

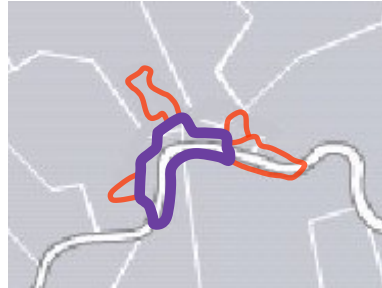


Jubilee Walkway
Section 1
The Western Loop



V1 : July 2009

Start / Finish: The panel in the gardens at Leicester Square. (TQ298807)
Station: Leicester Square
Distance: 6 miles (9 km)



Introduction:

This is a circular walk on the original Jubilee Walkway through the heart of the City with connections to many of the Capital's main tourist attractions.

Directions: From the panel in the centre of Leicester Square, exit the park in the south-west corner by the Odeon West End Cinema.

Follow the pedestrianised area south, down St Martin's Street, passing Westminster Library on the left. Continue straight ahead, passing between the two parts of the National Gallery.

The National Gallery, houses one of the greatest collections of Western European painting in the world. Its location in Trafalgar Square was chosen in 1831 as it was considered to be at the very centre of London.

Enter into the top of Trafalgar Square, **A** with its fountains, Nelson's Column and statues.

Trafalgar Square is dominated by Nelson's Column with the eighteen foot statue of Lord Nelson standing on top of the 171 foot column.

With Trafalgar Square behind you and keeping Canada House on the right, cross Cockspur Street and follow the curve of the road around to enter The Mall under the large stone Admiralty Arch – go through the right arch. Keep on the right-hand side of broad avenue that is The Mall.

The Mall is London's Ceremonial route from Buckingham Palace to the City of London. The Queen's coach came along here to her Coronation in Westminster Abbey in 1953 and to St Paul's Cathedral for the thanksgiving services for the Silver Jubilee in 1977 and the Golden Jubilee in 2002.

Continue ahead, passing the Royal Marines Memorial on the right, and passing in front of the grand façade of Carlton House Terrace. After nearly 300m, at the Duke of York steps, with its large granite column and bronze statue of the Duke of York at the top, cross over The Mall at the Duke of York steps and enter St. James's Park.

Once across the road there is a good view of Buckingham Palace. Section 5 of the Walkway continues through St James's Park to Buckingham Palace. Next turn left and then right to take the path beside the war memorial – there are toilets along here and cafés nearby.

To your left is Horse Guards Road with the parade ground and by the road is a panel showing the scene for Trooping the Colour which is held every June to mark the Queen's official birthday.

Continue through the park past the lake. Just beyond the lake, turn left up to Horse Guards Road. At the end of the road is the junction with Birdcage Walk. Section 5 heads to the right to Buckingham Palace.

To stay on the Jubilee Walkway, turn left onto Great George Street. Continue 150m further on, into Parliament Square **B** to see Big Ben.

Parliament Square itself has statues of many famous statesmen, including Sir Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela. Straight ahead there is an interpretative panel here with a number to ring for an audio description. Look also for the Jubilee Walkway maps wrapped around lamp-posts.

To continue, cross at the lights near the information panel, and walk towards

Westminster Abbey, **C** the visitor's entrance is straight ahead.

The history of Westminster Abbey goes back more than a thousand years of history when Benedictine monks came to this site in the tenth century.

Turn left and follow Parliament Square around the South side turning right along St Margaret's Street in front of the Houses of Parliament. **D** You will pass another interpretative panel on the way.

The site of the Houses of Parliament is officially known as the Palace of Westminster, and was the residence of kings. The clock tower contains the famous Big Ben bell, cast in 1858 and named after Benjamin Hall, commissioner of works at that time.

Cross St. Margaret's Street at the pelican crossing in front of Old Palace Yard and find the pavement behind the black security wall. Continue walking southwards, down St. Margaret's Street, and at the end of the Houses of Commons and the security wall, turn left into Victoria Tower Gardens.

For an accessible route over Lambeth Bridge, avoiding the steps, keep on Millbank, otherwise stay in Victoria Tower Gardens, follow the River Thames to the right, upstream, through the park to the children's play area at the foot of Lambeth Bridge. At the end of the park, climb two flights of steps up to Lambeth Bridge.

Go up the steps and cross to the other side of the Thames, over Lambeth Bridge. At the end of the bridge, turn left, following the Thames downstream now, and passing the Museum of Garden History, housed in a disused church, and Lambeth Palace. **E**

Lambeth Palace has been a historic London residence of Archbishops of Canterbury since the 13th century. The Museum of Garden History was set up in 1977 in the historic church of St Mary-at-Lambeth as the world's first museum of the history of gardens and gardening.

The route now takes the south bank of the Thames and joins the Queen's Walk and the Thames Path National Trail on the south-east side of the river.

Follow the walk along the Albert Embankment passing St Thomas's Hospital and go under Westminster Bridge – find the tunnel by looking slightly to the left at the foot of the steps. The path continues straight on.

At 135 metres, 450 feet above London, the London Eye **F** is the world's tallest cantilevered observation wheel, with 40km panoramic views on a clear day. It was opened in March 2000 and the wheel design was used as a metaphor of the turning of the century.

Continue beside the Thames along The Queen's Walk passing Jubilee Gardens and then go under Hungerford Bridge, with its elegant suspension bridge alongside for pedestrian links to the South Bank Centre.

This is the site of the 1951 Festival of Britain and is now part of a riverside promenade which is lively with street performers. There are cafés and accessible toilets here.

The Jubilee Walkway continues passing Gabriel's Wharf, the OXO Tower and under Blackfriars Bridge passing Bankside Gallery, before reaching the Tate Modern **G** and the Millennium Bridge link to St Paul's Cathedral.

Tate Modern, in the former Bankside Power Station, houses Britain's collection of international modern and contemporary art.

Cross over the Thames on the Millennium Bridge. Section 2 of the Walkway continues along the South Bank.

Foster and Partners' 'blade of light' design was developed in close collaboration with sculptor Sir Anthony Caro and engineers Arup. Formed by a single sweeping arc, the bridge appears as a thin ribbon of steel by day and when it is illuminated at night as a shining blade of light across the river.

Once on the other side of Millennium Bridge, back on the north bank of the

Thames, continue straight ahead, walking up St Peter's Hill pedestrianised area to St Paul's Cathedral. **H** Section 2 heads east along Queen Victoria Street .

The current Cathedral - the fourth to occupy this site - was designed by the court architect Sir Christopher Wren and built between 1675 and 1710 after its predecessor was destroyed in the Great Fire of London. This magnificent building, considered as Wren's masterpiece, is a noted landmark in London.

From the impressive south entrance, turn left along St Paul's Churchyard, cross at the zebra crossing at the junction, and continue westwards onto Ludgate Hill, walking on the right-hand side of the road. Go over Ludgate Circus into Fleet Street. Section 3 turns right along past the Cathedral.

Fleet Street was once the home of Britain's national newspapers and news organisations, but they have all moved out now.

Continue about 450m along Fleet Street and turn right onto Chancery Lane. Look out for an information panel outside Kings College on Chancery Lane, on the gate post. Section 4 of the Walkway continues north along Chancery Lane.

Turn left off Chancery Lane onto Carey Street. From Carey Street turn right on Serle Street crossing into Lincoln's Inn Fields. **I** To visit the Sir John Soane Museum at Number 13 stay on the north side of the square, otherwise cut diagonally through the square with its mature trees, grass and café.

John Soane was born in 1753, the son of a bricklayer, and died after a long and distinguished career, in 1837. He designed this house to live in, but also as a setting for his antiquities and his works of art. Today it is a fascinating collection of the books, casts and models that Soane got together for students and is open to the public.

At the north-west corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields, turn left along Remnant Street crossing Kingsway to the junction with Great Queen Street. Carry on over the junction and follow the walkway along Great Queen Street, passing the Freemasons' Hall. Cross Drury Lane and turn left down it for 30m, then

turn right on to Broad Court pedestrian area, and at the end of there, turn left on Bow Street to the Royal Opera House, a large white building with white columns. **J**

The Royal Opera House is an opera house and major performing arts venue in the London district of Covent Garden, one of the foremost opera houses in the world. The large building, often referred to as simply "Covent Garden", is the home of The Royal Opera, The Royal Ballet and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House.

Pass the Royal Opera House and next to it, the splendid glass and cast iron floral hall – a reminder of the market days of Covent Garden – and continue on Bow Street. Turn right into Covent Garden along Russell Street. Covent Garden opens up to the left and right, the London Transport Museum is to your left.

Keep to the right of the market along the Piazza and onto the cobbled King Street.

Cross Bedford Street and continue along New Row, turning left after 50m along Bedfordbury and almost immediately first right down a small alleyway known as Goodwins Court.

Cross St Martin's Lane and continue straight ahead (slightly to the left) on the pedestrianised Cecil Street. At the end of there, turn left at Charing Cross Road and cross at the zebra crossing 40m away. Now on the right-hand side of Charing Cross Road, follow it round to the right, along Irving Street, to the north of the National Portrait Gallery.

The National Portrait Gallery is an art gallery housing a collection of portraits of historically important and famous British people. It was the first portrait gallery in the world when it opened in 1856.

Cross into Leicester Square to complete this section.