



## London LOOP

Section 1

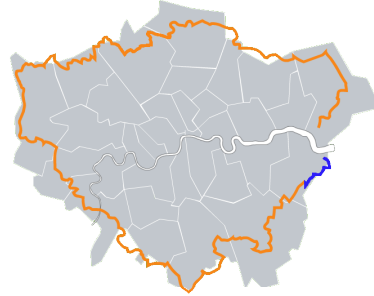
Erith Riverside to Old Bexley



Transport  
for London

walk  
London

**Start:** Erith station (TQ511781)  
**Station:** Erith station  
**Finish:** Bexley High Street (TQ494735)  
**Station:** Bexley  
**Distance:** 8.5 miles (13.5 km)



**Introduction:** This section starts at Erith station and goes south to finish close to Bexley station in the historic village of Old Bexley. It offers easy walking mainly on riverside paths.

The walking conditions are mostly level with a few short climbs. Paths beside the rivers can be muddy at times.

There are cafes and pubs at many places along the way and you can picnic at Hall Place.

V2 : June 10

**Directions:** Leave Erith station and follow the road, under the bridge to the mini roundabout, and take a right into Stonewood Road which leads to the Riverside Swimming Centre. Cross the road at the Swimming Centre, into Riverside Gardens. **A** Turn right and follow the path through the gardens. The LOOP follows the Thames Path here for a while.

At the end of the gardens continue along Erith High Street. Take a left, just past the White Hart pub, down towards the river and Erith Deep Wharf. **B**

Carry on beside the river. At the end, turn right, cross Wheatley Terrace Road, then go through the bollards, and straight ahead to Manor Road. Here, turn left past the Royal Alfred pub, and keep going along Manor Road for about half a mile. At the end of the industrial estate, where Manor Road meets Ray Lamb Way, turn left down the little tarmac lane, back towards the river.

At the end of the path go right past the Yacht Club compound and straight ahead onto a raised bank. Carry on following the bank beside the river. When you reach the River Darent, the path turns right, joining the Cray Riverway Walk.

Cross the dam access road **C** via the kissing gates and keep following the river wall. About 3/4 of a mile past the dam the path splits and the creek curves to the left. If you want stop here you can carry straight on to Slade Green rail station. To carry on, follow the creek round to the left and keep following the river wall.

When the path reaches Crayford Creek, keep following the River Cray. At the end of the path, go through the barrier, turn right at the metal fence then immediately left down the road. **D**

Go under the bridge with the "Road Liable to Flood" sign and keep going. Where the road forks, cross to take the right fork and straight ahead towards the busy Thames Road. At the road junction there is a pedestrian crossing to your left, use this to cross the road and on the far side turn left. Soon you will reach Crayford Way, cross and turn left following the path round to the right with the green space on your right. After you cross the river turn right and follow the path with the Cray on your right

The river is home to common reeds - the tallest British grass which can reach ten feet high. It was used to thatch roofs, and was harvested in huge quantities. The marshes are one of the few remaining areas of Thames grazing marsh in London, with ditches supporting a wealth of rare plants and animals, and a good range of breeding birds.

Keep walking, and at the road, turn right and cross the bridge, then take the first left up Barnes Cray Road. Where the road curves to the right, follow the track off to the left, and there on your left, is the river again. Follow the path to Crayford Road.

Across the road to your right is a bus stop where the 428 can take you back to Erith.

Cross the road and go left towards Waterside Gardens, or walk through the gardens with the river on your right. At the Bear & Ragged Staff, cross Crayford High Street at the pedestrian lights and bear slightly right to continue along London Road.

The Bear and Ragged Staff was the badge of the Earl of Warwick - the famed 'Kingmaker of the Wars of the Roses. He was killed in thick fog at the battle of Barnet after he'd just joined the Lancastrians .

Crayford Station can be reached from here by turning left and heading down Crayford Road, past the Town Hall, then right into Station Road.

To carry on keep along London Road, crossing another road via pedestrian lights, then fork left into Bourne Road and keep going until you reach the garage on the left.

The two posts either side of the garage are all that is left of the old Crayford cinema. After the second post, turn left just past the garage, go through the kissing gate and walk down the left edge of the playing field. **E** At the bottom follow the path through the vegetation to meet up with the river - turn right and follow the bank.

Ignore the first bridge but cross at the second one and turn left. If you want to take a look at Hall Place, **F** go right after the bridge, instead of left.

Hall Place is a fine Tudor mansion built almost 500 years ago in the reign of Henry VIII for the Lord Mayor of London. It has a magnificent panelled Great Hall with Minstrel's Gallery and fine decorative plaster ceilings, as well as award-winning gardens, a stunning topiary lawn, herb gardens and inspirational herbaceous border.

Follow the hedge, crossing the little creek (usually dry), then round to the right and head for the railway bridge which carries the A2. **G** Go through the kissing gate and up the ramp, up the steps and at the top turn left. Immediately after the bridge, fork left through the kissing gate and down the path. At the bottom, take a hairpin left and then left under the bridge.

At the next fork, take a right (the lower path). As you go up the slope towards the road, there's a stile on the right, leading into Churchfield Wood. Cross the stile and head off down the right hand path. Keep following the path, with the woods on your left. At the end is a little stile cum kissing gate, which brings you out onto a tarmac path. **H** Turn right and keep walking.

When you reach the end of the footpath with St Mary's church opposite, turn left towards Bexley High Street, then keep right. Pass under the bridge by the Old Mill pub, then cross the road and turn left at the mini roundabout.

This section ends at the junction of Bexley High Street and Tan Yard Lane on the left.

Station Approach is just past Tan Yard Lane on your left - taking you to Bexley Station.