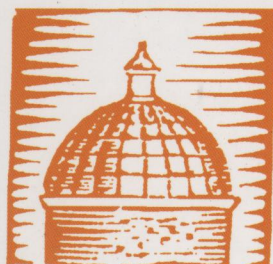


Millennium Heritage Trails cater for walkers of all abilities. They have been developed to highlight the areas in and around Greenwich, less famous but fascinating and rewarding in their own rights.



These trails have been brought to you by Greenwich Tourism Partnership along with:

WOOLWICH



development
agency



Greenwich *even better*
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



Design and Illustrations by William Webb

Produced by *FWT* London - 4.5.00 www.fwt.co.uk



GREENWICH MILLENNIUM HERITAGE TRAILS

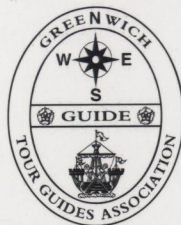


Heritage Trails

The Heritage Trails are designed to explore World Heritage Site Maritime Greenwich and surrounding areas. Take time to discover the historic moated Tudor Barn at Well Hall Pleasaunce; stroll around the ancient woodlands, parks and open spaces some of which have splendid views. Also enjoy unearthing the area's rich history.

Guided Tours

For those who prefer organised walks, Greenwich and Deptford Tour Guides can help you discover more about the local environment and arrange specific tours in buildings which are not open to the general public.



Contact: Greenwich Tour Guides (020) 8305 0067
Deptford Tour Guides (020) 8692 6919

The Green Chain Walk



The Green Chain Walk is a 40 mile network of signposted footpaths that link together many open spaces. Starting from the River Thames you can work your way towards the dinosaurs at Crystal Palace. Alternatively, just walk a small section of chain; it's within easy walking distance of numerous transport links. Route Packs available at the Tourist Information Centre.

Contact: Green Chain Project Officer (020) 8921 5876

Riverside Walks

The Thames Path National Trail mirrors the Riverside Walks until the Thames Barrier, the Riverside Walk continues through Woolwich and onto more rural Thamesmead. The walk follows the widening river as it continues east past Thamesmead on it's way via Kent and Essex to the North Sea.

Contact: Riverside Co-Ordinator (020) 8921 6201

A few things to remember:

- The Heritage trails cross some major roads so please take care, especially with children, and use proper crossing places whenever possible.
- Always allow enough time to complete your walk. Some stretches of the trail may not be lit and some parks may close at night.
- Some sections of the trails may be steep. If you require further information about access for the less mobile, please contact the TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE.

MILLENNIUM HERITAGE TRAIL



Woolwich

Distance: 6.2km (3.9 miles) Grade: Strenuous Time: 2-2½ hours

About the Area

Woolwich has been a garrison town for centuries and the impressive Georgian façade of the Royal Artillery barracks overlooks a huge parade ground. The foundations of England's navy were laid at Woolwich when Henry VIII established a Royal Dockyard on the riverfront in 1512. The ropery and gun storehouse of the dockyard were later expanded and from 1668 machines and weapons of war were cast, proved and stored at the Royal Arsenal. The arsenal buildings, currently being restored, will reopen in the early years of the new millennium as a heritage centre.



The Museum of the Artillery is housed in a unique bell-tent structure designed by John Nash and erected originally for a reception for the allied sovereigns in St James's Park, London, in 1814.

The Thames Barrier, a 20th century engineering triumph, crosses the river at Woolwich. Whenever a flood threatens London, massive gates rise from the riverbed between shining silver piers and stem the flow of water.



The RACS was founded by workers of the Royal Arsenal Supply Association, in 1868. It first traded from a house in Eleanor Road (now Barnard Close) and then from a house in Plarry Place. The name changed to Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society in 1872 and the first shop opened in Powis Street in 1873. It was one of the largest retail co-operatives in the country, pioneering many services to its members, including low-cost housing and adult education. The RACS was incorporated into the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) in 1985.

Lunch Stops

Earl of Chatham a late 19th century building noted for its Victorian tiling.

Waterfront Bar which has panoramic views of the Thames Barrier, Dome and Canary Wharf.

Director General which has the feel of an old railway coach and dates back to 19th century.

Woolwich Heritage Trail

From **General Gordon Square**, opened in 1983, walk down through **Woolwich Market** towards **Royal Arsenal Gate House**, circa 1829. Cross Plumstead Road by the crossing and enter Dial Square – an opportunity to see some of the regeneration work happening in the Arsenal including the Brass Foundry. On leaving turn left and continue down Warren Lane passing the old Guard House on your right. Soon you will pass the rear entrance to the Arsenal and have an opportunity to view several of the other buildings. These include Building 40, former home of the Royal Artillery Military Academy, Building 41, New Royal Laboratory Building and Buildings 17 & 18, soon to be the home of the "Firepower!" experience. Continue down towards the river, keeping the wall on your right. Just after the main entrance to the Arsenal turn right into Ship & Half Moon passage and into Riverside Park with its sweeping views of the Thames and looking upstream past the Thames Barrier towards Docklands and the Dome.

Go left along the river towards Woolwich. If you follow the path out of the Park you will be walking away from the river and you should double back on yourself over the slipway. Then walk behind the **Waterfront Leisure Centre** and the **Woolwich Foot Tunnel** entrance on your left (a small domed structure). As you return to the main road on the right, by the roundabout, is the **Woolwich Free Ferry**. The ferry and foot tunnel are both links to the north side of the river and the **North Woolwich Station Museum**.

Cross the road at the roundabout over to the Mitre public house and, keeping the river on your right, walk up to the church on the raised pavement. From here you can see the site of the former **Royal Dockyard** by the river and, in the distance, the Thames Barrier & Canary Wharf. Then walk round the front of **St. Mary's Church**. Enter the church grounds and keep the church on your left, noting the sundial on the side of the church and the lion at the rear, until reaching the main road.

On leaving the church grounds turn left to return to the roundabout and cross towards the **Gala Bingo Club**, a former Granada Cinema, which still has its fantastic Art Deco interior.



Turn right into Powis Street and if you look above eye level you will see varied facades, especially noticeable above the old **Co-op** building, which displays their motto. Following the High Street take the second turning on the right into Calderwood Street. In front is the Woolwich Campus of the **University of Greenwich**. A peek inside will reveal a wonderful rotunda. Walk up Calderwood Street; turn left into Market Street, and passing the **Magistrates Court** and **Police Station** continue on to the **Woolwich Town Hall** (entrance on Wellington Street), the principal headquarters of Greenwich Council. If it is open it is well worth a look at the very impressive interior which has been used for filming on several occasions. Turn right into Wellington Street and walk up to the crossroads.

At this point there are two routes that can be taken.

Cross the road and proceed along Artillery Place. On the left is the geodesic dome that houses the hi-tec weapons simulator of the Royal Artillery. Cross and turn left into Repository Road, towards the tank. The **Royal Artillery Barracks and Parade Ground**, the home of the Artillery since 1716, are on your left and from here are fine views across the parade ground to the magnificent Georgian facade. As you continue you will pass, on your right, the **Museum of the Artillery in the Rotunda**, new store buildings of the Royal Artillery and an 18" rail mounted gun before turning left into Ha Ha Road.

This will take you to the other side of the parade ground. Carefully cross the main road and continue to walk towards the Parade Ground on the upper level. The memorial gardens and ruins of the **Royal Garrison Church of St George** are on the left. Take the narrow path beside the church (retracing your steps) and at the bottom of the steps turn left into Woolwich New Road. Continue past **Connaught Mews** and bear right along Woolwich New Road to see the **Roman Catholic Church of St Peter the Apostle**. This is the work of A.W.N. Pugin, the designer responsible for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament. Continue down to Woolwich and General Gordon Square. On the right is the **Tramshed** which housed a turntable which was used for turning the trams.

For a shorter route at the junction of Wellington Street and John Wilson Street turn left and follow road until it becomes Grand Depot Road. From here you will view the Royal Artillery Barracks and Parade Ground. Continue on the main route as from the Royal Garrison Church of St George.

Places of Interest



General Gordon Square is named after 'Gordon of Khartoum' the Victorian military general who was born in Woolwich. Today it is a green open space in the town centre. It was very different in the early 20th century when an open ventilation cutting above the railway tunnel belched out fumes, causing the square to be known as 'the Smoked Ole'.



The origins of **Woolwich Market** go back to the Middle Ages. Until Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries it was church land and tolls were paid to the Bishop of Rochester. James I granted a market charter in 1620 and the rights remained in private hands until 1887 when they passed from Sir Spencer Maryon Wilson to the local Board of Health and eventually to Greenwich Council. Many of the stalls are family-run, having passing from generation to generation.



Military occupation of the riverside site known as the Woolwich Warren (because of the number of rabbits in the area) began in the 16th century and increased in importance in the years after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. Renamed the **Royal Arsenal** in 1805, this was the centre for the manufacture and testing of weapons of war for more than 300 years. A workforce of more than 80,000 was employed in the ordnance factories and brass foundry, where guns were cast during the First and Second World Wars. The Arsenal was decommissioned in the 1990s and the early 18th-century buildings, some attributed to Sir John Vanbrugh, are being restored and redeveloped as part of a heritage centre scheduled to open in 2004 or 2005. A number of the buildings which include the **Brass Foundry** and **Dial Square** can be seen through the railings beside the Guard House, which is behind the attractively decorated Beresford Gate.



Royal Arsenal Gardens and Riverside Walk The riverfront to the east of the Woolwich Ferry has been inaccessible for centuries. The huge Royal Arsenal site was out-of-bounds, its whereabouts so secret that it never appeared on maps, but with the area now being redeveloped, a Royal Arsenal Gardens and Walk have been created between Woolwich and Crossness. Extensive landscaping has been undertaken with trees and heathers planted on the route beside the old Arsenal site. Elsewhere shrubs and trees line the paths and cycleway which run for almost 4 miles through Thamesmead to Belvedere. The walk will eventually extend westwards to Deptford.

Woolwich Foot Tunnel, similar to the earlier foot tunnel at Greenwich, was designed by Sir Maurice Fitzwilliam and opened in 1912.

Close to the ferry landing stage and entrance to the foot tunnel on the north bank of the Thames is the **North Woolwich Old Station Museum**. This was once the terminus of the long discontinued Eastern Counties and Thames Junction Railway, later known as the North Woolwich Railway and now part of the North London Line. The station has been restored to its 1854 condition and its ticket office reconstructed. The exhibits outline the history of the Great Eastern Railway. Ⓜ (limited).



The Woolwich Free Ferry was the first successful attempt to link Woolwich and the surrounding area with Essex. It opened in 1889 when a paddle steamer carried vehicles, passengers and goods across the river. More modern diesel boats were introduced in 1963 and the landing stages have been replaced by steel-trussed ramps.

The Gala Club, built in 1937 as the Granada Cinema, has a celebrated impressionistic Gothic fantasy interior. Theodore Komisarjevsky, the noted Moscow Arts Theatre director/designer who settled in England, designed this in 1937. (Guided tours can be arranged to see the wonderful art deco interior). Tel. (020) 8858 6169. Ⓜ (none).



GREENWICH MILLENNIUM HERITAGE TRAILS





The Church of St Mary Magdalene has stood on the hill overlooking the river since 1739, though Woolwich has had a parish church on almost the same site for at least 900 years. A stained glass window commemorates the 591 passengers who died when the Princess Alice, a pleasure steamer, sank in the Thames in 1878, and there is a memorial to Tom Cribb, the boxer who was champion of England, in the first half of the 19th century. ♣



The old headquarters of the **Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society** at 125-161 Powis Street were built in a 'Harrods' Italian Renaissance style in 1903, the facade richly ornamented in terracotta. Over the entrance is Alfred Drury's statue of Alexander McLeod, a founder of the RACS and its first full-time secretary. Opposite, at 136-152 Powis Street the society built a regional office and store in 1938. This was designed in an art deco style with bands of faience and continuous windows by S.W. Ackeroyd, the society's architect.



The main campus of the **University of Greenwich** occupies the site of the former Woolwich Polytechnic, which was founded in 1890. The buildings date from several periods, some like the Bank House going up in the late 1870s, others a century later. The name changed to the Thames Polytechnic in 1969 and university status was achieved in 1992. An original 500 students in 1891 has now grown to more than 14,500, the majority based at three campuses – Woolwich, Avery Hill with its magnificent Winter Gardens and Maritime Greenwich at the Old Royal Naval College. ♣

The Old Town Hall is a small, classical building dating from 1842. Compared to the 1906 replacement, its pilasters and pediment seem modest and unpretentious. The lamp-holder over the entrance is particularly fine. ♣



Woolwich Library, with its central bow window and Dutch gable, was put up in 1901 by Church, Quick and Whincop. ♣ (limited).



The designer of the **Old Woolwich Baths**, in the appropriately named Bathway, was Henry Hudson Church, a local architect, who incorporated an elaborate facade and tower into this 1894 building. Today the Students' Union uses it.



Sir Alfred Brumwell Thomas designed **Woolwich Town Hall** early in the reign of King Edward VII. It is one of London's most florid civic centres and has a tower and three domes. The galleried entrance hall has a grand staircase which divides in two below a Venetian window. The ornate council chamber, the principal meeting place of the London Borough of Greenwich, has some splendid plasterwork and colourful stained glass.



The splendid frontage of the **Royal Artillery Barracks** is 1,000 ft long. Said to be the longest Georgian facade in England, it overlooks a grand parade ground and acres of common land. In terms of scale, the only comparable buildings in Europe are in St Petersburg. An unknown architect built the eastern section between 1775-82 and James Wyatt was responsible for the western section, which was completed in 1802. Behind the facade, lie barracks modernised in 1967 to house 700 men of the Royal Regiment of the Artillery. Originally as many as 4,000 people could be accommodated in buildings to the rear of the front. (Guided Tours can be arranged to see the magnificent Glass Room)



The Museum of the Artillery in the Rotunda must rank as one of the most unusual museum buildings in London. The bell-tent was put up originally in St James's Park for the meeting of the allied sovereigns who came to London in 1814 to celebrate Napoleon Bonaparte's exile to Elba. Five years later it was moved to Woolwich, given a lead roof by its designer, the architect John Nash, and filled with a collection of ordnance illustrating the development of artillery. The earliest weapons were in use at the Battle of Crecy in 1346, the latest deployed in the Gulf War. ♣ (limited).



The fragmentary ruins of the **Royal Garrison Church of St George** stand in a memorial garden on Grand Depot Road. The Italianate church, built in 1863 by Thomas Henry Wyatt, was modelled on a church at Wilton in Wiltshire. It was gutted when a bomb fell on it during the Second World War. Noted for the wonderful mosaic which still adorns the back wall.



The three buildings that comprise the **Connaught Mews** were built in 1780 as a military hospital, the first of its kind in the country. They then became the Connaught Barracks. In the early 1990s they were converted into apartments.



St Peter's Church, erected in 1842, is the work of A.W.N. Pugin, the designer responsible for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament. The west front has a Gothic-style window, and the large east window sits between elaborate buttresses. The interior of the Roman Catholic Church is unremarkable. The chancel and side chapel were added in 1887-89. The presbytery, also by Pugin, has additions by his son E.W. Pugin. ♣ ♣WC



The old brick **Tramshed** was built in 1908 as an electricity transformer station, but when other forms of transport superseded trams it lost its purpose and in the 1970s was converted into a theatre. In its heyday as an entertainment venue, the Tramshed drew audiences for its music and comedy programmes from all over London.

Transport link-up:

Buses to all corners of the borough will enable you to find some of Greenwich's hidden gems.

Green Chain Walk continues out to **Lesnes Abbey**; towards Eltham will take you through Oxleas Woods, heading towards Greenwich will take you into **Charlton Park** and past Charlton Village with its wonderful Jacobean House.

Other links can be via trains or exploring the riverside paths which continue as far as Thamesmead in one direction and Greenwich in the other passing the **Thames Barrier** and the **Dome**.

Accessibility

The full route of this walk takes about two to two and a half hours. All paths are surfaced and where routes cross roads in most cases pedestrian crossings are used. The route in some places is hilly.