



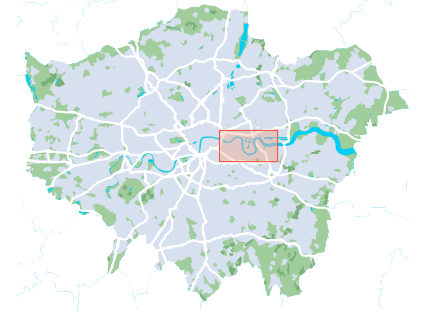
Thames Path south bank



Section 3 of 4

Tower Bridge to Thames Barrier

- Section start:** Tower Bridge
- Nearest station to start:** London Bridge
- Section finish:** Thames Barrier
- Nearest stations to finish:** Charlton
- Section distance:** 11 miles (17.5 kilometres)



Introduction

On the south side, the Thames Path connects some of the most evocative places on the historic riverside, culminating in the World Heritage Site at Greenwich.

Here the National Trail continues beyond Greenwich as far as the Thames Barrier, where it officially ends. The Thames Path extension route (section four) enables walking all the way to the boundary of London with Kent.



Tower Bridge to Greenland Pier - section 3a



Section 3a start: Tower Bridge
Section 3a finish: Greenland Pier
Section distance: 3.5 miles (6 kilometres)

Directions

To start this walk from London Bridge station, use the Tooley Street exit and cross the road, following signs to Hay's Galleria. Walk through this shopping centre and turn right at the river, walking past HMS Belfast to Tower Bridge.

1 From Tower Bridge on the south side of the Thames, walk along Shad Thames with the river on the left. Pass shops and riverside restaurants set into warehouses linked overhead by iron bridges.

Turn left before the first bridge into the passageway of Maggie Blake's Cause, an alleyway connecting Shad Thames with the riverfront.

Did you know?

Named after a local community activist the alleyway represents a significant victory - public access to the riverside in a predominantly privately-owned environment.



Turn right at the side of the Thames. Walk through to the river frontage of Butler's Wharf. This most imposing of Victorian warehouses is now stylish apartments and riverside restaurants. Cross the stainless steel footbridge at the entrance to St. Saviour's Dock, an atmospheric inlet of warehouses and tidal mud.

Next is New Concordia Wharf and Jacob's Island Pier, the part of Bermondsey which Charles Dickens described as, "the filthiest, strangest and most extraordinary of the many localities that are hidden in London". St. Saviours Dock displayed the bodies of pirates who were captured and hanged here. It is here that Bill Sykes, in Charles Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist*, falls from a roof and dies in the mud. Dickens gives a vivid description of the dock.

After crossing the inlet to St. Saviour's, the Thames Path goes through and under the building on the river frontage. Follow the narrow ramped path down to Mill Street and carry on straight ahead along Bermondsey Wall West. The river here is mainly hidden by warehouses now converted to luxury apartments.

Turn right down East Lane then left onto Chambers Street. Take the next left onto Loftie Street and walk through Fountain Green Square to join the Thames again. The walkway broadens here as it approaches Cherry Garden Pier.

Once again the path is driven inland for a short stretch by riverside houses and back onto Bermondsey Wall East to The Angel pub. On the other bank of the Thames the Execution Dock can be seen. Here the notorious Captain Kidd, who had been convicted of piracy and murder, was executed on the second attempt in 1701.

To the right of The Angel pub there is a sunken grassy space which hides the remains of the 14th-century manor house of Edward III. Just beyond it at the riverside are the King's Stairs, after which the park takes its name. The stairs served the palace, as well as generations of watermen and the mudlarks who scavenged along the river at low tide.

Did you know?

The word mudlark was originally used to name the children in Victorian London who were forced by desperate poverty to scour the Thames foreshore for items to sell for a few pence - such things as bits of coal and rope, discarded iron, copper nails, old bones (ground up for fertiliser) and lost tools.

From King's Stairs Gardens carry on ahead, with the river on the left. Go through a narrow passage between warehouses linked by overhead bridges, now decked with greenery, to reach the historic heart of Rotherhithe and another lovely old pub, The Mayflower.


Did you know?

The pub is named after the famous ship which carried the Pilgrim Fathers to America in 1620, and which began its epic journey from its mooring near here, returning to London the following year. The Last Will and Testament of the Mayflower crew is displayed in the bar and the passenger list is on show in the restaurant upstairs.


Across the road, St. Mary's Church provides the burial place for four of The Mayflower's owners, including Christopher Jones, who captained the ship to the New World. Its roof is shaped like an upturned ship. Just beyond the church is the Brunel Museum - during the construction of his Thames Tunnel this building was the engine house which pumped out water.

Did you know?

The Thames Tunnel was the first tunnel ever built under a navigable river, today it is used by trains between Rotherhithe and Wapping on London Overground.

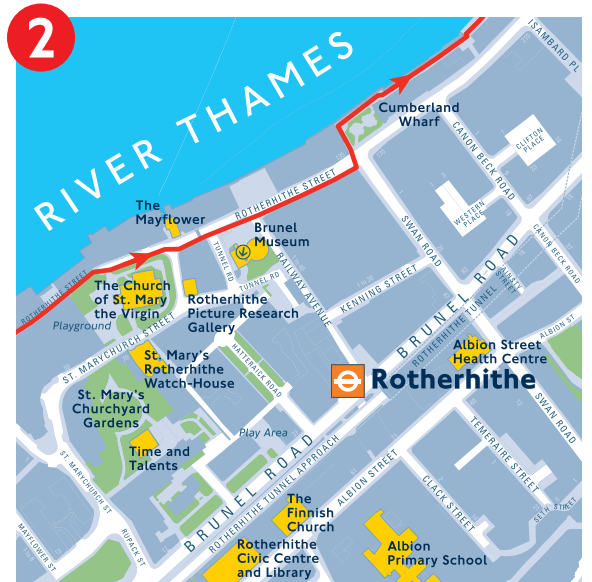
 **2** Now carry on along Rotherhithe Street. At the junction with Swan Road from the right, look for a signpost next to trees on the left. Turn left through a small garden area to reach the Thames again, or stay on Rotherhithe Street for a step-free route.

Walk on until the Thames Path crosses the red lift-bridge at the entry to Surrey Water. Turn to the left, around the Old Salt Quay pub. There are yet more superb views as the path weaves along the riverside, skirting the old warehouse and rice mill of Globe Wharf, ducking behind apartments and back to the river via Globe Stairs.

 **3** Pass the handsome houses of Sovereign Crescent and go over the little footbridge over an inlet. With Canary Wharf as a landmark on the far bank, walk on along Pageant Crescent. A newly opened route takes you through the Hilton Docklands. Look for the Thames Path signposts all the time.

Keep walking with the river on the left, past Nelson Dock. The next landmark is Surrey Docks Farm. Go through the farm to enjoy a break at the cafe, or see the wonderful parade of bronze animals, and the live ones as well, in what was once the site of the 18th century shipyard. The Farm has a variety of animals, a working blacksmiths, a dairy and a herb garden.

The tented landing stage of Greenland Passage is now straight ahead. The path leads away from the river again onto Odessa Street. There turn left, parallel with the river, until turning left again to reach the river. Walk on to the entrance to Greenland Dock.



Did you know?

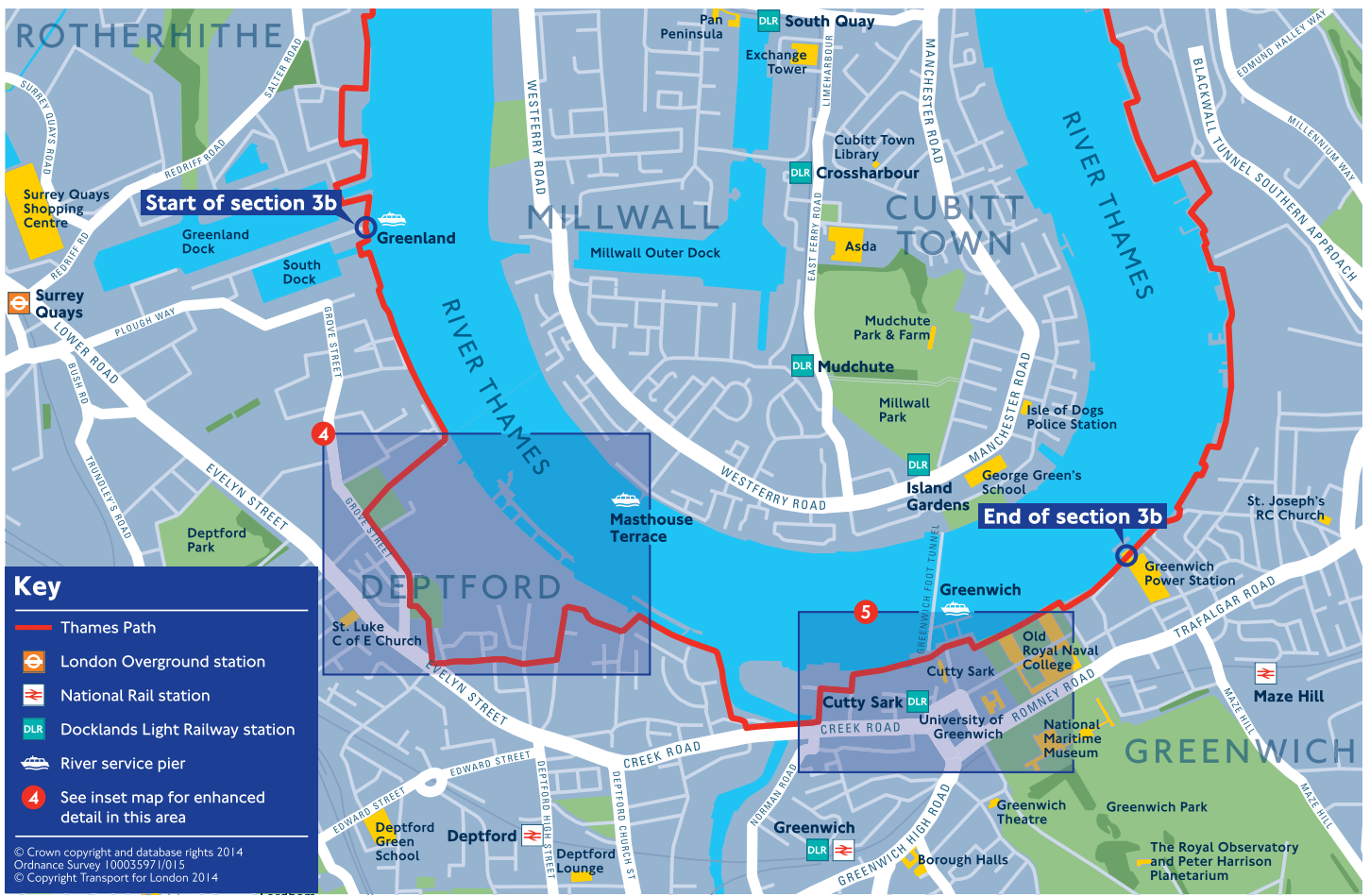
Created in the 17th century to serve the Royal Dockyards at Deptford, Greenland Dock later became a base for Arctic whalers - hence its name.

Cross over the dock entrance via the pedestrian bridge. Carry on past Greenland Pier to neighbouring South Dock, another well-used stretch of water with berths for over 200 vessels.

Did you know?

This whole peninsula took the biggest pounding of any British docks in World War II. South Dock was pumped out and used to build the concrete caissons for the 'Mulberry Harbours', used in the D-Day landings, and named after Mulberry Quay.

Greenland Pier to Greenwich Power Station - section 3b



Section 3b start: Greenland Pier
Section 3b finish: Greenwich Power Station
Section distance: 3 miles (4.5 kilometres)

4 Follow the waterside past high-rise flats of the Pepys Estate until reaching Deptford Strand and the Old Rum Stores, now converted into housing, once the site of the Tudor docks of Deptford. It was here on the steps that Sir Francis Drake was knighted by Queen Elizabeth 1st after he circumnavigated the world on the Golden Hinde (a replica of which can be seen at the St Mary Overie Dock on Clink Street by Southwark Cathedral on the southern section two).



Turn inland now for the last leg to Greenwich. Walk through the newly refurbished Pepys Park, named after one of Deptford's most famous residents, Samuel Pepys, who did much to reform the Royal Navy, as well as keeping his now-famous diary from 1660-1669.


Exit the second part of Pepys Park onto Grove Street. Turn left here to skirt round the Convoys Wharf, before entering the Sayes Court Park. This was the site of the house and garden of John Evelyn, the great herbalist.

Cross the park diagonally along the path to exit on Sayes Court Road and carry on straight ahead into Princes Street. Go left down Watergate Street and find at the end Twinkle Park. Turn right here along Borthwick Street. At the corner (where the road becomes Deptford Green), turn left to join the riverside path.

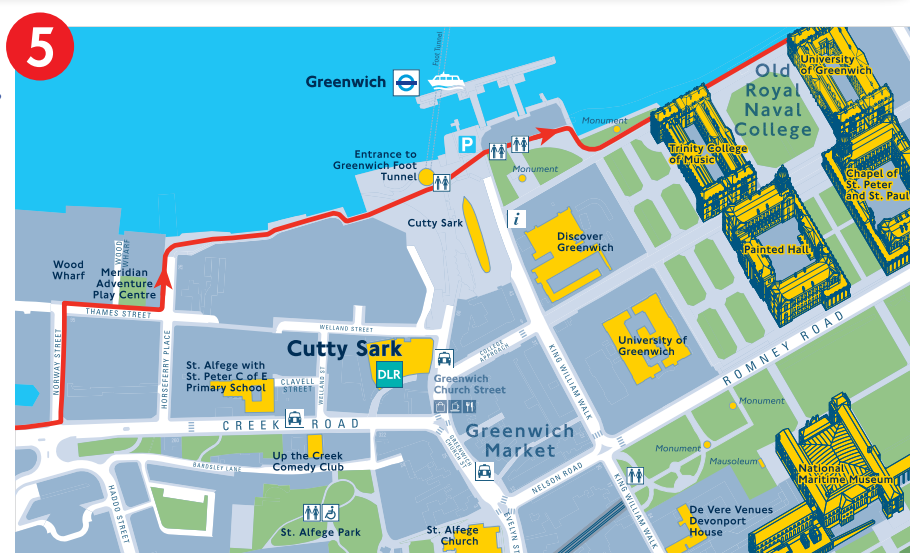
Follow the river round to Deptford Creek, where the River Ravensbourne enters the Thames, passing Peter the Great's statue.

Did you know?

Tsar Peter I of Russia, more usually described as 'Peter the Great', travelled to Europe in 1697-98 to study new developments in technology, especially shipbuilding. He lived near the Royal Dockyard in Deptford, at the home of the writer John Evelyn, for much of his four-month stay in England. This statue was erected in 2001 to commemorate the Tsar's visit.

 **5** Crossing the Creek by the moveable road bridge (on Creek Road), leave historic Deptford for its more famous neighbour of Greenwich. Turn first left down Norway Street and follow the road round to the right along Thames Street before taking a left by the adventure playground to rejoin the Thames.

The next landmark is the Cutty Sark, the fastest sailing ship of her day and the world's last tea-clipper.



Did you know?

Built in 1869 in Scotland, she was intended to last only 30 years. She was undergoing restoration when a fire broke out in 2007, but the restoration is now complete.

With the river on the left at Greenwich Pier, follow the path past the Old Royal Naval College to the Trafalgar Tavern with the small statue of Nelson below the steps.

Greenwich Power Station to Thames Barrier - section 3c




Section 3c start: Greenwich Power Station
Section 3c finish: Thames Barrier
Section distance: 4.5 miles (7 kilometres)

Turn left down the passage behind the tavern which leads back to the river and the Trinity Hospital, still in use as almshouses. Towering above is Greenwich Power Station, built in 1906 to power trams. It is now a back-up for London Underground. The Greenwich Meridian runs under its massive jetty.

Pause next at the Cutty Sark tavern near the Harbourmaster's House, with its Georgian bow windows and riverside terrace, and the last chance for refreshment until the O₂ at North Greenwich Station. From here, the waterside presents an intriguing mix of industry and dereliction with factories like Tate & Lyle's refinery (which processed a million tonnes of sugar a year) set amongst marine scrap yards, slipways, warehouses and wharves, and converted flats.

An inland detour along Pelton Street and Banning Street is created by a massive development by Lovell's Wharf, but a temporary passage has been provided leading back to the Thames. Look out along the way for several information boards explaining the fascinating history of the wharves.

Ignore signs for the inland 'cross peninsula' route - which is shorter but leaves the Thames - instead go between yards piled high with stone and on to Victoria Deep Wharf. On the far bank of the Thames the West India Dock is visible.

 **6** Carry on along the river as the O₂ Arena (originally known as the Millennium Dome) comes into view. Go right around the Arena, always keeping the Thames on the left.

Did you know?

Greenwich Peninsula was once marsh land which was reclaimed for farmland and then market gardens. With 19th century industrialisation came manufacturing: ammunition, chemicals, steel, submarine cables - and soap. Just over 100 years ago it became the site for the largest gasworks in Europe, creating a major task in cleaning up contaminants from the site.

Walk on past the sculpture 'Quantum Cloud' by Anthony Gormley, past the Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park and on past the Greenwich Yacht Club.

The Anchor & Hope pub marks the final half-mile stretch to the Thames Barrier, where a cafe and Visitor Centre awaits.

It is about a 20-25 minute walk to get to Charlton station from the end of this section - retrace your steps back along the Thames Path and turn left at the Anchor & Hope pub onto Anchor and Hope Lane. The road here leads directly to the station on the other side of Woolwich Road.

