

Holland Park to Earls Court

Many streets have been omitted from this map

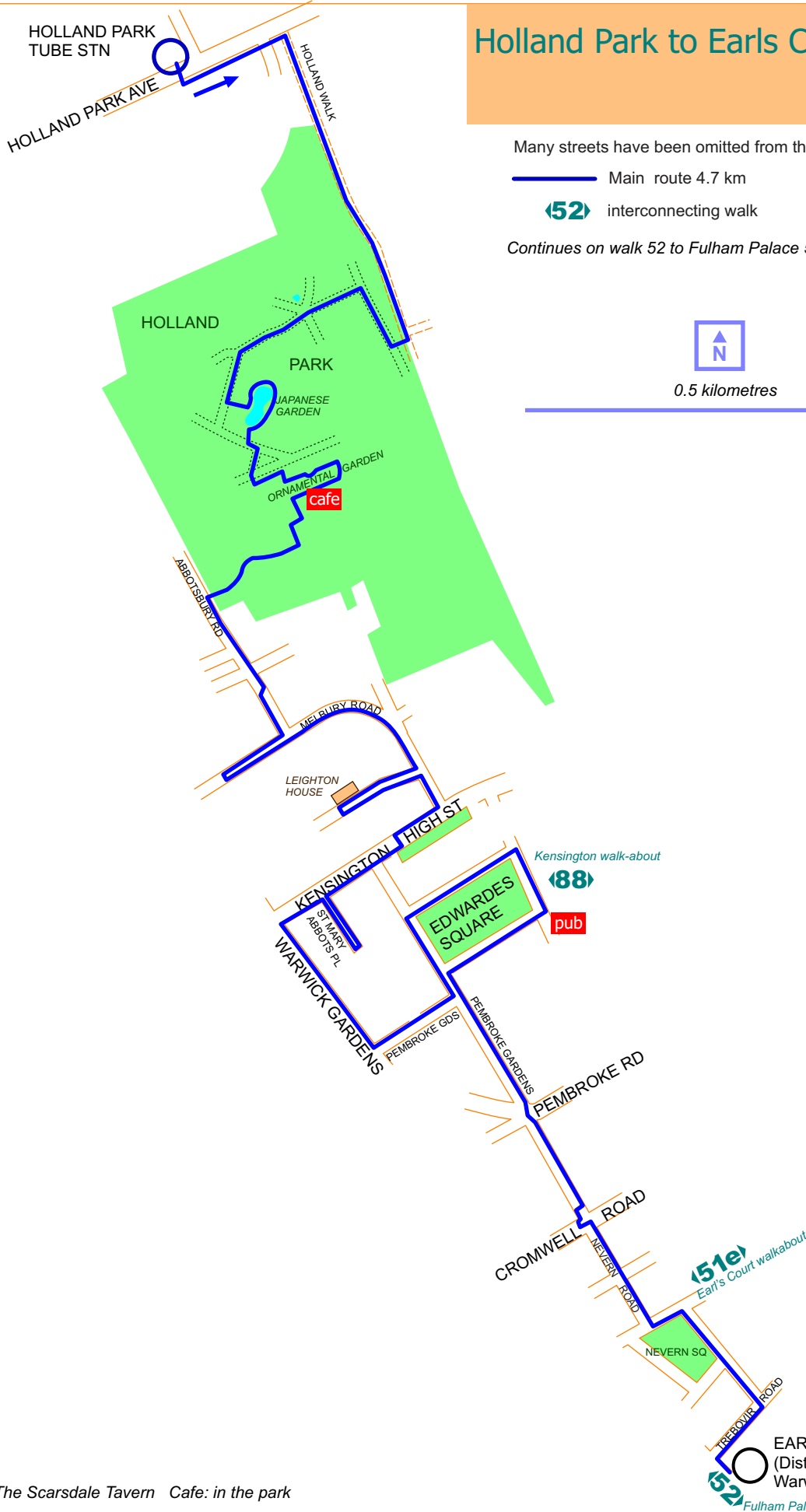
 Main route 4.7 km

 interconnecting walk

Continues on walk 52 to Fulham Palace 5.4 km



0.5 kilometres



Pub: The Scarsdale Tavern Cafe: in the park

 EARLS COURT STA
(District & Piccadilly Lines)
Warwick Road exit
Fulham Palace and Hammersmith

Holland Park to Earls Court

This pavement walk combines with the next one, to end at Fulham Palace

Kensington & Chelsea

All the land of this walk was held for centuries by the de Vere family. They gave some to the Abbey of Abingdon for the cure of their Son and this ended up with the Crown at dissolution. Then in 1591-97 Sir Walter Cope acquired the pieces to form the Manors of Abbots Kensington and Earl's Court, separated by what would become Hammersmith Road.

Holland Park

Sir Walter Cope had a Jacobean mansion built called Cope's Castle. Later his land came into the possession of the Rich family (Earls of Warwick and Holland) through the marriage of Sir Henry Rich, first Earl of Holland, to Cope's daughter. The house was renamed Holland House. When the fourth Earl of Holland died in 1721, the title passed to his aunt, Lady Elizabeth Edwardes (née Rich) and was inherited by their son, Edward Henry Edwardes. There is no evidence that any member of the Edwardes family lived at Holland House. In March 1768 Henry Fox, who had recently been created Baron Holland, bought all of William Edwardes's property north of the Hammersmith road, leaving the Edwardes family in possession of Earl's Court Manor. The house itself was devastated by incendiary bombing during the Second World War. The ruins and the grounds were bought by London County Council in 1952 from the last owner. The northern half of the park is semi-wild woodland, the central section around the ruins of Holland House is more formal with several garden areas, and the southernmost section is used for sport. The remains of the house form a backdrop for the open air Holland Park Theatre, home of Opera Holland Park.

Japanese Garden

A main attraction is the Kyoto/Fukushima Garden. In 1991 the garden was donated by the Kyoto Chamber of Commerce in Japan in preparation for the Japanese Festival in London in 1992. Following the terrible disaster that struck Fukushima, Japan in 2011, was reopened as a memorial garden and subsequently renamed 'Fukushima Garden'. The garden was designed by a famous Japanese garden designer to accurately display their style of gardens including the use of stone lanterns, sculptures, tiered waterfalls, water features and koi carp.

Melbury Road

On exiting the park the walk passes numerous grand houses. 8 Melbury Road is a large detached house built in the Queen Anne style

by the architect Richard Norman Shaw. It was commissioned by the painter Marcus Stone as a "studio-home" for himself. The house is next to the home of George Frederick Watts, and backs on to the garden of the Leighton House Museum, the former "studio-home" of Frederic, Lord Leighton. 31 Melbury Road (originally no 11), also built in the Queen Anne style by Shaw, was commissioned by the painter Luke Fildes, and latterly occupied by the film director Michael Winner. It is situated next to William Burges' Grade I listed Tower House. The choice by artistic rivals Fildes and Stone of Richard Norman Shaw as the architect of their houses was an important symbol of their ambition to become academicians, members of the Royal Academy of Arts, and of the art establishment themselves.

The walk visits briefly St Mary Abbots Place with its Arts & Crafts buildings and Edwardes Square with its fine private garden before taking a straight line to Nevern Square, not actually square but nevertheless imposing.

Earl's Court

It was south of the Hammersmith Road that the de Veres, as Earls of Oxford, held their manor court when they owned Abbots Kensington, Knotting Barns, West Town and Earl's Court. The courthouse shown stood on a site occupied today by Earl's Court Station.

At the time the Edwardes inherited, it was known for its market gardens. In 1776 William Edwardes was created Lord Kensington. It was the second Lord K who initiated development.

Edwardes Square

Development began in 1811, when Lord Kensington entered into an agreement with Louis Changeur for the building of houses on the south side of the High Street, undertaking to grant ninety-nine-year leases as the houses were covered in. The most striking feature of Edwardes Square is the very large size of the central enclosure—slightly over three acres—in relation to the comparatively small houses surrounding it, a decision which was to lead the developer to bankruptcy. Changeur as a Frenchman gave rise to the canard that the square had been laid out to provide 'cheap little houses' for Napoleon's invading Army. The plan shows a range of twenty-five houses (now Earl's Terrace), four square storeys above basements and virtually identical in outward appearance to houses in Montague Street where Changeur had previously been working, facing the High Road but set well back and guarded by a pair of small single-storey lodges at either end. The south side of the square was to be a mews. The garden at the centre of the Square was laid out by P A Sack, who later

became Director of the National Botanic Garden at Buenos Aires.

Kensington Canal

Counter's Creek ran south from Kensal Green to join the Thames west of Battersea Bridge and ultimately influenced Earl's Court's development.

In 1822 Lord Kensington initiated plans to convert the creek into a canal to bring goods and minerals from the London docks to the Kensington area.

The canal was a financial failure, even when a railway company was floated to link the canal basin to Willesden. But in 1859 that railway was extended southwards to the rail network across the river, to form the West London Railway, by converting the canal to a railway. A short stub of the waterway was left from the Thames and served flour mills and the Imperial Gas Works, until 1967.

Nevern Square

In 1872, Lord Kensington's surveyor, Martin Stutely laid out a grid of roads south of Cromwell Road. Building commenced with Longridge Road in the Italianate style using stock/gault brick and varying amounts of stucco, mostly completed by 1881.

By then fashion had moved on, so Nevern Square and some houses surrounding it built between 1880 and 1886 were built in a style known as "Domestic Revival", which harks back

to the architecture of earlier English and Flemish houses, in red and yellow brick with cut and moulded red brick details, and delicately patterned iron railings and balconies. Despite this outward change in appearance, the houses are of similar size and accommodation with similar shared features such as sash windows, projecting porches, closet wings and roofs hidden behind parapets.

A great merit of the square is its uniformity of style and materials. The private garden is about three-quarters of an acre in size. There are several magnificent old plane trees and four Victorian wrought iron gates flanked by decorative piers.

for more about Earl's Court visit 51e

