

This is an urban city walk, quieter than popular Chiswick Mall with lots of interest

-  Recommended route 8 km (south bank)
 -  Alternative via Chelsea Harbour 9 km
 -  North bank route 7.6 km
- 52** intersecting walk

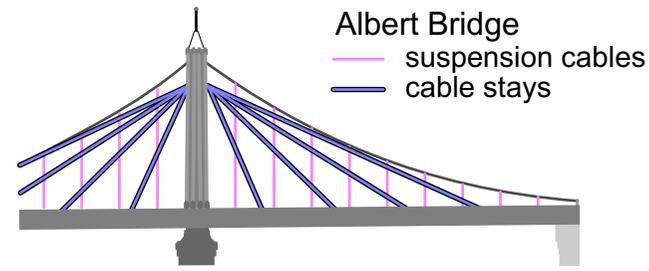
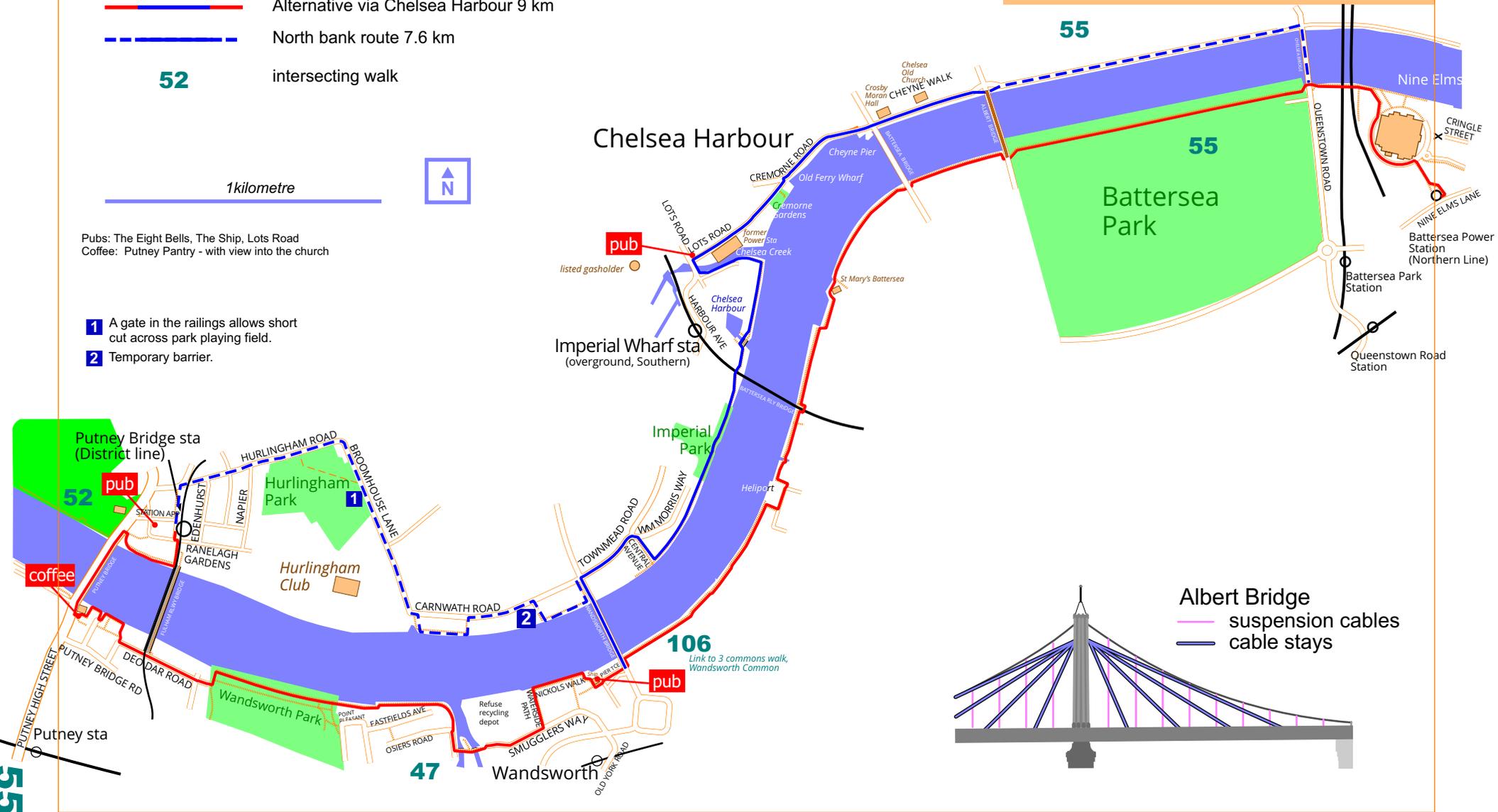
1kilometre



Pubs: The Eight Bells, The Ship, Lots Road
Coffee: Putney Pantry - with view into the church

- 1** A gate in the railings allows short cut across park playing field.
- 2** Temporary barrier.

From Putney bridge to Battersea Power Station



Thames Path

This walk is a favourite of ours and is part of the Thames Path. The Path follows the river Thames for 185.2 miles (298 km) as it meanders from its source in the Cotswolds through several rural counties and through London as far as Woolwich. For an overview of the Thames in London visit

www.tonero.me.uk/thamesoverview.htm

The River

The River Thames is 215 miles (346 km) long, the longest river entirely in England and the second-longest in Britain. The Thames itself provides two-thirds of London's drinking water. It is tidal up as far as the lock at Teddington and for the whole stretch of this walk. High tide reaches Putney about 30 minutes later than London Bridge. With rising tide, the Thames flows upriver.

Putney Bridge

The first bridge of any kind between the two parishes of Fulham and Putney was built during the Civil War, after the Battle of Brentford in 1642, when the Parliamentary forces built a bridge of boats between Fulham and Putney. The current stone bridge was designed by Joseph Bazalgette and constructed in 1886. On the north side is the Bishop of London's Fulham Palace and All Saints Church, Fulham.

Thames South Bank

St Mary's Putney

On the south side is St Mary's Putney. The parts of the medieval church which survive today are

the tower, some of the nave arcading (mid-15th century) and the Bishop West Chapel, built in the early 16th century by Putney resident, Nicholas West.

The Victorians substantially rebuilt and enlarged the church in 1836; it then featured an east facing altar, galleries on three sides and box pews.

In 1973 an arson attack gutted much of the church. Rebuilding was not completed until 1982.

The church is now entered via the cafe in the adjacent Brewer Building to the south, constructed in 2005; the font stands on this new axis with congregational seating beyond and the altar platform in the former north aisle.

Douglas Warehouse

The Boathouse pub is in Douglas Wharf, premises originally constructed for William Douglas & Sons. The three wharf-side buildings had a railway line at the rear running to a timber yard. A crane remains as a decorative item.

By 1962, Douglas had outgrown its premises and re-located to a new factory in Basingstoke. At that time they produced refrigeration compressors, cold stores for factories and ports, chilled water and glycol plants and plants to chill and freeze all kinds of meat and foodstuffs, plant used for the conversion of inedible residues (including feathers) into feed meals, fertilisers and tallows, margarine, lard and shortening plants for the bakery, biscuit, flour and confectionery trades, chocolate,

glucose, syrup, malt extract and edible oil storage and distribution plants.

Wandsworth Park

Wandsworth Park is a Grade II listed urban park. It is 8 hectares in size and is home to over 350 trees of many different species. Putney Sculpture Trail is in the park, with two sculptures by Alan Thornhill. Originally allotments, the land was purchased in 1898 by London County Council, Wandsworth District Board, and by public subscription. The park plans were made by Lt. Col. J. J. Sexby, a horticulturist and the first Parks Superintendent for the LCC. It has a fine avenue of trees along the river.

It opened in 1903 'for the use and enjoyment of the people of London for ever'. The site has remained relatively unaltered, a shelter and public convenience being added in 1901 and a bowling green pavilion and two tennis courts c 1920. A new riverside terrace opened in 2019 on the north west corner of the park, formerly a disused area.

River Wandle

Rising in the Surrey Hills and meandering through south-west London to the Thames at Wandsworth, the river Wandle once supported the highest density of water mills of any English river, providing resources for local industry. In Victorian times, the Wandle was one of the hardest-working rivers in the world, with 90 mills along its 11-mile length. Pure and clear, the water was ideally suited for the bleaching and printing of high quality fabrics, designed

and retailed by famous names like William Morris and Arthur Liberty.

The Wandle Trail forms two walks in this collection, walks 46 and 47.

Plantation Wharf

This 1980/90s development is on the site of a former sugar refinery. The recent debates about slavery mean that many are arguing for a change in names.

Edmiston Heliport

The heliport was built by W. & C. French and opened in 1959. The heliport, once owned by Westland and then Harrods, makes use of a jetty to provide a helipad for take-off and landing, and has onshore parking for three to four aircraft, depending upon their size. The heliport operates between 08:00 and 21:00 although flights are permitted between 07:00 and 23:00.

Edmiston, luxury superyacht brokers, have taken over the title sponsorship of the heliport with a restyling of the interior & exterior areas as well as repainting the helicopter landing apron.

St Mary's, Battersea

The existing elegant classical galleried building completed in 1776 is well worth visiting. An original 1611 bible is on display.

The artist, engraver and poet William Blake was married to Catherine Boucher in the church in 1782.

It is said that Turner painted some of his river-scape studies of light from the vestry window. He lived in a terrace house across the river in Chelsea, which can be seen from the

churchyard, and was rowed over each day by his servant in order that he might paint. 'Turner's Chair', in which he sat to paint, now sits under the pulpit and is used by the clergy during celebrations of the Eucharist in the side chapel. The window contains an early self-portrait of Turner set against a drawing of the West end of the church.

Albion Riverside

This high-end residential development between Albert and Battersea Bridges was completed in 2003 for client Hutchison Whampoa Property; it was designed by Foster and Partners in a high-tech modernist style to with an unusual asymmetrical crescent plan. The architect's own office, built in 1990, is immediately alongside to the east. The Royal College of Art is just behind.

Albert Bridge

This bridge really is special, opened in 1873 and, although strengthened, never replaced. Designed by Rowland Mason Ordish of Messrs Ordish and Le Feuvre as part suspension and part cable-stayed, it was taken over by the Metropolitan Board of Works and strengthened by J Bazalgette. The iron and steel work was supplied by the Britannia Ironworks of Derby. Further extensive strengthening work was carried out in 1972-3, including the installation of two additional circular piers connected by a transverse steel beam beneath the middle of the bridge.

The elaborate Gothic style towers consist of a central cast-iron cylinder set on a base, with an

eight-point star plan, each cylinder being surrounded by eight colonnettes. The tower is capped by a lantern, containing the housing for the suspension cable, and topped by a finial. The four original toll booths are retained.

Battersea Park & Power Station

See walk 55 for descriptions.

Thames North Bank

Hurlingham Club

Situated in 42 acres of landscaped grounds, The Hurlingham Club is recognised as one of the world's premier private member clubs. Since its opening in 1869, The Hurlingham Club's croquet and tennis lawns, botanical gardens and stately Georgian Clubhouse – regarded as the birthplace of polo – have made it a sought-after destination for exclusive sporting and social activities.

A Gun Club was formed in 1860 at the Hornsey Wood Tavern, which stood in what today is Finsbury Park. The creation of the park in 1867 forced a relocation and the club received the permission of Richard Naylor to promote its live pigeon shooting at his Hurlingham estate. The next step was the formation of the Hurlingham Club for this purpose and "as an agreeable country resort". The club leased the estate from Naylor in 1869 and in 1874 acquired the land outright. The pigeon today forms part of the club's crest.

In 1942, about 9 acres of the polo ground were leased to Fulham Borough Council as allotments. In 1951 this land, and the pony stables, were then bought by the LCC for use

as a public park.

Cremorne Gardens

Until the 18th century, the land on which Chelsea Harbour is now built was no more than peaceful water meadows.

Then a few large, gracious, riverside mansions were built nearby, mostly long since demolished, but Hurlingham House (see above) survived. Chelsea Farm in nearly 10 acres of land from the Kings Road down to the river was the elegant residence of the Countess of Huntingdon, a great grand-daughter of William Penn. Inherited by Thomas Dawson, Lord Cremorne had the house enlarged and renamed after himself.

In 1831, Charles Random De Berenger, bought the house and turned it first into a sports club and then opened Cremorne Pleasure Gardens. Entertainment included concerts, fireworks, balloon ascents and galas. Opened in 1845 it closed down in 1877.

Rows of terraced housing were laid out inland from 1870 onwards, and after closing, the gardens were sold and built over.

The wrought-iron gateway which stood at the King's Road end of the original gardens was incorporated into the riverside park when it was landscaped in 1981-2

Chelsea Creek

Counter's Creek ran south from Kensal Green to join the Thames west of Battersea Bridge. Canals being the rage, 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 and it became a great success.

A short stub of waterway remained, from Kings Road to the Thames, used by businesses and wharves along its banks, its principal customers being flour mills and the Imperial Gas Works at Sands End, (on the Sandford Manor estate) then later the power station. Chelsea Basin was built in the 1830's and provided a harbour for barges carrying coals. In its industrial heyday, the basin had 15 lines of railway sidings and a scrap metal yard. The last coal barge discharged its cargo to the Lots Road power station in 1960.

On closure of the gas works the area declined and became derelict.

Lots Road Power Station

On the north bank of the creek, the power station, designed by James Russell Chapman, was built to feed Yerkes's underground network - the UERL - and opened in 1904. Derelict since 2002, It is being transformed into Powerhouse, a luxury residential complex.

Chelsea Harbour

Development of Chelsea Basin, the 18 acre site which eventually became Chelsea Harbour was delayed by a threatened large road scheme. Once this was abandoned, architects

for the developers were able to approach the owners of the site – the BR Property Board. They decided to hold a 'design and bid' competition which was thrown open to firms selected from an international list in 1985. Moxley & Jenner, backed by developers P&O, were declared the winners. Maximum use of the existing harbour was made and inspiration was found from Honfleur. By April 1986, the first concrete was being poured and two and a half years after construction started, Chelsea Harbour was all but completed.

The remaining part of the 260-acre industrial district located between the King's Road in Chelsea and the Thames, referred to as Chelsea Riverside, was a largely overlooked until 2009 when St George launched the Imperial Wharf development and the station by the same name.

Development is ongoing. The area around the former gasholders is to be high density and due to open in 2036. One gasholder is listed and thus preserved and is believed to be the oldest remaining in the world.

Cremorne Bridge

The bridge was designed by William Baker, chief engineer of the London and North Western Railway, and was opened in 1863. With its elegant lattice structure, the bridge was declared Grade II* in 2008, to protect to preserve its special character from unsympathetic development.

Old Chelsea

See walk 55 for details of Old Chelsea