

**THAMES WALK No.1  
Woolwich to Greenwich  
Saturday 29 September 2012**

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This walk will be led by Reinalt Vaughan-Williams

The Thames Path is a National Trail, opened in 1996, following the length of the River Thames from its source near Kemble in Gloucestershire to the Thames Barrier. It is about 184 miles long.

All the guide books take you the easy way downhill from the source of the Thames to the Thames Barrier. REMS is taking you the hard way uphill from Woolwich until you've had enough. The source of the Thames is 105 m higher than the mouth. This varies depending on the tide and where you think the source is.

This first walk runs from Woolwich Arsenal to Greenwich. On the way we pass the Thames Barrier, the Millennium Dome now known as the O2 Arena, Greenwich Power Station, Trinity Hospital, the Royal Naval College and the Cutty Sark. Across the river, you see the offices at Canary Wharf from various angles. Along with the interesting buildings comes a lot of grot in the form of derelict factories and heaps of gravel topped with earth movers. The former are evidence of the decline of our industries and I think of the latter as grown up men's sandcastles.

There are several well known pubs along the route including the Anchor and Hope, the Pilot Inn and the Trafalgar Tavern and there are toilets at other places on the way.

We shall have lunch at the Pilot Inn, which is at one end of the "unexpectedly charming little terrace of Ceylon Place". Ann and I have a particular affection for this pub. When we attempted to walk this section of the path in the late 1990s, we reached this area in the dark and found ourselves directed through a huge muddy building site with notices warning us of deep holes and having to avoid large lorries and earth movers. We could see lights in the distance and headed for them. It turned out to be the Pilot Inn, which made us very welcome and rang for a taxi to get us out of the area. They've filled the holes in and got rid of the lorries and the site is now a pleasant grassy area lined with young trees.

At Woolwich Arsenal, a sign claims that it is 6 miles to Greenwich. This won't take account of temporary detours. After lunch, you have a choice of walking round the Dome peninsula or continuing across it in front of the Dome (I'll give directions). The former will add 1 or 2 miles to the walk. I don't know which route is 6 miles long.

**GETTING THERE** The nearest station is Woolwich Arsenal, which is served by trains from London Bridge, which run every 5 minutes and take 21 minutes and the DLR from Stratford and Canning Town, which runs every 10 minutes and takes 12 minutes from Canning Town. (This is a longer but more interesting route.) **Please do check train times before you leave.** From the Woolwich Arsenal station, turn right and walk down New Road, cross the main road at the lights, turn left and into Woolwich Arsenal, which is now an attractive area mainly filled with blocks of flats and wide pedestrian ways.

**MEET** from 10:30 onwards in the Dial Arch pub, which you will see straight ahead inside Woolwich Arsenal for refreshments and toilets. The walk will start at 11:00.

**REFRESHMENTS** may be had in many places in Greenwich. It will be very crowded and touristy. If I have some refreshments at the end of the walk, I might sit outside the Trafalgar Tavern with its fine view of the river.

**LATE ARRIVALS** Phone Reinalt to find out where we are. If you are late, it will be better to get off at Woolwich Dockyard and walk down to the river, looking out for the Thames Path signs, which may not be beside the river at this point.

**GETTING BACK** Greenwich station is served by trains to London Bridge and the DLR to Stratford and London.

**CONTACTS** Before the meeting John Belling [john.a.belling.secrems@gmail.com](mailto:john.a.belling.secrems@gmail.com) 07986 379935

On the morning only - Reinalt 07758 085741

**COSTS** £3 each. All refreshments at cost.

