Green Chain Walk

Section 2 of 11
Erith Riverside to Bostall Woods

Section start: Erith Riverside (Riverside Gardens)
Nearest stations to start: Erith

Section finish: Bostall Woods
Nearest stations to finish: Bostall Hill / Longleigh Lane bus route 99, for Erith or Plumstead

Section distance: 3.4 miles (5.5 kilometres)

Introduction

Enjoy a panoramic view of the Thames estuary at Erith before heading up to high climes at Bostall Woods and London's hidden heathland. The section starts at Erith Riverside, once a popular waterside resort, with yachting and steamers during the 19th Century until the expansion of industry overtook the resort. Looking across the Thames from the waterfront there are views of Rainham and Wennington marshes on the north bank.
To reach the start of section two from Erith station, follow the road from the station under the main road, head for Stonewood Road where you will find Riverside Gardens ahead.

Either cross West Street and turn left to join the Thames Path, continuing for 650 metres before heading left away from the river down Corinthian Manorway, then bearing left into West Street (opposite St. John the Baptist’s Church). Alternatively, turn left and walk along West Street to the church.

Cross West Street and follow Jessett Close bearing left pass the church (with the church on the right) and cross the footbridge over the railway. Bear left along Pembroke Road then right, along Valley Road into Franks Park.

Follow the marker posts, bearing left to the Green Chain signpost. Turn right to eventually leave the park to follow along Halt Robin Road.

Cross Lower Park Road and continue along Halt Robin Road. Cross Picardy Road and turn right into Upper Abbey Road, following it to Heron Hill. Turn right and left past the pub into Leather Bottle Lane.
Turn left into Lesnes Abbey Woods. Follow the markers, left up the hill and right at the crossing. Pass the tumulus (a mound of earth and stones), turn right and follow downhill. Cross the main track then left and right to the signpost.

**Did you know?**
Lesnes Abbey Woods, sometimes known as Abbey Wood, is an area of ancient woodland. The most unusual feature of the woods is the startling sight in spring of carpets of wild daffodils. Their presence indicates that these woods are ancient, for they are a species which flourishes only in areas which have been woodland for centuries.

Follow the marker posts up through the woods, you will pass the remains of Lesnes Abbey on the right which make an interesting diversion. With the remains behind you, turn right to reach and cross over New Road where you will re-enter the woods. Very soon, turn left to follow the marker posts up to the pond and continue.

Follow the path around the pond to the far side and then turn left towards Hurst Lane. At Hurst Lane, turn right and then take the next left, still Hurst Lane, through the small private housing estate. Follow the road as it bends to the right and then meets, Knee Hill. Cross over Knee Hill at the traffic lights turning right along the narrow footpath and immediately left to take the lane leading into Bostall Heath, soon after, take a sharp left and head through the woodland.
At Bostall Hill road, turn right then after 60 metres left to cross the road. Follow the path around the eastern edge of the cricket field and cross Longleigh Lane to Bostall Woods at the Green Chain signpost where this section ends.

If you are finishing your walk here the nearest bus stops are on Bostall Hill. From the car park on Longleigh Lane turn right and right again at Bostall Hill. On this side of the road bus route 99 will take you to Plumstead station, or the stop opposite bus 99 back to Erith station.

Did you know?
Bostall meaning 'woody' is on top of sand hills with views over the Thames and marshes. Robert Bloomfield wrote of these "Brown heaths that upward rise and overlook the winding Thames". Bostall Heath was one of the wastes of the Manor of Plumstead. In 1866 the Lords of the Manor enclosed the whole of the Heath but this act was successfully contested in the courts.