Introduction

Visit the world’s largest movable flood barrier before heading up to London's finest Jacobean mansion and a secret castle in the woods! The Thames Barrier was built to save London from disastrous flooding and opened in 1984. The Barrier spans a third of a mile across the Thames and consists of 10 separate movable steel gates built side by side. Severndroog Castle at the end of the walk is not actually a true castle, but a summerhouse erected in 1784 as a memorial to Sir William James of Eltham Park. It commemorates his exploits in the East Indies, including the conquest of the Castle of Severndroog on the coast of Malabar.
Directions

To get to the start of this walk from Charlton station, turn left out of the station, cross Woolwich Road and head along Anchor and Hope Lane. At the roundabout you need to continue ahead on Anchor and Hope Lane, but please use the pedestrian crossing lights, which are left at the roundabout. When you get to the river turn right for the Thames Barrier.

Alternatively use bus routes 161, 177, 180 and 472 and get off at the Royal Greenwich University Technical College.

The Green Chain footpath can be found by the pedestrian crossing traffic lights.

From the southern riverside adjacent to the Thames Barrier, look for the Green Chain signpost. Cross the embankment and pass the coach park, crossing two roads following the marker posts to enter the Barrier Gardens. Walk through the gardens to Woolwich Road.

Cross the road and enter Maryon Park, the walk divides at this point.

For Maryon Park, turn left and then right at the 'Circle of stones'. Pass the playground on your right and on to the Green Chain signpost. Follow the marker posts round to the right and through the park. Turn right to climb the steps to Thorntree Road.

To avoid the steps turn left and follow the path towards Maryon Road, turn right along Maryon Road then right up Woodland Terrace to Thorntree Road.

Or for Gilbert’s Pit, turn right and then bear left. Just after the metal fencing turn left and climb the steps to the marker post, continue up the steps for extensive views of the Barrier and east London. Then to continue, turn right and follow the path, eventually bearing right to follow around the edge of the meadow and through a gate into Thorntree Road.

From either route cross Thorntree Road and follow the signs into Maryon Wilson Park. Follow the marker posts to the Green Chain signpost where the routes join. Continue on to Charlton Park Road.

Did you know?

Charlton is one of the few inner London communities to have retained its village features. Referred to in the Domesday Book, the name Charlton means the 'peasants farmstead'. Charlton House is one of the best examples of Jacobean architecture in the country and the finest in London. The house is of red brick with stone dressing and in plan follows the letter 'E'. The interior contains a great hall, chapel, state dining room, saloon and gallery.
At Charlton Park Road, turn right and cross the road at the bollards. Enter Charlton Park and follow the path to the Green Chain signpost. **Section 4A starts at this point.** Turn right, follow the path to the end and turn left.

Follow the path almost to the end and then turn left following the marker posts alongside the railings. Leave the park at the gate leading into Charlton Park Lane. Turn right, cross Canberra Road at the mini roundabout and left. Follow Inigo Jones Road, cross Prince Henry Road and enter Hornfair Park.

Turn left around the play area, cross Hornfair Park then left into a narrow path. Bear right through the gate and continue to Baker Road. Turn left and shortly bear right to follow the path across Woolwich Common.

Head towards the former Royal Military Academy then turn right where the paths cross. Shortly bear left towards the Green Chain signpost on Academy Road.

**Did you know?**

The Royal Military Academy began in the Arsenal in 1721 but was moved to the East side of the Common in 1808. The Academy was established under the Broad of Ordnance 'for instructing and edifying of young gentlemen intended for the office of engineers...they are taught in it the principles and art of fortification and every branch of military science relating to it, besides the French and Latin tongues, writing, fencing and drawing'.
Bear right, along Academy Road, cross it and Shooters Hill at the traffic lights. Turn left along Shooters Hill and bear right to enter Eltham Common.

Cross Eltham Common and follow the markers into Castle Wood. Follow the paths as far as the small car park. Turn right and follow the path, bearing right to Severndroog Castle or straight ahead to avoid the steps rejoining the main route in Jack Wood.

From the castle, descend the steps to a formal garden then left through Jack Wood, turn right into another garden area. Keep the red brick structure to your left and shortly after the gardens turn right, through the woodland to the top of Oxleas Meadows.

From the Green Chain signpost alongside the pavilion follow the signposts to Oxleas Wood where this section ends.

Sections three and four also finish here and Section six starts at this point.

If you are finishing here, the nearest bus stops are on Shooters Hill road. Walk back down the path you came up and where the Green Chain Walk turns right, carry on ahead to the main road. Here you can get bus route 89 to Blackheath Rail Station or bus route 486 to Woolwich Arsenal Rail and DLR station. On the opposite side of the road you can get buses to Welling Rail Station.

For Falconwood station; from the Green Chain signpost in the middle of Oxleas Wood follow the marker posts south, turning left to emerge at the junction of Welling Way and Rochester Way. Cross over and head south on Rochester Way to the station.