Section distance: 2.4 miles (3.9 kilometres)

Introduction

The pulse of urban London quickens again as you begin section eight. Hugging the South Bank, it links no less than eight landmark bridges and is a hub of cultural centres, including the Globe Theatre, South Bank Centre, Tate Modern and several famous museums.

The route continues to follow the same route as the Thames Path and now also joins the original route of the Jubilee Walkway, as well as The Queen's Walk, which was fully opened in 1994. It is now possible to walk from Tower Bridge to Lambeth, only leaving the riverside briefly at Southwark.

After passing through a number of riverside boroughs, the walker is now in a heavily built-up part of London, with many magnificent landmarks in view. The Thames is crossed by numerous bridges.

As you walk you will be able to enjoy the skyline of London which has changed dramatically in the last half century, and continues to change from year to year, particularly along this section of the Thames.

Look out for the Jubilee Greenway discs in the pavement as you go round.
Directions

1. Starting at Tower Bridge (on the south side of the Thames, with Tower Bridge itself on the right), walk along the promenade which is The Queen's Walk towards the peculiar egg-shaped glass building - this is City Hall, home of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly.

Pass this, as well as The Scoop at More London on the left. HMS Belfast is moored in the Thames to the right. Looking behind, there is good view of the Tower of London from here.

Did you know?

The Tower is the oldest and most celebrated fortress in the country. It was a royal palace for five centuries and the home of the Royal Mint at one time. State records were held there, it was the site of the original Royal Observatory, a place for assemblies and treaties, a notorious prison with many famous prisoners, including royalty, and even a zoo (before the exotic animals were transferred to the London Zoo in Regent’s Park in the 1830s). It is now home to the Crown Jewels, one of the most popular displays for the many visitors that come from all over the world.

Continuing westwards pass Southwark Crown Court and Hay's Galleria. Pass along London Bridge City Pier (where there is a Jubilee Walkway panoramic panel).

2. Just before London Bridge it is necessary to make a short inland detour. After the Cottons Centre and the London Bridge Hospital, turn left down a covered walkway away from the riverside, then turn right onto Tooley Street. Look out for the Thames Path signage and the Jubilee Walkway pavement discs as a guide.

Next is Glaziers' Hall (in Montague Close) to the right, and a little further to the left, is Southwark Cathedral.

3. Follow the road round to the left and with the corner of the Cathedral on your left turn, almost immediately, sharply to the right around the corner of an office building. Walk towards a dock where a model of Drake's Golden Hinde is moored. At the riverside by the Old Thameside Inn is another Jubilee Walkway panoramic panel.

Turn left along Clink Street, with The Old Thameside Inn and other buildings on the right, between you and the river. Pass the Clink Prison Museum. Bear round to the right past a couple of eateries, then turn left along the riverside past The Anchor Bankside pub.
Continue on to Southwark Bridge, where the Financial Times Building stands on the left. Next is Shakespeare's Globe. The Bankside Gates, opened in October 1999, under the auspices of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths, adjoin Shakespeare's Globe, next to which is Provos's Lodge (all on the left).

Did you know?
Shakespeare's Globe dates back to the 1500s. William Shakespeare moved to Southwark in 1599, having become a shareholder in the theatre in 1598 and staged many plays here. In 1613 during a production of his Henry VIII, the theatre was burnt down. It was rebuilt and Shakespeare may have staged some more plays here. But in 1642 all theatres and places of entertainment were closed, and it was demolished in 1644. American actor and director Sam Wanamaker campaigned for many years for the Globe Theatre to be rebuilt. It re-opened in 1997.

Further along is the Tate Modern, directly opposite Millennium Bridge.

Did you know?
The London Millennium Footbridge is a pedestrian-only steel suspension bridge, with a ramp, crossing the Thames, linking Bankside with the City. It was designed by Foster and Partners as a 'blade'-like design and developed in close collaboration with the sculptor Sir Anthony Caro and the engineers Arup. The bridge appears as a thin ribbon of steel by day but at night it is illuminated and gives the impression of a shining blade of light across the river. The bridge alignment is such that a clear view of St. Paul's Cathedral south facade is presented from across the river, framed by the bridge supports, thus providing a scenic view of the cathedral.

Just after the Tate Modern cyclists follow a different route to the end of this section as the path alongside the river is closed to cyclists. Turn left onto Hopton Street after the Tate Modern and then right onto Southwark Street. Turn right onto Blackfriars Road, heading North towards Blackfriars Bridge, but turn left into Upper Ground just before you cross the bridge.

Pass the National Theatre on the right and head under Waterloo Bridge continuing along Belvedere Road. With the London Eye directly to the right, turn left onto Chicheley Street. At the end, turn right onto York Road. To reach the official end point of this section, follow the road around and turn right towards Westminster Bridge where this section ends.

Alternatively, to continue onto section 9, continue ahead onto Lambeth Palace Road towards Lambeth Bridge.

From the Millennium Bridge, continue westwards on the south side of the Thames. Pass under Blackfriars Bridge (named after Blackfriars Monastery), a Dominican priory which once stood nearby. After this comes the pub called Doggett's, with the OXO Tower Wharf shortly after, located on the riverside on your left. The OXO Tower offers refreshment opportunities.

Next are the ITV Tower / The London Studios, and the National Theatre before Waterloo Bridge. Outside the National Film Theatre is the popular South Bank Book Market, where stalls sell a wide range of books at competitive prices. Then you pass the complex of cultural buildings on this exciting area of Bankside with its many buskers and entertainers.

Pass under the Golden Jubilee Bridges - these are the old Hungerford Bridges (the two white footbridges either side of the rail bridge which runs across the Thames towards Charing Cross).

The route opens out near the Jubilee Gardens. On the left is the Silver Jubilee flagpole, behind which is the Shell Centre and then the London Eye.

The former County Hall is on the left, containing the Sealife London Aquarium and The London Dungeon.
Did you know?
County Hall was the headquarters of London County Council and then the Greater London Council. The main building opened in 1922, with the north and south wings following between 1936 and 1939.

Pass under Westminster Bridge in a subway which becomes obvious once you approach the steps. Beside Westminster Bridge, on the left, is the South Bank Lion. This section ends here.

Section nine - South Bank Lion to Buckingham Palace - continues along the Thames.

For public transport at this point, either go up the steps to cross Westminster Bridge to reach Westminster Tube station, or back-track to the London Eye to pick up the clippers, or from Jubilee Gardens turn inland to reach Waterloo Station (Rail and Tube). There are accessible toilets at Waterloo East and at Westminster Station.

This is the end of section eight.