



sole-searching

Although Walk 5 provides some of the easiest walking along the Capital Ring, it's full of interest. You cross two extensive commons, Tooting Bec and Wandsworth, each with a lake and viewing platform. The orient comes to town as you pass a mosque at Wimbledon and a mosque-like pumping station at Streatham. Be prepared for an examination of criminal history as you pass Wandsworth Prison.



Walk 5
»»5

Walk 5. Streatham Common » Wimbledon Park

walk the capital RING

Discover the heart and soul of London on foot...



Walk 5
Streatham Common
» Wimbledon Park
5 1/2 miles, approx. 2 3/4 hours

Walk 4. Crystal Palace Park » Streatham Common

The Capital Ring

1. Woolwich Foot Tunnel » Falconwood
2. Falconwood » Grove Park
3. Grove Park » Crystal Palace Park
4. Crystal Palace Park » Streatham Common
5. Streatham Common » Wimbledon Park
6. Wimbledon Park » Richmond Bridge
7. Richmond Bridge » Osterley Lock
8. Osterley Lock » Greenford
9. Greenford » South Kenton
10. South Kenton » Hendon Park
11. Hendon Park » Highgate
12. Highgate » Stoke Newington
13. Stoke Newington » Hackney Wick
14. Hackney Wick » Beckton District Park
15. Beckton District Park » Woolwich Foot Tunnel

This is Walk 5 of the 15 stage Capital Ring, a 78 mile circular walk devised by the London Walking Forum. It takes you on a fascinating journey through London's parks, riversides, streets and woodlands.

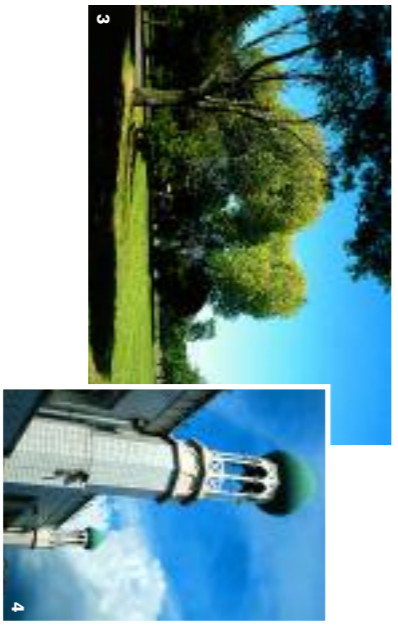
If you have enjoyed this walk you might be interested in the London Loop, a 150 mile circular route in 24 stages taking in the best countryside of the outer London Boroughs. For more information on these and many other walks in London call 0870 240 6094 (national rate), email walking@tfl.gov.uk, or visit Transport for London's Walking Pages on www.tfl.gov.uk/walking.



Streatham Common » Wimbledon Park

WALK THE CAPITAL RING

Discover the heart and soul of London on foot...



Walking conditions and accessibility

Walk 5 is almost entirely level, on a firm surface, with just two short, gentle ascents, and a longer, steeper one approaching Wimbledon Park Station. There are no flights of steps. All the station platforms are reached by flights of steps, except the down platforms at Streatham Common and Wandsworth Common, which have level access.

1. Streatham Pumping Station
2. Flowerbeds in Wandsworth Common
3. Wandsworth Common
4. Wimbledon Mosque
5. Pond and Boardwalk at Wandsworth Common
6. Memorial in Wandsworth Cemetery
7. Swans on the River Wandie



Public Transport Information »

Use the train or bus to get to and from the walk. Stations and bus stops are marked on the map overlaid to help you plan your journey. For further information call 08457 484950 for trains, or 020 7222 1234 for London Underground and buses, or visit the Transport for London website www.tfl.gov.uk

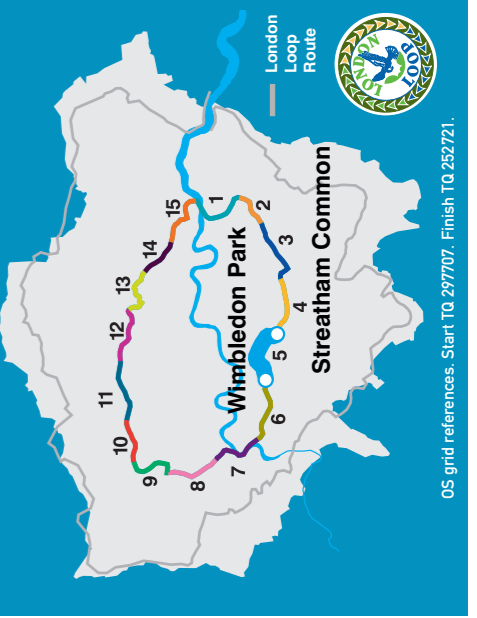
Streatham Common, Balham and Wandsworth Common Stations. Frequent daily services to/from London Bridge, London Victoria and Clapham Junction (no Sunday service between London Bridge and Balham or Wandsworth Common). Also to/from East or West Croydon.

Earlsfield Station. Frequent daily services to/from London Waterloo, Clapham Junction and Wimbledon.

Balham and Wimbledon Park Stations. Frequent daily services between Central London and Balham (Northern Line) and Wimbledon Park (District Line).

The following places are served daily by the bus routes shown. **Streatham Common Station** 60, 118. **Mitcham Lane** 57, 201, 333. **Tooting Bec Road** 249, 319, G1. **Bedford Hill** 315. **Balham High Road** 155, 249, 355. **Nightingale Lane** 319, G1. **Trinity Road** 219. **Garratt Lane** 44, 77, 270. **Durnsford Road** 156.

Capital Ring Route



OS grid references. Start TQ 297707. Finish TQ 252721.

How to enjoy your walk

You can walk all or part of this 5 1/2 mile (9 km) section. There are frequent bus stops and train stations if you need to break off along the route. Remember – leave your car at home! Your route is well marked with the distinctive Big Ben discs and fingersigns, so there is no need for a map or compass. We can't guarantee the weather of course, so an extra sweatshirt or a waterproof may come in handy. There are plenty of places to stop and refresh yourself along the way.

One of the London Strategic Walks

The Capital Ring has earned the coveted Seal of Approval awarded by the London Walking Forum. It is also one of the strategic walking routes, which have been designated by the Mayor of London to set high standards for other trails in the Capital. Funding has been provided by Transport for London and the appropriate boroughs. If you would like further information, if you notice any damage or obstructions, or if you have suggestions to improve the walk, please call 0870 240 6094 (national rate), or email walking@tfl.gov.uk. Full details of these and many other trails in London can be found on TfL's Walking Pages website: www.tfl.gov.uk/walking.



Walk 5

Streatham Common to Wimbledon Park

PICK YOUR WALK

From the start of Walk 5 near Streatham Common Station, it's 5½ miles to Wimbledon Park Station, where Walk 6 starts – in case you're thinking of continuing further. For a shorter walk, from Streatham Common Station it's 2¼ miles to Balham Station, 2¾ miles to Wandsworth Common Station, or 4½ miles to Earlsfield Station.



Italic text refers to a station link or alternative route.

		3 Points of interest
Capital Ring route	Alternative route avoiding steps. Station links and connecting walks	

From Streatham Common Station turn left along the approach road and continue ahead along Estreham Road to the footbridge, where Walk 5 of the Capital Ring starts. Keep ahead beside the railway line. At the bend, turn left through the subway to Potters Lane, then turn right along Conyers Road.

A strange mosque-like building appears on your left – actually, it's Thames Water's Streatham Pumping Station, built in 1888. Keep on past Fairmile Avenue, and look out on your left at number 14 for a stained glass window, which shows a woman watching a departing sailing ship. Cross busy Mitcham Lane with care, if necessary using the refuge to the right. Keep ahead along tree-lined Riggindale Road, passing the hefty, red-brick Streatham Methodist Church, built in 1900. At the end bear left up a footpath on to A214 Tooting Bec Road.

Turn left over the railway then cross at the traffic lights by Aldrington Road. Turn left past the entrance to Tooting Bec Lido.

1 Tooting Bec Lido has one of the largest swimming pools in Europe – a hundred yards long and thirty-three yards wide. It was opened as a conventional open-air pool in 1906, but in 1936 it was rebuilt as a “lido”, which is Italian for beach. It has a large open-air pool and a paddling pool, surrounded by sunbathing areas.

Bear half right along a tarmac footpath on Tooting Bec Common. The strange word Bec comes from St. Mary de Bec in Normandy, whose abbey held this parish during the twelfth century. Halfway across you pass a copse, behind which lies a small lake – a short detour takes you to its viewing platform. *Just before the road, Bedford Hill, you can turn sharp left for refreshments at the park café.* Cross the road and continue ahead across the northern part of the common.

Bear left towards the railway, which is the main line from London to Brighton, built in 1846. In eighty yards at a notice board turn left along an alleyway.

Cross Culverden Road and keep ahead along Fontenoy Road, returning to Bedford Hill. Turn right to cross at the refuge, then turn right and immediately left into Ritherdon Road, following the left-hand pavement. Take the third right, Cloudesdale Road, using the right-hand pavement. At the end, cross Elmfield Road and turn left, passing Balham Leisure Centre then Ravenstone School to Balham High Road.

2 Opposite is Du Cane Court which, despite its rather bland exterior, is one of the most elegant apartment blocks in South London, dating from the art deco period of the 1930s. It has been the home of many celebrities, and was a location for the television series, *Poirot*. Appropriately for a town that had several theatres and cinemas during the early twentieth century, Balham has many other connections with the world of entertainment. Natives include film actress Margaret Rutherford, football pundit Jimmy Hill and sitcom writer John Sullivan, creator of *Citizen Smith* and *Only Fools and Horses*. But it was Peter Sellers who in 1958 immortalised the town in his spoof travelogue, *Balham, gateway to the south*.

Turn right along Balham High Road and cross over at the traffic lights. *For Balham Station keep ahead under the bridge.* As you cross, note Balham's parish church of St. Mary and John the Divine, built in 1808, with its domed baptistry in front. Turn left then immediately right along Balham Park Road.

Cross Boundaries Road and keep ahead for 500 yards to a bend. Turn right along an alleyway leading on to Wandsworth Common.

Follow the railway line through the ticket office of Wandsworth Common Station, then bear left beside the station approach road to St. James's Drive. Cross at the lights to pass the Hope pub, then cross Bellevue Road. Bear half right on to the next part of Wandsworth Common, rejoining the railway line. Soon you pass two ponds, which you can inspect more closely by taking a detour along its over-water boardwalks and viewing platform.

Continue beside the railway to a footbridge, keep ahead then immediately fork left on the third path, heading for the right-hand end of a long brick wall. The cream building to your right, the former Neal's Farmhouse, now contains a cafeteria and toilets, as well as park offices and a nature study centre. Bear left between the fences then keep ahead, between a cricket ground and Dorlcote Road. Just before the end, bear left up a short earth path to Trinity Road. Cross at the traffic lights towards the County Arms pub, then keep ahead along Alma Terrace.

3 Ahead now is the high brick wall of Wandsworth Prison, which was built in 1851 as the Surrey House of Correction. It has had some famous inmates, including Oscar Wilde in 1895, Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs, from 1963 until his notorious escape in 1965, and Derek Bentley, who was wrongfully hanged here in 1953 for the murder of a policeman – the conviction was overturned in 1998.

Turn left along Heathfield Road to a mini-roundabout, then turn right along Magdalen Road. This runs dead straight for three-quarters of a mile, but shortly you can relieve this by turning into Wandsworth Cemetery and following the parallel path to a gate near the end (which is not suitable for wheelchairs). Pass Earlsfield Public Library to reach Garratt Lane, with Earlsfield Station to your right.

Cross ahead at the lights then turn right under the railway bridge to the junction with Penwith Road, where you turn left.

4 Very soon you cross the River Wandle, which used to be famous for trout fishing, and is once again becoming a home for many species of water-loving flora and fauna. It flows from two sources at Waddon, near Croydon, and Carshalton, and enters the Thames at Wandsworth. With a drop of around 200 feet in just ten miles, it is one of the fastest flowing rivers in the London area, and once powered dozens of watermills. These produced all manner of things, not only flour but metal, leather, paper, textiles, snuff and even gunpowder. In the Middle Ages, the river was known as Ledeborne – the loud stream – an apt description for such swift waters. The origin of its present name is something of a mystery, but appears to be connected with Wandsworth. The river is accompanied by the Wandle Trail, which links the Vanguard Way at Croydon to the Thames Path National Trail.

Take the next left, Ravensbury Terrace, then bear right with the road, which becomes Haslemere Avenue as you pass the Haslemere Industrial Estate. Cross Dawlish Avenue and Brooklands Avenue, keeping ahead into Mount Road. Take the next left, Lucien Road, and keep ahead into Durnsford Road Recreation Ground. Follow the tarmac path round to the right, past a school and playground, into Wellington Road. Turn left, then at the end, beside Field Court, turn right along a short alleyway to Durnsford Road.

Turn left to cross at the lights towards Wimbledon Mosque, built in 1977. Turn left along the far side then turn right up Arthur Road. At the top is Wimbledon Park Station, where Walk 5 finishes. *To continue on to Walk 6, stay on the right-hand side and keep ahead past the station.*



Capital Ring Guidebook



A guidebook to the whole Capital Ring, by Colin Saunders, has been published by Aurum Press at £12.99, available from all good booksellers.

As well as a very detailed route description, there are full colour photos by David Sharp, and enlarged Ordnance Survey Explorer maps at 1:16,666 scale show the route, station links and facilities.