

Fulham Society 50th Anniversary Walk

Section 3: West Brompton to the Riverside Studios (2.3 miles)

This section, shown as an **orange line**, starts at West Brompton Station and continues to the Riverside Studios, close to the two Hammersmith Stations. [Click here](#) for the TfL journey planner. There is a more detailed map on the next page. This is an urban walk through a great diversity of residential areas, bypassing a vibrant street market, the prestigious Queen's Club, an interesting and quiet cemetery and a small urban park, before detouring briefly into Hammersmith to end at the fascinating Riverside Studios and one of the best areas to stop for a meal or drink.



24. Exit the station and turn left, over the rail bridge and back into Fulham. Here on the left side once stood the hugely popular Lillie Bridge Athletic Grounds. However, in 1887 there was a sensational riot caused by an apparent gambling scam at a running race. The place was left in ruins after fencing and seating was smashed up and burnt by the angry crowds who had unsuccessfully demanded refunds. It closed soon afterwards.
25. On the other side of Lillie Road, you can see the tall Empress State building. One of London's first skyscrapers, it opened 1962 and was briefly the tallest building in London. Designed as a hotel, but used by the Admiralty and GCHQ and later the Metropolitan Police. It is now being transformed into London's new counter-terrorism and organised crime hub.
26. Continue along Lille Road, crossing onto the north side and passing some elegant Victorian houses planned by Sir John Lillie. One of the houses has a coat of arms over the front door, said to be the work of a Royal plasterer. It is said that this house was a meeting place of the beautiful actress Lily Langtry and the future King Edward VII (and you have just passed the Lillie Langtry pub). Just after the bus stop, turn right onto a path leading to a large Council estate. (Or if you wish, you can first detour to visit the lively North End Road street market, which involves turning left at the mini roundabout ahead. Return here to continue the walk).
27. The pathway leads to the West Kensington & Gibbs Green estates, containing 760 flats. Local residents fiercely opposed a plan to demolish these estates along with the old Earls Court exhibition Centre and replace it all with a vast scheme of 7,500 flats, mainly private with some "affordable" housing. The Lille Square development on Seagrave Road went ahead and the exhibition centre was demolished in 2014 but demolition of the council estates was stopped. The two estates were eventually handed back to the Council and the remaining land was sold by the original developer to Delancey. The residents have still not got control of their estates and the future of both estates and that of the demolished exhibition centre currently remains uncertain.
28. The pathway leads northwards into Thaxton Road and then Aisgill Avenue. As Aisgill Avenue bends westwards and becomes Mund Street, take Gibbs Green Close on the right, northwards. At a T junction turn left, also Gibbs Green Close until you leave the estate to emerge onto Beaumont Crescent. Turn right and cross over to see no 2, where Jamaican born pan African campaigner Marcus Garvey had an office in the 1930s.



29. Cross over the North End Road and continue into Castletown Road. Further up the North End Road was The Grange, a house once occupied by the famous novelist Samuel Richardson and later by the artist Edward Burne-Jones. All that remains today is a Council block bearing the name and a tiny remnant of the old garden, so it is not worth a detour.
30. Back in Castletown Road, this area west of North End Road was named "West Kensington" as a marketing gimmick by the two Victorian developers from Dorset, Messrs Gibbs and Flew, who built 1200 houses here. It was formerly known as "North End", a name preserved in the North End Road which leads to the site of the former North End House. The name West Kensington has stuck and most people do not realise that this area is part of Fulham.
31. Take the first right into Challoner Street and then turn left into Barons Court Road. Look out on the right for no 20 where Mahatma Gandhi lived in 1890 when studying law at University College London. It seems the tube line at the back of the house did not distract him unduly. Take the left fork into Barton Road and walk to the end. As you emerge onto Palliser Road, you will see to your left the gates of Queens Club (although our walk takes us right towards Barons Court Station).
32. Queen's Club, dating from 1886, owes its origins to the local developers Gibbs & Flew who laid out 12 acres of land as the Queen's Club cricket ground. It is the oldest multi-purpose sports ground in the world after taking over from the earlier Prince's Club in Chelsea (which closed in 1888 when the land was taken for development) launching great inter-varsity sporting events in rugby, football and athletics which later transferred to bigger grounds at Twickenham, Wembley and White City. Today it is home to racquet sports, hosting a pre-Wimbledon tennis tournament each summer and being the national headquarters of Real Tennis. The sports shop is open to non-members (ask at the gate).
33. After turning right into Palliser Road, you pass an excellent butcher's shop and ahead is Barons Court tube station. Turn left before the station to go into Margravine Gardens and after a few yards turn left into the gates of Margravine Cemetery.
34. Margravine Cemetery was opened in 1868 and laid out by local architect George Saunders who designed the Gothic style lodges and chapel. Some of the gravestones have been cleared from the 16 acre site to create more open areas and to attract wildlife. There is an impressive Grade II listed Gothic style mausoleum for 18 year old Frederick Harold Young (died 1883) commissioned by his parents and used also for later family members. Most recently restored is the Blake memorial, a Gothic cross erected as a memorial to 13 workers at the Blakes munitions factory in Hammersmith which was bombed eleven days before the end of the war in 1918. There is also a large Grade II listed WWI memorial pillar erected in 1922 for the 227 former staff of Lyons tea rooms who died in the war. It is surrounded by an arc commemorating the company's 242 staff who fell in WWII. The Company was based at the Fulham end of Hammersmith and both memorials were originally located in the company's sports fields, but were relocated first to another company site and then here in 2002. Another monument, cast in Bronze and also Grade II listed (1895), commemorates George Broad who ran a famous foundry nearby, where many famous Victorian statues were cast, including Eros

at Piccadilly Circus. Exit the cemetery through the wonderful Victorian gates onto Margravine Road, turn right and then left into St Dunstan's Road. On your left is Charing Cross Hospital.

35. Charing Cross Hospital, a teaching hospital run by Imperial College, was originally located at Charing Cross in the Strand, moving here in 1973. The building was designed by Ralph Tubbs, most famous for his huge "Dome of Discovery" building for the 1951 Festival of Britain. Ralph had collaborated with famous brutalist architect Erno Goldfinger on his own house in Hampstead. The first woman to be admitted to the Charing Cross Medical School in 1914 was Edith Summerskill, later MP for Fulham. Before Charing Cross Hospital moved here, there was a huge Italianate Union workhouse on the site, built in 1850 as a result of the recent Poor Law legislation requiring amalgamation of smaller workhouses. In the 1850s there were 550 "inmates", many of whom required medical attention. This led to an infirmary being added which in time evolved to become a general public hospital, with an operating theatre added in 1906 and it was then used as a military hospital in the first world war. The hospital and workhouse buildings were demolished in 1966 to make way for the new Charing Cross building, meeting with "bitter indignation" locally. (A feeling also engendered by recent plans to demolish and reorganise the hospital). When you reach Fulham Palace Road, cross at the lights into Winslow Road and very soon on the right take the entrance to Frank Banfield Park.
36. Frank Banfield Park. This small but pleasant park was created in the 1970s. Walk across, bearing slightly left to leave on Chancellor's Road near the junction with Distillery Road and head towards the river. Turn right into Crisp Road, to leave Fulham and enter Hammersmith.
37. Crisp Road commemorates Sir Nicholas Crisp, a 17th century brick maker who invested his profits in early Colonial trade to Guinea in West Africa, including the slave trade. He also made the glass beads used in the trade. A prominent Royalist supporter of King Charles II during the Civil War, he lived in Brandenburgh House nearby (long since demolished) and is buried in St Paul's Church Hammersmith. At the top of Crisp Road, turn right if you wish to end your walk at Hammersmith Tube station. To continue the walk, turn left instead into Queen Caroline Street and bear left at the river, where you will find the recently redeveloped Riverside Studios.