

City of Westminster Gaslights (Lancaster Gate to Embankment)		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
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City of Westminster Gaslights (Lancaster Gate to Embankment)

Start: Lancaster Gate Underground

Finish: Embankment Underground

Length: 12.5 km (7.8 mi). **Cumulative ascent/descent:** 39/54m.

Toughness: 1 out of 10

Time: 3 hours walking time.

Transport: Lancaster Gate is a stop on the Central Line and a short walk from Paddington Mainline Station. Embankment is a stop on the District and Circle Lines as well as the Northern (Charing Cross Branch) and Bakerloo Lines and very close to Charing Cross Mainline Station. St. James's Park is a stop on the District and Circle Lines. All stations as well as the whole route are within Zone 1.

Walk Notes:

In 1807, London was the first city in the world to light its streets by gas, which was much cheaper and produced brighter lights than the previously used candles or oil lamps. More than 200 years later, there are still about 1,300 gas-fuelled street lights left, bathing their surroundings in a markedly warmer, yellow glow than electric lights. About 270 of those are in the City of Westminster, preserved after a campaign to stop the Council from replacing them all on cost grounds.

This meandering route through the Royal Parks of the West End, St. James's, Westminster, Whitehall, Covent Garden, St. Giles and the Embankment passes a fair few of those gaslights, while leading through parks, squares and courtyards and along alleyways, secret passages, lanes, paths and (mainly) residential streets, while also passing numerous well-known and not so well-known sites of historical, architectural or political interest, many of which will be new even to born Londoners.

The route is rewarding in light as well as in darkness, as some of the parks and alleyways are closed at night, while some of the gaslights in those areas are on even during the day.

Walk Options:

Dropout points are aplenty along the route at tube or mainline stations or at bus stops.

The route can conveniently be split into two around the halfway stage at St. James's Park Underground, which is just off-route and has several pubs nearby:

- Lancaster Gate to St. James's Park measures 6.2 km/3.9 mi;
- St. James's Park to Embankment measures 6.8 km/4.3 mi.

For a start from St. James's Park: leave through the Broadway exit (also signed 'Park and Broadway') and *turn left* out of the building to a road (Petty France) and cross it a little to the left at a pedestrian crossing. *Turn right* past The Old Star pub and continue along Broadway. In 90 continue along Tothill Street. In 40m *turn left* up Dartmouth Street and in 100m, by the Two Chairmen pub, *turn right* along the pedestrianised Lewisham Street. Pick up the directions at the asterisk *).

Evening Closures – some of the parks, courtyards and alleys get locked at night. Diversions are described.

Refreshments:

There is **no shortage** of pubs, cafés, restaurants, takeouts and bistros on the route and at the end of it.

Notes:

Gaslights in London

The first gas lamp was created in 1792 by Scotsman William Murdoch for his house in Redruth, Cornwall. The first recorded street lighting fuelled by gas was installed in 1806 on parts of a street in Salford near Manchester for a mill owner. In London, German-born F.A. Winzer (anglicised to Winsor) demonstrated it in Pall Mall, on 28 January 1807. On June 4th 1807, a line of gaslights was illuminated to celebrate the birthday of King George III, each fed with pipes made from the up-cycled barrels of obsolete muskets.

In 1812, the Gas Light and Coke Company of Horseferry Road, Westminster became the world's first gas company, supplying the Cities of London and Westminster and the Borough of Southwark.

On 31 December 1813, Westminster Bridge was lit by gas-fuelled street lamps.

Gaslight was up to 75% cheaper than oil lamps or candles, so that by 1859 gas lighting was found all over Britain and close to a thousand gasworks had sprung up to meet demand. Indoors, the brighter light enabled people to read more easily and for longer, which helped to stimulate literacy and learning.

Electric lamps had been invented as early as 1806, but it took to 1878 for the first electric street lights to appear (along the Embankment and near Holborn Viaduct). It quickly became more popular though and replaced most gaslights. In 1880, Electric Avenue in Brixton, became the first street fully lit by electricity.

There are around 1,300 gas-fuelled street lamps left in London, maintained by the London Lamplighters, from Richmond Bridge to Bromley-by-Bow, of which about 270 are in the City of Westminster. Most of the old lamps are marked with the crest of the monarch in the year it was erected.

Historically, each light was lit at night and extinguished in the morning with the help of a long brass pole.

Now, the lamps are visited every 2 weeks to adjust their timers, polish the glass and service the mantles. Gas lanterns vary in type, size, shape and materials, number of mantles, clock timers, pilot light or electric ignition. Mantles are teardrop-shaped elements looking like small electric light bulbs. In reality they are bell-shaped, silk mesh casings coated in lime-oxide, that give the lamps their charming warm glow. Lamps usually have two, four or six mantles – but can have as many as 10 or 12. Different mantle types produce different light. Each lamp is fitted with a regulator to control the gas pressure: if the pressure is too high, the efficacy and life of the mantle is reduced and if the pressure is too low, they give less light.

<https://thelondongasketeers.com/a-brief-history> <https://www.thehistoryoflondon.co.uk/gas-lamps/>

River Westbourne and Tyburn Brook

The River Westbourne (or Kilburn, its original name – after 'Cye Bourne' – royal stream) rises on the Hampstead hills (as well as the Tyburn and the Fleet) and in Brondesbury Park and flows southwards through Kilburn, Bayswater, Kensington Gardens/Hyde Park and Chelsea before discharging into Inner London's combined sewer system, with only exceptional discharges joining the Thames. It runs as a culvert for most of its route to the Thames, but uses the natural valley created by the Westbourne. In the 15th century, conduits were laid to carry water from the Westbourne into the City of London for drinking, and in 1730 the Serpentine Lake in Hyde Park was formed by damming the river, although strictly speaking, the lake is called the Long Water west of the Serpentine Bridge (i.e. in Kensington Gardens) and Serpentine east of it (i.e. in Hyde Park). As early as 1834 though, the river became too polluted and since then the lake relies on water sourced from cleaner sources: initially from the Thames, now from three boreholes drilled into the Upper Chalk. The river meanwhile is diverted in a culvert to the east of the lake.

The Tyburn Brook (not to be confused with the River Tyburn which ran further east) joins it in Hyde Park. The weir sluice at the eastern end of the Serpentine feeds an artificial waterfall, with some of the water pumped back into the lake, the rest following the original course of the Westbourne and then joining its sewer. From there it turns south, where it was crossed by the 'Knight's Bridge', which carried one of the old roads to the west across the river. It continues east of modern day Sloane Street and forms the boundary between the City of Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

At Sloane Square tube station, the storm drain pipe of the river can be seen running above the platforms near the escalators. The storm outfall into The Thames can be seen at medium to low tide, about 270m west of Chelsea Bridge.

River Tyburn

The River Tyburn was 11 km long and rose on the Hampstead hills (as well as the Westbourne and the Fleet), flowing southwards through modern day Regent's Park, Marylebone (i.e. St.-Mary-le-Bourne), Mayfair, St James's and Green Park, then under the site of Buckingham Palace before splitting into distributaries through the marshland that met the Thames at four sites in two pairs either side of Thorney Island, on which Westminster Abbey was built: one near modern day Whitehall Stairs, the other by Thorney Street, between Millbank Tower and Thames House.

In the 13th century, conduits were laid to carry water from the Tyburn into the City of London for drinking, but no later than the 17th century, the watercourse south of Buckingham Palace had probably dried up due to too much abstraction and the remaining flow had been diverted to run south through Pimlico as an (initially open) sewer. The river is now fully culverted and its successor sewers emulate its main courses.

Related trivia:

- Oxford Street and Park Lane used to be called Tyburn Road and Lane respectively;
- At Baker Street Station, the pipe carrying the Tyburn can be seen from the westerly end of the Circle and Hammersmith & City Line platforms, in the tunnel towards Edgware Road station.

WALK DIRECTIONS

From **Lancaster Gate** Underground Station, facing **Bayswater Road** with **Kensington Gardens** beyond it and the culverted and covered course of the **River Westbourne** just to the right, *turn left* along the pavement. In 50m *fork left* with the pavement to the left of a side road and in 25m *turn right* across that road at a set of lights and *turn left* across **Westbourne Street** and a cycle-way at another set of lights and continue along the main road. In 120m cross **Brook Street** at a set of lights and in 20m *turn right* across Bayswater Road at another set of lights and enter **Hyde Park** through a pedestrian gate to the left of a couple of car gates with a large **converted gaslight** in-between the two car gates. In 25m cross the **North Carriage Drive** and a cycle-way to a multi-directional signpost. The route will follow the sign to the half-left ('Rangers Lodge, Reformers Tree'), but you first cross a sandy bridleway and then *turn left* along a broad tarmac path to the right of the fenced bridleway.

In 40m *bear right* along the first of two tarmac paths and in 30m pass **gaslight 156** on the right, then in 100m **gaslight 155** by **Tyburn Meadows** on the left (a wildflower meadow, according to an info panel on the far side) and in 60m continue in the same direction at a crosspaths. In 75m continue in the same direction at another crosspaths, now with the fenced park nursery on the right, by **gaslight 153**. In 90m continue in the same direction where the fence and a fork in the path veer right, now gently descending into the shallow valley of the now largely dried up and in any case culverted **Tyburn Brook**. In 80m, at the bottom of the dip, on the left you have an old fenced **water pump** and a **sheep trough** beyond it. Re-ascend towards **The Old Police House** on the right, in 50m passing **gaslight 151** on the left, followed by the fenced grounds of the **New Lodge** with another **gaslight**. In 50m *turn right* at a seven-way path junction, past some bike stands, a multi-directional signpost and **gaslight 211** and continue *to the left* of the police station.

In 30m you pass the very picturesque blue '**police**' **gaslight 170** on the left and in 20m a **converted gaslight** on the right. With **gaslight 178** just ahead, you *turn left* along a tarmac path. In 65m *bear right* at a crosspaths by **gaslight 171** (a **toilet block** is located just ahead beyond the park's Learning Centre, open to 16.00 in winter and up to 21.00 in summer). In 70m you cross a path and then gently descend for 350m towards the **Serpentine** while passing **gaslights 172 to 174**. At the bottom of the drop, at a signposted multi-path junction by the Serpentine Road and with the **Serpentine Bar & Kitchen** opposite, you *turn left* to the left of the road, which is lined by **gaslights**. The area to the right is slightly sunken and is the valley created by the **Westbourne**, but now features an artificial **waterfall**. There are also some **Memorial Gardens** (including a Holocaust Memorial) and the **Rose Gardens**. In 220m you pass a **Bandstand** on the left, where you can spot a **Statue of Little Nell** 90m away to the left. In 40m pass another **gaslight** on the left and in 40m a **Cavalry Memorial**.

At the end of the road, where it meets the **South Carriage Drive** by the ornate **Queen Elizabeth Gate** (with **six gaslights** on its gate posts) and a **Statue of Achilles** on the left, you *turn right* along the road towards the **Decimus Burton Screen** (or Apsley Gate) to the right of Apsley House (site of the Wellington Museum). *Turn left* across the road at a set of lights and pass to the left of the **Hyde Park Corner Lodge Café** out of Hyde Park. Cross **Knightsbridge** (the A4) at a set of lights, with some **gaslights** on the right outside **The Lanesborough Hotel**, then *turn left* across a set of lights to cross the near lane of a roundabout (with some **converted gaslights** on the right-hand side of the road) and follow a path across the green island within the roundabout with its War Memorials. Go under the **Wellington Arch** (or Constitution Arch), with two **converted gaslights** on its far side, then cross the far lane of the roundabout at a set

of lights and continue ahead into **Green Park** to the left of a cycle path to the left of **Constitution Hill** (road), flanked by **gaslights** on either side.

In 40m you pass the **Commonwealth Memorial Gates** with another **four gaslights** in-between the lanes. In 20m ignore a left fork by the Queen's Meadow on the left and in 50m *fork left* away from the road. In 230m you pass **gaslight C52** on the right in the shallow valley of the now culverted and buried **River Tyburn**. In 90m at a six-way junction with the **large gaslight G50** in the middle, you pass the light and *bear right*, now with higher ground to the left. In 60m cross a tree-lined path lined by **gaslights**. This is **the Broad Walk** from which you get good views down to the right of four of the **most ornate and attractive gaslights** in town, on the **Canada Gate** into the park. In 35m cross another path lined by more **gaslights** (**G36** is just to the right) and in 20m *turn left* at a junction. In 35m you pass a large **gaslight** where another path joins from the right behind and continue up towards the top-right park corner.

In 250m, at a four-way path junction in a circle and by the large **gaslight 20** on the right, just before the ramped path down into **Green Park Station**, *turn right* to leave the park and *turn right* downhill along a broad path. You pass **gaslight G17** and then **gaslights G16 to 14**. In another 20m *turn left* through a metal gate (locked after 22.00 hours) and follow a narrow path between brick walls. In 25m continue under some houses and in 20m *turn right* in **St. James's Place** cul-de-sac (with a **gaslight** on the left on top of Number 20's wrought-iron entrance and another street **gaslight**). You pass to the right of **The Stafford Hotel** with **gaslight 9** (also with an old '8041' sign) up on the wall of the next house on the left. At the bottom of the road, *turn left* with it, with **eight more gaslights** scattered around the junction (two of those converted). There is a blue plaque on the house on the right (William Huskisson, statesman and commonly known as not the first, but the first widely reported railway passenger casualty in 1830) and you continue along this charming road with **plenty of gaslights** (many converted), some on top of wrought-iron entrance gates.

In 35m there is a green plaque on the house on the left (Sir Francis Charles Chichester KBE, sailor) and two more **gaslights** can be found down the right in the courtyard leading to **Dukes Hotel**, and in 35m pass a blue plaque for Frederic Chopin. In 35m you reach **St. James's Street**, which is lit by **converted gaslights**, by a pedestrian crossing a little to the right. The route will continue across that crossing, but first *turn left* for 25m to the **Blue Ball Yard**, where you find **one of only two remaining wall-mounted bracket-less gaslights**, and also a very fine backyard with some **gaslights** (part of The Stafford Hotel). Go back to and across St. James's Street and *turn right* downhill. You cross King Street and *turn left* along its pavement. In 40m *turn right* down **Crown Passage**, with **Davy's Wine Bar**, **six gaslights** (3 converted, 3 not), several shops, cafés and sandwich bars, **Il Vicolo** restaurant and – near the bottom – the **Red Lion** pub. *Turn right* along **Pall Mall**, lined by **converted gaslights** but also with two **gaslights** in a chained-off middle reservation. *Turn right* along **St. James's Street**.

In 30m *turn right* between wood-panelled parts of the **Berry Bros. & Rudd** wine merchants along a narrow archway lined with painted panelling and with a plaque commemorating it as the site of the **Texas Legation from 1842-45**. This leads in 20m to the secretive **Pickering Place** (apparently Britain's smallest square), with a **couple of converted gaslights**, one on a house corner and another one above the exit from the archway. Return to St. James's Street and – with a blue plaque visible across the road to the right (for The Royal Yacht Squadron) – you *turn left* back down the road. Cross the road at a pedestrian crossing and further down, *turn right* along the quiet **Cleveland Row**. There are **converted gaslights** on the left, either side of the gate of the Grade I-listed **St. James's Palace** (1533-35), as well as **gaslights** along the left-hand side of the road (plus a couple that are just stumps without a lantern left).

At a road junction, ignore the (private and guarded) **Stable Yard Road** turning left towards the Grade I-listed **Clarence House** (1825-27) and the Grade I-listed **Lancaster House** (c. 1820) and continue ahead along a narrower part of Cleveland Row. On a house wall on the right, you find **converted gaslight 5** (also with an old '8031' sign) before you *turn right* with the road and in 20m *turn left* along a paved path and go through a couple of metal gates (locked after 22.00 hours, and with a **gaslight** on the left just before the second gate) and *turn left* along a broad path along **Green Park**, by **gaslight G8** on the right. You pass **gaslights G7 to G2** and in 170m by **gaslight G1**, a broad path **lined by more gaslights** joins from the right out of the park. In a further 20m go through double metal gates by **gaslight G5** on the right, and *turn left* along **The Mall**, lined by **gaslights** on both sides of the original road, starting with **G6** on the right, and **converted gaslights** on the right along the modern road.

In 65m you cross **Stable Yard Road**, with the Grade II-listed **Stable Yard Gates** and the Grade II-listed **Stable Yard Lodge** on the left. They incorporate **Grade II-listed gaslights** with George IV and William IV monograms (and cast iron octagonal ribbed bases and octagonal shafts, with Windsor lanterns). In 140m cross the **gaslights**-lined **Marlborough Road** and in 190m, by **gaslight G40** on the right, you *turn left* towards the **King George VI and Queen Elizabeth** (the Queen Mother) **Memorials**, flanked by **gaslights**. [This has gaslights despite only being built in 2009 on the request of the Windsor family.] Follow steps up past the statues onto **Carlton Gardens** (road) at its turning circle-type end around a circular green, lined by **gaslights**. Number 3 on the right used to house the **Y Service of MI6** (signals intelligence collection).

Walk along its left-hand side, passing Number 2, briefly home to **The Carlton Club** (a private members' club for the Tory Party), with a blue plaque for **Marshall Earl Kitchener of Khartoum KG**. This is followed by Number 1, official **Residence of the Foreign Secretary**. *Turn right* with the road, lit by **gaslights** with George IV initials, passing on the left a **statue of**, and on the right at Number 4, a **blue plaque for, General Charles de Gaulle**. You pass a blue plaque on the right (Marquess Curzon of Kedleston) and continue along **Carlton Gardens Terrace**, where Carlton Gardens turns left, now with the fenced **Waterloo Gardens** on the left. At the far end of the gardens, cross two arms of **Waterloo Place** (road) to an info panel on the right, naming the various statues and memorials visible from here. **Lower Regent Street** can be seen away to the left, rising up to Piccadilly Circus, but you *turn right* back towards The Mall, passing the **Duke of York Statue** and going down a flight of steps with two **rare lantern gaslights** positioned high up on the walls to the side of the steps.

Pass the **Institute of Contemporary Arts** on the left and cross The Mall at a set of lights on the left to enter **St. James's Park** along a tarmac path to the left of the **Royal Artillery Memorial** (Boer War) and to the right of **Horse Guards Road** and the imposing two-part **National Police Memorial** on its far side. The road is lined by **gaslights** (some converted) and you pass a toilet block on the right (open to 18.00 in winter and up to 21.30 in summer). The backs of Government buildings dominate the view on the left (Cabinet and Privy Council Offices, Scotland Office, No. 10 Downing Street, the FCO and the Treasury) and in 40m you pass another War Memorial. Cross a path (with **St. James's Café** away to the right) and in 70m pass the **St. James's Park Lake** on the right. In 90m pass a garden cottage and in 20m an info panel about the pelicans in the lake, and in 25m there is another **gaslight** on the left.

In 20m, at a four-way path junction, you *bear right* (i.e. do not turn right). In 80m cross a path by the first of **three gaslights** on this stretch and in 80m you cross a cycle-lane then **Birdcage Walk** (road), lined on the park side with what are likely to be the **oldest remaining street gaslights** in London (with George IV initials along the base). Continue through lockable metal gates and along a narrow paved path with one

gaslight to in 25m go up the **Cockpit Steps** onto a street corner (Old Queen Street/Dartmouth Street). [**Should the gate be locked**, *turn left* along Birdcage Walk, *turn right* along Storey's Gate and *turn right* along Old Queen Street.] *Bear right* towards the **Two Chairmen** pub (Greene King, named after the sedan chair carriers who waited for fares after cockfights) where Queen Anne's Gate turns to the right.

Here you have a choice:

For the Full Walk, *turn left* along the pedestrianised **Lewisham Street**.

For a finish at St. James's Park Underground, continue ahead along **Dartmouth Street** and in 100m at a T-junction with **Tothill Street**, you find **The Sanctuary House Hotel** (Fuller's) and the **Blue Boar** pub opposite. *Turn right* along the road and in 40m, where it forks and continues as **Broadway** in both onwards directions, continue straight ahead. On the left along the other arm of Broadway are the **Conrad St. James Hotel** and **The Feathers** pub (Nicholson's). In 50m, pass **The Old Star** pub (Greene King) and in 40m *turn left* at a pedestrian crossing to the station entrance.

*) You pass **converted gaslight 5** on a house corner on the left and some more **converted gaslights** further along. At a T-junction with a road, opposite the **QEII (Conference) Centre**, *turn right* along **Storey's Gate**. You pass the **Westminster Arms** (Shepherd Neame), one of six local pubs containing a **division bell**, used to alert MPs that a vote will soon be taken in Parliament, then the **Methodist Central Hall** with its **Wesley's Café**. Cross **Tothill Street** at a pedestrian crossing and **Victoria Street** at a set of lights, then *turn left* along the **gas-lit** The Sanctuary towards **Westminster Abbey**, whose entrance is flanked by **elaborate gaslights**, and with another **gaslight** on the right-hand wall (there are more **gaslights** inside the – ticketed – Abbey).

Turn right through a lockable metal gate (open 08.00-17.00 only) along a narrow alleyway leading into **Dean's Yard**. [**Should this be locked**, continue to the right parallel to the yard along Great Smith Street (**converted gaslights**) and in 220m *turn left* along Little Smith Street (**converted gaslights**) then *turn right* along the **gas-lit** Tufton Street, the continuation of Dean's Yard.] Skirt around the left-hand side of the garden square lined by **gaslights** (including **the oldest surviving gaslight** here (number 5), fixed to the wall in the left-hand corner near the group entrance, as well as a **unique stained glass gaslight** right above it), and aim for the exit in its far-left corner, with the **Westminster Abbey Choir School** on the right, including **The Cellarium Bar & Terrace**. Leave the yard through another lockable metal gate and continue along the **gas-lit Tufton Street**. Ignore the **gas-lit Great College Street** to the left and in 50m **Little Smith Street (converted gaslights)** to the right and in 60m cross **Great Peter Street (converted gaslights)** to continue along Tufton Street.

In 60m you pass a blue plaque on the left (Eleanor Rathbone) and in 30m a green plaque (Sir Michael Balcon, film producer) on the left, opposite one on the right (Siegfried Sassoon MC, poet) on the corner of **Bennett's Yard**. In 20m *turn left* along the **gas-lit Dean Trench Street** and in 40m you reach the **gas-lit Smith Square** with **St. John's Church** in its middle. Follow the road around its right-hand side (in 60m, **The Marquis of Granby** (Nicholson's) is visible down the **gas-lit Dean Bradley Street**) and around to the left (with **The Footstool Café** in the church basement, Mon-Fri 10.00-17.00) and left again. By the **Smith Square Hall** on the left, *turn right* along the **gas-lit Lord North Street**. You pass a green plaque for W.T. Stead (journalist) and in 70m cross Great Peter Street (**converted gaslights**), by the **Arts Council** building away to the left, and with **St. Thomas's Hospital** visible on the right across the Thames in Lambeth.

You continue along the **gas-lit Cowley Street** and *turn left* with it, passing blue plaques for Sir John Gielgud (actor and theatre director) and Lord Reith (first Director-General of the BBC) on the way, with a bracketed **gaslight** on a building's corner (but missing some vital parts). You *turn right* with the **gas-lit** road (now **Barton Street**), in 30m pass a blue plaque for T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), and in 30m *turn right* along the **gas-lit Great College Street**. In 110m *turn left* through a metal gate along a paved path through **College Green**, with the **Houses of Parliament** and the **Palace of Westminster** ahead across **Abingdon Street** (**converted gaslights**).

In 40m you pass **Knife Edge Two-Piece** by **Henry Moore** (1962-65) on the grass on the right and in 50m on the left the ruined remains of **The Jewel Tower** (English Heritage, open to 16.00 in winter, to 17.00 in summer), a 14th-century surviving element of the **medieval Palace of Westminster**. *Curve to the left* with the path past a car parking area lined by **eight gaslights**, staying to the right of a grassy area with a monument to George V. You pass **Westminster Abbey** along its back and then its neighbour, **St. Margaret's Church** (which has a **two-bracketed gaslight** above the entrance to the clock tower away to the left) and *turn right* across St. Margaret Street at a set of lights, this side of **Parliament Square**. *Turn left* along the opposite pavement.

In 80m cross Bridge Street at a set of lights towards **St. Stephen's Tavern** (Hall & Woodhouse) and *turn right*. You pass the entrance to **Westminster Station** and in 100m from the road crossing, *turn left* along **Victoria Embankment**, this side of **Westminster Bridge**. There are **plenty of converted gaslights** along both sides of the road. In 200m you pass the entrance to **New Scotland Yard** and cross Richmond Terrace to enter the **Whitehall Extension** of the Embankment Gardens. At the far end of the gardens, you find a couple of info panels (**Queen Mary's Steps/Whitehall Palace** and **The Victoria Embankment Gardens**), and cross **Horse Guards Avenue**.

Enter **Whitehall Gardens** through a metal gate (open to 16.30 in winter and up to 21.30 in summer). [**Should the gate be locked**, skirt around the gardens to the left along the parallel Whitehall Court (with a blue plaque for Sir Mansfield Cumming, 1st Chief of the Secret Service, and a memorial for the Royal Tank Regiment) and Whitehall Place.] You pass an info panel (**Statues of Victoria Embankment**) and follow the left of two paths through the gardens, passing **several converted gaslights**. The London Eye and the Hungerford Bridges dominate the view across the Thames ahead, while in 100m you pass the **Lanson Terrace** of **The Royal Horseguards Hotel** on the left. In 100m leave the gardens onto a junction of Whitehall Place and Northumberland Avenue.

Cross the road a little to the left towards the **Kit Kat Club** and continue up along its left along **Craven Street**. In 50m pass **converted gaslight 11** and a blue plaque for Herman Melville (author) and in 50m a bronze plaque for Heinrich Heine (German poet and essayist). In 20m, the **Craven Passage** on the right (**converted gaslights**) leads past **The Ship & Shovell** pub (Hall & Woodhouse, and – uniquely – split between two buildings either side of the passage) down to the arches under **Charing Cross Station** and on to Villiers Street (for all food and drink options that way: check the very end of this text). Continue up Craven Street (**converted gaslights**) and in 110m *turn right* along the **Strand** and in 40m *turn right* into the station forecourt (**converted gaslights**) to the **Queen Eleanor Memorial Cross** (1864-5) with its info panel.

Continue through the forecourt and *turn left* back to the Strand. Cross the road at a set of lights a little to the right and *turn right* along the opposite pavement. There are some **elaborate converted gaslights** in the middle embankment of the road and in 90m **William IV Street** and **Agar Street** join from the left. In 50m cross Bedford Street and in 20m ignore Exchange Court on the left, then in 10m Heathcock Court. In 30m pass a green plaque for the Adelphi Theatre and in 15m [!] *turn left* along **Bull Inn Court**. In

20m you pass the **Nell Gwynne** pub (City Pub Group) and then **five gaslights** further up the lane. In 60m *turn left* along **Maiden Lane**, by a green plaque opposite (The Gramophone Company) and a **gaslight** 20m to the right outside **London's oldest restaurant (Rules)**, of 1798).

In 25m you pass a green plaque on the left (William Terriss, actor) and in 20m **The Porterhouse** bar on **Exchange Square**, which boasts **three gaslights** down the lane to its right as well as a green plaque for JMW Turner. In 30m cross Bedford Street at a four-way junction (with **gaslights** in three directions, and **converted gaslights** down the left) and *turn up to the right* along its left-hand pavement. In 50m *turn left* along **Bedford Court**, a passage first, then a lane, with **converted gaslights**. In 80m *turn up to the right* along **Bedfordbury**. In 30m ignore **Hop Gardens** on the left but in another 30m by **gaslight 2** on the right, you *turn left* down the narrow **gas-lit Goodwin's Court** (supposedly one of the two inspirations for the 'Diagon Alley' in the **Harry Potter** novels). There is an info panel halfway down the alleyway on the right and at the far end, with **The Salisbury** pub (Greene King) opposite, you *turn left* briefly along **St. Martin's Lane**, then right along the pedestrianised and **gas-lit Cecil Court**, the other of the two inspirations for the 'Diagon Alley'.

This lane is lined by bookshops, auctioneers and antiquarians. In 40m you pass a blue plaque for Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart on the left and in another 40m a green one for the British Film Industry/Flicker Alley. In 20m *turn right* along **Charing Cross Road**. In 30m *turn right* again along **St. Martin's Court (converted gaslights)**, in 20m passing **The Round Table** pub (Greene King), then the legendary **J. Sheekey** restaurant and **The Salisbury**. You re-cross St. Martin's Lane and continue up along the **gas-lit New Row**, passing **Mr. Fogg's Tavern** (one of a selection of cocktail bars with a Mr. Fogg's theme – of Jules Verne's 'Around the World in 80 Days' fame). In 90m **Bedfordbury** joins from the right and in 20m you pass **The White Swan** (Nicholson's). In 15m at the street corner on the left is **The Round House** (Fuller's, with an almost round façade).

At this four-way road junction, lit by (mostly) **converted gaslights**, *turn left* along **Garrick Street** and in 15m *turn up to the right* along **Rose Street** towards **The Lamb & Flag** (Fuller's), with a **converted gaslight** above its entrance and a **large gaslight** to the right on the building's corner. Pass the pub along a narrow passage to the right (**Lazenby Court**, with one **gaslight**) and *turn left* along **Floral Street**. There are some **gaslights** up on the building on the left and in 30m you *turn right* along the pedestrianised continuation of **Rose Street** with another **gaslight** up on the right. In 40m cross **Long Acre (converted gaslights)** to a blue plaque opposite (John Dryden, poet, critic and satirist) and *turn right* along its pavement. In 30m *turn left* along the pedestrianised **Slingsby Place** and in 60m *turn right* in its central courtyard.

In 40m cross **Mercer Street** (with some **gaslights** away to the left and right, and with **converted gaslights** closer by) and continue along **Mercer Walk** (with its modern gaslight-lookalikes). Follow this to the right around the **Guinness at Old Brewer's Yard** brewpub and to the left by **Stanford's** travel bookshop. In 20m *turn right* along **Langley Street** (with some **converted gaslights** on the left and right) back to and across **Long Acre** in 50m and go down the pedestrianised **Langley Court (converted gaslights)**. In 50m *turn left* along **Floral Street (gaslights)**. The walkway linking the two buildings of **The Royal Opera** is visible ahead. You pass a Paul Smith flagship store and reach a four-way junction by **The White Lion** (Nicholson's) on the left and **The Nag's Head** (McMullen) opposite, and *turn right* along **James Street (gaslights)**.

Ahead is the **Covent Garden Market Hall**. In 60m *turn right* along the market hall with its **gaslights** hanging off the side on the left and **more gaslights** in the archways of the new building on the right (gaslights having been chosen here on the request of the

architect), then continue along the **gas-lit King Street**. In 40m *turn left* along a passageway into **St. Paul's Churchyard** ('the Actor's Church') with its ten **unique and specially commissioned gaslights** (8 on columns, 2 above the passageways). [**Should this passage be locked**, continue along King Street and *turn left* along the **gas-lit Bedford Street**.] *Turn right* in the churchyard and on the way out between the two iron gates, spot another **gaslight** on the wall on the right and *turn left* along the **gas-lit Bedford Street**. In 40m *turn left* along the **gas-lit Henrietta Street**. In 40m pass a green plaque on the left for William Shipley (artist) and in 90m stay to the right of **Covent Garden Market Hall** with more **gaslights** hanging off it (and many more away to the left as well as in the central market hall).

In 40m ignore the right turning **gas-lit Southampton Street** and continue along the market hall towards the **London Transport Museum**. Just before it, *turn right* along **Tavistock Court** and in 40m *turn left* along the **gas-lit Tavistock Street**. In 20m, ignore Burleigh Street to the right (with a **gaslight** visible 20m away) and in 60m cross **Wellington Street**. You pass a blue plaque (Thomas de Quincey, writer) opposite the **Côte** restaurant and at the subsequent junction, with **Fishworks** opposite, *turn left* up **Catherine Street**, passing some more **gaslights**. In 50m pass the **Nell of Old Drury** pub, opposite the **Theatre Royal Drury Lane**. In 35m, *turn left* along the **gas-lit Russell Street** and in 20m, by **The Marquess of Anglesey** (Young's), *turn right* along **Bow Street** (**converted gaslights**).

In 70m, by **The Royal Opera House** on the left, you *turn right* along the **gas-lit** pedestrianised **Martlett Court**, signed 'Bow Street Police Museum', also with **converted gaslights** on the wall of the police museum. In 40m, at an oblique junction of **four gas-lit alleyways**, *turn right* along **Crown Court**. In 40m you pass the entrance to the **Crown Court Church of Scotland** on the right (1718, the longest-established Presbyterian Kirk in England) and in 30m, by a blue plaque on the right (Fortuna, the sculpture on the building's wall), you *turn left* along **Russell Street**. In 50m, at a four-way junction with **Drury Lane**, *turn right* along it. There are some **converted gaslights** along here, as you walk along the back of the Theatre Royal.

In 65m *turn right* along the **gas-lit Tavistock Street** and in 110m *turn left* down the **gas-lit Catherine Street** at a four-way junction. In 60m *turn right* along **Exeter Street** and in 30m, by **Cristopher's** restaurant on the right, *turn left* downhill along **Wellington Street's** pedestrianised section (but mind the cycle-way in the middle!) towards the **Strand/Aldwych junction**, with **Waterloo Bridge** stretching out beyond. In 60m cross the **Strand** at a set of lights a little to the right and *turn right* along its opposite pavement. In 30m cross **Savoy Street**, with the **Savoy Tap** (Shepherd Neame) just down the road, and in 100m pass the drive to **The Savoy Hotel**.

In another 30m, by **The Coal Hole** (Nicholson's), **[!]** *turn left* along an alleyway, soon going down some steps. You pass the back of **The Savoy Theatre**, where you find **converted gaslight 6** up on a wall bracket on the left, then in 20m **converted gaslight 5** with an info panel. The theatre was the first in the world to be lit entirely by electric lights, in 1881. Continue down **Carting Lane** and in 20m **Savoy Way** joins from the left. In 25m, you pass the **last remaining sewer gas destructor light** in Westminster (with an info panel). This is fed by gas emanating from the sewerage system when available (but also by grid supplied gas to keep the flame going continuously) and was built here to keep sewer smells away from the hotel guests.

In 30m, at a T-junction with **Savoy Place** (the line of the historic north bank of the Thames before the embankment was built), enter the **Victoria Embankment Gardens** opposite (open to 17.00 in winter and up to 21.30 in summer). [**Should the gardens be closed**, *turn right* along Savoy Place and follow the route on the route map to the

point where the walk route re-joins out of the park by the River Gate.] You pass an info panel on the statues on display in the gardens and *turn right* along the main tarmac path along its middle, passing several numbered **converted gaslights**. Just after the **Embankment Bistro Café**, the path splits three-ways by a **Robert Burns Memorial** on the right. *Take the right fork*.

In 75m you reach the historic **River Gate** (1626) down from the long-lost **York House** (see the interesting info panel on the gate's far side) and *turn right* out of the gardens through a metal gate. *Turn left* along a path filled with tables and chairs by **Gordon's Wine Bar**. **Buckingham Street** joins from the right at head height and there is a green plaque on the corner (William Smith, geologist). In 50m go up some steps and through a lockable gate (open to 23.30) onto **Villiers Street**, with the office buildings on top of Charing Cross Station opposite. There is a blue plaque on **Kipling House**, the first building on the right (Rudyard Kipling, journalist, poet and writer).

Embankment Station is 100m away to the left (with some **converted gaslights** along the road from the right under the railway lines). The entrance to **Charing Cross Station** is 50m away to the right, opposite **The Princess of Wales** (Nicholson's), either up some steps or two sets of escalators (as you enter the concourse, **The Beer House** is just to your right).

Further options for food and drink **higher up Villiers Street**: **All Bar One**, then several **in the arches away to the left** under the station (**The Sherlock Holmes** (Greene King), **L'Olivo** café & bar, **Champagne Charlie's**, **MOC Kitchen**, **Charing Cross Theatre Player's Bar & Kitchen** plus **The Ship & Shovell** up some steps) or even **around the corner to the right near the top**, on **John Adam Street** (**Theodore Bullfrog**, Young's).