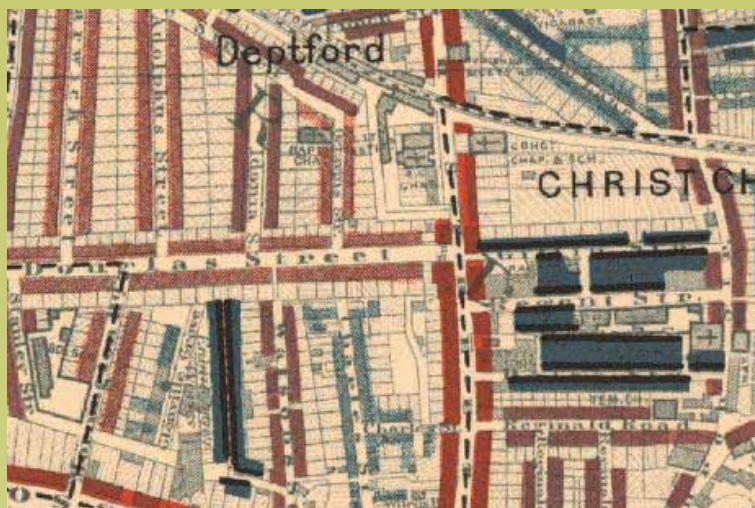




Royal  
Geographical  
Society  
with IBG

## District 45

A self guided walk in London's Deptford



Find out about Deptford's Victorian wealth and poverty  
Visit the streets described by social reformer Charles Booth  
Discover rich maritime history and today's vibrant communities  
Explore how Deptford has and hasn't changed over a century

[www.discoveringbritain.org](http://www.discoveringbritain.org)

the stories of our landscapes  
discovered through walks





This booklet is to be used alongside the audio commentary for this walk

## Contents

Introduction	3
Route overview	4
Practical information	5
Detailed route maps	7
Directions	9
Further information	14
Credits	15

© The Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers, London, 2012

Discovering Britain is a project of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

The digital and print maps used for Discovering Britain are licensed to the RGS-IBG from Ordnance Survey

Cover image: Section of Charles Booth's 1902 Poverty map © Charles Booth Online Archive, LSE

---

## District 45

### Travel back in time to London's Deptford 100 years ago

Greenwich, with its spectacular riverfront location and grand buildings, is associated with England's glory days as a maritime nation. But its neighbour Deptford is steeped in just as much history of the sea.

It was where ships docked and unloaded their cargoes, where foreigners came to learn the art of shipbuilding, where sailors waved farewell to England as they headed out across the empire.



Part of Charles Booth's poverty map of Deptford (1902)  
© Charles Booth Online Archive, LSE

	<b>BLACK:</b> Lowest class. Vicious, semi-criminal.
	<b>DARK BLUE:</b> Very poor, casual. Chronic want.
	<b>LIGHT BLUE:</b> Poor. 18s. to 21s. a week for a moderate family
	<b>PURPLE:</b> Mixed. Some comfortable others poor
	<b>PINK:</b> Fairly comfortable. Good ordinary earnings.
	<b>RED:</b> Middle class. Well-to-do.
	<b>YELLOW:</b> Upper-middle and Upper classes. Wealthy.
A combination of colours - as dark blue or black, or pink and red - indicates that the street contains a fair proportion of each of the classes represented by the respective colours.	

The colour coding used on the poverty maps  
© Charles Booth Online Archive, LSE

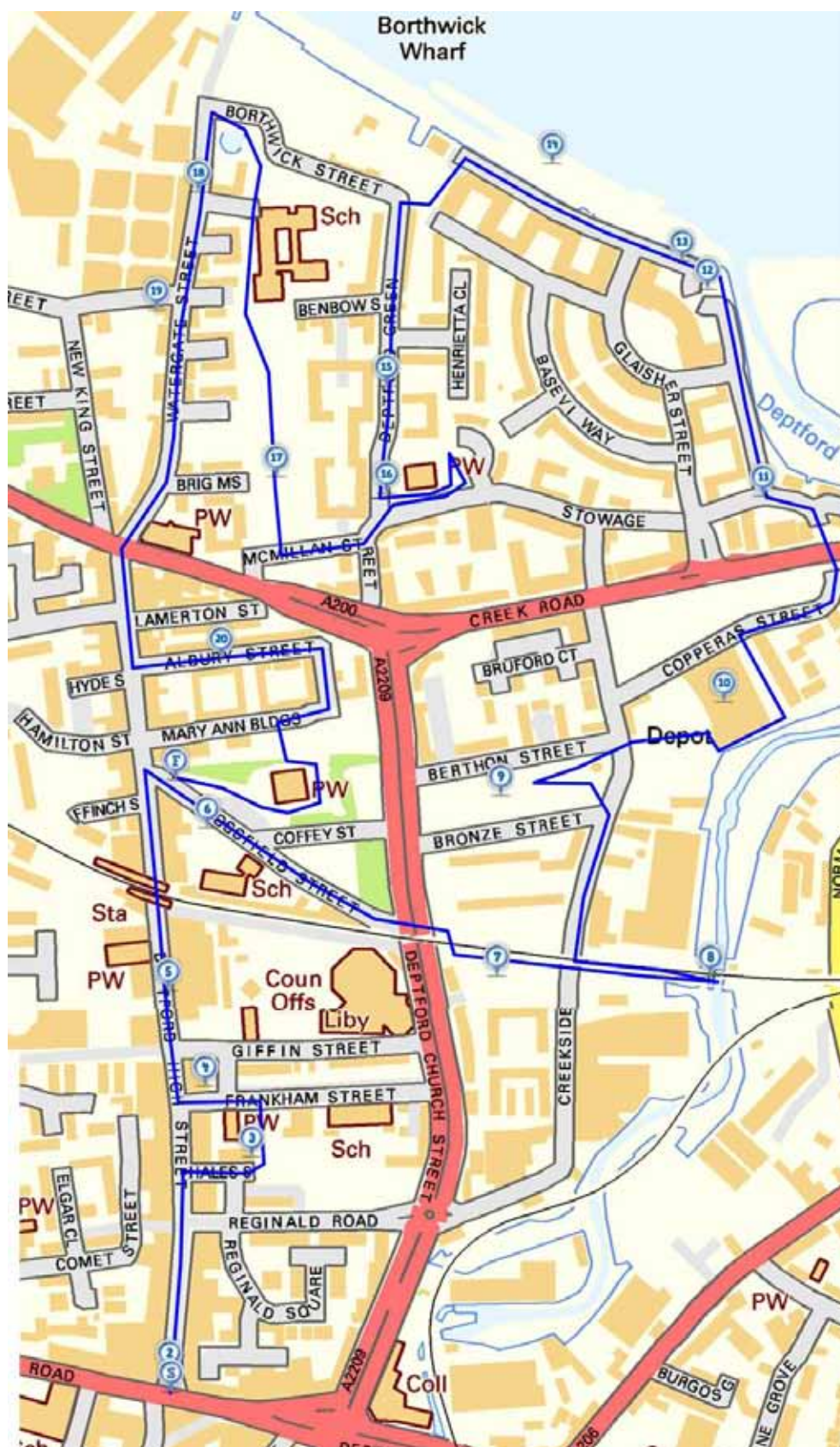
This walk paints a picture of life in Deptford over a hundred years ago, when it was a working neighbourhood of bustling docks and wharves, busy streets and overcrowded houses, poverty and deprivation alongside affluence and comfort.

It uses observations recorded by the social reformer, Charles Booth, who did a survey of poverty in London. There are also insights from other writers – diarists, novelists and historians – describing the Deptford of the Victorian era.

Fast forward one hundred years and find out how some things have changed in Deptford and other things have stayed the same, ranging from the condition of the streets and housing to industry and employment.



## Route overview



---

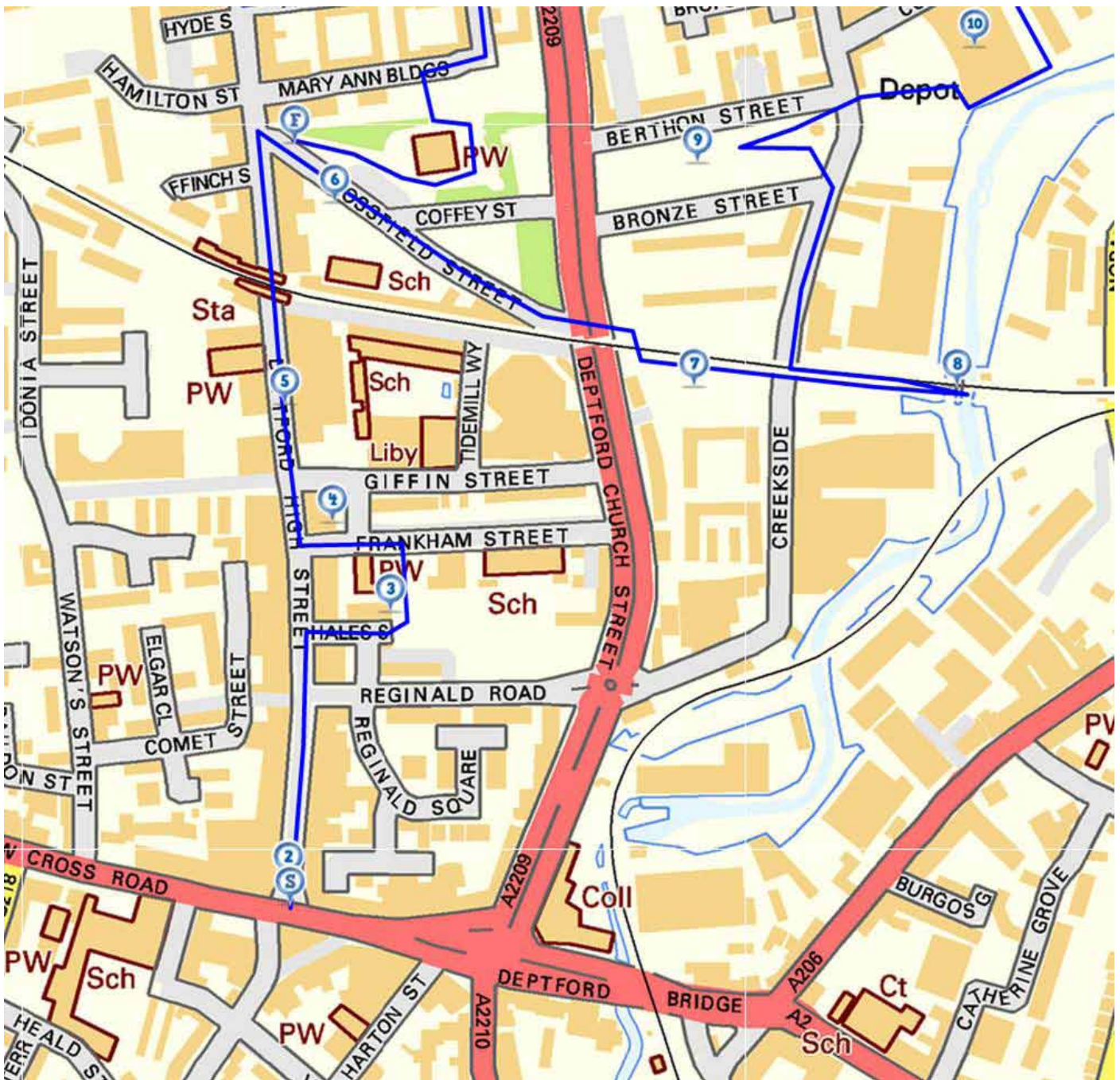
## Practical information

<b>Location</b>	Deptford, Southeast London
<b>Getting there</b>	<p><b>Train</b> - the nearest overground stations are Deptford and New Cross (accessible from London Bridge, Charing Cross and Waterloo East) <i>Please note Deptford train station does not currently have step-free access</i></p> <p><b>Underground</b> - nearest station is Deptford Bridge (DLR)</p> <p><b>Bus</b> - served by various bus routes. Those closest to the walk start include include 53 (Westminster to Plumstead), 177 (Peckham to Thamesmead) and 453 (Deptford to Marylebone)</p> <p><b>Bicycle</b> - Deptford is on National Cycle Route 4, which follows the River Thames via Greenwich, Rotherhithe and Lewisham</p>
<b>Start point</b>	The large anchor at the end of Deptford High Street, SE8 4AD <i>Note: In 2013 the council put the anchor in storage during improvement works to the High Street; whether or not it will return is unknown</i>
<b>Directions from railway station to start</b>	<p><i>From Deptford train station</i> - turn right and walk along Deptford High Street for about 350 metres</p> <p><i>From Deptford Bridge DLR station</i> - walk about 200 metres along Deptford Broadway towards New Cross</p> <p><i>From New Cross train station</i> - turn left and walk about 400 metres along New Cross Road towards Greenwich</p>
<b>Finish point</b>	St Paul's churchyard, SE8 3DP
<b>Onward journey</b>	The route is almost circular. The front of St Paul's Church leads onto Deptford High Street. Turn left to return to the anchor.

<b>Distance</b>	2 ½ miles
<b>Level</b>	Gentle – A flat route on urban streets and beside Deptford Creek
<b>Conditions</b>	Deptford High Street can be busy especially on market days. Watch for traffic and look after your valuables. The riverside section can be chilly in winter.
<b>Suitable for</b>	<b>Wheelchairs/pushchairs</b> - a completely step-free route (though Deptford railway station does not have a lift)
<b>Refreshments</b>	<p>Plenty of cafes and restaurants on Deptford High Street, including the Deptford Project Cafe - located in an old train carriage beside Deptford station! (Tel: 07525 351656)</p> <p>There is also a café at the Laban Building, open Mon-Sat 8.30am-6.30pm (Tel: 020 8691 8600)</p>
<b>Toilets</b>	<p>- Giffin Square, halfway along Deptford High Street (between Stop 4 and 5)</p> <p>- Laban Building (Stop 10)</p>
<b>Other info</b>	<p><b>Deptford market</b> is held on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday mornings in the High Street and nearby Douglas Way. Stalls set up from 7am with the last closing around 4pm.</p> <p><b>Deptford X</b> contemporary art festival is held in July and August. Local and international artists take part, there are many free events and public artworks on display (Tel: 020 8692 4278)</p>



## Detail of first part of the route

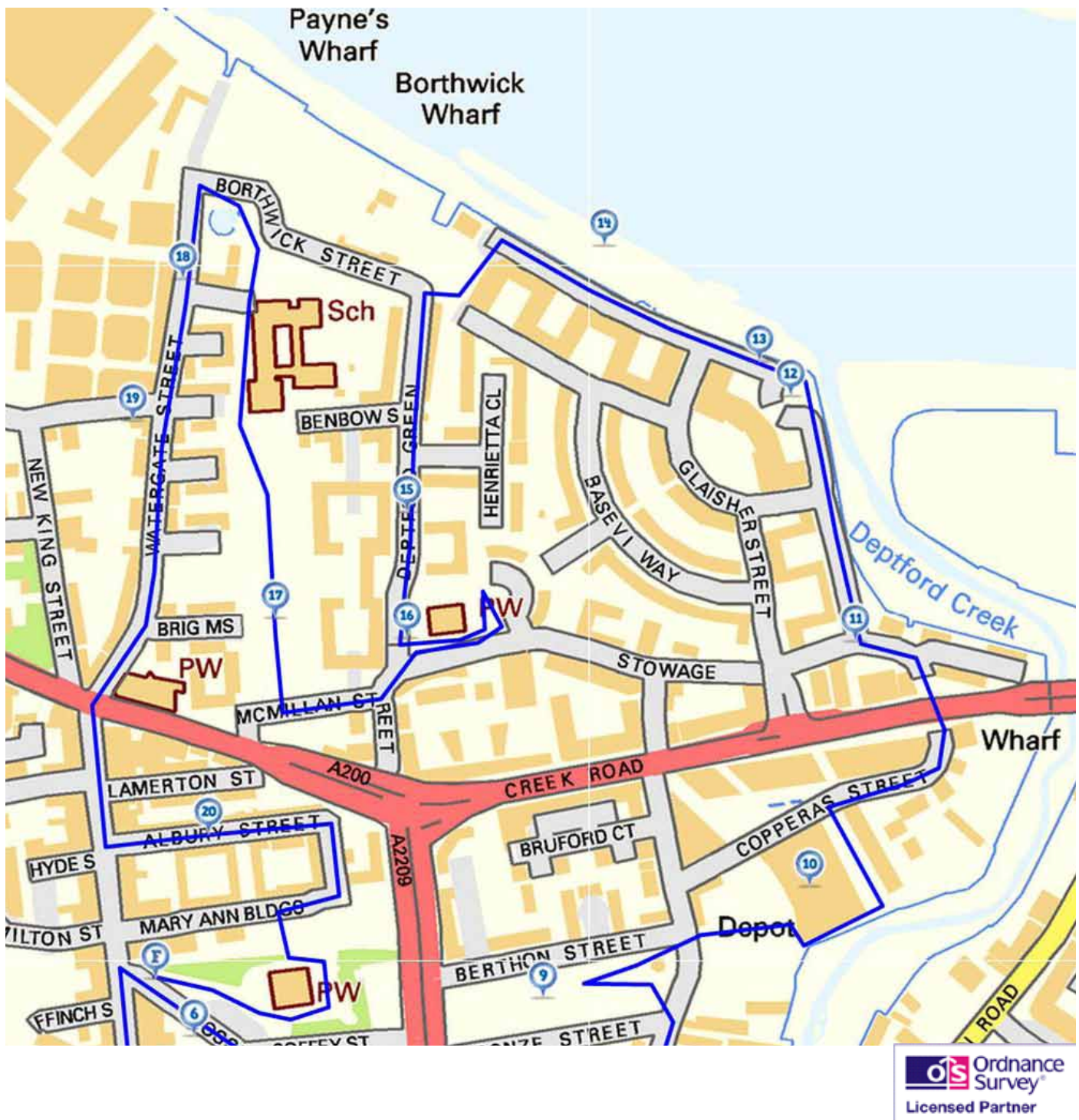


### Stopping points

1. The big anchor, Deptford High Street
2. The big anchor, Deptford High Street
3. Corner of Hale Street and Frankham Street
4. Frankham Street
5. Deptford High Street
6. Crossfield
7. Crossfield Estate
8. Halfpenny Hatch Bridge over Deptford Creek
9. Sue Godfrey Local Nature Reserve



## Detail of second part of the route



- 10.** Laban Building
- 11.** Stowage
- 12.** Peter the Great statue
- 13.** River Thames
- 14.** Abandoned riverside landing stages
- 15.** Deptford Green
- 16.** St Nicholas churchyard
- 17.** St Nicholas Green
- 18.** Corner of Watergate and Trevithick Street
- 19.** Dog and Bell pub, Prince Street
- 20.** Albury Street
- 21.** Mydidee's grave, St Paul's churchyard



---

## Directions

Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

### 1. Deep ford

#### **The big anchor, Deptford High Street**

##### **Directions 1**

Remain at the end of the high street on the site of the big anchor and listen to Track 2.

### 2. A courteous welcome

#### **The big anchor, Deptford High Street**

##### **Directions 2**

Walk along Deptford High Street then take the second road on the right, which is Hale Street. At the end of the cul-de-sac, go left around the corner of the building. Find the plaque on the wall next to a large tree and listen to Track 3.

### 3. Wretched, filthy, and forlorn

#### **Corner of Hale Street and Frankham Street**

##### **Directions 3**

Follow the back of the buildings, with a parking area and school to your right. Turn left into Frankham Street back towards the High Street. Stop at the mural on the back of a building and listen to Track 4.

### 4. Mighty ships

#### **Frankham Street**

##### **Directions 4**

Return to Deptford High Street and turn right. Stop somewhere before the railway bridge and listen to Track 5.

---

## **5. Cultural melting pot**

### **High Street**

#### **Directions 5**

Continue along Deptford High Street. After passing under the railway bridge, take the first right into Crossfield. Keep on the road on the right hand side. After about 50 metres, find an opening in the wall where there is a fenced-off yard. Stop there and listen to Track 6.

## **6. Victorian kitchen**

### **Crossfield**

#### **Directions 6**

Continue along Crossfield and then cross over Crossfield Church Street at the pedestrian crossing. Turn right towards the railway viaduct and then almost immediately left through the entrance in the railings into the estate. Turn right and go through the third arch of the viaduct. Stop there and listen to Track 7.

## **7. 'The worst part of Deptford'**

### **Crossfield Estate**

#### **Directions 7**

Walk along the path alongside the viaduct. Cross over Creekside and continue straight along the path. Stop at the bridge over the creek and listen to Track 8.

## **8. Victorian innovations**

### **Halfpenny Hatch Bridge over Deptford Creek**

#### **Directions 8**

Retrace your steps back along the path, this time with the viaduct on your right. Turn right into Creekside. At the first junction, there is a park ahead called Ferranti Park. Cross over into the park. At the far left corner is an opening into another part of the park. Go through this opening and listen to Track 9.

## **9. From pottery to park**

### **Sue Godfrey Local Nature Reserve**

#### **Directions 9**

Retrace your steps across the park back to Crossfield. Across the road is the entrance to the Laban Dance Centre. If it is closed, stop by the entrance and listen to Track 10. If it is open, go into the grounds and listen to Track 10. There are toilets and a café inside.



---

## 10. Dancing on deck

### Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

#### Directions 10

*If you could not go into the Laban building*, go round the outside of the site along Creekside and then right into Copperas Street. *If you went inside the grounds of the Laban building*, make your way around the side of the building which overlooks the creek. Go through the car park and out of the gate onto Copperas Street.

Follow Copperas Street round the corner to where it meets Creek Road. Cross straight over into Stowage. Just around the corner, the riverside footpath bears off to the right. Stop at this junction and listen to Track 11.

## 11. Riverside folk

### Stowage

#### Directions 11

Follow the riverside footpath for about 200 metres. Stop at the statue of Peter the Great on the corner of the riverside walkway and listen to Track 12.

## 12. Russian visitor

### Peter the Great statue

#### Directions 12

From the statue, turn back towards the river. Go to the railings overlooking the river and listen to Track 13.

## 13. An interminable waterway

### Riverside

#### Directions 13

Continue along the riverside footpath for a short distance. Stop alongside the abandoned landing stages and listen to Track 14.

---

## **14. Powering London**

### **Abandoned landing stages**

#### **Directions 14**

Continue along the riverside footpath. After a short distance the path turns left away from the river with blocks of flats on the left and a boat storage area on the right. Follow the path round, go through the bollards and then turn left along Deptford Green. Stop outside one of the housing blocks on the right hand side and listen to Track 15.

## **15. Social mixing**

### **Deptford Green**

#### **Directions 15**

Continue along Deptford Green as far as St Nicholas Church on the left hand side. Stop outside the gates and listen to Track 16.

## **16. Skulls and murderers**

### **St Nicholas churchyard**

#### **Directions 16a**

Go into the churchyard and make your way around the right hand side of the church. Look on the back wall of the churchyard for the stone to mark the death of Christopher Marlowe. Stop here and listen to the rest of Track 16.

#### **Directions 16b**

Retrace your steps out of the churchyard onto Deptford Green. Turn left and then immediately right into McMillan Street. After a short distance on the right hand side is St Nicholas Green. Go into the park and listen to Track 17.

## **17. Riverside rest**

### **St Nicholas Green**

#### **Directions 17**

Walk straight through St Nicolas Green to the primary school at the far end. Go round the left hand side of the school and follow the footpath through the playground. Go past the pond and turn left into Watergate Street. Stop at the first junction on the left with Trevithick Street.



---

## **18. 'Foetid smells and rough women'**

### **Corner of Watergate and Trevithick Street**

#### **Directions 18**

Continue along Watergate Street then turn right into Prince Street. Stop outside the Dog and Bell pub.

## **19. What shall we do with a drunken sailor?**

### **Dog and Bell pub, Prince Street**

#### **Directions 19**

From the pub, go back to Watergate Street and turn right. Continue along to the junction with the main road. You need to go straight over into Deptford High Street but look for a safe pedestrian crossing point. Once on Deptford High Street, take the second left into Albury Street. Stop outside the row of houses on the left hand side.

## **20. Sea captains' houses**

### **Albury Street**

#### **Directions 20**

Continue along Albury Street. At the end, turn right down the side of some flats and right again around the back side. Find a gate on the left hand side into the grounds of St Paul's churchyard. Walk around to the front of the church. Look around the grassy area outside the front of the church for a small stone which marks the grave of Mydidee.

## **20. From Tahiti to Deptford**

### **Mydidee's grave, St Paul's churchyard**

#### **Directions 21**

You have now reached the end of the walk. If you go to the main church gates you will find yourself back on the High Street just a few hundred meters from where we started at the big anchor.

---

## Further information

### **Caroline's Miscellany**

Blog featuring Deptford

<http://carolineld.blogspot.com/search/label/deptford>

### **Charles Booth Online Archive**

Major archive featuring searchable copies of Booth's maps

<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>

### **Flying Bombs and Rockets**

Details of German missiles that hit Deptford in the Second World War

[http://www.flyingbombsandrockets.com/V1\\_summary\\_se14.html](http://www.flyingbombsandrockets.com/V1_summary_se14.html)

### **Old Deptford History**

<http://www.olddeptfordhistory.com>

### **South London Guide: Deptford**

History of the area plus a large collection of period images and maps

<http://www.southlondonguide.co.uk/deptford/index.htm>

### **South Western Electricity Historical Society**

Ferranti's Deptford Power Station

<http://www.swehs.co.uk/archives/news25su.pdf>

### **St Paul's Church**

Information on the church's history, building and Sinfonia

<http://www.achurchnearyou.com/deptford-st-paul/>



---

## Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance in producing this Discovering Britain walk:

- **Sean Patterson** for creating the walk
- **Jenny Lunn** for editing the walk materials
- **Rory Walsh** for taking photographs
- **Caroline Millar** for editing the audio commentary
- **Nick Stanworth, Alex Ricketts, Sam Carlsson** and **Florence Lee** for additional assistance with compiling walk resources
- **The Charles Booth Online Archive at the Library of the London School of Economics & Political Science** (<http://booth.lse.ac.uk>) for kind permission to use maps, written records and images
- **The British Library** for permission to use images from the 'Deptford plans and drawings' collection
- **Lewisham Local History and Archives Centre** for access to superb archive photos (<https://picasaweb.google.com/lewishamheritage>)
- **The National Archives** for kind permission to reproduce an image from the Illustrated London News
- **Erica Pani** for testing the walk and providing useful feedback



**Britain's landscapes are wonderful.**

**There is a tremendous variety within our shores – whether in the countryside, in towns and cities or at the seaside. And every landscape has a story to tell about our past and present.**

**Discovering Britain is an exciting series of geographically-themed walks that aim to bring these stories alive and inspire everyone to explore and learn more about Britain. Each walk looks at a particular landscape, finding out about how forces of nature, people, events and the economy have created what you see today.**

**The self-guided walks are fun, informative and inspiring. Prepare to discover something new, to be surprised and to find the unexpected.**

**Visit [www.discoveringbritain.org](http://www.discoveringbritain.org) to**

**Send your review of this walk**

**Search for other walks**

**Suggest a new walk**