



Royal
Geographical
Society
with IBG

The heart of the Empire

A free self-guided walk along London's Strand



www.walktheworld.org.uk

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Walk the World is part of Discovering Places, the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad campaign to inspire the UK to discover their local environment. Walk the World is delivered in partnership by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) with Discovering Places (The Heritage Alliance) and is principally funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor. The digital and print maps used for Walk the World are licensed to RGS-IBG from Ordnance Survey.



The
Heritage
Alliance



The heart of the Empire

Discover London's Strand and its imperial connections

Welcome to Walk the World! This walk in London is one of 20 in different parts of the UK. Each of these walks explores how the 206 participating nations in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games have been part of the UK's history for many centuries. Along the routes you will discover evidence of how many countries have shaped our towns and cities.

At its height, Britain's Empire covered one-quarter of the Earth's land area and one-third of the world's population. It was the largest Empire in history. The Empire's beating heart was London and The Strand one of its major arteries. This mile-long street beside the River Thames was home to some of the Empire's administrative, legal and commercial functions.

On this walk you will discover how running an empire shaped Britain. Visit world-famous landmarks from iconic buildings to tiny shops. Discover international stories behind everyday features of British life from tea and tobacco to language and the law.

The days of Empire are long gone but its legacy remains in the landscape. A walk down this modern London street is a fascinating journey through Britain's imperial history.



Scenes from the Strand
Mike Jackson © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Route map



Stopping points

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| S. Temple Underground station | 12. India House |
| 2. Victoria Embankment terrace | 13. Somerset House |
| 3. British American Tobacco | 14. Simpson's-in-the-Strand |
| 4. Temple Bar memorial | 15. The Savoy Hotel |
| 5. Twining's tea shop | 16. Stanley Gibbons |
| 6. Royal Courts of Justice | 17. Royal Society of Arts |
| 7. Samuel Johnson statue | 18. Zimbabwe House |
| 8. St Clement Danes Church | 19. Coutts bank |
| 9. Australia House | 20. Charing Cross station |
| 10. Bush House | 21. South Africa House |
| 11. Kingsway | F. Trafalgar Square |

Practical information

Location	The Strand, Westminster, central London
Getting there	<p>Underground - the walk starts from Temple station. Embankment, Aldwych, Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus and Waterloo are also nearby.</p> <p>Train - the nearest mainline station is Charing Cross, which serves Kent and Sussex routes. The Strand is also accessible from Waterloo via Waterloo Bridge.</p> <p>Bus - many local bus routes run along the Strand or to Aldwych and Trafalgar Square at either end of the route</p> <p>Bicycle - there are several Barclays Cycle Hire docking stations nearby</p>
Start point	Temple Underground station, WC2R 2PH
Finish point	Trafalgar Square
Onward journey	To return to Temple station use Directions 22 (on page 12)
Distance	1 ¼ miles
Level	Gentle - a simple city centre route, though by a busy road.
Conditions	The whole route is on pavements. Mostly flat bar a slope from Temple Place (Stop 3). Alternate directions given to avoid steps.

Suitable for	<p>Families - take care of young children when crossing busy roads</p> <p>Wheelchairs / pushchairs - an entirely step-free route</p>
Refreshments	There are plenty of places to stop for food and drink along the route, from cafes and pubs to the hotel restaurants. At the end of the route, we recommend the crypt of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church.
Toilets	Public toilets available at Victoria Embankment (Stop 2) and the museums in Trafalgar Square
Other info	<p>The route can be very busy especially at weekends, Christmas time and in the tourist season.</p> <p>Trafalgar Square often hosts special events, from concerts to demonstrations. Check before travelling.</p>
Family-friendly activities	<p>St Clement Danes Church (Stop 8) is open daily from 9am-4pm except Bank Holidays, special services & events. Please call before visiting. Tel: 020 7242 8282.</p> <p>Somerset House (Stop 13) is open daily 10am-6pm. Entry to the Courtauld Gallery is £6. In winter the courtyard hosts an ice rink (ticketed entry). Tel: 020 7845 4600</p> <p>The National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery are open daily from 10am-6pm (9pm Fridays). Free entry except to special exhibitions.</p>
Tourist Information	The nearest Piccadilly Circus Travel Information Centre at Piccadilly Circus Underground station

Directions

These directions are for use with the Imperial London walk audio commentary. Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

1. Welcome to Imperial London

Temple Underground station

Directions 1 - Exit Temple Underground station and turn left. Go up the small flight of steps and turn left again. Go through the wrought iron gate, up the stairs and onto the terrace of Victoria Embankment Gardens. When you are overlooking the Thames Embankment, listen to Track 2.

Note for wheelchair / pushchair users: Sadly there is no step-free access to the terrace but there is a reasonably good view of the Victoria Embankment from outside Temple station.

2. An Imperial platform

Victoria Embankment

Directions 2 - If you are on the terrace, go back down the steps. Turn right along Temple Place. Stop by the offices of the British American Tobacco Company at Globe House. Listen to Track 3.

3. Up in smoke

British American Tobacco, 4 Temple Place

Directions 3 - Continue along Temple Place. Pass the building with a ship weathervane and go into a small passageway on the left. Take the first left on to Milford Lane. Continue up to the Cheshire Cheese pub - take care as the pavement is very narrow. Turn right into Little Essex Street, then left into Essex Street. Continue up to the Strand. Turn right at the end and stop by the monument in the middle of the road with a black dragon on top. Listen to Track 4.

4. A dragon's den

Temple Bar memorial

Directions 4 - Retrace your steps a short way and walk along the left hand side of the Strand. Continue up to number 216, the Twining's tea shop. Listen here to Track 5.

5. Taste of Empire

Twining's tea shop, 216 Strand

Directions 5 - Stay at Twining's tea shop and look across the road at the Royal Courts of Justice. Listen to Track 6.

6. The legal world

Royal Courts of Justice

Directions 6 - Use the pedestrian crossing outside the Courts to reach the central reservation. Then carefully turn left into the grounds at the back of St Clement Danes Church. Stop by the first statue, which is of Samuel Johnson, and listen to Track 7.

7. A common language

Samuel Johnson statue, St Clement Danes churchyard

Directions 7 - Walk around the Church to the front entrance. Stand between the two military statues and listen to Track 8.

8. From Empire to Commonwealth

St Clements Danes Church

Directions 8 - With your back to the church entrance, cross over the two pelican crossings ahead and stop outside Australia House. Listen to Track 9.

9. Signs of confidence

Australia House, Aldwych

Directions 9 - With Australia House on your left, continue onto Aldwych. Stop outside Bush House at the junction of Aldwych and Kingsway. Listen to Track 10.

10. London calling

Bush House, Aldwych

Directions 10 - Remain in the same place but look across to the end of Kingsway. Listen to Track 11.

11. Pomp and circumstance

Kingsway

Directions 11 - Continue around Aldwych and stop outside the next building, India House. Listen to Track 12.

12. A changing relationship

India House, Aldwych

Directions 12 - Continue then turn left into India Place. At the end, cross the Strand using the pelican crossing. When you reach the other side turn right and stand in front of Somerset House. Listen to Track 13.

13. A full house

Somerset House

Directions 13 - Continue along the Strand. Cross over Lancaster Place and pass Savoy Street. Stop at the entrance to number 100, Simpson's. Listen to Track 14.

14. Grand masters

Simpson's-in-the-Strand, 100 Strand

Directions 14 - Continue a short way along the Strand until you reach Savoy Court. When you have a good view of the Savoy sign stop and listen to Track 15.

15. History and luxury

The Savoy Hotel

Directions 15 - Continue along the left side of the Strand up to an arched entranceway. Look across road and you should be able to see the Stanley Gibbons stamp shop opposite. Listen to Track 16.

16. Stamp duties

Stanley Gibbons Stamps, 399 Strand

Directions 16 - Continue along the Strand and cross over Adam Street. About 50 metres further stop by the set of steps on the left that lead down to the Royal Society of Arts building. Listen to Track 17.

17. The great exhibitors

The Royal Society of Arts

Directions 17 - Continue a short distance along The Strand and look across the road for a gap between the buildings. On the corner of Agar Street you will see number 429 Strand, Zimbabwe House. When you have a good view, listen to Track 18.

18. Roads to independence

Zimbabwe House, 429 Strand

Directions 18 - Once again, continue a short distance down the Strand. After about 25 metres, look across the road for a dark glass fronted building. This is the head office of Coutts Bank. Listen to Track 19

19. Savers and sharers

Coutts, 440 Strand

Directions 19 - Continue along the Strand and pass Villiers Street and the stairway for the Underground station. Turn left into Charing Cross Station forecourt. Stop at a safe place and listen to Track 20.

20. Making tracks

Charing Cross station

Directions 20 - Leave Charing Cross Station forecourt and turn left onto the Strand. Continue up to the traffic lights before Trafalgar Square. Cross the road at the lights and stop in front of South Africa House. Listen to Track 21.

21. A return to freedom

South Africa House

Directions 21 - From South Africa House use the pedestrian crossings to go into Trafalgar Square. Face the National Gallery then turn to the building on its left. Listen to Track 22.

22. A journey across the Empire

Trafalgar Square

Directions 22 - From Trafalgar Square you can visit The National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and St Martin-in-the-Fields Church. The Houses of Parliament, the South Bank, Leicester Square and the West End are also nearby. To return to Temple Underground station you can retrace your way back along the Strand or use the District & Circle Lines from Charing Cross station.

Further information

Find out more about the walk story and places of interest along the route:

Australia House

www.uk.embassy.gov.au/lhlh/History.html

Coutts

www.coutts.com

English Speaking Countries

englishspeakingcountries.org

High Commission of India

hcilondon.in/indiahouse.php

The Royal Society of Arts

www.thersa.org

St Clement Danes Church

www.raf.mod.uk/stclementdanes

Simpson's-in-the-Strand

www.simpsonsinthestrland.co.uk

Somerset House

www.somersethouse.org.uk

South African High Commission

southafricahouseuk.com

Stanley Gibbons

www.stanleygibbons.com

Twining's

www.twining.co.uk

Zimbabwean Embassy

zimbabwe.embassyhomepage.com

Credits

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- **Alastair Owens** for providing the materials that inspired this walk
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The
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Alliance





The UK is an island nation but we are by no means isolated -
we are a hub of worldwide connections.

Walk the World is an exciting series of free geographically-themed
walks that aim to show how the UK is linked with the 206 countries
due to compete at London 2012.

Each walk explores how the Olympic and Paralympic Nations
and their people have shaped our surroundings -
often in surprising ways.

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

Visit www.walktheworld.org.uk

Submit your own links

Search for other walks

Find out how to create your own walk