

ARCADIAN THAMES WALKS

Below is one of the TLS Arcadian Thames Walks that will lead you around the fascinating River Thames on your doorstep. They are a set of six healthy walks for all the family to enjoy, available from local Tourist Information Centres, attractions, pubs and hotels or to download from the TLS website.

BE SAFE AND ENJOY YOUR VISIT
 The foreshore is an amazing place to discover hidden treasures and explore, but please be aware of the following:

- Wash hands before eating and drinking.
- Wear sensible shoes/wellies for walking on the shore.
- Do not wander off on your own, the tide can turn suddenly.
- Be aware of deep water.
- Advise children not to run, there are often hidden trip hazards.
- Keep an eye out for passing boats – they may produce a sudden wash.
- The area is tidal, so please be aware that the tide will come in and may flood certain areas. If unsure, check the times of the tide before setting out.

THE THAMES LANDSCAPE STRATEGY (TLS)
 The TLS aims to conserve, enhance and promote the remarkable Arcadian Thames between Hampton and Kew. London's Arcadia is a £1 million Heritage Lottery Funded project to implement the TLS and encourage more people to use the riverside. Visit our website at www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk

FREE CHILDRENS ACTIVITY SHEET
 A free activity sheet for children to take on the walk is available from our website. www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk

KEY

- Bus Route
- The Arcadian Thames Walk
- Thames Path
- Place of Interest
- Tripboat Stop
- Pub
- Toilets
- Specialist Shops

Approximate Distance:
 10 km/6 miles (3 hours)

HAMMERTONS FERRY
 Tel: 020 8892 9620
 Feb - Oct: Mon - Sun and public holidays 10.00 and 16.00 or dusk if earlier.
 Dec - Jan: Weekends only 10.00 and dusk.
 Nov: No service during November.

WESTMINSTER PASSENGER SERVICES ASSOCIATION
 Tel: 020 7930 2062/4721
 Westminster, Kew, Richmond, Hampton Court

TURKS LAUNCHES
 Tel: 020 8346 2434
 Richmond, Kingston, Hampton Court

PARR'S CIRCULAR CHURCHES
 Tel: 020 8917 8850/37956 902 646
 Richmond Pier, Teddington Lock

Access Information: Some sections of the walk have a rough and uneven surface. There are several steps and steep climbs. A series of accessible guides are available on the TLS website.

RECREATION, TRANSPORTATION AND RIVER USE

An important consideration in all TLS project work is to improve access to, connections along and understanding of the Thames corridor. The Arcadian Thames offers unrivalled recreational opportunities, whether this is a stroll along the river, a summer picnic, a trip on a boat or simply a stress-free commute to work along the towpath. A draft Visitor, Education and Outreach Action Plan was completed in 2008 with the ultimate vision to link up the attractions and town centres along the river by boat, connected to a legible, dry and accessible network of cycle, walking and public transport routes.



GR8 River Race 2008



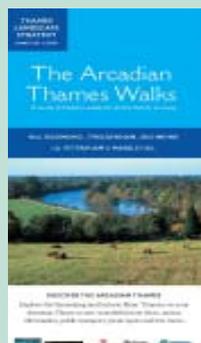
Improving the Connections Between River Transport and Local Attractions is a Key Element of the TLS Plan

Working through the action plan, the TLS has teamed up with a number of partners to investigate exciting new ways of enhancing use of the river corridor. During 2008 a new pontoon was opened by the Environment Agency at Teddington to facilitate trip boats and for private boats to tie up to whilst waiting for the lock to open. Further trip boat stops are being investigated at Hammerton's Ferry (for Marble Hill, Ham House and Orleans Gallery) and Twickenham. 2008 also saw the launch of the TLS Treasures by the Thames leaflet that cites 45 must-see locations along the Arcadian Thames as well as a wildlife leaflet explaining the natural attractions of the area.

Four new walking leaflets were published and an interpretation panel was unveiled at Richmond Riverside by local resident Bamber Gascoigne celebrating the area's unique waterman heritage. A new dual cycle and walking route has been completed between Kingston Bridge and Hampton village through the TLS Hampton Court Approaches project. Managed by Neil West from the London Borough of Richmond, this exciting new link has greatly improved amenity and the appearance of the busy main road between Home and Bushy Parks.



Improving Connections Between Public Transport and Other Sustainable Travel Options



Arcadian Thames Walking Guides



Enjoying the Riverside

The TLS is also embarking on a new project linked to Transport for London's Smarter Travel initiative to investigate how sustainable travel planning can be maximised along the river. A key consideration will be to provide a series of linked transport options (such as bus, walking or boat) connecting any infrastructure and signage improvements with landscape enhancements particularly those associated with managing places for water during periods of flood. This could see a network of dry routes to guide people from the towpath in times of high tide and flooding so as to continue their journey without getting wet. This would have additional benefits for cycling and access.

Working with Kingston Rowing Club and local regattas, funding has also been secured for a new pontoon at Canbury Gardens for use by the busy club.

FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION

Restoration of the Lost Floodplain

'To work in partnership to re-create, conserve, connect and enhance the natural character of the floodplain in response to climate change for people, wildlife and occasionally water'.

The River Thames is London's best known natural feature. It twists and turns through the capital, changing from a freshwater river at Molesey into a saline estuary in the east. Between Hampton and Kew in the upper reaches of London's river, there are a remarkable number of connected open spaces

– a unique landscape of historic, natural and cultural significance that has been celebrated for over three hundred years as 'The Arcadian Thames' – meaning a rural paradise where humans and nature co-exist in harmony.

Since Neolithic times, this remarkable landscape has been shaped by human activity – modifications to the floodplain responding to the changing needs of local populations. Wildlife has been quick to adapt to these changes, taking advantage of man's modifications to the natural environment whilst recreational activity has constantly evolved as new stretches of riverside have been opened up.

Many of these changes to the floodplain, particularly those taking place after WW II however, have seen a considerable reduction in the floodplain's capacity to accommodate water – the traditional water meadows and wetland habitats being replaced by new higher 'dry' environments or encroached on for housing - very little of the floodplain today is truly 'natural'. To a large extent this has not been a problem, particularly since the construction of the Thames Barrier. Climate change however, has altered the balance.

Climate Change & Flood Risk



Thames Barrier

As climate changes, the risk from tidal surges, sea level rise, freshwater flooding and the inflow of water from urban drainage is set to intensify, putting the floodplain at increasing risk from flooding. It is expected, for example, that fluvial flows entering the tidal river at Teddington could increase by up to 40% by 2080.

At present, flooding throughout the Thames landscape is managed by the Thames Barrier. However, the Environment Agency predicts that this is unsustainable in the future. Unavoidable modifications will be needed in the way that the Barrier is used in order to protect Central London from increased flood risk rather than the parks and gardens of Arcadia.

Increasing flood risk and changes in the operation of the Thames Barrier could have a significant effect on the towpaths, parks and gardens along the floodplain between Hampton and Kew, much of which is low lying and not protected by high flood walls. As such, it is anticipated that over the coming years a much greater part of the floodplain will be inundated with water and that this flooding will happen with increasing frequency – particularly when a fluvial flood meets a high tide moving up river. At present much of the floodplain is simply not ready for this increased inundation. Historic landscapes, wildlife sites and human use of the riverside will be affected in the following ways:

- * More space will be needed to store flood water reducing the area that can be used for recreation (which will be at a premium as the city heats up)
- * Established habitats will begin to decline, forcing species to migrate across regions, searching out new habitats. To survive, wildlife will need large areas of linked natural open space to move about in that is appropriate to wet conditions



High tide, River Lane, Richmond

FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION

- * Increased flooding could stretch the emergency services, and people living in riverside properties will need to prepare themselves for flood events.
- * Established recreational movement patterns will be considerably altered by rising waters (particularly on the towpaths and riverside parks) putting the long-term viability of sustainable transport and visitor initiatives at risk.
- * Housing will be affected and it is expected that flotsam and jetsam will increase.

Case Study - Ham Towpath



Low Tide



High Spring Tide

Climate change predictions show that flooding events will increase, possibly becoming the norm, reducing the amount of time that the paths are open to visitors, commuters and locals to enjoy. Dry routes are needed - designed under a holistic masterplan for the floodplain that accounts for water, wildlife and humans.

Increased flood events will have a considerable impact on the infrastructure that sustains much of the recreational patterns along the river. Already the towpath is regularly washed away by spring tides and floods – restoration of the floodplain would help to put in place sustainable solutions to reduce this occurrence.



Before



After

The construction of the Hammertons Boardwalk demonstrates how dry routes can be incorporated into the landscape connecting the network of walking and cycling routes

The Hammertons Boardwalk was designed to connect Ham Avenues with the towpath in a way that respected the rural character of the area yet conformed to strict accessibility standards. The structure also needed to be above the spring high tide level. The boardwalk was nominated for the Transport for London Awards 2007.

Following this success, a second boardwalk is currently being built on Douglas Meadow.

FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION

Making Space for Water and TE2100

To plan for effects of climate change and increased flood risk, a radical new approach to managing the floodplain is being proposed by DEFRA called 'Making Space for Water' to create multi-use spaces for people, wildlife and occasionally water.

On the tidal Thames, the Environment Agency has begun a series of studies to understand what the flood risk is and how this could change over the next century. This study is called TE2100 – a suite of adaptable measures to keep flood risk below an acceptable level of risk - ranging from rainwater recycling, SUD, emergency planning, controlled inundation of riverside spaces, new tidal barrages and restoration of lost floodplains.

Aims

The proposed TLS 'Restoration of the Lost Floodplain' project provides a holistic and co-ordinated way forward to implement (on the ground) the TE2100 scheme and a raft of other initiatives that could be affected by rising flood risk (including: 'Making Space for Water' the Water Framework Directive, 'Living Landscapes', the Mayor for London's 'Smarter Travel Initiative', Legible London and borough aspirations). It intends to work towards the following aims:



- To Restore the Natural Morphology of the Landscape
To restore and recreate the natural character and functions of the floodplain where possible incorporating lost historic elements and natural river features and processes
- To Achieve Floodplain Optimisation to Manage and reduce Flood Risk
To restore the natural functions of the riparian landscape in order to maximise the floodplain's capacity to store and release water in a managed way.
- To Create a Living Landscape
To restore, re-create and re-connect a mosaic of linked habitats that can adapt flexibly to climate change, that are natural to the floodplain and are sustained by the rhythms of the river in order for a diverse population of wildlife to move about in and flourish
- A Sustainable-Well Managed Landscape
To put in place a long-term management plan through the creation of a social enterprise to manage the new landscape
- A Connected Landscape for Everyone to Safely Use, Enjoy and Understand
To put in place a series of measures to facilitate recreational patterns and reduce the risk to personal safety from flooding. To increase understanding and use of the floodplain by all sectors of the community, visitors and tourists (during normal flow, in a flood event and in periods of drought) that is legible and accessible
- World Heritage Site Status
To continue to restore the Arcadian Thames to a level at which it can be nominated for UNESCO World Heritage Status in recognition of its unique contribution to world culture – a visitor attraction in its own right, a place to escape the hustle and bustle of modern city life and a place where people want to live