



www.kewsociety.org

A CIRCULAR WALK AROUND KEW

1. KEW GARDENS STATION

The walk starts on the west side of the railway track at the main ticket office. The two-storey yellow-brick station buildings are an excellent example of mid-Victorian railway architecture. Following the completion of the Kew Railway Bridge over the river, the railway station opened in 1869 with electric trains being introduced in 1906 and the last steam trains phased out in 1916. Kew Gardens is the only London Underground station with a pub still attached. The station flowerbeds are maintained by the Kew Society.

2. KEW VILLAGE

With your back to the station, ahead is what is now called Kew Village – although in past centuries, Kew Village was deemed to be the area around Kew Green.

Looking to your left you will see the steps of **Hennebique Bridge**. This 1912 footbridge is a rare surviving example of a reinforced 'wrought iron frame clad in concrete' structure built using the pioneering technique of French engineer, François Hennebique. The bridge's narrow deck and high walls were designed to protect its users' clothing from the smoke of steam trains passing underneath. Also on your left, beside Pether the butcher, is a cobbled cul-de-sac which originally housed several engineering workshops. It was here that viscose, patented as 'Rayon', was first developed in 1894.

Opposite, on your right, the first wooden single-storey lock-up shops appeared in the late 1880s, built on former fields and market gardens. It is from these beginnings that the village has evolved into what you see today and we are very fortunate to have a wide variety of independent shops, such as the Kew Bookshop. You can find a list of these on our website at www.kewsociety.org/community-links. The village also hosts a market on the first Sunday of the month selling quality food and crafts.

Walk straight ahead past the bus stop. Cross Sandycombe Road at the zebra crossing and continue along Lichfield Road, which is lined with some of the finest Victorian houses in Kew.



3. VICTORIA GATE

Ahead and on the opposite side of Kew Road you will see **Victoria Gate**, formally opened on Queen Victoria's birthday in 1889 and the most popular entrance to Kew Gardens. Also, you can't miss within Kew Gardens a tall brick tower, the Campanile, built in the 1840s by Decimus Burton (architect of Kew Gardens' Palm House and Temperate House) as a water tower and chimney for the Palm House.

Keeping Victoria Gate on the opposite side of the road, turn right and walk along Kew Road. Opposite the junction with Kew Gardens Road you will see **Cumberland Gate**, built in 1868 to cater for the increased visitor numbers to Kew Gardens due to the arrival of the railway, but now no longer in use.

4. THE ORIGINAL MAIDS OF HONOUR

Continue to **The Original Maids of Honour**. Legend has it that King Henry VIII came across Anne Boleyn eating the famous Maids of Honour curd pastry tarts at Richmond Palace. Tasting one, the king was so delighted that he confiscated the recipe and demanded it be kept secret. The Newens family, who owned The Original Maids of Honour from 1827 to 2009, moving to this site in 1850, had inherited the recipe for the famous tarts, and it continues to be kept secret by today's owners.

Continuing on, you will pass the gated entrance to **Gloucester Court**, the first blocks of flats on Kew Road, which was built in the 1930s.



Just before the bus stop, take note of **352 Kew Road** which was home to the American-born Walter Howell Deverell, one of the Pre-Raphaelite painters. Here, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, another Pre-Raphaelite artist, painted the ethereal Lizzie Siddall, whom he later married.

356–358 Kew Road (Denmark House) is where Franz Bauer (1758–1840) first lived in Kew. He was the first botanical illustrator at Kew Gardens, becoming Botanical Painter to King George III and spending 50 years in the role. He and his brother were trained in Vienna and are regarded as two of the best botanical artists of all times.

On the other side of the road are the two arched bricked-up entrances behind which, from 1882 to 1928, the **Kew Volunteer Fire Brigade** was located, operating with volunteer staff from Kew Gardens.

At the junction with Mortlake Road, walk left across Kew Road at the lights and you will be outside **Descanso House (197–199 Kew Road)**, lived in by William Aiton who was Head Gardener of Kew Gardens from 1759. Across the road, the row of shops and houses dates from 1876 and this junction was further widened in 1937.

Bear left and pass **The Botanist Pub**. Once a butcher's premises, note the wide corner entrance which allowed animals and carts to access the yard at the back. The heavy oak doors, butcher's hooks just inside the pub and large shop window, with the ceramic tiles below, still remain.

5. KEW GREEN

You are now on **Kew Green**. Kew Village grew up around the Green over time. Due to the close proximity of Richmond Palace, houses were built around Kew Green by Tudor noblemen, courtiers and wealthy merchants and this was repeated when the Georgian royal family resided at Kew. They were attracted by the local hunting grounds and the desire to escape as far as possible from the stench and disease of London. In the Second World War, the Green was used for growing vegetables and honeycombed with air-raid shelters.

Just outside the church walls is **The Kew War Memorial** – unveiled in June 1921, it now commemorates local people who fell in both World Wars. It was originally surrounded by a very low fence, but because horses grazing on the Green were able to eat flowers placed on the Cross, the protective railing you see today was erected in 1927.

6. ST ANNE'S CHURCH

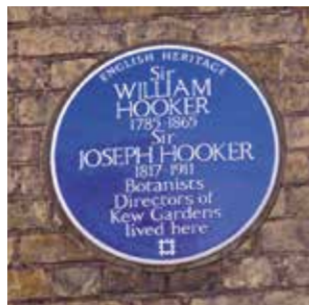
In 1710, following a request from local residents, land and money were donated by Queen Anne for the church, and St Anne's was consecrated in 1714. It was extensively added to by royal successors, notably King George III, and the enlargement of the church has continued into the 21st century. In the late 18th century, school lessons were held in the south aisle of the church. If the church is open it is well worth a look inside.



In **St. Anne's Churchyard** can be found the tomb of **Thomas Gainsborough** (1727–1788), one of Britain's greatest artists. Gainsborough was favoured by King George III and, along with two other painters buried here, **Johann Zoffany** and **Jeremiah Meyer**, was a founder member of the Royal Academy. Many other notable people are interred here.

From here, start walking clockwise around Kew Green. Most of the houses/buildings you pass on the south side were once owned by royalty and now belong to Kew Gardens. For example, **Cambridge Cottage (37 Kew Green)**, with the white stone portico, became the residence of the 1st Duke of Cambridge and, following the death of the 2nd Duke of Cambridge (grandson of George III) in 1904, was presented to Kew Gardens by King Edward VII. Today, Cambridge Cottage and garden are leased out for functions.

Don't miss the **Post Box** mounted on the wall just beyond 43–45 Kew Green. This is one of only two mounted letterboxes, and the only King George VI letterbox, in Kew.



In 1851, **49 Kew Green** became the residence of **Sir William Hooker** (1785–1865), who had been appointed Kew Gardens' first official Director in 1841. It was under William Hooker that Kew Gardens was enlarged and first opened to the public. He collected plants from around the globe and Hooker's herbarium – of a

million specimens – formed the nucleus of the present world-renowned collections. His son, **Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker** (1817–1911), lived in the house when he succeeded his father as Director. Joseph Dalton Hooker, a life-long friend of Charles Darwin, made a huge contribution to the collections and scientific work of the Gardens. Ever since, the house has been the home of every Kew Director during their time in office.



7. ELIZABETH GATE

Elizabeth Gate has wrought iron double entrance gates to Kew Gardens for carriages, flanked on either side by pedestrian gates. The original gates, installed in 1846, were designed by Sir Decimus Burton. The gates were refurbished, renamed Elizabeth Gate in honour of HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and re-opened by HRH Princess Alexandra in 2012.

Note the **K6-type telephone box**. The K6, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V, was produced from 1936.

Kew Gardens' Herbarium House, behind the iron railings, became Kew Gardens' first on-site herbarium in 1852 and is a centre for its scientific work, also housing the magnificent Library and Archives.

Continuing clockwise, you pass a row of very fine 18th and 19th century houses. **79 Kew Green, The Cricketers Pub**, has been on this site since 1729. Cricket has been played on Kew Green since the early 18th century and the Kew Cricket Club was formed in 1882, although the pavilion wasn't built until 1964.

Walk up the slope past **85 Kew Green** on the corner: formerly the site of the Kings Arms Inn, it was rebuilt around 1910 as a restaurant. Cross at the lights and you will be looking directly at Caxton Name Plate Manufacturing Co. Ltd.'s name on the west wall of **110 Kew Green, Caxton House**. They produced a range of car and motorcycle club badges from 1964 until they ceased trading in 1997.

Follow the road that continues around the Green and pass **The Greyhound Pub** to reach **Kew Pond**.

8. KEW POND

A creek running from the River Thames, where King Henry VIII's royal barge was moored when he hunted in the surrounding countryside, originally fed the pond. Enlarged to become a fishery in Saxon times, this pond was later used by the local monks to hold fish to be eaten on non-meat days. In time, it became a village pond used for watering livestock and cleaning carriage and cart wheels, then in the twentieth century Kew Pond fell into disrepair. Now, once a month, the Friends of Kew Pond replenish it via a tunnel and valve system linking it to the river.

The Green and the church feature in paintings by the French Impressionist artist, **Camille Pissarro** (1830–1903). If you have time, continue clockwise around the Green to 10 Kew Green which is where Pissarro stayed in 1892. You will pass 22 Kew Green where Pre-Raphaelite painter, **Arthur Hughes** (1832–1915) lived. Then retrace your steps to Kew Pond.

Turn to your left away from the pond, look across to 68 Kew Green.



9. WESTERLY WARE

Walk down the lane between 68 and 66 Kew Green and turn left where a sign directs you to Thetis Terrace. *Wheelchair users follow the signs for step-free access to the riverside and on reaching the towpath, turn right to re-join the walking route, having traversed three sides of Westerly Ware.* Turn right along Thetis Terrace and admire the late 19th century, two-storey artisan cottages and their delightful gardens.

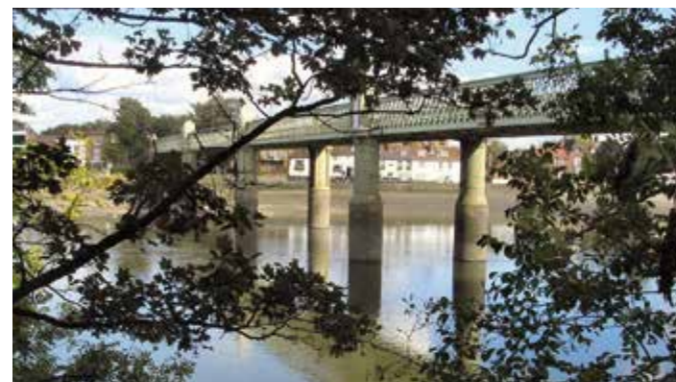
On your left is **Westerly Ware** where in previous centuries fishermen dried their nets and sorted their catch. It became a public recreation ground in the last century and the Westerly Ware Association of local residents now oversees the area. On reaching the towpath via a few steps, look left to **Kew Bridge**. At times of the year when the foliage is dense you will need to walk to your left for a better view of the bridge.

10. KEW BRIDGE

From possibly as far back as Roman times, a ferry service crossed the River Thames between Brentford and Kew. The first, mostly wooden toll bridge opened in 1759 and was replaced thirty years later with a stone bridge – both were opened by King George III. The third and current bridge, constructed of Cornish granite, was named in honour of King Edward VII who performed the opening ceremony in 1903; however, it remained known as Kew Bridge.

Limited riverboat services run from **Kew Pier**, also found to your left.

11. THE THAMES PATH



Now, as you walk along the towpath, with the River Thames on your left, look across the river to Strand-on-the-Green, famous for its fine eighteenth century houses. Your view of the river will depend on whether the tide is high or low. Eels, carp and perch are amongst fish now found in the Thames – plus the occasional dolphin, whale or seal.

Pass Watcombe Cottages on your right before reaching **Kew Allotments**. In 1917, this land was divided into 50 plots for families to cultivate for food during WWI. Interest in allotments grew again during WW2 with the 'Dig for Victory' campaign.



Midstream is **Oliver's Ait** – a valuable site for wildfowl and nature conservation, managed by the Port of London Authority. Legend has it that Oliver Cromwell either visited the Ait to discuss military plans or took refuge there during the Civil War.

Pass under the historic **Kew Railway Bridge** and turn right. Immediately on your left, the small woodland is a nature reserve – home to the rare two-lipped door snail. Walk on, keeping the railway line on your right, and on your left pass the 1970s Brutalist architecture of **The National Archives**.

12. THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Almost opposite the fourth lamp post take the narrow entrance to the right of the large metal gate into the landscaped grounds of The National Archives. (NB. The entrance is open in the daytime until approximately 7pm).

Turn left and follow the path through the park to the front of The National Archives' building. As the official archive for the UK government, it is home to one of the oldest and largest collections of public records in the world, including the original Domesday Book and Shakespeare's will. A rotating exhibition programme showcases highlights from the collection, with free family activities and a well-stocked gift shop and café also available.

With your back to the main entrance of The National Archives, take the path dividing the two ponds. Be sure to read the plaques giving information about Ruskin Avenue and WW2, and the **There be monsters** globe sculpture.



Turn left before the gates, keeping The National Archives' car park on your right, and walk straight ahead. Leave via the Levett Square exit to the east of the archives and at a mini-roundabout turn right to walk up Bessant Drive, keeping the R68 bus stop (bound for Richmond) on your left-hand side.

Look to your left on Bessant Drive to see **Kew Retail Park**.

13. KEW RETAIL PARK

Kew Retail Park is situated on the former site of the WW1 Glendower Aircraft Factory that built De Havilland DH-4s and Sopwith Salamanders. The adjacent riverside area was the runway where planes were tested. In 1923 it was taken over by Dodge (part of Chrysler Motors from 1928) who made model Kew trucks and cars there. Chrysler Airflow, De Soto and Plymouth cars were assembled at this site from 1933 until WW2. The various DeSoto models were named **Richmond, Mortlake** and **Croydon**. The Plymouth models were **Kew Six** and **Wimbledon**. During WW2 aircraft fuselages were assembled on the site, which was badly damaged in 1944 by the second V2 rocket to land in Britain – it was announced as a gas explosion!

Keeping Kew Retail Park on your left, turn right and look across to **Gypsy Corner** – it was used as a camping site from the early 19th century. Cross over the Mortlake Road at the lights and arriving on the opposite side, turn right and immediately left up Beechwood Avenue. Turn right into West Park Road – in 1913, **25 West Park Road** was in the news as a 'safe house' for suffragettes on the run. **Kew Gardens Station** lies ahead. Cross the railway line by either the Hennebique Bridge or the subway to reach your starting point.

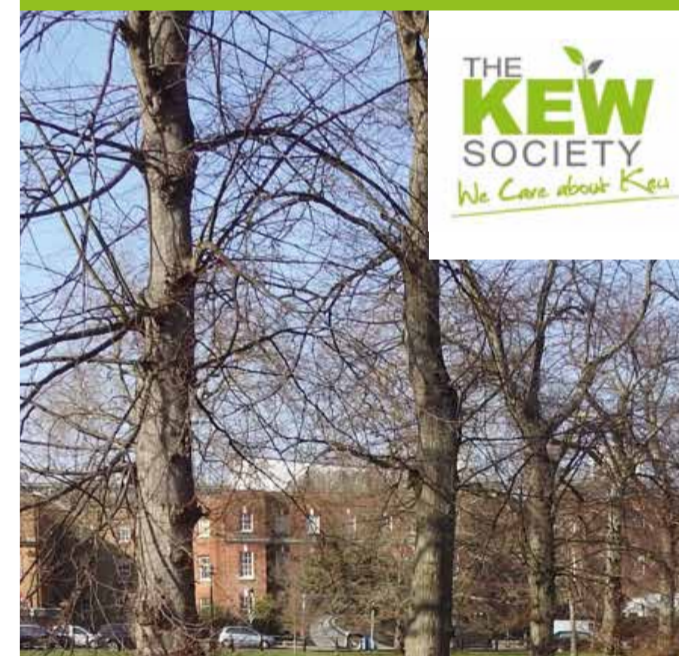
BUSES: Route 110 stops at Kew Garden station. Other nearby routes include stops 65, 297 and 267. **TRAIN:** Trains run from Waterloo via Vauxhall and Clapham Junction to Kew Bridge station. South West Trains run services to Richmond station. **TUBE:** Kew Gardens is in Zone 3 and served by the District Line (Richmond branch) and London Overground. Visit tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/ for more information.

HOW TO GET THERE

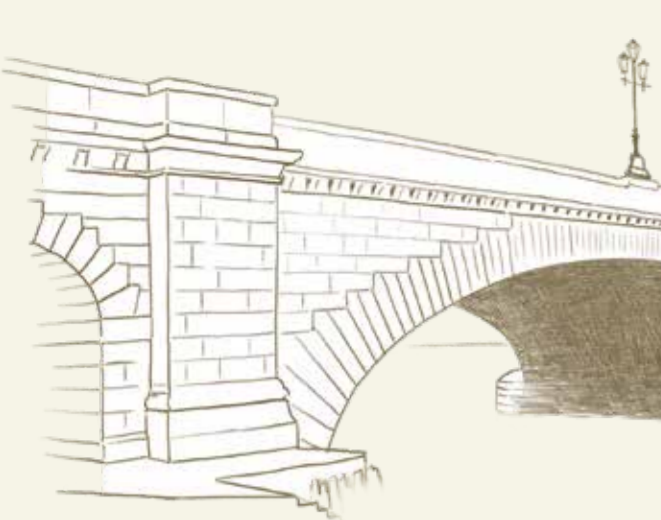
This circular walk is designed to show you some of the other delights of Kew and tell you a little of the history as you go. The walk is approximately 2.7 miles long; you should allow one to two hours depending how often you linger at points of interest. For more detailed history you can look at www.kewsociety.org/circularwalk.

From its early origins as a Saxon settlement on the River Thames, Kew flourished thanks to royal patronage and the arrival of the railway. Today, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (Kew Gardens) – designated by UNESCO in 2008 as a World Heritage Site – ensures that Kew is known around the world. If you are not already familiar with Kew Gardens, we strongly recommend that you plan to spend some time there.

A CIRCULAR WALK AROUND KEW



A circular walk designed to show you some of the delights of Kew and give you a little bit of history as you go.



KEW PALACE

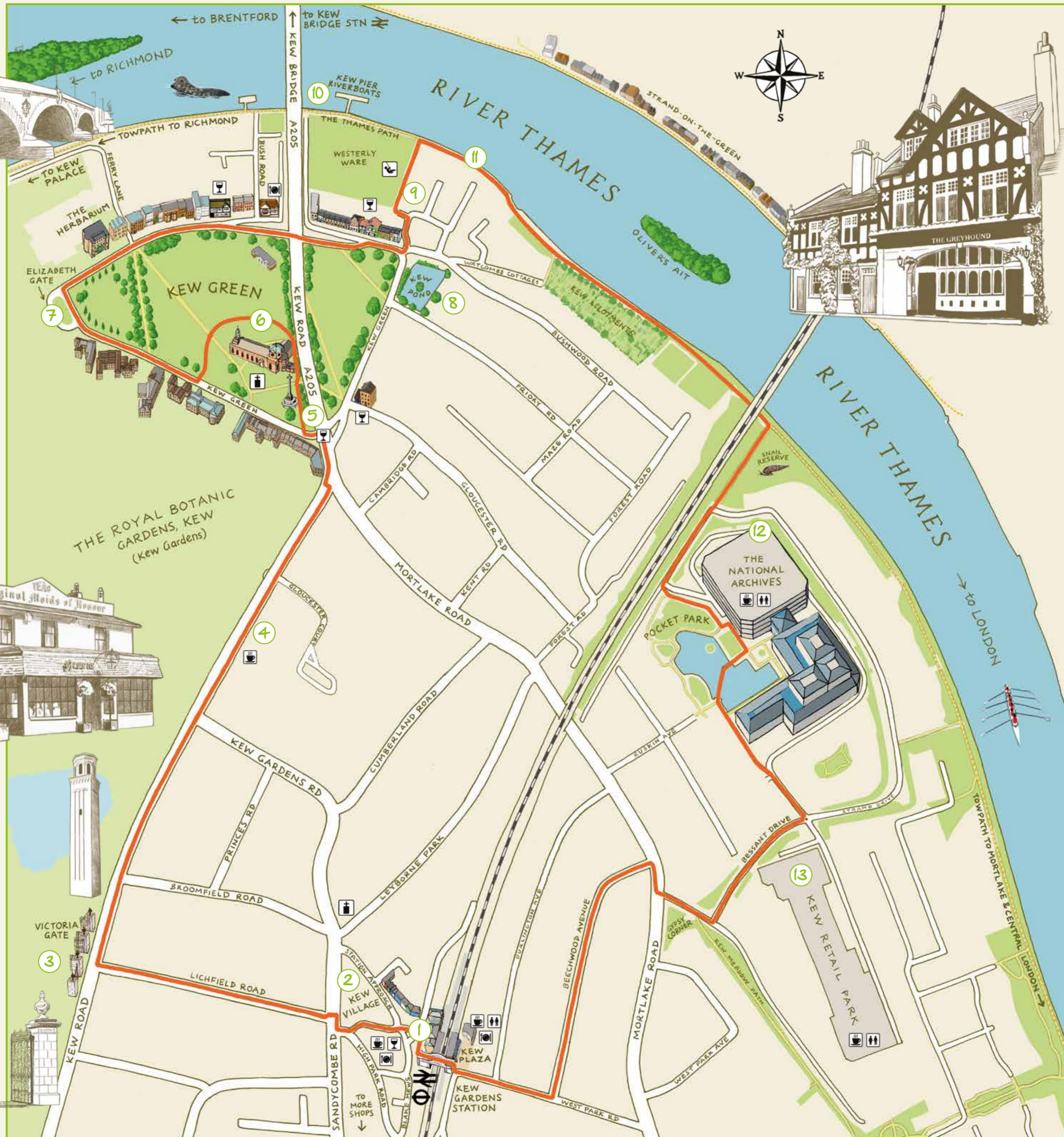
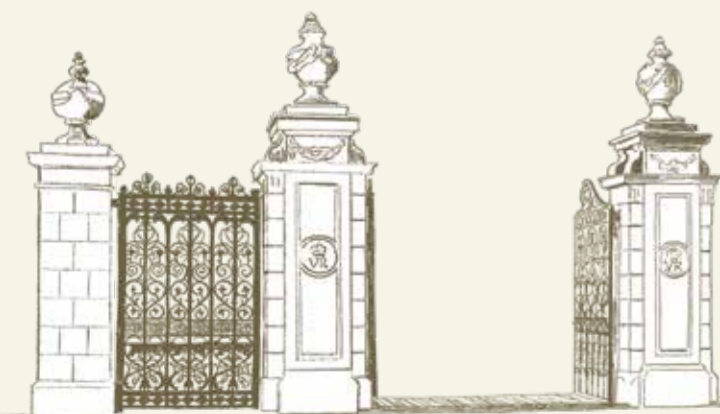


Located on the site of the old Kew Farm, a Dutch silk merchant named Samuel Fortrey who worked in the city of London, commissioned this fashionable red brick mansion to be built in 1631. Originally called the Dutch House, it became home to the royals and known as Kew Palace. Kew Palace sits in the grounds of Kew Gardens, on the bank of the River Thames.



THE CAMPANILE

The Campanile, a tall brick tower, was built in the 1840s by Decimus Burton (architect of Kew Gardens' Palm House and Temperate House) as a water tower and chimney for the Palm House.



THE KEW SOCIETY

If you live or work locally and are not already a member of the Kew Society, log onto our website www.kewsociety.org/join-us/ where you can read more about what we do and join online, or by sending a form to The Secretary, The Kew Society, 13 Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Surrey, TW9 4DR. The Kew Society is a registered charity, run by volunteers, for the benefit of everyone who lives or works in Kew.

Our work focuses on four main areas: planning (keeping a close eye on all proposed developments and their potential impact on the community, commenting where necessary); environment (protecting and improving our green spaces, the towpath and riverbank); gardening (establishing and maintaining local flowerbeds and community gardens around the village) and organising events for our members (talks, walks and social activities).

If you enjoyed your walk, you may wish to make a small donation to the Kew Village Sparkle Fund. This can be made via the donation box in The Shoe Station shop, situated where you started the walk by the station.

You will discover that Kew has more to offer than meets the eye, there are plenty of cafes, restaurants and interesting shops for browsing or buying. See www.kewsociety.org/community-links/ for more detailed information.

The village also hosts a market on the first Sunday of the month selling quality food and crafts – see www.kewvillagemarket.org.

Further information on the local area, please see Richmond Council's Local Studies Library and Archive service – www.richmond.gov.uk/local_studies_collection

KEY:

	Toilets		Restaurants
	Cafés		Pubs
	Churches		Playgrounds
	Circular Walk		
	District Line/Overground		



We are grateful to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Area Fund who have contributed to the funding of this leaflet.