

Artford Council's WONDERFUL WALKS

START

Step 1

Step 2

Read about the stone bridge here

Step 3

Step 4

Join in the fun at the skatepark

Step 5

Step 6

Keep an eye out for Central Park athletics track

Step 7

Walk No. 4: Central Park to Brooklands Lakes (via Princes Tunnel)

Length: **0.7 miles** Time: Approx. **1 hrs** Difficulty: **Easy**

Special details: Not fully wheelchair accessible around Brooklands Lakes. Perfect for dog walking. This route can be walked or cycled.

Sturdy footwear is recommended

www.dartford.gov.uk/wonderfulwalks

Step 1: Enter Central Park from Market Street with Dartford Library and Museum on your left. This highly ornamental section of the park was originally the back garden of "Bank House" in the High Street before Market Street was built in 1926.

Step 2: Walking through the park you will see on your left a small stone bridge which was originally a portion of the medieval Town Bridge.

Step 3: At the end of this straight path, called 'The Avenue,' will be the location of a traditional bandstand to be constructed as part of plans to restore Central Park's Edwardian splendour. The town's original bandstand was located close by.

Step 4: Turn sharp left and walk along the path towards the open parkland area where the skate park (constructed in 2007) can be found. Watch users of varying experience perform 360's or kickflips to your right.

Step 5: Carry along the path. To your left the River Darent flows alongside. This type of river is unusual as it is a perched chalk stream (it flows above the water table). This leg of the river flows into Acacia Hall and used to power Colyer's Mill where the Acacia Ballroom now stands.

Step 6: Continue walking south keeping Central Park Athletics track on your right. The track is home to Dartford Harriers where Steve Backley trained and which hosted Zola Budd's first race in the United Kingdom.

Step 7: Continue towards Princes Road embankment. This road, built as the Dartford Bypass, was opened by the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) in 1924 and included the two tunnels where the River Darent flowed.

"Our latest easy to follow walk takes you through the new Princes Tunnel walkway – the first of many improvements to Central Park as part of our plans to restore the park's Edwardian splendour so there is something for everyone to enjoy."



Councillor Jeremy Kite
Leader of the Council

Step 8

Use the Princes Tunnel to travel safely through to Brooklands Lakes

Step 9

Step 10

Step 11

Step 12

Follow the path alongside the lakes

Step 13

Step 14

Step 15

Head back towards Central Park

Step 16

Continue on for a longer walk

Step 17

Step 18

Step 19

Reach the gates of T.S. Anson

Step 20

Step 21

Back to the Princes Tunnel

FINISH

Step 8: Go through the gates to the western tunnel – opened in 2009 to allow pedestrians and cyclists to go from Central Park to Brooklands Lakes without the need to cross the busy road. This tunnel, now known as the Princes Tunnel is part of the Darent Valley Path.

Step 9: Follow the tunnel until you reach Brooklands Lakes, formerly known as Ellingham's Ponds. Dartford & District Angling and Preservation Society lease the fishing rights and the lakes are open to the public for fishing.

Step 10: At the junction of the paths beyond the gates turn left and then right just before the small bridges to follow the route. If you wish, crossing the bridges will take you to Princes Park, home of Dartford Football Club and one of the first eco stadiums.

Step 11: About 100 metres along the path you can visit an island with an industrial past on the left, over the bridge. It was cleared of derelict buildings in the 1980's. On the river you can see Brooklands House with the mill races next to it.

Step 12: Continue on the path with the lakes to your right and the River Darent to your left.

Step 13: Turn right to follow the lake side close to the back of the industrial units. The island in the centre of the lakes is a conservation island with no access for fishing so that birds may breed undisturbed.

Step 14: Keep to the lake side until you reach a bridge on the right and turn right onto the central path here.

Option: If you wish to have a longer walk of another 1.1km, continue walking around the lake side. See Step 16 onwards. This part is not suitable for wheelchairs.

Step 15: Follow the path until you reach the Princes Tunnels which will take you back through Central Park.

Step 16: Keep to the lake side with the industrial estate on your right for around 150m. The path turns right. Continue on for another 200m with the lakes still on your right.

Step 17: The path turns left over a narrow section of path. Continue until you reach the rear gardens of some houses and follow the path to the right.

Step 18: Keep the houses on your left and the lake on your right. This path eventually takes you to the rear of the Homebase store.

Step 19: Keep going past the store and car park. At the far end of the Homebase car park, turn left beyond the car park and you will reach the gates of T.S. Anson (home of Dartford Sea Scouts) on your right. You will see a car access gate in the distance off of Princes Road. Continue for around another 100m.

Step 20: You will reach a wide roughly finished tarmac path before the Princes Road car park entrance. Turn right past the barrier and follow the wide path with the lake on your right.

Step 21: After around 300m you will reach the Princes Tunnel from Step 9. Retrace your route through the tunnel into Central Park to complete the longer route.

