ROYAL GREENWICH HERITAGE TRUST

Woolwich History Walks FOR KIDS

TRAILS START HERE

greenwichheritage.org/woolwich-walks
These trails will tell you all about the history of the Royal Arsenal and Woolwich. For more than 300 years, the Royal Arsenal produced all the weapons for the British Army and Navy and it was the most important manufacturing site in the UK. Until recently, everything inside its walls were a secret but now much of it is open to the public to explore.

**Which trail do you want to follow?**

- **Royal Arsenal Walk**
  The Royal Arsenal Walk will show you some of the most important buildings, factories and warehouses used in the production of weapons. These weapons were used in both the First and Second World Wars.

- **Wider Woolwich Walk**
  The Wider Woolwich Walk explores the military history of the area related to its soldiers, past and present, and you will get to see what life is like in Woolwich today. You will see the old military hospital, school and church along the route, as well as some other interesting buildings.

- Additional loop including the Barracks & Mallet’s Mortar
- Additional loop including the Barracks & the Rotunda
Guardhouses and Peter Burke’s Assembly

The two guardhouses in front of you were used to control the river entrance to the Royal Arsenal when it was producing weapons. Everything that happened inside the area was very secret and, in some cases, dangerous so the guards had to know who was coming in. The group of statues is a modern piece of art called Assembly by Peter Burke. They contrast with the old industrial buildings in the area and they have become a local landmark.

Take a picture doing your best impression of a human statue, with one of the old guardhouses in the background, and post it on twitter @GreenwichHC!

You will see lots of old cannons on your walk around the Royal Arsenal and Woolwich. Keep a tally of how many you spot in the space below!
2 The Grand Store
The buildings you are walking around now were a series of military storage buildings and warehouses. Tens of thousands of guns arranged in rows and millions of cannon balls and shells stacked in pyramids were stored here. Prisoners were set to work in the Grand Store as punishment for their crimes, and their main job was to hammer rust off the weapons.

3 The Shell Foundry
Different types of ammunition were produced in the Shell Foundry. There are two cannons in front of the gates (remember to add these to your tally). Can you spot the large dent in one of the cannons? This was made when a cannon ball hit it!

The date that the Shell Foundry was built is written on the gates in Roman numerals. If M = 1000, D = 500, C = 100, L = 50, V = 5 and I = 1, can you work out what date it was built?

4 Carriage Works
Gun carriages are wheeled supports for larger weapons, like cannons. The carriages were not always thought to be an important part of the weapons. However, the building on your left was dedicated to the design and making of these carriages. Can you think of three reasons why effective carriages are so important?

5 Dial Arch
Completed guns were taken through this arch in front of you into an area where they could be finished and stored. Above the pub door there is a sun dial, which is what gave this arch its name. This clever invention tells the time by using shadows cast by the sun and made sure that the workers were always on time! What time does it say it is now? How close is this to the actual time? Draw your answers in the clock faces below.

Dial Square Football Team
In 1886, some Royal Arsenal workers formed a football team called Dial Square. In 1891, this club turned professional under the name Woolwich Arsenal before moving north of the river to Arsenal stadium in 1913. This was the start of one of the most successful football teams in the UK!
Royal Brass Foundry
This building is where guns and cannons were made. **Why do you think the doors needed to be so tall? Can you spot the unicorn above them?**

Royal Laboratory Pavilion
The Royal Laboratory Pavilion was used for the invention and development of new weapons. In the mid-18th century, this laboratory provided official firework displays for royal events.

The Old Military Academy
Originally, this building provided education and training for army officers. Alongside learning French, Latin, Maths and English, the officers also had lessons in fencing and dancing! On top of the academy there is a weather vane and a compass face showing the direction that the wind is blowing. **What direction is it blowing right now?**
General Gordon Square and the Victoria Cross memorial

This square is named after Charles George Gordon. He was a Victorian military general born in a house on Woolwich Common. There is also a Victorian Cross paving stone in front of the paddling pool, dedicated to John Pattison – a hero of the First World War. This square used to be known as the ‘old smokehole’ because of all the soot and fumes from the railway. Thankfully it looks very different today!

St Peter’s Church

St Peter’s Church was built in 1842 and designed by A.W.N. Pugin, also responsible for decorating the inside of the Houses of Parliament. There are several faces carved on the church walls. Have a go at drawing one of these in the space below.

Royal Garrison Church of St George

This is the old military church that was damaged by a bomb in the Second World War. You can just see the old mosaics through the blue gates that commemorate soldiers from Woolwich who have been awarded medals. What type of flower can you see on the gate and why do you think they are there?

Victorian stenchpipe

Just in front of you, you should see a very tall pipe. This is a Victorian stenchpipe. In 1858, London suffered from ‘The Great Stink’. All the waste from the city was being dumped into the Thames and eventually the smell got so bad that nobody could leave their house for weeks! Pipes like this one were designed to release some of these horrible smells high above everyone’s head to save their noses.

Connaught Mews

Have a look through the iron gates at Connaught Mews. These houses used to be a military hospital. Can you spot the red cross on one of the walls which is used as a symbol of military medical services? There are also two more cannons in here to find for your tally!
The Royal Artillery Barracks

This HUGE building is the home, or barracks, of 700 soldiers. It used to house up to 4,000 people and it is the longest Georgian house in Europe. **Count the number of windows and doors that you can see in total and write your answers in the space here.**

In front of this building is a statue dedicated to the Crimean War.
The Green Hill School and Mallet’s Mortar
This building used to be a primary school for the children of soldiers. In front of the building you can see another type of military weapon – a Mortar, created by a man named Mallet. It is the largest ever to have been built in this country and weighs almost 3 ½ times a double-decker bus!

The Rotunda
This tent-like building was created to celebrate victory in the Napoleonic Wars. It was moved to Woolwich in 1816, given a lead roof and made permanent. It was then used as a museum, which has since been moved, and is now used as a boxing ring by the Kings Troops, who look after the royal horses.

The Kings Troops, Royal Horse Artillery
The King’s Troop, Royal Horse Artillery are the horses used in special ceremonies. Six horses are needed to pull just one First World War field gun on wheels. If you are lucky you might spot the horses exercising in Charlton Park!

Ha-Ha Road
This funny road is not a joke! It is named ‘Ha Ha Road’ because of the ditch that separates the Royal Artillery Barracks Field from Woolwich Common. Farmers used to take a break by the common so that their animals could graze on their way to be sold at London markets. The ditch stopped the animals from wandering onto army land and being shot by mistake.

Major John Little memorial
This memorial was dedicated to Robert John Little, a heroic royal marine. It’s also an old fountain! Read what’s written on it. In the space below write a dedication to your hero and explain why they are so heroic.

61st Battery Royal Field Artillery Boer War Memorial
This memorial commemorates the deaths of 18 soldiers who were killed in the Second Boer War. Design your own war memorial in the space below.

Woolwich Town Hall
Inside the Woolwich Town Hall is a Book of Remembrance, remembering all the soldiers who have lost their lives.
80,000 people employed in the Royal Arsenal at its peak

1,500 tons of coal, an entire ship load, were burned per week

1,100 buildings located within the Royal Arsenal

147 miles of railway line made this the densest railway network in Britain

1 day off given to workers every 2 weeks

WORD SEARCH
You have learnt a lot on your walk today!
Find the answers to the questions below in the word search.

1 What is the name of the arch through which completed guns were taken for finishing touches and storage?

2 There is a war memorial in front of the Royal Artillery Barracks. Which war is it dedicated to?

3 What is the name of the building which used to be a large tent but was then made into a permanent structure with a lead roof?

4 What is the name of the long brick-walled trench that was built to prevent animals from wandering into the Royal Artillery Barracks?

5 What is the name of the man who designed the largest mortar ever built in the UK?

6 What is the name of a group of buildings used to house soldiers?

7 What have you been counting along your walk?

C X H E A H A H U
A S G R X O C Y S
N L T S D R R T K
N R D J A V I M C
O T E L L A M J A
N V A C W S E O R
S I D F B P A I R
D S R O T U N D A
B E W Q U R F L B

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