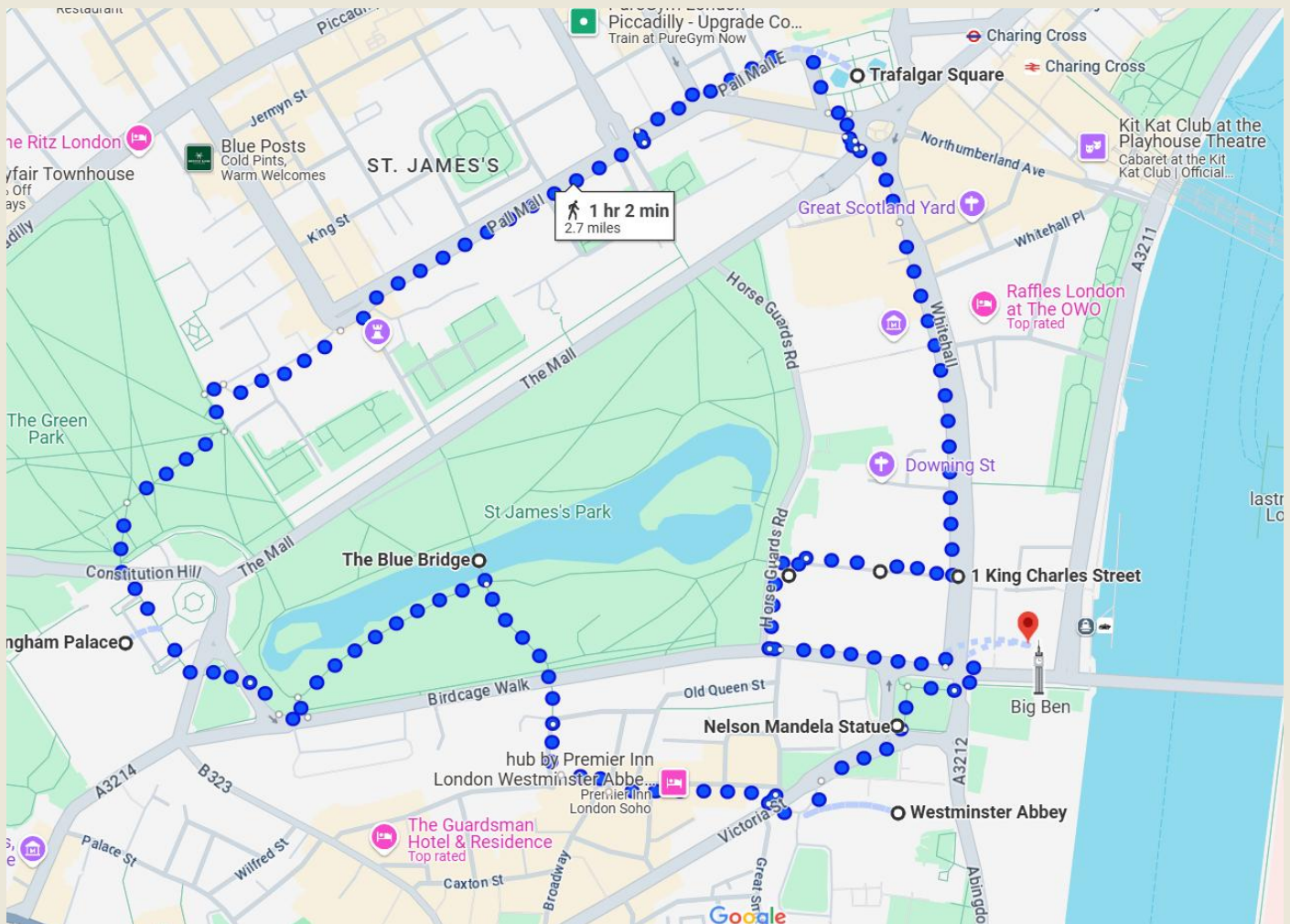


London Loop - Westminster

This walk only takes an hour and two minutes – if all you did was walk it. But there is so much to see along the way and some excellent places to visit too.

Here is a map of the route. It will be broken down into smaller sections as the route progresses. All maps and images are from Google Maps as per their Geo Guidelines.



Step1

Westminster station to Parliament Square (Mandela) – 3 minutes

The route starts at Westminster Underground station. Within you will find the Jubilee **SILVER/GREY**, District **DARK GREEN** and Circle **YELLOW** lines so plenty of ways to get there.

The map below starts at exit 5 (red circle). If you come out of exit 4 (blue circle) you will have the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) right in front of you. From there turn right along Bridge Street to join the blue dotted route below.



From exit 5 itself take the crossings as shown. As you cross for the first time the Houses of Parliament will be ahead and to the left. You can see a statue of Winston Churchill on Parliament Square itself. It's written on the map, but we've added a green circle too.

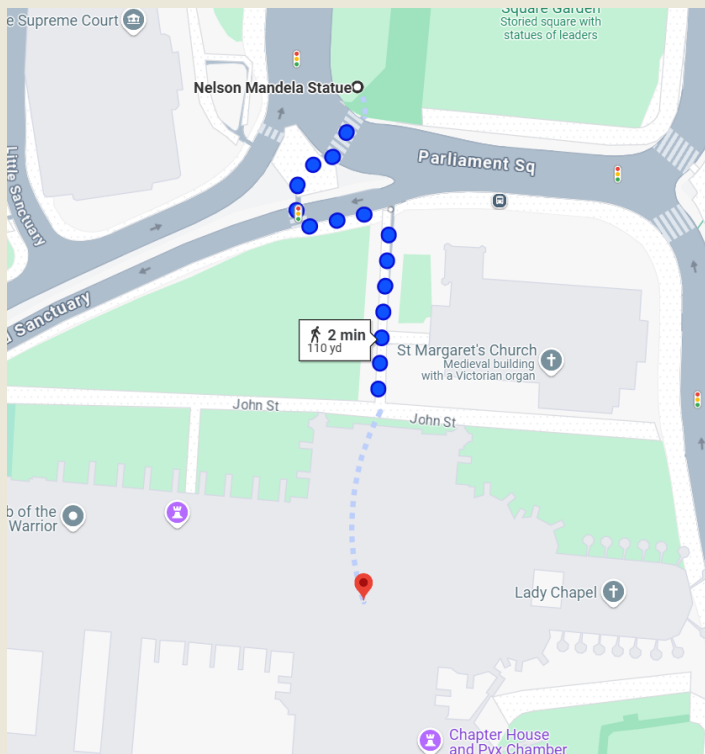
It doesn't matter which route you take, just head towards the opposite corner from the Churchill statue. When you get there, you will find a statue of Nelson Mandela. The route shown goes close to a host of statues.

Do note that there can sometimes be protestors or similar here, given its proximity to parliament. This is especially likely on a Wednesday. It can be loud, there might be a lot of police, and parts of this area might be closed – it's perfectly normal!

Step 2

Parliament Square to Westminster Abbey – 2 minutes

This is a very quick and easy part of the route. Simply cross the road from the Mandela statue using the crossing. The entrance to the Abbey is ahead and to the left, on the long side of the abbey.

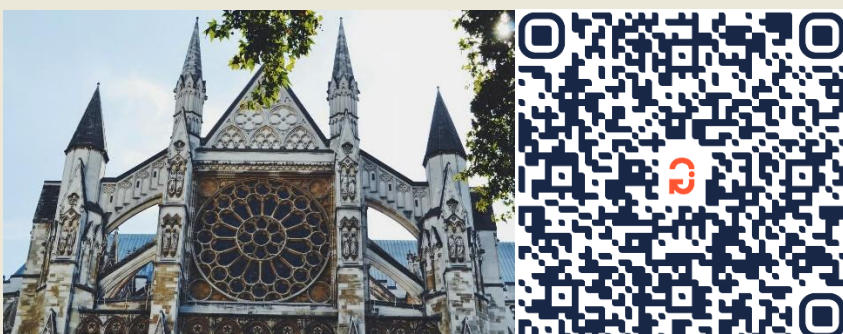


It's recommended to book for the Abbey – particularly if you are going close to opening time (and that makes sense for this route) and especially in the summer months. Do note that they have a rolling programme of events that can lead to closures. In addition, the tickets are often not released that early as they may be waiting for the events programme to be confirmed. The following link is for entry only but has the advantage of offering late cancellation.

Westminster Abbey – entry only



Westminster Abbey – entry and guided tour



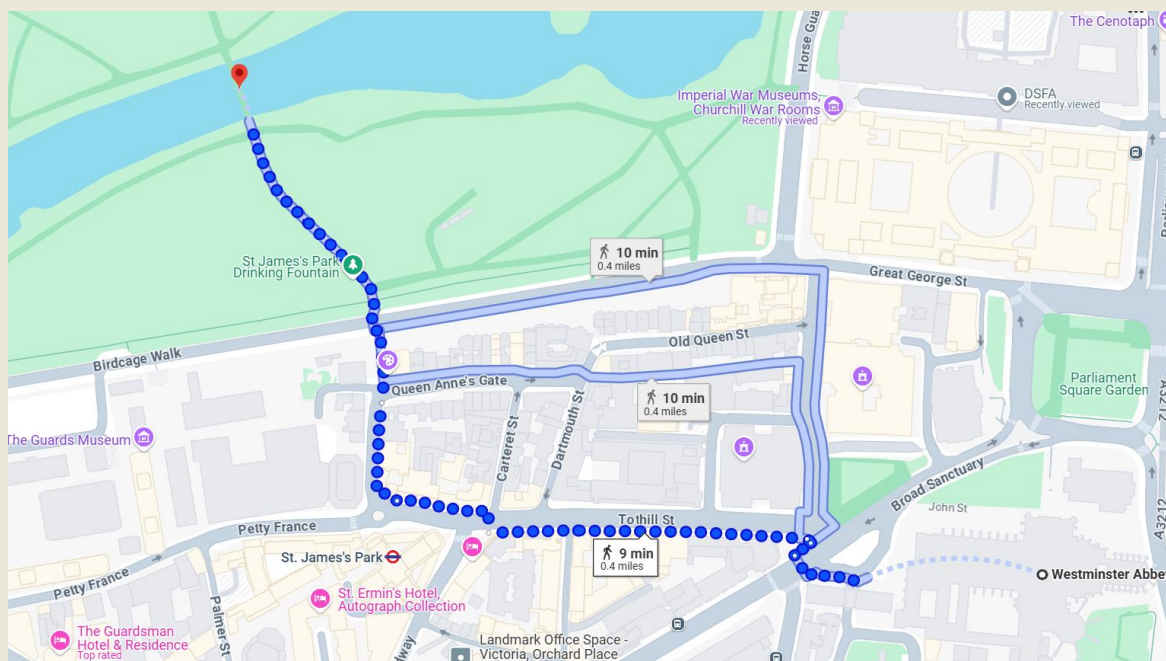
Step 3

Westminster Abbey to St. James's Park bridge – 10 minutes

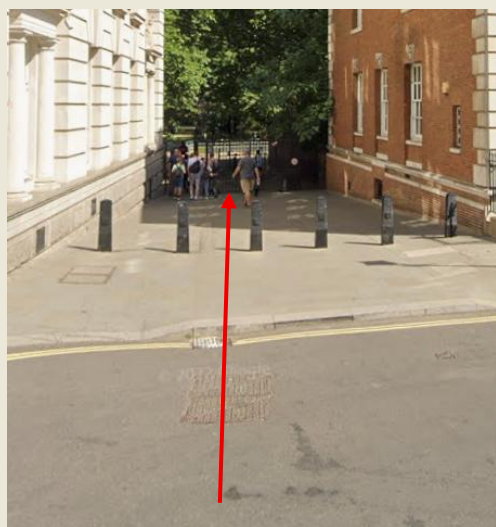
The exit from the Abbey is at its western end. As you can see from the following map there are various routes you could walk. If following the blue dots, you will first cross The Sanctuary to Victoria Street, then use the crossings to enter Tothill Street. As you enter the latter the Methodist Central Hall will be on your right.

Follow Tothill Street until you reach its junction with Broadway. St. James's Park Underground station will be ahead to the left. At this point cross the road to the right-hand side – there's no crossing but there are central refuges to assist with crossing.

You will then be looking for the next right, Queen Anne's Gate, and the junction is at a mini roundabout with a pub called the Old Star on the corner. Head along this new street until it turns to the right – what you need to do is carry straight on into a short pedestrian section.



Here's the view as you go into the pedestrian section. At the end of the pedestrian section you will come out on Birdcage Walk. Use the crossing that is in front of you to cross the road and then enter St. James's Park. Following the route, you will end up on a bridge over the lake. You can see the London Eye to your right and Buckingham Palace to your left.

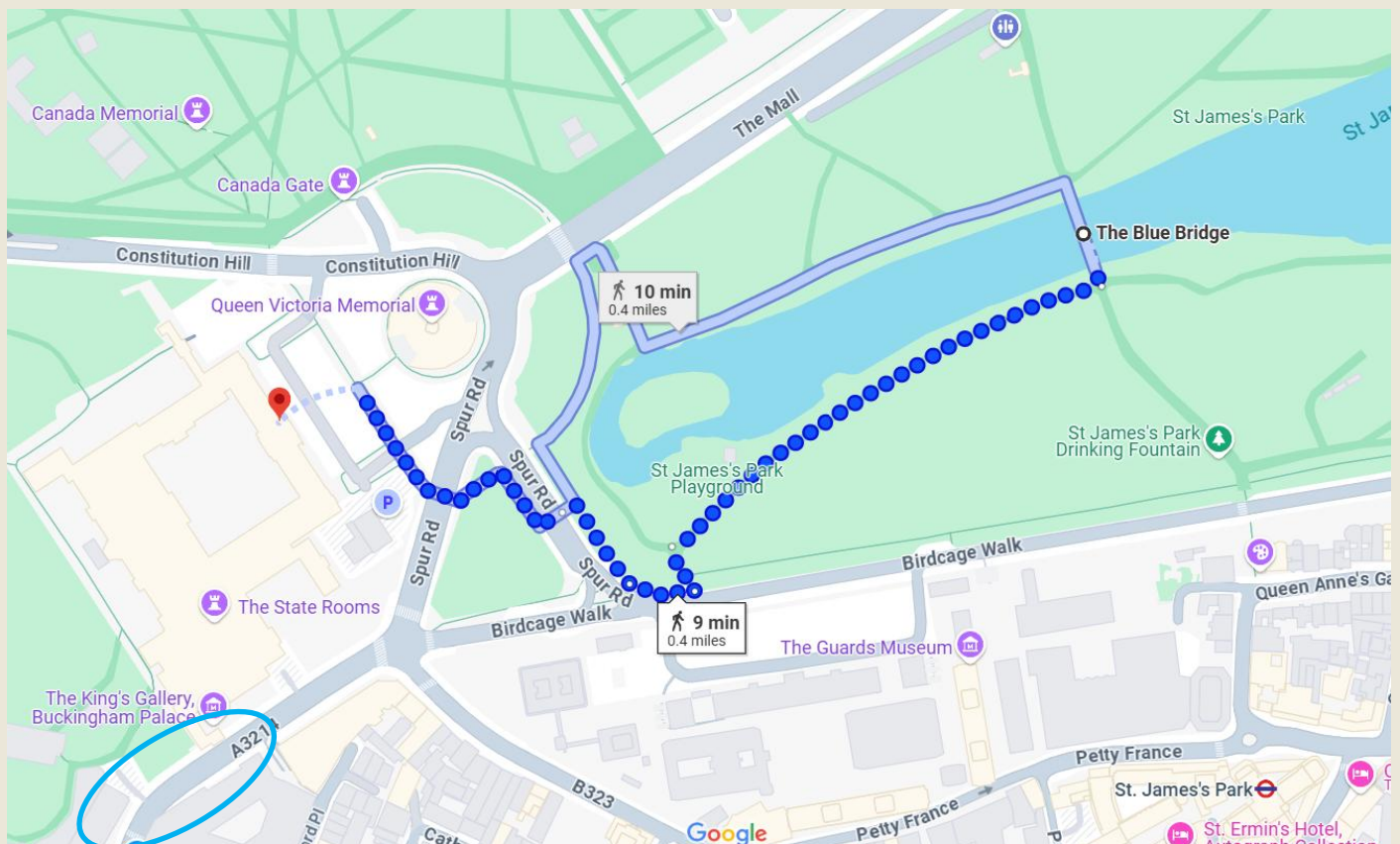


St. James's Park is included in the Buckingham Palace and Royal Walking Tour below.

Step 4

St. James's Park to Buckingham Palace – 9 minutes

From the bridge you can go either side of the lake to reach Buckingham Palace. Both are easy walking and easy to follow.



The end of the blue dotted route will take you to the front gate of the Palace where you can see the guards on duty.

The Palace itself (the State Rooms) has limited mid to late summer opening as well as some special dates and events. There are some extra parts that are open for much more of the year and these are in the area of the blue oval – the King's Gallery and the Royal Mews.

Buckingham Palace – State Rooms



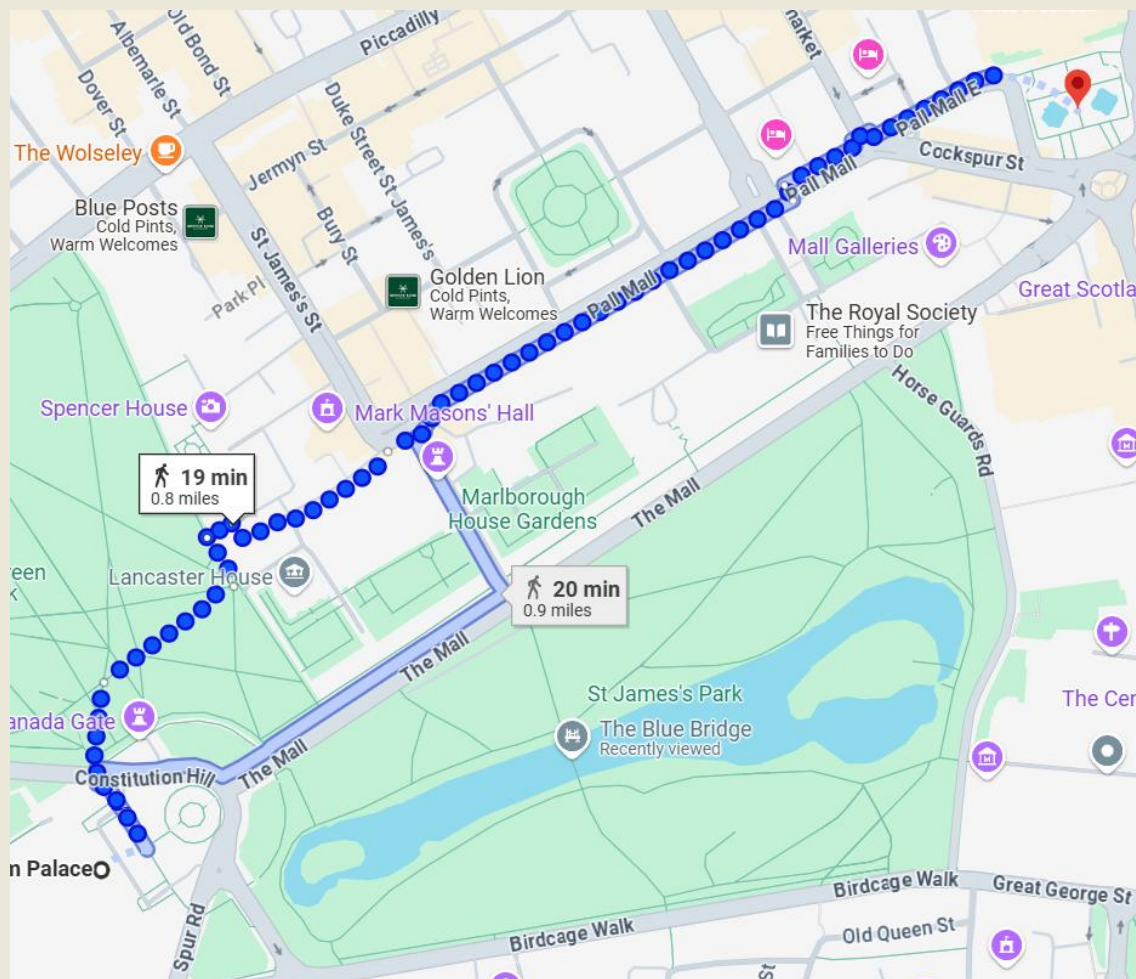
Buckingham Palace and Royal Walking Tour



Step 5

Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square – 19 minutes

At the northeastern corner of the Palace, you will find a crossing that allows you across Constitution Hill and into Green Park. The route then cuts across the park and you need to take a small gateway.



Here's an image of the gateway with the red arrows showing where you have come from.



This path will lead you through many big houses – Warwick House, Bridgewater House, Clarence House and St. James's Palace, as the path opens out to become Pall Mall. Along this route there are lots of grand buildings and

various statues, including, as you cross Waterloo Place, the statues of Florence Nightingale, King Edward VII and (on top of a large column) the Duke of York.

Just keep following Pall Mall – you will know you are approaching Trafalgar Square when you see the many Canadian flags on their High Commission.

If you would prefer to follow The Mall, you can see it clearly on the previous map running parallel to Pall Mall and along the side of St. James's Park. At the end of The Mall you will see the very large Admiralty Arch and need to take one of the pedestrian routes to the side of it. We prefer the Pall Mall route as it has more items of interest and also brings you out at a better part of Trafalgar Square.

There's a close-up focus on Trafalgar Square on the next page.

Here's a view of Trafalgar Square with various areas marked.

Canada High Commission – red circle

National Gallery – green circle, free, go either side of the National Gallery to reach it

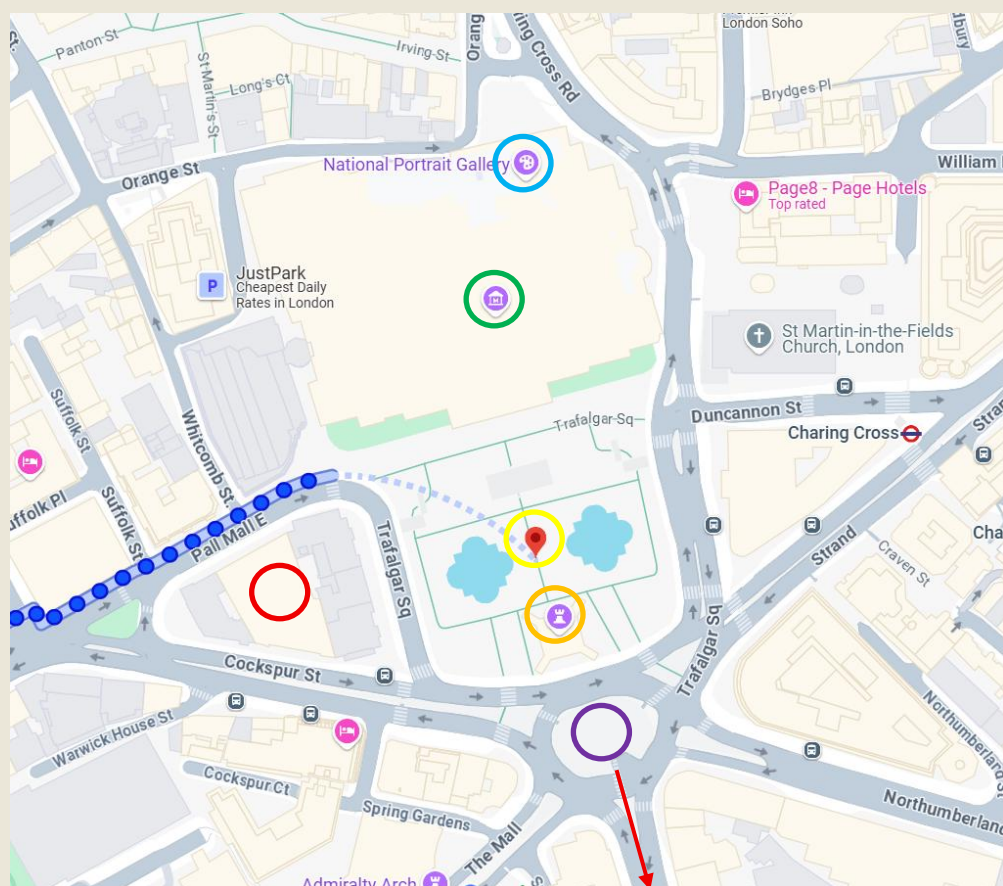
National Portrait Gallery – blue circle, free

Fountains/lions – yellow circle, free to roam area, do note that this area is used for large events so may be closed off (e.g. Chinese New Year, major sporting finals, St. Patrick's Day)

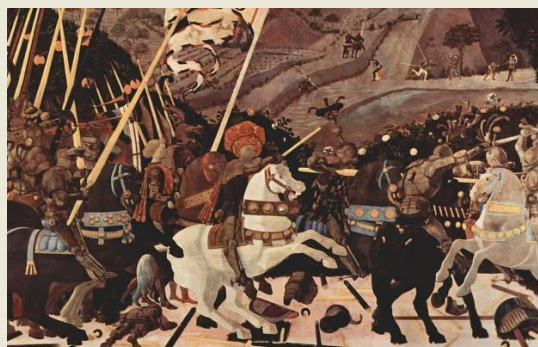
Nelson's Column – orange circle

King Charles I statue – purple circle

Onward route – red arrow



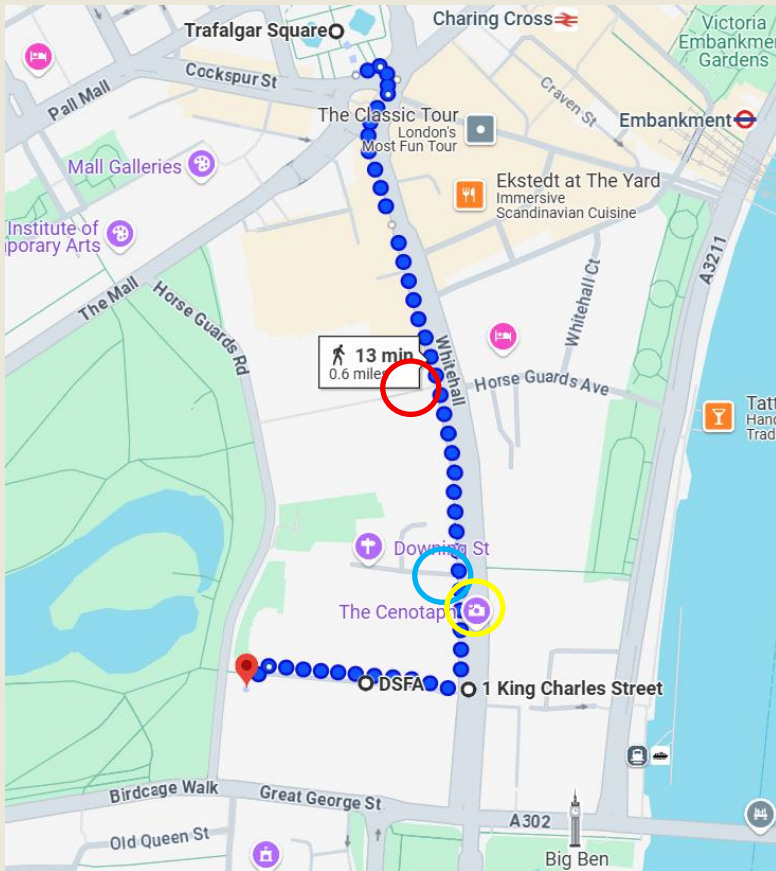
National Gallery – guided tour



Step 6

Trafalgar Square (via Horseguards Entrance, Downing Street, Cenotaph) to Churchill War Rooms – 13 minutes

From Trafalgar Square you will head down Whitehall. It is easy to find – the King Charles I statue looks down it and you will see the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) in the distance.



There are a few points of interest along the street.

Horseguards – red circle, guards, sometimes mounted, will be on duty here. Head past them to Horseguards Parade if you wish but come back to Whitehall. They have a museum here.

Downing Street – blue circle, this is where the Prime Minister stays and there are various government buildings close by.

The Cenotaph – yellow circle, in the middle of the road, this is the memorial to the UK and Commonwealth war dead.

There is more along this street to see, and it is also where King Charles I was executed in 1649.

Shortly after the Cenotaph you need to take King Charles Street on the right. It is almost opposite the Red Lion pub and has three ornate stone arches. At the end, after some steps, you will find the Churchill War Rooms to your left.

Household Cavalry Museum - entry



Churchill War Rooms and Political London audio



Churchill War Rooms and WWII Tour



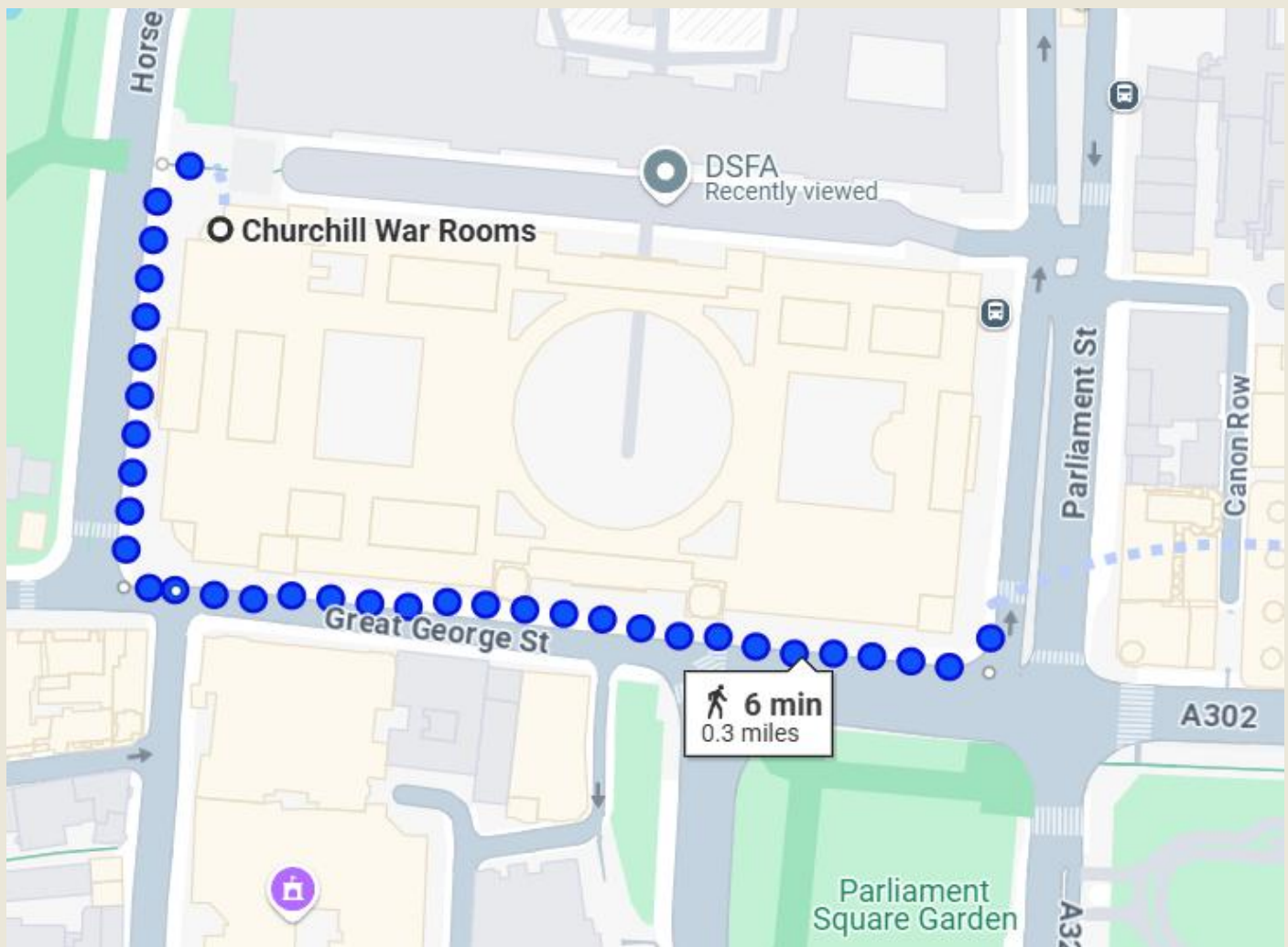
Step 7

Churchill War Rooms to Westminster Underground – 6 minutes

From the Churchill War Rooms turn left along Horse Guards Road then take the next left onto Great George Street. As you head along the latter the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) is ahead of you. You will pass some red telephone boxes that form a popular photo spot.

You will then see Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament and Parliament Square once more.

Once you get to the end of the road you will find an entry to Westminster Underground station right there, without having to cross the road. This is exit 6. Head in there for trains.



As well as the ones already shown, here are a range of great ideas for the general Westminster area, some of which go beyond that area.

Guided sightseeing tour on an open top bus



Buckingham Palace and Changing the Guard experience



Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace and Big Ben guided tour



London Hop On Hop Off bus with optional river cruise

