

# Greenways & Quietways

Better Towpaths for Everyone in London



Canal &  
River Trust

Keeping people, nature & history connected

Canal & River Trust, January 2014

**London Waterways:**

Bow Back Rivers  
Grand Union Canal  
Paddington Arm of the Grand Union Canal  
Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal  
Hertford Union Canal  
Limehouse Cut  
London Docklands  
Regent's Canal  
River Lee  
River Stort

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Andrew Gilligan, Mayor's Cycling Commissioner and Sir Brian Fender, Chair  
London Waterways Partnership

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# 1. Foreword

## Sir Brian Fender, Chair of London Waterways Partnership

The Canal & River Trust cares for 2,000 miles of waterways across England and Wales, memorable places loved for their historic and environmental interest and for getting us around on foot, by bike or afloat.

Our waterways serve thousands of people providing access to leisure and for work. London is again embracing waterside places from Stratford and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Tottenham Hale and Meridian Water in the Lee Valley, to Kings Cross, Old Oak Common and Paddington Basin.

We believe strongly that better towpaths enhance our Capital.

We continue to promote safe, considerate towpath sharing and welcome everyone. Supported by almost £4M of Transport for London [Greenways](#) and borough funding over many years, the Trust has vastly improved towpaths for boaters, anglers, pedestrians and cyclists.

The next chapter for securing *Better Towpaths for Everyone* has begun.

## Andrew Gilligan, Cycling Commissioner, Greater London Authority

In 2013 Boris Johnson launched the [Mayor's Vision for Cycling in London](#).

“We are creating a new network of routes for a new kind of cyclist; routes for people who want to cycle slowly, in their ordinary clothes, away from most of the traffic.

Most of the routes will be ‘Quietways’, using London’s network of quieter side streets plus routes through parks and on canal towpaths, which they will share with pedestrians... Quietway routes are slower than the main roads. They are not aimed at speedy commuter cyclists, who will almost certainly stick with the fast main roads.”

“London’s towpaths offer a great way to get around the city and are home to some iconic spots – with continued investment they can help support the Mayor’s ambitious vision for cycling. We recognise that in some areas, like some stretches of the Regent’s Canal, capacity is limited at busy times. But where there is opportunity we want to work with the Canal & River Trust to develop Quietway routes, improve towpaths for shared use and create better travel links throughout the city.”

## 2. Our Values

These principles reflect our expectations for London towpaths as we seek further improvements and our objectives for high quality shared spaces which are safer for everyone.

1. Towpaths have historical, community and personal importance to be balanced with their role in connecting places.
2. The Trust and its stakeholders will ensure canal and river environments are safeguarded as havens for people and wildlife.
3. Towpaths should be free to access for all users
4. Towpaths should be improved where needed, to accommodate increased visits safely. Improvements should benefit everyone and enhance the waterway setting.
5. Towpaths should be a distinct category in cycle or other route design standards, recognising their shared use and historic waterside character.
6. Visitors will continue to recognise they are entering a slower space shared by pedestrians, cyclists, boaters, joggers and anglers.
7. Routes along canals and rivers will ordinarily be branded in the names of these historic waterways.
8. Where there are concerns over capacity or underlying condition, towpaths will not be promoted as part of a wider route network, but alternative routes along roads will be sought.
9. In London,
  - towpaths along the River Lee, Grand Union Canal and Paddington Arm are proposed as strategic Quietways
  - the majority of the Regent's Canal towpath will not be a Quietway but alternative Quietways along roads will be delivered
  - towpaths will be a distinct category of Quietway in the London Cycle Design Standards

### 3. Progress so far

#### Greenways - a proud past and a bright future



#### London Greenways

#### Monitoring Report

September 2013

MAYOR OF LONDON

Transport for London



*“Greenways offer safe and attractive routes for cycling and walking that open up and connect London’s parks, green spaces and quiet streets. They have been a key part of the Mayor’s strategy to encourage more Londoners to use two wheels, particularly those who may be new to cycling or are picking it up again. They also contribute to the Mayor’s aim to encourage more people to use their feet by providing comfortable and attractive conditions for walking. Greenways also helped deliver the Mayor’s objectives for a sustainable 2012 Games, with the programme of walking and cycling route improvements introduced in 2012 continuing to prove effective and popular with users.*

*... Working in partnership with the London boroughs, Sustrans, the Royal Parks and the Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways), we installed 52km of new infrastructure and approximately 23km of improved infrastructure at 19 different locations this year. The network now consists of some 432km of routes with potential, through the Quietways programme, for significant growth in future years.*

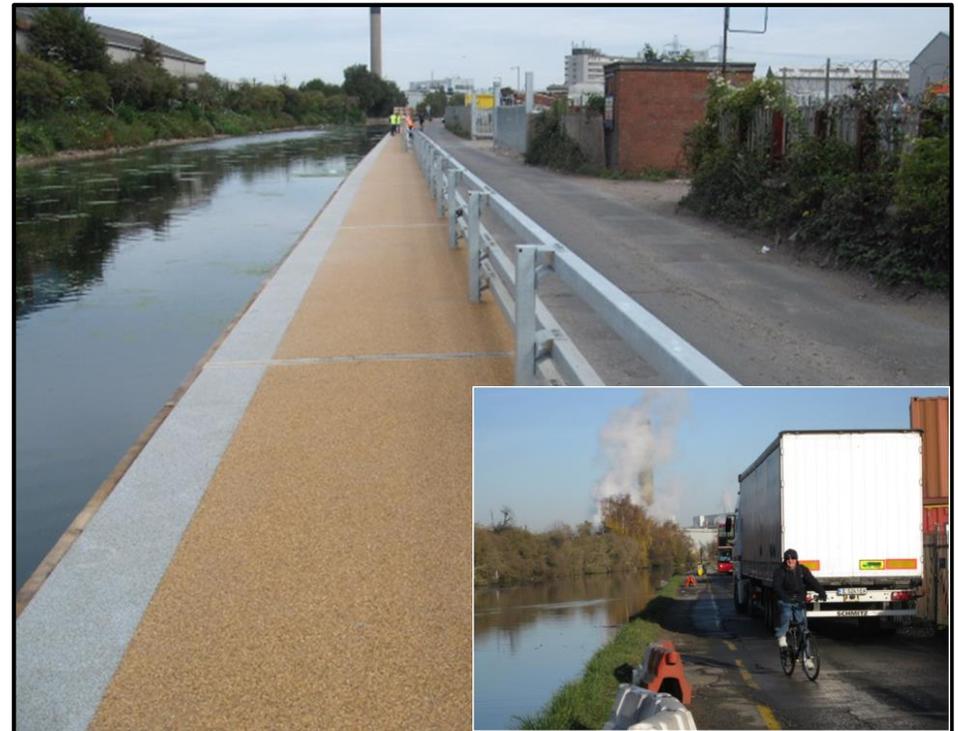
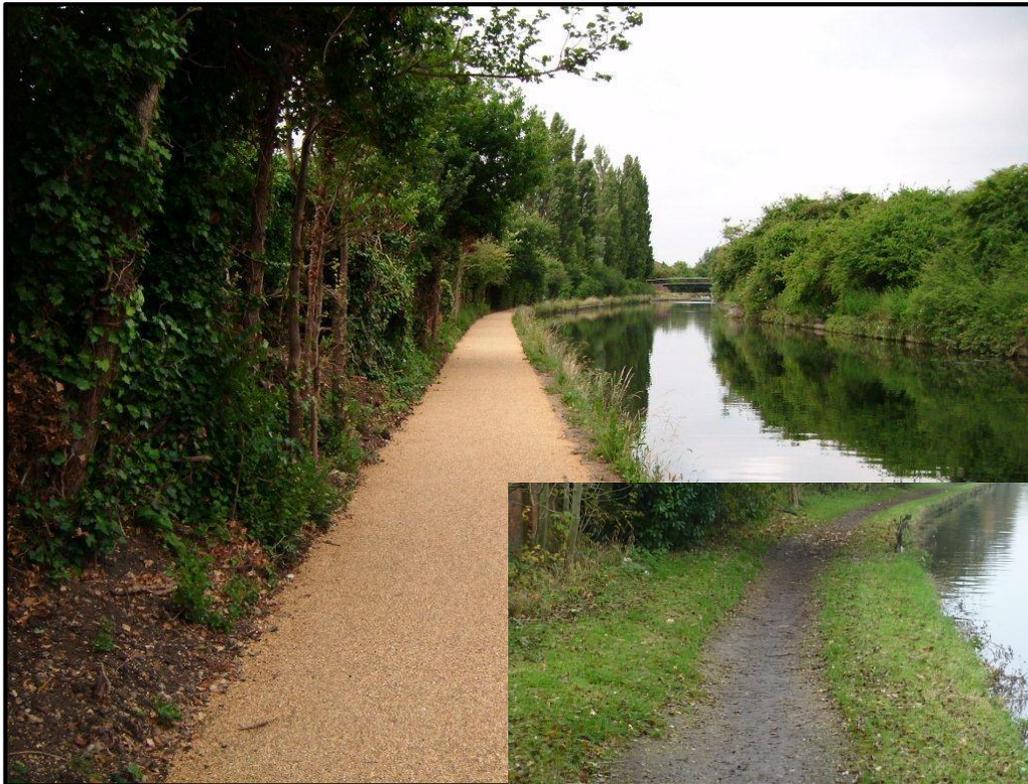
*The success of the Greenways programme has provided the blueprint for a key element of the Mayor’s new approach – Quietways, a London-wide network of direct cycle routes through lightly-trafficked back-streets, parks and green spaces.*

*As with Greenways, they will help promote a transformation in the way people can travel around the Capital and help create better places for all” (London Greenways Monitoring Report, September 2013)*

## Better infrastructure

A wide array of funding totalling around £4M has helped improve towpaths in recent years. For example:

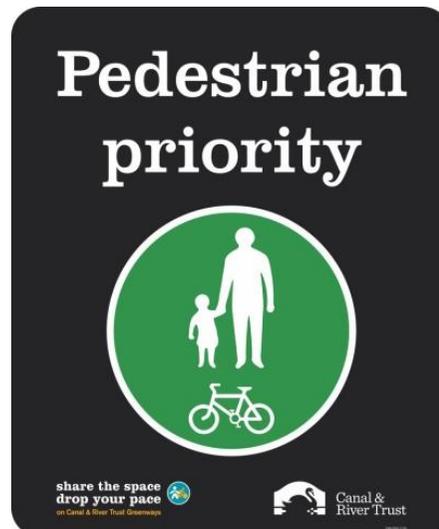
- Enhancement of 3 of the 8 Olympic Walking & Cycling Routes on East London towpaths
- A new Towpath Code supported by the *Share the Space, Drop your Pace* campaign
- New shared use & pedestrian priority signage
- By 2014, over 60 *Legible London* signs along towpaths in 15 boroughs
- Work to secure *Quietways* along roads as alternatives to the busy Regent's Canal towpath



## Better signage

In 2012, the Trust launched a revised Code after consultation with stakeholders including Living Streets, Inland Waterways Association, Sustrans, The Royal Parks, Hampstead Heath Park Managers, the Friends of Regent's Canal and local cycling groups.

The Towpath Code reflects shared use by cyclists, dog-walkers, boaters, anglers, pedestrians and cyclists, and has been well received.



## Welcome to Regent's Canal Please follow the Greenway Code for Towpaths



### 1. Share the space

consider other people and the local environment whenever you're on a Greenway. Remember some people may move less predictably, for example young children or those with visual, aural or mobility impairments.



### 2. Drop your pace

considerate sharing of the limited towpath space is the key. Jogging and cycling are welcome, but drop your pace in good time and let people know you are approaching by ringing a bell or politely calling out before waiting to pass slowly.



### 3. Pedestrians have priority

towpaths are 'Greenways' or shared use routes where pedestrians have priority and vehicles, except bicycles and mobility aids, are generally excluded.



### 4. Be courteous to others

a smile can go a long way. Abusive or threatening behaviour is not acceptable and should be reported to the police.

### 5. Follow signs and obey local bye-laws

they are there for the safety of everyone. Cyclists should dismount where required and use common sense in busy or restricted areas, recognising that pedestrians have priority.

### 6. Give way to oncoming people beneath bridges

whether they are on foot or bike and be extra careful at bends and entrances where visibility is limited.

### 7. When travelling in large groups

especially if you are running or cycling, please use common sense and give way to others.

### 8. Try to avoid wearing headphones

as this makes you less aware of your surroundings, possible hazards and others sharing the same space.

### 9. Keep dogs under control

ideally using a short lead on busy towpaths and clean-up after them. Dog fouling is very unpleasant and is a health hazard.

### 10. At all times, keep children close to you

and encourage them to learn and follow the Greenway Code for Towpaths.

share the space  
drop your pace  
on Canal & River Trust Greenways



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CN-002-117c

## Better behaviour

We have considerable experience of managing places which are shared by many different visitors.

With the help of volunteers, we also promote our *'Share the Space, Drop your Pace'* campaign with a clear message of safe and considerate sharing of towpaths for everyone.



## 4. Opportunities

In the next few years *Quietways* and other borough programmes will provide new opportunities.

In central London, the Regent's Canal towpath will continue to provide a route for daily journeys and will need investment, but will not be a *Quietway*.

Working with [Central London Cycle Grid](#) partners there is agreement that boroughs and TfL need to deliver alternative cycle routes to help alleviate pressure on the Regent's Canal towpath.

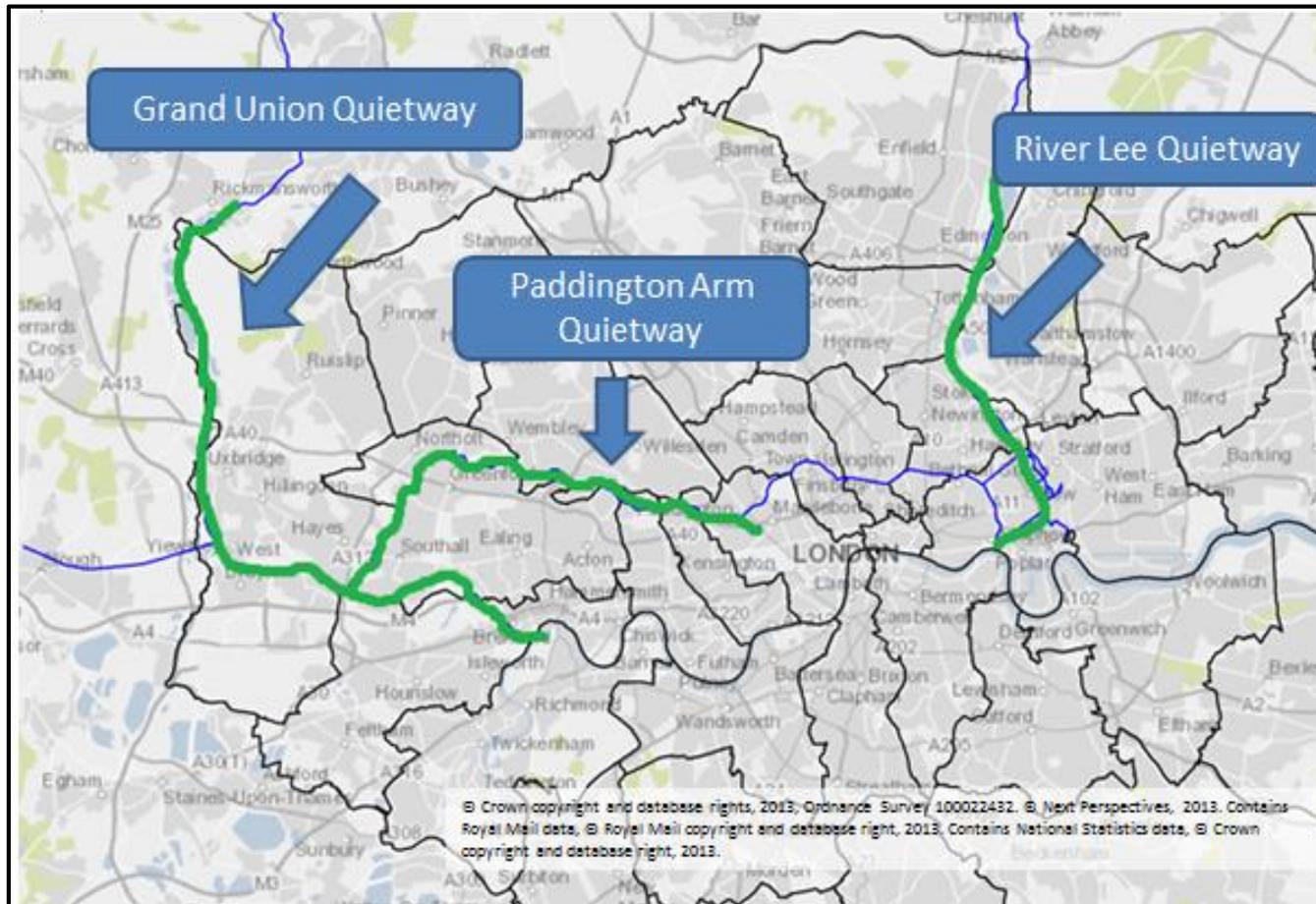
Clearly branded and promoted as quieter, leisure routes, the *Quietways* programme should deliver better towpaths for everyone:

- River Lee Quietway                      Enfield to Limehouse
- Grand Union Canal Quietway        Brentford to Harefield
- Paddington Arm Canal Quietway     Paddington to Southall



## 5. Appendix – Route Details

### Route overview

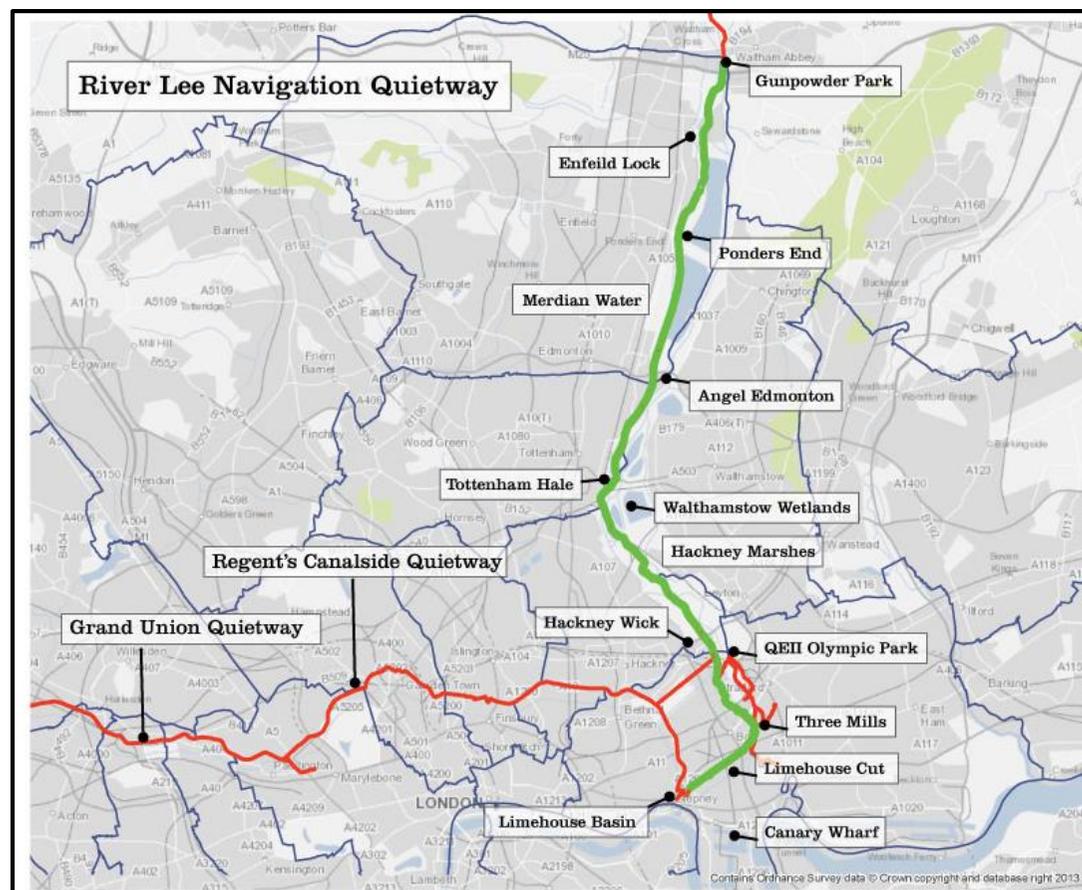


## River Lee Quietway (Stratford to Enfield, 23km)

Borough	Length (m)
Enfield	7650
Hackney	4153
Haringey	3443
Newham	2098
Tower Hamlets	4818
Waltham Forest	1296
<b>Total</b>	<b>23458</b>

Forming a north-south artery from east London through the Lee Valley, the *River Lee Quietway* links 4 boroughs through these places:

*Limehouse Basin – Bow – Three Mills - QEII Olympic Park  
– Hackney Marshes – Walthamstow Wetlands - Tottenham  
Hale – Angel Edmonton – Meridian Water - Enfield Lock –  
Gunpowder Park*



The River Lee Quietway provides a green link between the Upper and Lower Lee Valleys, the key strategic transport interchange at Tottenham Hale, with the Isle of Dogs to the south. Benefitting from some of the biggest green spaces in London including Hackney Marshes and Walthamstow Wetlands, the route also connects with key visitor destinations such as QEII Olympic Park.

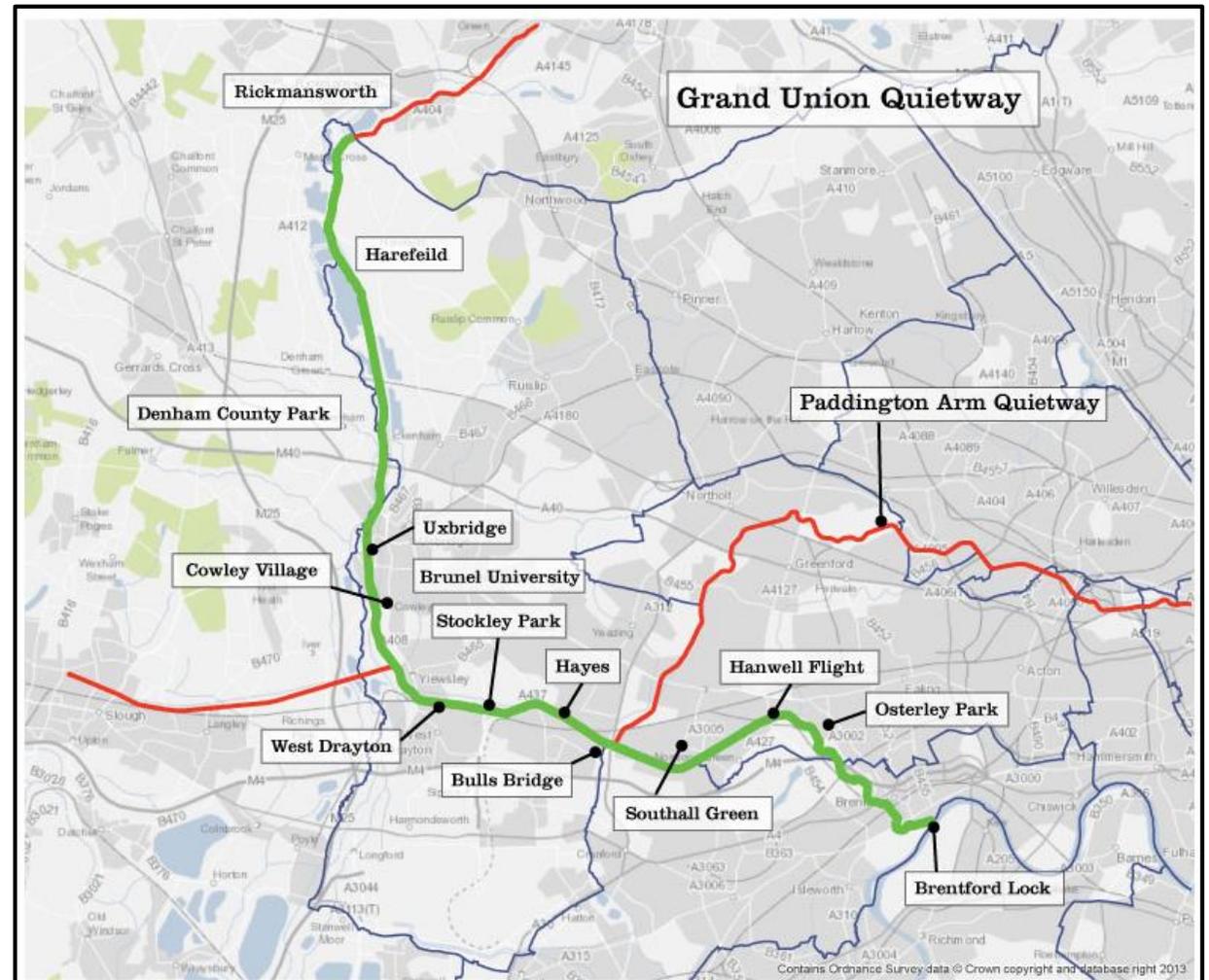
**Grand Union Canal Quietway  
(Brentford to Harefield, 28km)**

Borough	Length (m)
Ealing	6353
Hillingdon	17561
Hounslow	3490
<b>Total</b>	<b>27404</b>

Connecting the Thames at Brentford in west London through the Brent, Colne and Crane river catchments, the *Grand Union Canal Quietway* links 3 boroughs through these places:

*Brentford Lock – Osterley Park – Hanwell Locks – Southall Green – Hayes - Stockley Park – West Drayton – Yiewsley – Cowley Village – Brunel University - Uxbridge – Denham Country Park - Harefield*

The Grand Union Quietway provides links into Heathrow and encompasses key visitor destinations such as Osterley Park, Hanwell Flight and Brentford Locks.



## Paddington Arm Quietway

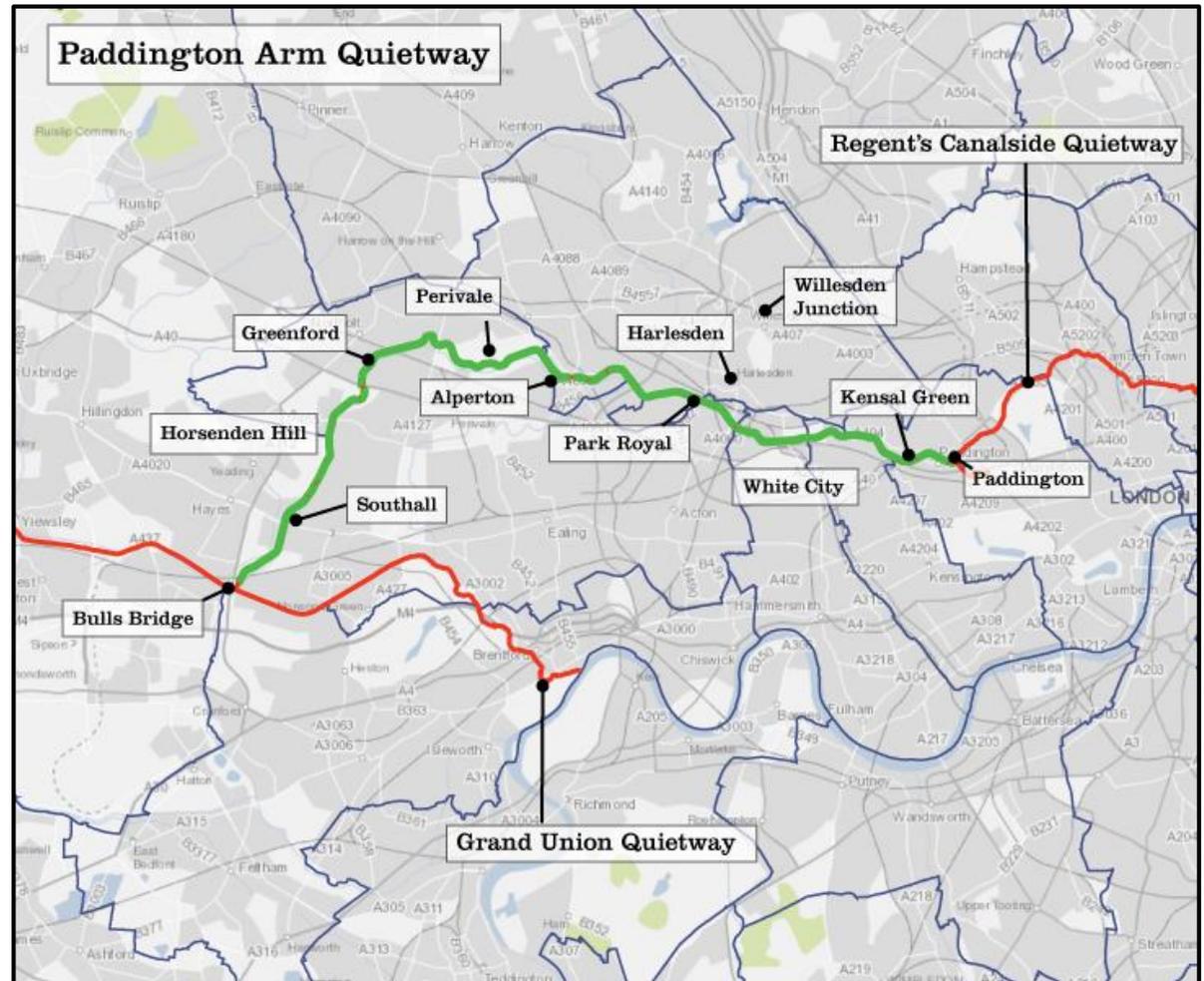
(Paddington to Southall, 22km)

Borough	Length (m)
Brent	2897
Ealing	12817
Ham & Fulham	2015
Hillingdon	1336
RBK&C	1945
Westminster	698
<b>Total</b>	<b>21708</b>

Connecting the Grand Union Canal near Southall in west London with the historic canal junction at Little Venice near Maida Vale, the *Paddington Arm Quietway* links 6 boroughs through these places:

*Paddington – Kensal Green-White City- Willesden Junction- Harlesden- Park Royal- Alperton- Perivale- Greenford- Southall*

The Paddington Arm Canal Quietway connects key employment centres such as Park Royal and White City with suburban centres such as Greenford and Perivale. The route takes in key visitor destinations such as Little Venice and connects with green spaces such as Horsenden Hill.





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