

**U3A Bikers  
Lincoln's Inn  
Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022**

The high pressure anti-cyclonic conditions over the country brought the promise of another fine day.

However, with cold temperature overnight we were cautious of icy patches on the roads as we each made our way to the Lido in Brockwell Park.

After just a short briefing to the group (Neisje and I had previously reconnoitred the route), we made our way across Dulwich Road, to Shakespeare Road and by minor roads to Kennington Park.

The little café in the park was a convenient place to sit outside for a cup of coffee and a chat. There was also some lovely home-baked cake provided by one of the riders (thank you, Gisela). Some recipes were exchanged!

We left the park, pausing to look at the Prince Consort Lodge.

Built as a model dwelling for the Great Exhibition in 1851 and "state-of-the-art" it was moved to the park in 1852-53.

We crossed at the traffic lights into Kennington Lane.

A short ride brought us to **Cleaver Square**, a very fine example of a residential square surrounding an open space, originally laid out in 1789.

Just around the corner at 39 Methley Street was one of the several blue plaques in this area with the name of Charlie Chaplin on it.

This one was erected by "The Dead Comics Society"!

Joining Kennington Road and crossing the traffic lights, we turned into Black Prince Road, following it towards the river.



At the junction with Lambeth High Street we paused to admire the very impressive ornate tiled frontage of the former offices of Royal Doulton Company, standing on the corner next to the factory.



The factory operated here from 1826 to 1956.

At the end of Black Prince Road we found the White Hart Dock where barges carrying China clay used to arrive.

The China clay was brought from Cornwall. A deposit north of St Austell was revealed to be the largest in the world and a global industry began to rapidly develop.

Also here is an information board about the cholera epidemic in Lambeth where an estimated 2,000 people died from the disease in 1848.



Doubling back along Lambeth High Street and crossing Lambeth Palace Road near the rail bridge brought us to the Archbishops Park, originally a part of the gardens of Lambeth Palace.

We joined a short stretch of Westminster Bridge Road; here the cycle route is much improved with a filter on the traffic lights to allow cyclists safe passage on to the bridge.

As we crossed the bridge we saw that the plastic sheeting covering the Augustus Pugin-designed Elizabeth Tower (it was formerly just called the Clock Tower) had recently been removed to reveal the beautiful gilded surround of the faces of the clock.



A right turn at the traffic lights beside Big Ben led along the Victoria Embankment; this entire route was on dedicated cycle lanes, so easy cycling; a well-designed cycle-friendly route.

At Savoy Street we turned up the hill and crossed the Strand into Covent Garden and paused for a few minutes to admire the façade of the main entrance to **St Paul's Church**, designed by Inigo Jones.



The church has long had a connection with the theatre, beginning as early as 1663 when the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, was established.

A ride along Long Acre, Great Queen Street and Remanant Street brought us to Lincoln's Inns Fields.

The idea of stopping here on such a cold day to eat our packed lunches had no appeal when a warmer option was proposed.



After a short ride we arrived at Fleet Street. Directly opposite is one of the very few houses in London which survived the 1666 Great Fire of London, located at 17 Fleet Street.

An earlier building was rebuilt in 1610 and became a tavern called the Prince's Arms. One of the rooms on the first floor was called **Prince Henry's Room**. Prince Henry was the son of James I.

We crossed directly over Fleet Street and into the Inns of Courts, starting in Middle Temple, in the western part of "The Temple".



The headquarters of the Knights Templar was based here, until the organisation was dissolved in 1312.

Some buildings are modern, replacing ones which were destroyed in The Blitz, but others date back to the 16th century.

The Inn is also jointly responsible, with Inner Temple, for **Temple Church** and the Master's House next to the church, a Georgian townhouse built in 1764.

Leaving the Temple we arrived on the Victoria Embankment and joined Cycle Highway C6 which took us safely across Blackfriars Bridge.

Below us on the north side was the original outflow of the Fleet River.



Our destination was the restaurant *Ev* which serves “Classic Turkish mezze dishes and grilled meats, in a comfortable eatery under the railway arches.” For some, the Mediterranean lentil soup was the perfect answer to the cold conditions.

It was then on to St George’s Circus, past the Imperial War Museum, to Kennington Road, and so to our homes.

Well done all those who braved the cold conditions of a January day to take part. All agreed that it was well worthwhile!



Riders David Rosenfeld, Irene Skiadopoulou, Andrew Burke, John Clements, Felicity Henderson, Jane Evans, Gisela Robinson, Niesje de Boer, Juliet Filose, Martin Goffe.

Distance / time: 14 miles / 4½ hours

*Ride leaders: John Clements & Niesje de Boer*

*Ride leaders: Niesje de Boer and John Clements*

*Convenor: John Clements*

*Report and photos: John Clements, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2022*

*Acknowledgement: Wikipedia*

## Notes

**St Paul's Church** in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, was designed by Inigo Jones as part of a commission for the 4th Earl of Bedford in 1631 to create "houses and buildings fit for the habitations of Gentlemen and men of ability".

**The Temple Church** is a “Royal peculiar church” in the City of London located between Fleet Street and the River Thames, built by the Knights Templar as their English headquarters. It was consecrated on 10 February 1185 by Patriarch Heraclius of Jerusalem.

**Prince Henry's Room** is situated on the first floor at the front of No. 17 Fleet Street, London. The house is one of the few surviving buildings in the City of London dating from before the Great Fire of London in 1666. It is a Grade II\* Listed Building. The site was once owned by the Templars, but after the dissolution of the Order of St John, the building was rebuilt in 1610 and became a tavern called Prince's Arms. This coincided with the investiture of Prince Henry, son of James I, as Prince of Wales.

**Cleaver Square.** Residential squares with a communal open space proved so popular in 17th and 18th century London that they became the capital’s most characteristic townscape. The first was Covent Garden designed by Inigo Jones in 1631, and by the 18th century every major development in the West End featured at least one square. With the expansion of Georgian London the idea began to spread further afield.

Cleaver Square, laid out in 1789, was the earliest to be developed south of the Thames. Until the middle of the 18th century, the landscape was of hedgerows, fields and meadows traversed by the turnpike road from the city to Clapham. There were very few buildings, mostly scattered farms and taverns. Widespread development followed the building of Westminster Bridge in 1750 and Blackfriars Bridge in 1770.

Mary Cleaver had inherited the estate in 1743 and leased the land in 1780 to Thomas Ellis a local landlord. He developed the square (called Princes Square). By the 1870s the area had deteriorated and the houses were severely overcrowded. The centre of the square was enclosed by Ellis in 1792 as a grazing ground. Later it was planted as a garden, then a nursery with greenhouses. In 1927 it was brought by the County Council and in 1937 the name was changed to Cleaver Square. More trees were planted and the garden was gravelled over as a recreation ground. The area declined, especially during the war years, and it was only in the 1950s that Cleaver Square's inherent charm was recognised and improvement made.

In 1995, the London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust organised The London Squares Conference to encourage the renovation of these open areas. Cleaver Square featured prominently and Lambeth Council resolved "to restore the centre of the square to provide once again an attractive and peaceful public space for the people of Kennington", with the backing of English Heritage, a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and donations from residents. The result is this attractive square that we see today.

### Photos



*The Prince Consort Lodge*



*Leaving Kennington Park*



*Royal Dalton offices, detail*



*Palace of Westminster*



*Lincoln's Inn Fields*



*Temple Church*