

## Detailed Guidance for Walkers with Wheels

### General

Thamesmead has been developed with an attempt to separate pedestrians and traffic as much as possible, and there are many suburban pathways, often beside water. Our entire walk route is step free and push chair friendly, but some of the ramps (made in the 1960s when standards were different from now) could well provide a challenge for users of heavier wheelchairs. These are marked on the map at **V, W, X, Y & Z**.

The route has three barriers to progress for all walkers, each of which has to be crossed twice. These are an arterial road (Eastern Way), the railway line at ground level, and an elevated walkway known as the Ridgeway which runs above a nineteenth century sewer built to carry London's waste to the Crossness pumping station. An additional potential difficulty for wheelchair users is that three of the checkpoints are on hills.

If you feel that the five ramps identified on the map could be problematic, you have the choice of (i) following the main route and relying on a helping hand from fellow walkers or a member of the public (there is usually someone around), or else (ii) using buses and the alternative routes for which detailed guidance is given below. A ground level route between Checkpoints **A** and **B** avoiding the ramps on the bridge at **Z** is indicated on the map, making use of the public lifts at Abbey Wood station to cross the railway line. Frequent accessible bus services provide a means of avoiding **V, W, X** and **Y**. Bus service 53 (every 10 minutes) links bus stops O & B on the map, avoiding the steep hill at **V**. Ramp **W** is not too bad at 1 in 18. **X** is a small but steep hump bridge over the little canal. To avoid **W & X** use service 177 (every 10 minutes) between stops F & C on the map. To avoid ramps at **Y** use any bus (every minute or two) between stops S & C.

Bus services 53 and 291 from bus stop G outside Woolwich Arsenal Station will take you to stops close to Checkpoints F and G.

Abbey Wood, Woolwich and Woolwich Arsenal Stations have step free access to all platforms. Plumstead Station platforms are accessed only by steps.

### Detailed Guidance going westwards, Abbey Wood to Woolwich

#### **1) Wheelchair route between Checkpoints A and B avoiding ramps at Z.**

Return to Abbey Wood Station to use the public lifts, solely as a means of crossing the railway line.

On exiting the lift turn immediately right into Rushdene Road.

At Alsike Road cross then turn right.

You are beside the railway line, which is not now the Elizabeth Line.

Pass under the footbridge which you are doing all this to avoid, cross Maran Way, then at the bus stop turn left into a wide alley marked Buckwheat Court.

This alley will bring you out at a bus stop opposite **Checkpoint B**.

Halfway along this alley your route is blocked momentarily by the Atrium Community centre. Go round this on the east side.

When you reach Yarnton Way cross safely near the shops.

#### **2) Wheelchair route using bus for Checkpoint C avoiding Y.**

From Y, use the quiet bit of Harrow Manor Way to reach bus stop **S**. Buses are every couple of minutes and will take you one stop to bus stop **C**. From bus stop **C** go north, cross and turn into Bentham Rd for a short distance to go down a short ramp and arrive at **Checkpoint C**.

**3) Between Checkpoints C and D** there is a hump bridge, **X on map**, short but steep hump, and later, a ramp to cross the Ridgeway, **W on map**, approximately 1 in 18.

#### **3a) Wheelchair route between Checkpoints C and D.**

If you decide to manage **X** and **W**, after crossing the bridge **X** turn right along the canal. Continue alongside the canal for a little way then, on approaching the road bridge under Bentham Road, fork left up past the houses to the bus stop. Continue past the bus stop to cross the road safely just beyond Southwood Road, opposite. Return and turn left into Southwood Road, SW, se. At the end of Southwood Road proceed across the open area to rejoin the main route at Birchmere lake.

### **3b) Wheelchair route using buses for Checkpoint C to D avoiding X and W.**

If you wish to avoid **X** and **W** do the following. On leaving Checkpoint C, retrace your route to the stop opposite stop **C**. Bus No. 177, every 10 minutes, will take you all the way to bus stop **F** in Eynsham Drive, close to **Checkpoint D**.

**4)** To avoid the steps into St Nicholas churchyard from Church Manorway wheelchairs will need to use Benares Road and St Nicholas Road.

**5)** Wheelchair users can avoid the stiff climb at **V** in Brewery Road by continuing along Plumstead High Street to Griffin Road and using bus No. 53 (every ten minutes) from Orchard Road, bus stop **O**, for two stops up Griffin Road to bus stop **B** outside **Checkpoint F**.

### **Detailed Guidance going eastwards, Woolwich to Abbey Wood**

**1)** The climb to **Checkpoints G and F** is quite gradual but to avoid this and shorten the route, bus services 53 and 291 from bus stop **G** outside Woolwich Arsenal Station will take you to stops close to Checkpoints G and F.

**2)** There is a short steep slope down at **V** in Brewery Road. To avoid this, take bus No. 53 (every ten minutes) from below **Checkpoint F** in Griffin Road, two stops to the terminus at Orchard Road. Then go eastwards along Plumstead High Street to rejoin the main route.

**3)** To avoid the steps down from St Nicholas churchyard into Church Manorway wheelchairs will need to use St Nicholas Road and Benares Road.

**4)** Between **Checkpoints D** and **C** there is a ramp to cross the Ridgeway, **W on map**, approximately 1 in 18, and later a hump bridge, **X on map**, short but steep hump.

### **4a) Wheelchair route using buses for Checkpoint D to C avoiding W and X.**

If you wish to avoid **W** and **X** you could do the following. Bus No. 177, every 10 minutes, from bus stop **F** in Eynsham Drive, close to **Checkpoint D**, will take you to bus stop **C**. From bus stop **C** go north, cross and turn into Bentham Road for a short distance to go down a short ramp and arrive at **Checkpoint C**.

### **4b) Wheelchair route between Checkpoints D and C.**

If you decide to manage **W** and **X**, having skirted the south side of Birchmere lake, don't go down to the canal side, but instead cross the open area to find Southwood Road, through the barrier. At the end of Southwood Road turn right to cross the road safely then go back along bentham Road to the bus stop. Here drop down to join the canal which you avoided earlier.. Continue along the canal a little way to cross the hump bridge **X**. Turn right and use the middle of Claridge Way to reach **Checkpoint C**.

### **5) Wheelchair route using bus from Checkpoint C avoiding Y.**

From Checkpoint **CF** go up a short ramp to Bentham Road. At the end of the road cross Bentham Road and Carlyle Road to reach bus stop **C**, southbound. Buses are every couple of minutes and will take you one stop to bus stop **S**. Alight and cross the busy road to take the quiet arm of Harrow Manor Way northwards and rejoin the main route at the foot of ramp **Y**.

### **6) Wheelchair route between Checkpoints B and A avoiding ramps at Z.**

From Checkpoint **B** cross the road safely near the shops then return to the bus stop behind which you will see an alleyway. Follow this alley southwards as straight as you can all the way through to Alsike road. Halfway along this alley your route is blocked momentarily by the Atrium Community centre. Go round this on the east (left) side. At Alsike Road turn right. You are beside the railway line, which is not at this point the Elizabeth Line. Pass under the footbridge which you are doing all this to avoid, and at the end bend right and cross the road to turn left into Rushdene Road. This will bring you to the public lifts at Abbey Wood Station on your left. Use the public

l  
i  
f  
t  
s