



Explore the dark heart of Camberwell and the struggle for freedom in all its many guises, including the Lunatic Asylum and Brixton murals.

1 St Giles Church A church has been here since before 1086. The current church replaced the medieval one destroyed by a fire in 1841, so fierce it melted the stained glass windows and church bell. It suffered extensive damage during WWII, including the loss of William Morris designed window.

In the 1960s a relief centre for local homeless people opened in the crypt, which became the nearby St Giles Trust. Today the crypt is home to an arts venue and jazz club.

With St Giles as the patron saint of disabled people (then called 'cripples') and springs in the area said to work miracles, it is reputed that a corruption of cripple-well became Camberwell.

2 Camberwell House Lunatic Asylum In an age known for the brutal treatment of the mentally ill, Camberwell House was considered kind and enlight-ened. In the 1900s it pioneered ideas such as sports therapy. Today the buildings have been bought and divided between the local council, Camberwell Arts College, and student accommodation.

3 The Blue Plaques of Brunswick Park Two amazing women have lived in this quiet square.

Marianne Jean-Baptiste was the first black British woman to be nominated for an Oscar.

An actress, singer-songwriter, composer and director, she is best known for her roles as Hortense Cumberbatch in "Secrets & Lies" (1996), and Vivian Johnson in "Without A Trace" (2002).

Una Marson was a pioneering Jamaican feminist, poet, playwright, campaigner, presenter and producer. She moved to London in 1932 from Jamaica. She earned a fearsome reputation as campaigner for black women's issues, and was

one of the first poets to write in Jamaican patois.

In WWII she joined the BBC to become the first black presenter and programme maker. Her work included London Calling, a diary show broadcast around the world on her experiences of the war.

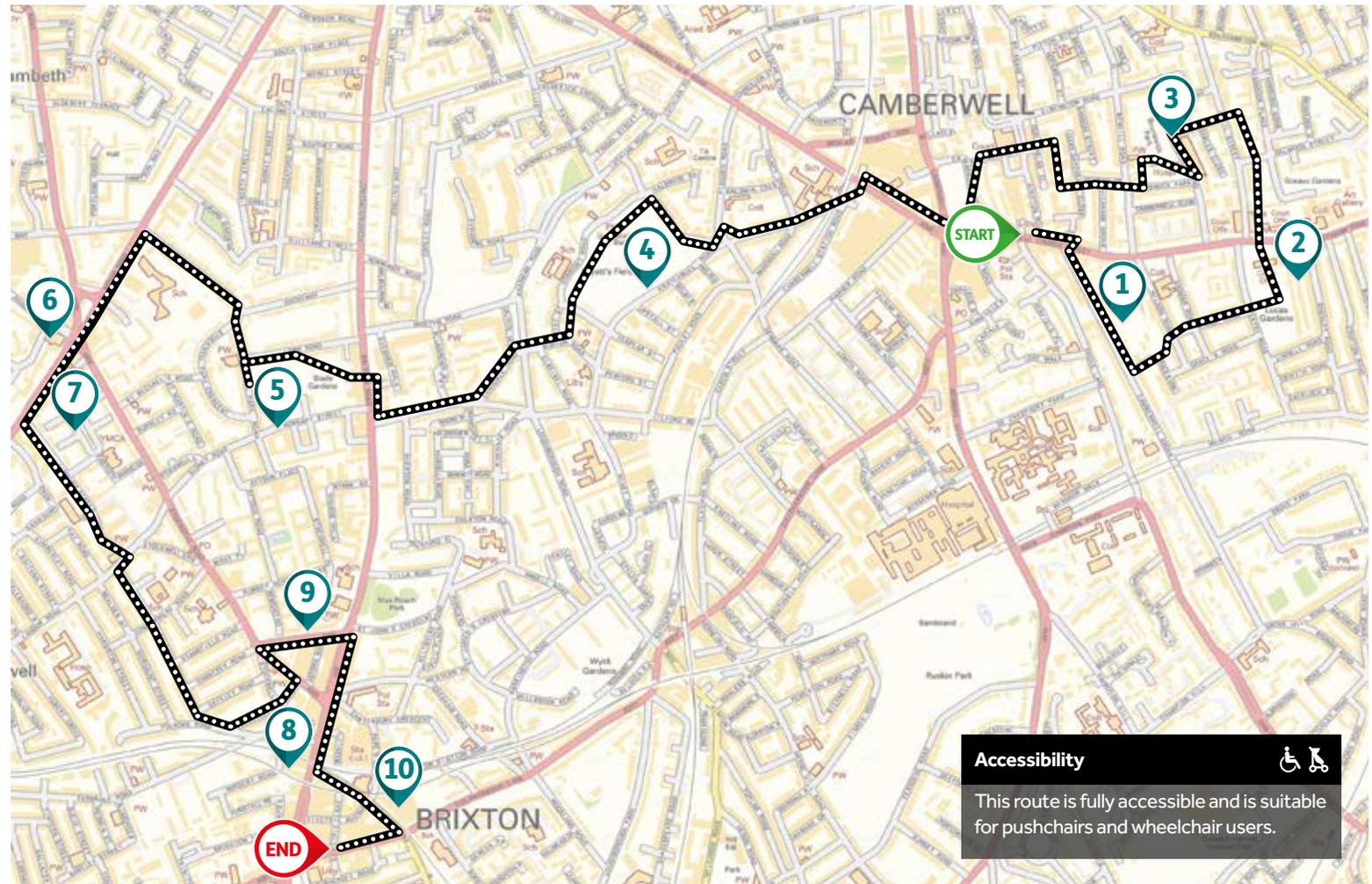
4 Myatt's Fields Park The lives of the community have intertwined in this park over centuries, but have all been

watched over by the ancient black Mulberry tree by the octagonal shelter. Hardly any small Victorian parks survive now. This one opened in 1889, and you can still stroll down the same paths as its creators.

The Minet Estate Isaac Minet was a Huguenot (French Protestant Christian), and in 1686 he fled persecution to become a refugee in England. His family became very prosperous

and his descendant James Minet built these houses in the 1860s. Stories from their life are reflected in the street names.

Cormont Road is named after the Minet family's home village. The first imposing block of mansion flats, Calais Gate, is where Isaac escaped from to come to England. Look up towards the roof see stone cats, a pun on the name Minet, which means 'little cat' in Old French.



Accessibility This route is fully accessible and is suitable for pushchairs and wheelchair users.



**The Bronze Woman,**  
photograph by Robert Larkin-Frost

The final building on Cormont Road is the smaller mansion block **Dover House**, named after the English town that gave sanctuary to the Minet family in the 1680s.

**5 Slade Gardens Mural**  
An artist called Gordon Wilkinson once lived in Stockwell. This mural of the adventure playground at Slade Gardens is his only surviving work. The picture portrays local workers – the policeman, the vicar, a school dinner lady – and neighbourhood children. As the playground now looks completely different, the mural offers a glimpse of people and their life here in the 1980s.

**6 Rotunda – Bronze Woman, Mural and War Memorial**  
**Bronze Woman** is thought to be the first public monument in England depicting a black female, erected as

a lasting tribute to Caribbean women. The child held aloft is a symbol of women’s strength and of their aspirations for the next generation. It was inspired by local resident Cecile Nobrega’s poem. She conducted a 10-year campaign to see her words given physical form; aged 89, she took part in its unveiling.

**Rotunda** If enemy bombs were falling, you’d be relieved to see this building. It marks a deep-level WWII shelter for 1,600 people. The paintings by local artist Brian Barnes show local people who gave their lives defending family, friends and neighbours.

**War Memorial Clock Tower** The words around this memorial read ‘To the Stockwell Men who served in the Great War. These were our sons who died for our lands.’ It was unveiled in 1922, with thousands looking on. Every single person in the crowd would have known someone who died in the war. Some, such as Dr. Foord Caiger who donated the clock, had lost their only child. The figure above the wooden doors is Remembrance.



**Rotunda Mural,**  
photograph by Ishwar Maharaj

**7 Stockwell Tube Station**  
In the tense aftermath of the London terrorist attacks of July 2005, the entire capital was on high alert. Two weeks after those tragic events, copycat bombers attempted and failed to detonate more devices. Police wrongly identified Brazilian Jean Charles de Menezes as one of the suspects, and shot and killed him here at Stockwell Tube Station.

Unveiled on 7 January 2010, this permanent memorial to de Menezes was created by local artist, Mary Edwards.

**8 Brixton Murals, Bellefields Road**  
This abstract artwork goes to show that not all murals need to have a hard hitting message. In 1987 residents asked for ‘birds, flowers and something non-political’. Lots of references to the local area can be found if you know what you’re looking for. The demolished Empress Theatre makes an appearance, as does an abstract impression of the local church. Names are played with too – what do you think the bell and pile of bricks represent?



**Stockwell War Memorial Clock Tower and Rotunda Mural,**  
photograph by Robert Larkin-Frost

**Beach Mural** was intended to match the Bellefields Road art in tone and colour. Again, local residents were consulted as to what they would like to see in the space. Together they create a vibrant yet peaceful environment for residents, improving the daily lives of those who live around them. Even on the rainiest day in Brixton, it’s possible to look at this mural and find the world a more peaceful place.

**9 Brixton Academy**  
This mural could have shown a very different scene. Created in 1981 when the infamous ‘Brixton Riots’ had just taken place, it could have commemorated those awful days. But the community decided it would be better to depict friendship and harmony.

**10 “Nuclear Dawn” Coldharbour Lane**  
In 1981, Britain was still in the depths of the Cold War. Ordinary people were threatened with global meltdown if political leaders decided to launch a nuclear strike. This mural expresses

the very real risk of doom hovering over the country at the time.

The mural holds a lot of detail, and it’s worth getting up close if you can. There’s even a mini version of this mural depicted amongst other landmarks of Brixton, political figures and images of peace.



**Nuclear Dawn Mural,**  
Coldharbour Lane, Brixton,  
photograph by Ishwar Maharaj