



*Seeing the Capital Differently*

## **Air Forces**

### **Welcome to *CityThemes***

By printing this leaflet you have decided to discover, or rediscover, the sights and delights of **London** in a different way. We hope that you enjoy your explorations of our fascinating and historical capital city.

This leaflet has been designed to allow you to explore as the mood takes you. Both well-known and lesser-known attractions are included and they are randomly listed so that you plan your own itinerary and visit as many or as few as you wish.

Please note:- some places restrict entry and ask for prior application either in writing or by telephone. This is indicated where known. Others may change opening days and hours with little warning – it may be worth checking by phone if they are off the beaten track.

A very brief description of the reason for the choice of site is given but because of space it is not possible to include much detail. Again a telephone call to the site may help you to decide on whether a visit is worthwhile. Remember there may be other items that interest you at the same site.

Themes are constantly being updated and new titles added so please keep looking at our website or get in touch with us by e-mail or letter. We welcome your comments especially if you feel that some site should be included or details are incorrect/inaccurate. Contact details are

website:            [www.citytheme.co.uk](http://www.citytheme.co.uk)  
e-mail:             [info@citythemes.co.uk](mailto:info@citythemes.co.uk)  
address:            CityThemes PO Box 42530, London E1W 3WL

### **Enjoy Your Explorations**

## Westminster Abbey

Deans' Yard, Parliament Square, SW1  
020 7222 5152 www.westminster-abbey.org

transport: Westminster & St James's Park u/g, Victoria & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A,88,109,159,211; boat Westminster Millennium Pier

facilities: audio guide & leaflets in 7 languages; guided tours (Apr-Oct Mon-Fri 10.00, 10.30, 11.00, 14.00, 15.00, Sat 10.00, 11.00, 12.30; Nov-Mar Mon-Fri 10.00, 11.00, 14.00, 15.00, Sat 10.00, 11.00, 12.30)

opening: Mon-Fri 09.00-16.45 (last admission 15.45); Sat 09.00-14.45 (last admission 13.45); closed Sun except for worship; Cloister daily 08.00-18.00; Chapter House daily 10.00-17.30 Apr-Oct, 10.00-16.00 Nov-Mar admission charge

a chapel dedicated to the Royal Air Force (RAF) has a stained glass window by Hugh Easton. It shows airmen of 68 Fighter Squadrons and angels in the 1940 Battle of Britain with badges of the fighter squadrons. The four panels have visions symbolising the Resurrection - a squadron leader before the Virgin Mary, a Sergeant Pilot before the Crucifixion, a Pilot Officer representing the Resurrection and a Seraphim with six wings and outstretched hands

the chapel also has the graves of Air Marshal Hugh Trenchard (1873-1956) and Air Chief Marshal Hugh Dowding (1882-1970)

## Royal Air Force Museum

Grahame Park Way, Hendon, NW9  
020 8205 2266 (general); 09001 6055 633 (information)  
www.rafmuseum.org.uk

transport: Colindale u/g; buses 204,303

facilities: disabled access & wcs; library; restaurant & snacks; shop

opening: daily 10.00-18.00  
admission charge

this museum traces the history of the Royal Air Force (RAF) from 1918 and has an exhibition on life in the RAF today and in the future using paintings, drawings and sculpture. There are many interactive displays and flight simulators. Displays of RAF uniforms and the Victoria & George Crosses won in combat stand alongside details of the United States Airforce (USAAF) in Britain and facts about the RAF Factory at Farnborough with a replica of the office of Sir Barnes Wallace who invented the bouncing bomb

the Battle of Britain Museum has a sound and light show with tableaux on the Munich Crisis, the Declaration of War and Evacuation. Aircraft involved in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War (Junkers, Henkel, Tiger Moths, Spitfires & Hurricanes) and an operations room, uniforms, medals, documents and memorabilia make it a fascinating place to visit

## Purfleet Heritage and Military Centre

Centurion Way, Purfleet, Essex  
01708 866764

transport: Purfleet rail; bus 324

opening: April-Nov first weekend in each month and then the following Sun

air force uniforms and artefacts are housed in a 1760 building

## Cenotaph

Whitehall, SW1

transport: Westminster u/g; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A,88,159,211; boat Westminster Millennium Pier

flags of the Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and Merchant Navy fly from this well-known 1920 war

memorial that commemorates both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World Wars

## Sir Arthur Travers, 1st Baron Harris ('Bomber Harris')

outside St Clement Danes Church, Strand, WC2

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g, Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341; boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

Bomber Harris (1892-1984) was commander-in-chief of Bomber Command during the War and organised massive bombing raids on industrial Germany. The statue of 1992 is by Faith Winter

## Canada Walk & maple tree

north walk of Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2

transport: Holborn & Chancery Lane u/g; buses 1,8,25,59,68,91,168,171,188,242

the maple tree (with explanatory medallion) was planted in 1945 to commemorate the establishment, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, of the headquarters of the Royal Canadian Air Force during 1940-45

## Hugh Montague, 1st Viscount Trenchard

Victoria Embankment Gardens - in front of former Air Ministry, SW1

transport: Westminster u/g; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A,88,159,211; boat Westminster Millennium Pier

this 1961 statue commemorates Hugh Trenchard (1873-1956), Air Marshal in the Royal Air Force (RAF) during the War and Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police between 1918 and 1929. He was the founder of the Police College at Hendon. It is by William Macmillan

## Royal Air Force Memorial

riverside of Victoria Embankment at Whitehall Stairs, SW1

transport: Westminster u/g; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A,88,159,211; boat Westminster Millennium Pier

the eagle symbol of the RAF can be seen on this memorial of 1923 to the men of the Royal Naval Air Squadron, Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Air Force. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield it was sculptured by Sir William Reid Dick

## Air Chief Marshal Hugh 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Dowding

outside St Clement Danes Church, Strand, WC2

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g, Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341; boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

memorial statue of 1988 to Air Chief Marshal Dowding (1882-1970) by Faith Winter

## Charles Frederick Algernon, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Portal of Hungerford,

Ministry of Defence lawns, Whitehall, SW1

transport: Westminster u/g; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A,88,159,211; boat Westminster Millennium Pier

an Air Vice Marshal in 1937 he became Chief of British Air Staff between 1940 and 1946. The statue of 1975 is by Oscar Nemon

## St Clement Danes

Strand, WC2  
020 7242 8282

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g, Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,

13,15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341;  
boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

opening: daily 08.30-16.30

*St Clement is the memorial church of the Royal Air Force (RAF) and has mementoes, badges and record books of names of those airmen who died during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. There are separate records for those who died in air battles and were awarded the Victoria and George Crosses*

*on the ceiling of this attractive church is the Royal Stuart coat of arms with the Latin inscription 'Built by Christopher Wren 1682; destroyed by thunderbolts of air warfare 1941; restored by the Royal Air Force 1958'.*

*among the fine furnishings is a 1956 organ, designed by Ralph Downes and made by Harrison and Harrison. It incorporates the RAF symbol of the eagle and was a gift from the American Air Force. The black granite font with redwood cover, surmounted by the Norwegian crown, with the inscription 'Til Minne Vare Falne Flygere (To the memory of fallen flyers)' was a gift from the Royal Norwegian Air Force. It is in the crypt Chapel together with an altar memorial to the Netherlands Air Force. The wrought-iron and brass lectern engraved with an outline of Australia was donated by the Australian Royal Air Force*

### **St Bartholomew-the-Great**

Cloth Fair, West Smithfield, EC1  
020 7606 5171

transport: Barbican & St Paul's u/g, City Thameslink rail; buses 8,25,56,242

opening: Tue-Fri 08.30-17.00, Sat 10.30-13.30, Sun 08.00-13.00, 14.30-20.00

*the Lady Chapel has colours including a banner embroidered with areas of conflict, an RAF flag and a monument dedicated to the 600 City of London Air Force Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Airforce*

*the embroidered kneeler at the sanctuary rail was begun in 1956. It is 24ft (7.3m) long and 17in (43cm) wide with 1,360,800 stitches. It was funded by congregation donations and commemorates 600 City of London Squadron Royal Auxiliary Airforce personnel who gave their lives in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War*

### **Runnymede**

A 308 road from Windsor towards Staines  
01784 432891

opening: daily at any time

*this famous site where King John signed and sealed the Magna Carta in 1215 also has on the hillside a memorial to the Commonwealth Air Forces. There are 20,455 names on stone panels and a courtyard 'to the men and women of the Air Forces of the British Commonwealth who lost their lives in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and who have no known grave'*

### **RAF Uxbridge, No.11 (Fighter) Group Operations Room**

Hillingdon, Middlesex UB10

transport: Uxbridge u/g, West Drayton rail; buses 207, A10,U3,U4,U7

opening: by appointment only. Please write to the above address

*a visit to this Royal Air Force underground bunker that was the centre of command and control of the South East sector of the United Kingdom during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, will give you an insight into operations during the Battle of Britain in 1940. The Plotting and Control Rooms are on view and the Briefing Room has a collection of wartime*

*memorabilia - models, uniforms, photographs, documents and prints.*

### **Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm**

Victoria Embankment, SW1

transport: Westminster u/g; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A, 88,159,211; boat Westminster Millennium Pier

*standing in the gardens on the riverside of the Ministry of Defence this 1991 war memorial shows a man in uniform holding onto a pair of wings. Around the memorial are the names of places where the Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm have served. The latest place name to be added is Kuwait*

### **St George's RAF Chapel of Remembrance**

Main Road, Biggin Hill, Kent  
01959 570353

transport: Bromley South rail; bus 320; New Addington Tramlink and bus 464

opening: daily 11.00-16.00

*this chapel in the shape of an aircraft hangar has stained glass windows commemorating the spirit of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War air and ground crews. Each window has the image of a pilot representing one of the squadrons. A book lists the 454 allied pilots killed during the Battle of Britain and there is a list on the wall of overseas pilots who fought for the RAF*

### **Brompton Cemetery**

Fulham Road, SW10

020 7352 1201 [www.open.gov.uk/rp/rphome.htm](http://www.open.gov.uk/rp/rphome.htm)

transport: West Brompton u/g & rail; buses 14,74,190, 211,328,C3

opening: daily 09.00-dusk

admission free

*this Victorian cemetery of 40 acres was originally the 'West of London & Westminster Cemetery' and has some notable graves among its 200,000. One memorial commemorates Sub-Lieutenant Rex Warneford who, in 1915, dropped bombs on a Zeppelin attacking London. He was the first pilot to be shot down in aerial combat and the memorial depicts an airship under attack with a portrait of Warneford*

### **Polish Pilots Memorial**

on the A40 western Avenue, near Northolt Airport, Middlesex

transport: South Ruislip u/g & rail; bus E7

*this 1948 column with its spread eagle and battle honours is dedicated to the Polish pilots who died serving with the Royal Air Force during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. Their names are inscribed on the wall behind*

### **Battersea Park**

Albert Bridge Road, SW11

[www.batterseapark.org](http://www.batterseapark.org)

transport: Sloane Square u/g, Battersea Park & Queenstown Road rail; buses 19,44,49,137,239,319,344, 345

opening: daily dawn-dusk

*a memorial of a carved crest commemorates the 5397 Australian aircrew that were lost in action over Europe during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War can be found at the east end of Central Avenue. It was set in 2000 into a Remembrance Stone boulder from Bondi Beach*

## **London Biggin Hill Airfield**

Kent TN16

01959 572277 for airshow (Airdisplays International Ltd)

transport: road M25 junction 4; Bromley South rail;  
buses 246,320,464

*Biggin Hill was originally a Royal Air Force station and played a vital role during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, being the base for the Spitfires during the Battle of Britain . It is now an important light aviation centre for business flights and flying lessons. See also entry under St George's RAF Chapel*

*its history as a military airfield began in 1917 when it became part of the inner patrol zone of the London Air Defence. It became famous in 1943 when it was the first station and sector airfield to claim 1000 enemy aircraft destroyed. After the war it became Transport Command Terminal, then between 1946 and 1949 Reserve Command, then 49-57 Fighter Command. In 1958 it was made non-operational until the RAF left in 1992. If you are interested in learning more the website, [www.bigginhill.co.uk](http://www.bigginhill.co.uk), has a description of the history of the Base and the squadrons that flew from there*

*the largest public airshow in Europe has been held at the airfield each year since 1962 usually in June. There are flying displays including vintage aircraft, helicopters, parachute teams and a display of static aircraft, funfair, craft stalls, music etc*

A great deal of care has been taken in collecting the information in this leaflet but *CityThemes* cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of that information. It can cover only a few of the many interesting sites to be found in London and therefore must not be considered a definitive guide.

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