

Family Activities in Wandsworth, Local Areas and Inner London

Most of the listed activities are free for both adults and children. Getting out of the house and engaging in different activities can make a huge difference to your family. Being outside of the house can dramatically improve a child's behaviour, reduce sibling rivalry and therefore contribute to positive mental well-being for the parent/carer. Spending time together, being active and having fun can improve relationships in the family enormously. At all of the listed activities there is no obligation to purchase food, so pack up your lunches and along the route you will find a picnic spot ideal for your family!

Parks & Play Grounds:

Listed are the main parks in Wandsworth, other local areas and London; all of these places are brilliant for an active, fun day out. Please check the Wandsworth Council Website for the more localised playgrounds.

Battersea Park:

Battersea Park Road, SW11 4NL

Nearest train station is Battersea Park. Many buses serve this area from across Wandsworth.

The park is gated and has 4 entry/exit gates.

Battersea Park is a large (200 acres) Victorian award winning park. Attractions include:

- Outstanding play areas with plenty of equipment ideal for children of all ages
- A grand 1k walk alongside the river Thames
- Ornamental & ecological areas
- Bandstand
- Magnificent fountains
- A large lake (rowing at a charge is available during the summer months)
- A children's zoo (again at an additional charge)

Tooting Common:

Closest Tube is Tooting Bec. Open access from all edges, Tooting Common is set over a large area of land with football pitches and 2 playgrounds. One of the playgrounds with a large sandpit is situated towards the Balham end of the common. The common also has a large duck pond.

Also situated on the common is a Council run Lido open from 1st May until 31st August. Tooting Bec Lido is in fact the largest outdoor pool in Europe. There is an admission charge but children

under 5's go free. (Please check out more information on the website of placesleisure.org/tootinglido).

Richmond Park:

Richmond Park is the largest enclosed area in London and due to its enormity has various access points not only from Richmond but also from Roehampton, Wimbledon and Kingston. Please check their website, as they give a detailed list of all the buses that serve the park.

There is plenty to do and see in Richmond Park -

- Playground – The Petersham Gate Playground has been designed for children of all ages. It features a sandpit, climbing frames, jumping lily pads, see saws and in summer time a water play feature, so take swimwear.
- Wildlife – Richmond Park has a wealth of wildlife and, of course, the easy to spot free roaming deer provide a wealth of excitement.
- Isabella Plantation – a 40 acre woodland garden
- King Henry's Mounds – Fabulous views of the Thames Valley & a distant view of St Paul's Cathedral
- Lakes

Wimbledon and Putney Common:

Open access over a vast area so consulting a map as to where you want to be is advisable.

The common offers nature trails and ponds. It also has a windmill and museum (small charges do apply to go inside the windmill, and a family ticket can be purchased).

A great outdoor space to explore but there are no children's playgrounds on the commons.

Wimbledon Park:

Nearest train station is Wimbledon Park and various buses serve the area. There are 3 main entrances to the park; Revelstoke Road, Wimbledon Park Road and Home Park Road.

The park is located next to the All England Lawn Tennis Club and is the largest park in the borough of Merton. It also has the largest lake in South London.

The park has 2 playgrounds with a sandpit and an interactive water feature/splash pool so do take swim wear & towels on a hot day! This playground is most suitable for children under 8 years.

Bishop's Park:

Bishops Avenue, Fulham Park Road.

This park runs adjacent to the river Thames and is situated on the north side of Putney Bridge and is very accessible by many bus routes.

This park is beautifully located right on top of the river Thames and lots to do for all the family and any age group. It has play grounds suitable for toddlers and juniors, a skate bowl, free table tennis tables (take your own bats and balls) basketball hoop and water play for all ages in summer months (don't forget your swim wear).

The park also has an ornamental lake, urban beach, moat gardens and a Thames river path.

Crystal Palace Park:

A short walk from Crystal Palace High street, which is served by many bus routes and close to Crystal Palace train station. It is one of the largest parks in South London and the home of the dinosaurs! The iconic model dinosaurs have been in the park for over 100 years/ There is a children's play area with a sandpit, lakes, a maze and a children's farm.

Other Local Parks:

Other play areas with summer water features and paddling pools include Streatham Common, Colliers Wood recreational ground and Figges Marsh. Figges Marsh is situated between Tooting and Mitcham.

Inner London Parks:**Hyde Park:**

The tube stations that surround Hyde Park are Lancaster Gate, Marble Arch, Hyde Parke Corner and Knightsbridge and Hyde Park is highly accessible by many bus routes.

At Hyde Park there is something to do for everyone. A fabulous London Park with great gardens, water features and memorials, including the memorial fountain for Princess Diana.

There is a brilliant playground suitable for all ages.

The serpentine lake is a great picnic area, or you can hire a rowing boat.

The serpentine also has a public lido (cost Adult: £4.80, Child £1.80, £12.00 for a family ticket 2 adults and 2 children) so don't forget you swim wear!

Kensington Gardens:

Kensington Gardens is readily accessible by public transport and there are a number of tube stations and bus stops that surround the park.

This park has lots to do and see including viewing Kensington Palace, fabulous gardens and many memorials, fountains and statues. This park is also home to the Princess Diana Memorial playground with lots of climbing equipment, a sensory trail, sandpits and water features, so don't forget swim wear!

City Farms:

Deen City Farm

39 Windsor Avenue, Merton Abbey, SW19 2RR

The nearest tube station (15 minute walk along the river Wandle) is Colliers Wood, but certain buses will take you closer to the farm. The farm is not open on a Monday.

Free to visit and plenty to see from goats, to guinea pigs and alpacas and at certain points of the day, animal feed can be purchased or certain animals are brought out for petting and displays. At weekends pony rides are available at an additional cost.

A further half a mile walk will bring you into Morden Hall Park with a wooden playground and zip wire. Morden Hall has plenty of streams and especially in the Rose Garden the stream is very accessible for a paddle and is great fun for all ages. Please take swim wear.

Deen City farm along with a walk into Morden Hall Park is a brilliant day out and it's all free!

Vauxhall City Farm

A short, signposted walk from Vauxhall tube and bus station. Situated in Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, the farm is free entrance and is open from Wednesday to Sunday.

Again various animals to meet, please check their website for times and activities.

Museums:

Living in London provides us with a vast choice of museums to visit. All the museums listed below are **FREE** entry. Please note that some exhibitions within the museum may incur an additional charge but on the whole there is plenty to see and do without paying! Museums appeal to various age groups and for that reason are a great day out for families with children of different ages. All the museums have a website and run various weekend or holiday activities so it is always worth checking as to see what is going on or simply show up and visit their usual exhibitions.

Horniman Museum:

100 London Road, Forest Hill, SE23 3PQ

The museum is a signposted 10 minute walk from Forest Hill Train Station and is served by various buses.

This museum is a brilliant day out with lots to see and do, including the natural history gallery packed full of taxidermy, skeletons & fossils. Also an interactive music gallery and plenty of opportunity to explore thousands of real museum objects. There is a small aquarium which charges for entry (£10.50 for a family of 4. Children under 3 are free).

The Horniman Museum is situated in a large interactive garden, with great views of London and across the road from the front of the museum there is a well-equipped playground and sandpit.

Natural History Museum:

Cromwell Road, SW7 5BD. The museum is signposted from South Kensington tube station and plenty of buses serve this area.

From dinosaurs to massive mammals, explore the massive diversity of life on earth. Take a journey through the spectacular earth sculpture and find out about the forces that shape our planet. An incredible museum which cannot fail to impress you!

Science Museum:

Exhibition Road, South Kensington, SW7 2DD

Signposted from South Kensington tube station and many buses serve this area.

Crammed with exhibitions and interactive activities and something to capture everyone's interest (even those who think science is boring!!)

Victoria and Albert (V&A):

Cromwell Road, SW7 2RL

Signposted from South Kensington Tube Station and many buses serve this area.

The world's greatest museum of art and design and plenty to stimulate the imagination. The V&A also has a garden and water features to explore.

V&A Museum of Childhood:

Cambridge Heath Road, E2 9PA

A signposted 5 minute walk from Bethnal Green underground station and many buses serving this area.

This museum has 4 main galleries: moving toys, childhood galleries, creativity gallery and front room gallery. Quite a distance from Wandsworth, but plenty to see and the museum runs free drop-in activities every day including arts and crafts, tours, trails and stories. Activities suitable for all ages from 3 – 12 years.

British Museum:

Great Russell Street, WC1V 3DG

The nearest tube stations are Tottenham Court Road and Russell Square and various buses serve this area.

Plenty of family activities are happening at the British Museum so check their website or simply turn up to learn more about the Tudors, Mummies, Roman Treasures, Masks, the English Civil War and a whole load more.

Imperial War Museum:

Lambeth Road, SE1 6HZ

The nearest tube is Lambeth North and various buses serve this area.

Discover more about war time. There is one of the main exhibitions called "A Family in War Time" which tells the story of a family who lived in London during the 2nd World War and the challenges that they faced.

Some of the exhibitions may not be suitable for younger children. Please check the website or speak the museum staff for guidance.

South Bank:

Having a walk along the Southbank is a brilliant day out with lots to see and do. The best access point for the Southbank is Waterloo Bridge, which will give you brilliant views of the London Eye and Westminster.

Just under the London Eye there is a large grass area and also a playground for children. All along the south bank there are many street performers and magicians and you can go into the Royal Festival Hall for free and often experience live music.

Outside the Royal Festival Hall are some interactive water fountains. You will get wet, take swimwear!

Further along the south bank is a small beach and if you keep walking you will get to the TATE modern. A brilliant gallery with free admission displaying Contemporary Art. The TATE is housed in what was once the Bankside Power Station, so even just walking into the Turbine Hall, which is the building's entrance, cannot fail to impress you.

From the TATE you can walk across the pedestrian Millennium Bridge (also known as the "Wobbly Bridge") and you will be right under St Paul's Cathedral.

Keep walking along the south bank and you will get some brilliant views of Tower Bridge.

Along the river there are various points where you can catch a river cruise to Greenwich. Please do your internet research for the best possible prices and tour companies.

Buckingham Palace:

A visit to the palace if you combine it with a Changing of the Guard's ceremony is an enjoyable trip to London. The nearest tube is Green Park and it is signposted. The band starts playing at 11.15am and the ceremony lasts until 12.00pm. **Please note the ceremony does not happen every day, so please check the schedule online.**

Libraries:

Libraries are great places for spending some quiet time together and as long as you take some identification and a recent proof of address (such as a utility bill, council tax statement or a

bank statement) you and your children can become library members for free, so that you can take books home (& DVD's at a small charge).

Libraries also have various activities running (especially in the holidays) such as story times, art activities, reading groups & various incentives to get children to read more. Please go into your local library for further information or look on the Wandsworth Council Website.

The libraries in Wandsworth are:

Balham: 16 Ramsden Road, SW12 8QY (020 8673 1129)

Battersea: 265 Lavender Hill, SW11 1JB (020 7223 2234)

Battersea Park: 309 Battersea Park Road, SW11 4NF (020 7720 4122)

Earlsfield: 276 Magdalen Road, SW18 3NY (020 8946 2088)

Northcote: 155e Northcote Road, SW11 6HW (020 7223 2336)

Putney: 5/7 Disraeli Road, SW17 2DR (020 8780 3085)

Roehampton (Library & Learning Centre): 2 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4HD
(020 8246 6979)

Southfields: 300 Wimbledon Park Road, SW19 6NL (020 8780 1945)

Tooting: 75 Mitcham Road, Sw17 9PP (020 8767 0343)

Wandsworth Town Library: 11 Garratt Lane, SW18 4AR (020 8877 1742)

York Gardens: 34 Lavender Road, SW11 2UG (020 7223 2341)

Other:

Battersea Arts Centre:

Battersea Arts Centre on Lavender Hill (5 minutes walk from Clapham Junction train station) recently joined forces with Wandsworth Museum. It is always worthwhile checking their website as they offer many free activities and workshops. Such as "Family Saturdays" where the last Saturday of every month families take over the arts center for a day of free activities. You may need to book in advance.

Pump House Gallery:

Battersea Park, London, SW11 4NJ

Pump House Gallery is a public exhibition space in the centre of Battersea Park and is owned by Wandsworth Council. Admission is free but the gallery is closed on a Monday and a Tuesday. The gallery runs various activities and on a Sunday they facilitate "Sunday Social" a free hands-on family friendly workshop programme suitable for all ages. Each session takes a theme from the exhibition and finds a fun way to explore it.

Low Cost Activities:

Swimming is a great exercise and can be fun for all the family.

Adults will need to pay around £5.60 in Wandsworth Council run pools. Children under 5 are free. Children between 6 and 8 years can buy a junior swim card for £2.00 which will be valid for 5 months and gives unlimited amount of swims as long as the child is accompanied by an adult. Children over 8 years pay £3.55 a session. Any parent receiving income support, can swim for £3.55 as long as you take evidence of your entitlement.

Please check on the leisure centre's website for swim times (especially for the teaching pool) and admission prices or contact them on the numbers listed.

Wandsworth Pools: For more information check the website: places for leisure and the name of the pool you want to visit.

Latchmere Leisure Centre: Burns Road, Battersea, SW11 5AD. Telephone: 020 7207 8004
A brilliant beach like pool with wave making facility on a weekend and in the holidays.

Balham Leisure Centre: Elmfield Road, SW17 8AN. Telephone: 020 8772 9577

Putney Leisure Centre: Dryburgh Road, SW15 1BL. Telephone 020 8785 0388

Tooting Leisure Centre: Greaves Place (off Garratt Lane), SW17 0NE.
Telephone: 020 8333 7555

Tooting Bec Lido (open air swimming): Tooting Bec Road, SW16 1RU, Telephone: 020 8871 7198. Prices: Adults: £7.70, Children between 5 and 15 years are £4.70. Under 5 years are free. On a hot day arrive early, to avoid disappointment!

Cinema:

The following cinemas have early showings (usually around 10.00am) on a Saturday and Sunday of family films. Ticket costs from £2.95 per person, and extra for 3D movies. The films are not the latest releases but are fairly current or back due to popular demand. There is no need to purchase food at the cinema and you are allowed to take in snacks that you have brought with you from home. Please check the cinema website for a list of the films they are showing and the times.

CineWorld: Southside Shopping Centre, Wandsworth Town

Putney Odeon: 28 Putney High Street, SW15 1SN

Streatham Odeon: 47-49 Streatham High Road, SW16 1PW

Wimbledon Odeon: 39 The Broadway, SW19 1QB

Clubs:

There are various low cost sporting clubs across the borough, from football to chess. Please check the Family Information Service on the Council Website. This website gives details on both weekend and holiday clubs.

Rainbows & Beavers, Cubs & Brownies, Scouts & Guides:

Depending on the age and sex of your child these groups meet weekly in term time, in several church halls across the borough. Rainbows for girls starts from age 5 and Beavers for boys starts from age 6. The groups do various activities from crafts, sports, cooking and trips out. They usually charge around £2.50 per meeting, per child. Please check their websites for the appropriate group for your child and to register an interest. The leader from your local group will then contact you.

Other Activities:

For pop up activities and things to do in the holidays please check online on Thrive which is the Family Information Service on the Wandsworth Council Website for an up-to-date list of activities that are happening across the borough (many of which are **free** activities).

Transport:

When travelling across London, check the Transport for London (TfL) website. This website will give you all your travel options by simply entering a start address and a destination address.

Please note that the above activities are suggestions and ideas of things to do. All of the activities require adult supervision for your children. At the time of writing, the information was correct but please do your own research on your chosen destination before heading out, as to avoid any disappointment!