This Map & Guide was produced by Dublin City Council in partnership with the Ballsbridge, Donnybrook and Sandymount Historical Society.

Thank you to the following for their contribution to the Ballsbridge Walking Trail:

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For details on Dublin City Council's programme of walking tours and weekly walking groups, log on to www.letswalkandtalk.ie

For details on the Ballsbridge, Donnybrook and Sandymount Historical Society, log on to www.bdshistory.org

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Ballsbridge had formed part of the estate of Viscount Fitzwilliam, passing to the Earl of Pembroke in 1816. The 19th century saw a steady flow of professional and merchant classes from the city to the suburbs and in 1863, Pembroke Township was set up (later becoming Pembroke Urban District Council) to provide local government services in the area. Industries such as mills, laundries, bakeries and ironworks were established and housing was provided locally for the workers. Institutions like the Royal Dublin Society and Masonic Girls’ School also moved to more spacious premises in the area and facilities for rugby, cricket, football, tennis and other sports were developed to cater for the growing local population.

Welcome to Ballsbridge!

This walking trail starts at Sandymount DART Station and finishes at Lansdowne Road DART Station. Walking at a leisurely pace, the trail should take you under 90 minutes to complete.

**SANDYMOUNT AVENUE**

The DART electric rail system uses the Dublin to Dun Laoghaire (Kingscourt) line, which was the first railway line in Ireland, opening in 1834. Sandymount Avenue has literary connections, with 5 Sandymount Avenue/George’s Villa being the birthplace of Nobel prize-winning poet, William Butler Yeats, and 11 Sandymount Avenue was the home of poet and playwright, T. C. Murray. Irish Nationalists, Patrick and Willie Pearse, both of whom were executed after the 1916 Easter Rising, once lived at 13 Sandymount Avenue.

**CLAYTON HOTEL**

Clayton Hotel on Merrion Road was built in the 1880s and was formerly a Masonic school for boys orphaned in closing in 1972. Masonic symbols still adorn the main entrance hall of the hotel. The assembly hall is now known as Thomas Prior Hall, after one of the founding members of the nearby ROS. Next to Clayton Hotel is the iconic post-modern building of the British Embassy, which was designed by London architects Allies and Morrison and completed in 1995. A number of other foreign embassies are also located in Ballsbridge.

**ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY**

The Dublin Society was founded in 1731, becoming the Royal Dublin Society in 1821 on the visit of King George IV. The buildings fronting Merrion Road were erected from 1904-28 in a neo-classical style as the Society’s headquarters, which had moved from Leinster House. The RDS promotes the development of science, agriculture, arts and industry and hosts a number of exhibitions, conferences, concerts and sporting events (including the Dublin Horse Show) every year. Opposite the RDS are the Midland Irish Bank headquarters and the Red House, the oldest building in Ballsbridge, dating from the 18th century. And adjoining the Red House is the Sweptstakes, which was formerly the headquarters for the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes, a lottery based on horse racing set up to raise funds for hospitals.

**Pembroke Town Hall**

Pembroke Town Hall was built in 1880 for Pembroke Township by one of their councillors, architect Edward Henry Carson, who was the father of well-known Unionist, Lord Carson. It is now the headquarters of the City of Dublin Education & Training Board. The adjoining former Fire Station dates from 1892.

**Pembroke Library**

Pembroke Library was opened in 1929, and was the last of the Carnegie libraries built in Dublin with money donated by Scottish businessman and philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. The quantity surveyor was W. F. Beckett, father of writer Samuel Beckett. Its first librarian was Michael O’Donovan, better known as the writer Frank O’Connor.

**BALL’S BRIDGE**

Ball’s Bridge gives its name to the area and is named after a Nicholas Ball, who had a house nearby. It was erected in 1791, rebuilt in 1835 and widened and improved in 1863. The river Drummond, one of Dublin’s major suburban rivers, rising in the Wicklow mountains and ending in Dublin Bay by26km.

**HERBERT PARK**

Herbert Park is one of Dublin’s most popular and oldest parks, dating from the Edwardian period. It was donated to Pembroke Urban District Council by the Earl of Pembroke in 1903 to commemorate the coming of age of his son, Lord Herbert. It was the site of the Irish International Exhibition of 1907 which ran for 6 months and was attended by over 2.7 million visitors. This Exhibition was a showcase for Irish and foreign industry and included restaurants, a concert hall and entertainments of all kinds. Brian Stoker, author of Dracula, called it ‘The great white fant’. The pond, into which a big water chute ended, is the only feature that still exists from the Exhibition.

Herbert Park opened as a public park in 1911 and caters for various sports including tennis, soccer, bowls and croquet as well as serving as a tranquil oasis from the hustle and bustle of the city.

**Rogl Road/Pembroke Road**

Rogl Road is immortalised in the poem, ‘On Rogl Road by Patrick Kavanagh, which was subsequently turned into a song when the poet met with folk singer, Luke Kelly. Patrick Kavanagh lived for some time at 63 Pembroke Road. Pembroke Road got its name from the site of the landing of the Earl of Pembroke, who laid out the road for building development from the 1830s.

**Royal City of Dublin Hospital**

The Royal City of Dublin/Baggot Street Hospital was opened in a Georgian House in 1832, as a teaching hospital for the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. It later also catered for students from Trinity College Dublin. The hospital was rebuilt in 1883 in a high Victorian style with redbrick and buttresswork to designs of Albert Murray. It became The Royal City of Dublin Hospital on Queen Victoria’s last visit to Ireland in 1905. The hospital now provides a variety of out-patient services.

**St. Mary’s Church**

St. Mary’s Church on Haddington Road opened in 1839 and features a rich variety of Irish and European stained glass and impressive interior decoration. Also to be seen in the Church is a plaque commemorating parishesioners who as soldiers in the British Army were killed during World War I.

**Northumberland Road**

Northumberland Road provided a path for British soldiers who marched from Don Laoghaire during the 1916 Easter Rising. Irish volunteers held 25 Northumberland Road under the command of Eamon de Valera, who later became President of Ireland. Faint bullet marks can still be seen on the gable wall of this building. Irish Volunteers also occupied the school-house, now a hotel, and Clonmel House, which was located between Mount Street Bridge. Two hundred and twenty British soldiers were killed or wounded and four rebels and several civilians also killed in the Battle of Mount Street Bridge. A plaque on 25 Northumberland Road and the memorial at Mount Street Bridge commemorate the volunteer dead. The bridge crosses the Grand Canal, which was built in 1761 and was an important transport thoroughfare.

**Beggars’ Bush Military Barracks**

Beggars’ Bush, an area once covered in bushes, was a refuge for beggars and highwaymen in the 18th century. Beggars’ Bush Military Barracks was the first barracks rebuilt to the ideas of Feng Shui, who proposed improved accommodation for soldiers. It was the first military establishment handed over to the Free State in 1922. Irish nationalist and author of The Middle of the Sonnet, Robert Erskine Childers was executed here by the Free State Forces in 1922. His son Erskine Childers later became President of Ireland in 1973. The post at the front of the barracks are a full set of guns from an 18th century warship. The complex now houses the Geological Survey of Ireland and the National Print Museum.

**Aviva Stadium**

Shelbourne Road had many industries in the past, including Richard Turner’s ironworks and the Seawalk Laundries, from which the brick chimney survives. A rise of mature trees remain from the former Trinity Botanic Gardens which once covered the area now occupied by Aviva Stadium. It opened in 2010 and it is home to the Irish Rugby Union and Republic of Ireland Football Teams.