

Part two: The Journey of the River Thames



Key Facts

Length: The River Thames is the second longest river in the UK at 346km.

Crossings: There are over 200 crossings over or under the river, including bridges, tunnels, public ferries and a cable car. The first crossing is a stone drainpipe near Thames Head; the last bridge is the QE2 Bridge at Dartford. The Queen Elizabeth II Bridge is the longest bridge over the Thames. At 812m long, it carries cars and trucks southbound. A tunnel under the river takes the northbound traffic. The first tunnel was started in 1825 to link Rotherhithe and Wapping and finally opened in 1843. It was designed by Mark Brunel and assisted by his son, Isambard.

Settlements: The river passes through the counties of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, many London Boroughs, Essex and Kent before reaching the North Sea.

The Thames in art: Many famous artists have painted the Thames.



Claude Monet



Canaletto



JMW Turner