

= A215 road =

The A215 is an A road in South London , from Elephant and Castle to Shirley . It runs through the London Boroughs of Lambeth , Southwark and Croydon .

Beginning as Walworth Road , the A215 becomes Camberwell Road ? much of which is a conservation area ? after entering the former Metropolitan Borough of Camberwell . Crossing the A202 , the A215 becomes Denmark Hill , originally known as Dulwich Hill , but renamed in 1683 to commemorate the marriage of Princess Anne ( later Queen Anne ) to Prince George of Denmark . After passing Herne Hill railway station the road becomes Norwood Road , Knights Hill , and then Beulah Hill at its crossroads with the A214 . Beulah Hill was the site of Britain 's first independent television transmitter , built by the Independent Television Authority in 1955 . Descending towards South Norwood the A215 becomes South Norwood Hill and then Portland Road , just after crossing the A213 . A short section starting at the junction with Woodside Green is known as Spring Lane , leading to Shirley Road , the final section into Shirley , Croydon .

The A215 is Britain 's most crash @-@ prone A @-@ road , having had 2 @,@ 836 crashes over its 10 mile length between 1999 and 2010 .

= = Walworth Road = =

At its northernmost point at Elephant & Castle in Newington , the A215 begins as Walworth Road , which runs between Elephant and Castle and Camberwell Road . It runs through Walworth and is the major shopping street of the area . East Street Market is especially busy on Fridays , Saturdays and Sundays . Other attractions include the Cuming Museum , Newington Reference Library and John Smith House , a former Labour Party headquarters which is now used by the local education authority .

Charles Babbage , the Victorian mathematician and computer pioneer , was probably born at 44 Crosby Row , now Larcom Street , Walworth Road on 26 December 1791 . A commemorative blue plaque is displayed on the Sexual Health Clinic at the junction of Larcom Street and Walworth Road .

Just off the Walworth Road was Walworth Road railway station on the London , Chatham and Dover Railway that was opened in 1863 and shut in 1916 due to wartime constraints .

= = Camberwell Road = =

Walworth Road transitions into Camberwell Road where the A215 enters the former Metropolitan Borough of Camberwell . The road runs adjacent to the railway between Elephant & Castle tube station and Loughborough Junction railway station . Much of Camberwell Road is a conservation area , due to its well preserved large houses from the early 19th century .

By the time of the Domesday Book , Camberwell was already a significant settlement . The town remained a popular resort for Londoners due to its believed medicinal wells . In 1685 , John Evelyn 's Diary mentions a Roman urn filled with bones which was uncovered intact during repairs to the road and exhibited at the Royal Society .

Camberwell Green , at the junction of Camberwell Road and Camberwell Church Street , was the traditional site of Camberwell Fair , an annual fair held every August . Following complaints about the noise and high crime levels generated by the fair , a group of residents bought the fairground in 1855 , converting it into the park which remains today .

In Victorian times Camberwell Road was a focal point of South London 's Music hall scene , with a number of music halls opening from the 1850s onwards . Following the advent of the cinema and later of television , the music halls fell into decline , with the last closing in 1956 . Nearby Orpheus Street marks the site of the Metropole Music Hall .

Since the New Works Programme of the 1930s , London Transport and its successors have planned to extend the Bakerloo line south to a station on Camberwell Road . The original plans were abandoned due to the war before much construction had been completed . Construction again

began in the 1950s and 1970s , but was abandoned each time . Transport for London still intend to build this extension but no date has been set for this .

= = Denmark Hill = =

After the A215 crosses the A202 it becomes Denmark Hill . This road was originally known as Dulwich Hill , and was renamed in 1683 to commemorate the marriage of Princess Anne ( later Queen Anne ) to Prince George of Denmark . The road runs between Kings College Hospital and The Maudsley Hospital before going alongside Ruskin Park . Further south the road passes the Denmark Hill Estate .

The Victorian art critic , author and social critic John Ruskin lived at 163 Denmark Hill from 1842 to 1871 . The house no longer stands and is now the site of a block of council flats . Ruskin Park , immediately south of the twin hospitals , is named in his honour .

Denmark Hill is home to two of London 's largest hospitals , the general King 's College Hospital ( part of King 's College London ) which moved to the site from its original central London location in 1913 , and the Maudsley psychiatric hospital .

It is believed by historians that 168 , 170 and 172 Denmark Hill were designed by noted architect and prison designer William Blackburn due their similarity in architectural style to his other buildings . However , as the original documentation relating to the construction of these houses has been lost or destroyed , it has proved impossible to confirm this .

Immediately south of the Maudsley Hospital is Denmark Hill railway station , built in 1866 and rebuilt following fire in 1980 , on the South London Line . This station forms part of the East London Line westward extension to Clapham Junction as part of the London Overground network .

= = Herne Hill = =

The road continues southwest into Herne Hill , a short stretch of road running through the area of the same name . The origin of the name is disputed but possibly derives from herons nesting on the ( now buried ) River Effra . The earliest known usage of the name " Herne Hill " dates from 1798 .

St Paul 's church was rebuilt in dramatic style by the gothic architect George Edmund Street in 1858 .

Herne Hill railway station is at the southern end of Herne Hill , on a busy six @-@ road junction . It opened in 1862 and was initially the southern terminus of the London , Chatham and Dover Railway

= = Norwood Road = =

Norwood Road begins after Herne Hill railway station . It runs alongside Brockwell Park and then south to Tulse Hill . A manor house known as " Brockholle " or " Brockhalle " ( the origin of the name " Brockwell " ) was built on Norwood Road , on what is now a part of Brockwell Park , in the mid @-@ 15th century . In 1809 the building was bought by wealthy merchant and Sheriff of London John Blades . Blades demolished the building , and built Brockwell Hall as a replacement at the top of the hill in the park ; this building still stands today .

Tulse Hill railway station is on this road . After passing the station , Norwood Road continues south past West Norwood Cemetery ( home of 65 Listed Monuments ) to West Norwood and the Norwood Triangle . Norwood Road is home to St Luke 's Church , a Grade II listed building designed by Francis Octavius Bedford in 1823 ? 5 and rebuilt by GE Street in 1870 .

The Regal Cinema opened on Norwood Road in January 1930 ; it was unusual in that it also staged live stage shows to accompany films ( including performances by animals from circuses visiting the nearby park ) . It was home to the Regal Redheads , a troupe of dancing girls who performed in the interval .

= = Knights Hill and Norwood High Street = =

Knights Hill starts in the north at West Norwood in the Norwood Triangle one @-@ way system , and runs through a council ward also named as Knight 's Hill . It ends in the south at a junction with the A214 at Crown Lane and Crown Dale . Knights Hill becomes Beulah Hill here at Crown Point . To the north , south of Knight 's Hill is the part of the Crystal Palace area with no name home to a large parade of competing large super markets along the A215 Norwood Road including Tesco , Cooperative , Iceland and ( by Summer 2009 ) Sainsbury ( ex Woolworth 's site ) . West Norwood railway station is on this road . Knights Hill contains the Knights Hill Nature Reserve , one of the last remaining vestiges of the Great North Wood which once covered the area .

The 1647 Parliamentary Survey described Knights Hill as " a small common wood containing 40 pollard oaks and two elms " .

= = Beulah Hill = =

Beulah Hill ( originally " Gravel Pit Road " ) begins at a crossroads where the A215 crosses the A214 and Knights Hill becomes Beulah Hill . The road makes a sharp turn to the east where it continues through the neighbourhoods of Upper Norwood . On the sharp bend is the ornamental Beulah Hill Pond . Formerly " Big Pond " , it was intended as a watering stop for horses and cattle using the road , and still contains a railing to prevent animals straying into deep water . The " Conquering Hero " pub was built next to the pond for the use of people stopping to allow livestock to use the pond , and remains today .

Nearby is St Joseph 's College founded in 1855 , one of the first Catholic educational institutions to be opened in England following the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy . Beulah Hill was the site of Britain 's first independent television transmitter , built by the Independent Television Authority in 1955 . Beulah Hill ends at a junction with the A212 ( Church Road ) . From this junction , the A215 is called South Norwood Hill .

= = South Norwood Hill = =

South Norwood Hill descends sharply towards South Norwood . It becomes Portland Road at the crossroads with the A213 road . No longer hidden from view by the Esso petrol station , which was demolished in 2009 , is the famous Spurgeon 's College , a theological college which since 1923 has been located in a mansion built in 1890 and known as Falkland Park . The former porter 's lodge of the Falkland Park estate still stands along South Norwood Hill as no . 217 , " Falkland Lodge " . Otherwise this section is mainly residential .

= = Portland Road = =

Portland Road begins at a crossroads where the A215 crosses the A213 on South Norwood High Street and South Norwood Hill becomes Portland Road . The road then travels down a hill with many shops ( mainly takeaways , newsagents ) . It passes South Norwood Leisure Centre , a new leisure centre which includes a creche , cafe , gym , swimming pool etc . Portland Road ends with a left turn to stay on the A215 at Spring Lane or straight on to change onto the B243 , Woodside Green . From June 2010 , the road will be the site of a station on the new London Overground network .

= = = Early history = = =

The northern section of the road was historically known as " Cholmerden " or " The Goat House " . The Minister 's of Bailiffs Account of the Chauntry of St Nicholas show that an annual rent of 33 shillings and four pence was paid on the land between 1442 ? 1483 ; this is the earliest recorded reference to the area . The road at the time ran through an ancient woodland known as the North Wood ( the origin of the modern place name Norwood ) . The area was cleared for farmland in the 16th and 17th centuries . Industrial development began in the early 19th century following

construction of the Grand Surrey Canal , linking the area to Surrey Commercial Docks and the River Thames in 1809 . This section of the canal was closed in 1836 , with the London and Croydon Railway built along the canal bed ; modern housing development began in the mid @-@ 19th century following the opening of the railway .

= = = Jolly @-@ sailor station and the London & Croydon Railway = = =

In 1839 the London and Croydon Railway opened Jolly @-@ sailor station ( sic ) ? listed as " Jolly @-@ sailor near Beulah Spa " on fares lists and timetables ? at the north end of the street . The station was renamed Norwood in 1846 . The station was immediately adjacent to a level crossing over Portland Road .

In 1844 , the London and Croydon Railway was given parliamentary authority to test an experimental pneumatic propulsion system on the railway ( referred to at the time as the atmospheric @-@ propulsion system ) . A pumping station was built on Portland Road ; this created a vacuum in a pipe paralleling the railway tracks . A piston extended downwards from the trains into a slit in the pipe , meaning that trains were literally sucked towards the pumping station or blown away from it . The pumping station was built in a Gothic style , with a very tall ornate tower which served both as a chimney and as an exhaust vent for air pumped from the propulsion pipe .

As part of the construction works for the atmospheric @-@ propulsion system , the world 's first railway flyover was constructed at the north end of Portland Road , to carry the new atmospheric line over the conventional steam line below . In 1847 , the atmospheric propulsion experiment was abandoned .

Following construction of new lines , the station closed on 1 June 1859 and was replaced by a new station on the south side of the road , Norwood Junction , which is still in use , now part of the newly @-@ extended East London Line of the London Overground which was opened on 23 May 2010 .

= = = Places of interest = = =

One of the earliest cinemas in South London , the Electric Picture Palace , opened on Portland Road in 1910 . The cinema was renamed the Central Cinema shortly afterwards , and closed in 1956 , and no trace of it now remains .

Portland Road is also home to the " Gold Coast " , the only Ghanaian public house in London ; this is a focal point for London 's Ghanaian community and serves Ghanaian beer , wine and food .

Roots , Routes , Roots ( also known as the " Portland Road Mosaic " ) , an 11 @-@ metre ( 36 ft ) long mosaic depicting the history of the Norwood area , is under the railway bridge . The mosaic was designed by artists Gary Drostle and Rob Turner , and built by children from a number of local schools .

= = Spring Lane = =

Spring Lane is a short road that starts at the junction with Woodside Green . It lies entirely within Woodside . St Luke 's Church , Ashburton Park , Ashburton Primary School and Woodside tram stop are on this road .

Spring Lane was notable for many years in having one of the few Ancient lights notices in London outside central London , on a private house immediately opposite the station . The sign was taken down in 2005 .

= = = Woodside tram stop = = =

Woodside railway station was built in 1871 to serve Croydon Racecourse ( see below ) . The station was unusual in being designed for horses , with access ramps instead of steps and with unusually high entrances designed to accommodate a horse and rider . In 1997 the railway was replaced by Tramlink ; the station is now Woodside tram stop .

= = Shirley Road = =

Shirley Road is the final road on the A215 . It is home to Ashburton Community School and Trinity School of John Whitgift . It ends in Shirley , Croydon . Shirley Road skirts the nearby suburb of Addiscombe . The town is named after the historic manor of Adscomb ( " Edge of the valley " ) , the country seat of the Heron family , which was situated on Shirley Road . The building no longer exists .

= = = Ashburton Playing Fields = = =

Ashburton Playing Fields are just off Shirley Road , behind the school . The fields were first dedicated as a public horse racing course by James I in the early 17th century . Following the opening of the nearby Woodside railway station in 1871 large numbers of Londoners began travelling to the racecourse . Following pressure from the Mayor of Croydon , concerned about the large crowds , the racecourse was closed in 1890 and replaced with a golf course ; this was bought by the council in 1942 and given to public use as playing fields .