

**10** Turn left at the top then go up another small flight of stairs. Walk down the corridor and go through the double doors passing the black lift on your left and following signs for the Bear Garden.

**11** Go through the Painted Room into the Bear Garden noticing the two architectural drawings that were alternative designs for the Royal Courts of Justice.

The Painted Room, also called the Bar Room, contains the Royal Coat of Arms, Queen Victoria's Coat of Arms and the following coats of arms of the Inns of Court:

- The Pegasus – Inner Temple
- The Pascal – Middle Temple
- The Grid Irons – Lincoln's Inn
- The Griffin – Gray's Inn

The Bear Garden is where solicitors, barristers and their clients meet to discuss cases. On one of her visits Queen Victoria said the noise from their discussions sounded like a "bear garden"! Bear baiting actually never took place on this site - the nearest site was where the Globe theatre is now.

The two alternative designs are by George Gilbert Scott. George Edmund Street was a pupil of Scott's. Scott designed the Albert Memorial and the St Pancras Hotel.

Originally the plans only allowed for 12 courtrooms. By the time the building work started this had already expanded to 19.



**12** Retrace your steps past the black lift to the main court corridor, which houses some of the original courtrooms. Stop by the sign for Court 10.

**13** Now turn left past court 10, then carry straight on through two sets of doors (you are going over the Main Hall) and turn right by Court 11.

**14** Walk down the length of the corridor passing the Lord Chancellor's Court, Court 15, on your left.

This is a misnomer: the Lord Chancellor has not sat here since the 1960s but the name remains.

**15** Continue down the corridor until you see the sign for Court 18 and then turn right.

**16** Walk past Court 19 and go through the double doors into the main costume gallery.

The main costume gallery houses some of the robes worn by different judges.

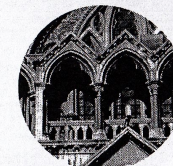
**17** Pass through the doorway by the bust of Lord Taylor of Gosforth. Notice the unusual statue of Lord Woolf.

Lord Woolf was Lord Chief Justice from 2000-2005.

**18** Finish your walk around the Royal Courts of Justice by turning right past Court 4 (the Lord Chief Justice's court) and taking any of the open staircases down to the Main Hall, back to where you started.



## Royal Courts of Justice (RCJ) Self-guided tour



## RCJ Self-guided tour

Please start your walk at the Enquiry Desk in the Main Hall.

**1** From the Enquiry Desk walk down the left hand side of the Main Hall. Stop by the small balcony on the left and take a moment to enjoy your surroundings.

The Main Hall is 238 feet long, 80 ft high and 48 ft wide. The mosaic floor was all individually hand laid.

**2** Walk to the back of the Main Hall, staying on the left-hand side. Look at the last portrait on your left, which is of one of the Fire Judges.

Did you know that it is reported that only six people died in the Fire of London? The Judge you are looking at was one of 22 judges who heard all the land disputes after the fire. A painting of one of the other Judges hangs on the wall opposite.

Walk on to the large statue at the end of the Main Hall, which is of Lord Russell of Killowen.

In 1894 Charles Baron Russell, Lord Russell of Killowen became the first Roman Catholic Lord Chief Justice since the Reformation.

*Did you know?* The Royal Courts of Justice were officially opened by Queen Victoria on 4 December 1882, the same year British naturalist Charles Darwin died.

**3** Now go through the arch on your immediate right and up the short flight of steps into the Crypt Corridor. Stop at the top of the steps. Café 26 is to the front on the left and is open from 9:00am - 3:00pm Monday - Friday. While here note also the two ornately-carved pillars, which you can see to your front on the right.

Soon after the building work began there was a stonemasons' strike. Workers were brought in from Europe during the strike and they lived and worked on site. During the long evenings they began to carve the pillars. Unfortunately this was not in the plans so they were stopped.

**4** Turn round to go back into the Main Hall. As you do so notice the unfinished pillar between the two arches.

The architect, George Edmund Street (see 7), was a very religious man who believed only God could create perfection. This pillar was left unfinished as a mark of respect.

**5** Pass through the left arch. Immediately to your left is the entrance to the cells.

**6** Continue down the left side of the Main Hall and stop midway at the statue of William Blackstone.

The William Blackstone Memorial was a gift from the American Bar Association to the English Bar in 1926. Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England is one of the links which best binds the United States to England.

**7** Walk on passing to the left of the Enquiry Desk where you will find a memorial to George Edmund Street.

George Edmund Street, the architect of the Royal Courts of Justice, never lived to see the building finished. He died in 1881 and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

**8** Walk on a short way and go up the small flight of stairs on the left, past the small costume display. We will come to our main costume display later.

In the first cabinet you will see the ceremonial uniform of the Tipstaff. He is the only person authorised to make an arrest in the Royal Courts of Justice.

**9** Follow the corridor round to the right and then up the large flight of stairs on your left, signposted "East Block, Bear Garden and Courts I-10".

