



- Main route 12.8 km
- optional routes
- Railway, Tramway
- Tram stop
- 47 interconnecting walk

This is a designated route and generally well signposted. This first page taking the Wandle from its source has all the best scenery. To jump the initial walk through Croydon take the tramlink 3 towards Wimbledon from the station to Wandle Park

- 1** We leave the Wandle here and walk to Carshalton Ponds, where we pick up a tributary.
- 2** We rejoin the main Wandle here at Wilderness Island.
- 3** Keep Watermeads Nature Reserve on your right unless you want to add to the walk, in which case go through the gate and turn right.
- 4** To even out the distances of the two walks consider breaking at Morden Station instead of Colliers Wood

Wandle Trail 1
Waddon Pond to Colliers Wood

Wandle Trail part 1

This officially designated Wandle Trail starts near source and goes down to the Thames. An excellent map is available at

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/visiting/attractions/wandletrail.htm>

Beddington Park

After crossing Croydon and its Parish Church it picks up the trail at Waddon Ponds. Beddington Mill was probably founded on the site of a medieval mill. During the eighteenth century it was used to grind corn and later to grind tobacco into snuff. The existing brick mill was built in the 1890s as a flour mill. The walk gets more attractive at Carew Manor. It was the home of the Carews of Beddington for 500 years. The house still contains a Great Hall with an impressive timber arch-braced hammer-beam roof, dating from around 1500. There is a Dovecote dating from the early eighteenth century. For information on the church visit

<http://www.friendsofbeddingtonpark.co.uk/> The park is said to be one of the most rich, historical and archaeological sites in south west London with evidence of settlements dating back to the late Bronze Age. The discovery of a Roman Stone Coffin in 1930 lends weight to suspicions that a grand Roman villa and bath-house once stood to the north side of the park. Beddington Park originated as a deer park in the 14th century for the Carew family.

Carshalton Ponds

Carshalton ponds lie near one of two sources of the River Wandle, which flows out of East Pond and over weirs in The Grove Park. Once a single sheet of water, its division into two pools dates back to at least the 15th century. Historically the upper West Pond was public, while the lower

East Pond was privately owned; it was also the source of power for the Upper Mill that ground corn for Carshalton. In the late 18th century access by vehicles from High Street to Pound Street or North Street meant fording through the ponds although there was a narrow wooden causeway for pedestrians. An 18th century account describes the East Pond as 'a most beautiful sheet of transparent water, free from filth and is never known to freeze in the severest seasons'. In 1924 Carshalton UDC purchased The Grove estate including East Pond, and in 1939 Honeywood Lodge, a 17th century house that overlooks the west side of the ponds. Honeywood was used for various social and community purposes and in 1989/90 it was converted into the borough's Heritage Centre.

Morden Hall

The estate land of Morden Hall was originally owned by Westminster Abbey. There is evidence of an earlier manor-house, but the Hall dates back to the 1770s and contains a variety of natural landscapes, including the parkland of the "Deer Park", meadow and marshland. A number of historic buildings are located in the park, including the Hall itself and preserved watermills where tobacco was once ground into snuff. It was owned and occupied by the Garth family until 1840 when it was sold to Gilliat Hatfeild a tobacco merchant. His son left the core of the estate (including the house) to the National Trust, when he died. The grounds are extensive and include Morden Cottage, the old Snuff Mill, and many old farm buildings, some of which are now a garden centre and a city farm. The rose garden has over 2000 roses.

Merton Abbey Mills

This half of the trail ends near Merton Abbey Mills

with its 18th century wheelhouse. Merton Priory was founded in 1114. It remained an important centre of learning until it was sacked by King Henry VIII in 1538. Surviving sections of the old priory wall can still be found in many of the area's gardens, especially near Liberty Avenue. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the ruins of the sacked priory were gradually replaced by mills as heavy industry developed along the River Wandle. The south of the neighbourhood consisted mainly of lavender fields. In the 18th century, the river itself was diverted from its original course and many waterways were created to drive the multitude of silk mills and bleaching works that had sprung up along this portion of the Wandle Valley. To assist the local industries, the world's first horsedrawn railway line independent of canals, the Surrey Iron Railway opened in 1803 and ran up what is now Christchurch Road. The line closed in 1838. The Abbey was restructured for textile printing in the early nineteenth century and was acquired by William Morris in June 1881 as the new home of Morris & Co.'s workshops. The complex, on 7 acres (28,000 m²), included several buildings and a dye works, and the various buildings were soon adapted for stained glass making, textile printing, and fabric, tapestry, and carpet-weaving. Liberty & Co. had been involved with the site since the 19th century, as their popular ranges of fabrics for dress and furniture were nearly all made there by Littler and Co, Morris's immediate neighbours to the south. In 1904 Liberty & Co took over the Littler site, and then in 1940 the Morris facilities as well. They continued to operate the Merton Abbey Mills until 1972, and textile production was continued by other firms until 1982.