



DISCOVER THE SOURCE

What's so special about the Wandle?

The Wandle is a chalkstream. There are only 200 chalkstreams remaining worldwide. And it is our job to protect them.

A chalkstream river can support some of England's most iconic species such as the water vole, brown trout and mayfly. But they need clean water!

In the past, the polluted Wandle was culverted and hidden away underground in Croydon. Although the river is much improved today, it still suffers from pollution.

You can help protect the Wandle by keeping an eye out for pollution and reporting anything you see to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Find out ways in which you can reduce pollution from your home on our website:

www.wandletrust.org/reduce-pollution



Explore more of the Wandle

The Wandle Trail largely follows the course of the river for 12.5 miles from East Croydon Station to the Thames Path. Visit the Wandle Valley Regional Park website to download the full Wandle Trail map and explore even more of the river!

This guided walk was created as part of the Discover the Source of the Wandle Project, part of the Heritage Lottery Funded Living Wandle Landscape Partnership Scheme.



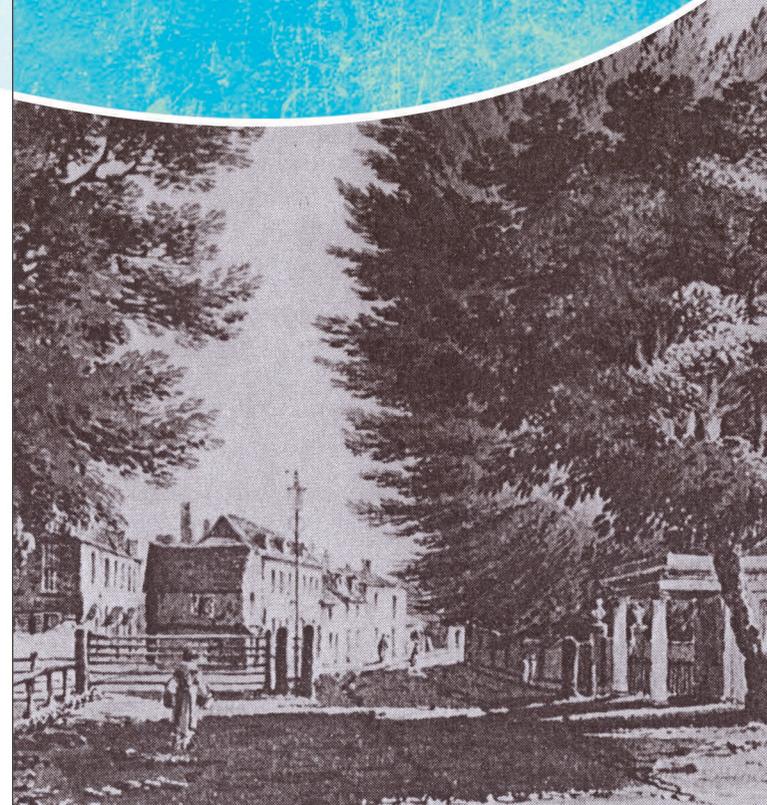
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DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THE WANDLE

walk two

CROYDON





2 A glimpse of the Wandle

The Wandle in Croydon today is very different. This may not look like much, but a small section of the now culverted Wandle resurfaces in the car park of Toys R Us on Purley Way. It's hard to imagine the Wandle as it would have been in the 18th century.

1 Waddon Ponds chalk spring

Waddon Ponds is a natural chalk spring on the Wandle. The Ponds were once part of an estate visited by distinguished guests such as Lord Nelson. These springs are a reminder that the Wandle is a chalkstream that once flowed through Croydon. It would have been full of brown trout and other wildlife.



12 Old spring source

Though it's hard to picture now, for centuries the old River Wandle rose from a spring at the site of the old Swan & Sugar Loaf pub (now the Tesco Express!)



11 Road or river?

Following the old river, Southbridge Lane was named after the old bridge over the Wandle. Today it's the only evidence of the former course.

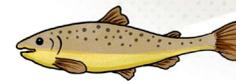


9 Polluted ponds

Laud's Pond was once a popular spot for recreation and fishing – another reminder of how very different the Wandle in Croydon used to be. Sadly, it became extremely polluted and was filled in during the 1850s.

10 Evidence underground

The Wandle remains underground in culvert pipes. As you walk through the underpass you'll notice a slight rise in the ground. This marks the location of the underground culvert through which the Wandle flows.



4 Cholera and culverts

You're now standing in Wandle Park, another place where the Wandle's been returned to the surface. The river was culverted around 1850 after growth in the local population led to its streams becoming little more than open sewers which in turn led to local outbreaks of typhoid and cholera.

3 Resurfaced river

Through this development the Wandle has been brought back to the surface. In the mid 19th century, however, this section – along with the rest of the Wandle in Croydon – was culverted underground. But why?

8 Road or river?

The walk follows Roman Way, another busy road, but once the course of the former river. You might close your eyes and, with some imagination, picture a quieter time... can you see the brown trout in a crystal clear chalkstream?

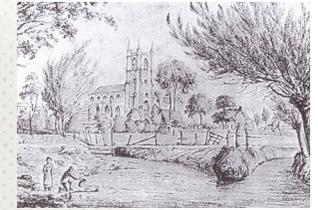


5 The new source?

The Wandle today is much improved thanks to the modern sewer system and local community efforts. There has been action to bring it back to the surface like here in Wandle Park where the culvert is now the first point where the river is visible above ground – its modern 'source' in other words.

6 Road or river?

The Wandle is mostly underground in Croydon, but Rectory Grove, now a busy road, was once the main course of the old Wandle. We know this from old drawings, paintings and maps of the area.



7 Watery graves

Croydon Minster was once located on the banks of the River Wandle. There is a burial site to the north of the Minster, but not to the south. Local legend suggests this was because coffins buried on this side floated to the surface when the Wandle flooded!

