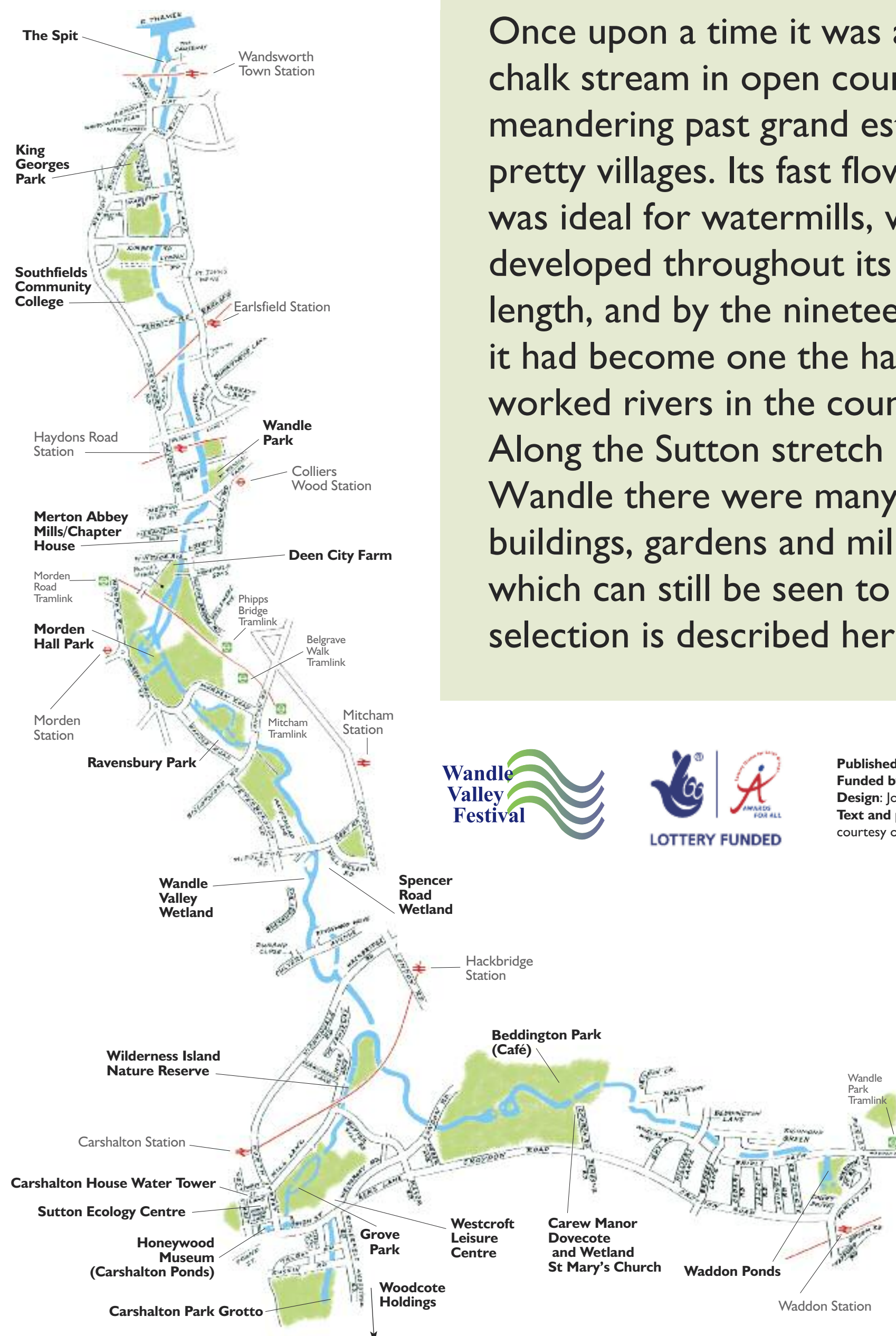


# River Wandle In Sutton

## A rich history on the Riverbank

The Wandle rises in two places, Waddon in the Borough of Croydon, and Carshalton in the Borough of Sutton. It flows through Merton down to the Thames at Wandsworth. Once upon a time it was a peaceful chalk stream in open country, meandering past grand estates and pretty villages. Its fast flow, however, was ideal for watermills, which developed throughout its 12 mile length, and by the nineteenth century it had become one the hardest worked rivers in the country. Along the Sutton stretch of the Wandle there were many historic buildings, gardens and mills, some of which can still be seen to this day. A selection is described here.



Published by: Wandle Valley Festival  
Funded by: Awards For All  
Design: Jonathan Spearman-Ox  
Text and pictures: John Phillips,  
courtesy of the London Borough of Sutton

## Springs and water courses



**Carshalton Park** about 1800-50. The Park was then larger and came right down to the High Street. The Orangery in the background still stands in Bookside near The Square.



The springhead by Carshalton House lake was the other main source of the Wandle. The house is now part of St Philomena's School. The lake and surrounding garden have had a complicated history but their present form date from the mid-18th century when they were reshaped to create the landscape shown here.



**Carshalton High Street** in the 1880s by William Tatton Winter. Some of the water from Carshalton Park ran in a stream along the side of the High Street. In the past Carshalton was a village of watercourses. Although some like the High Stream have gone Carshalton still has more water than most places especially when all the springs rise after a very wet winter.

## The Water Tower



The **Water Tower** and West Street ford by Gideon Yates, 1825. In the early 19th century the water from Carshalton House flowed through the tower and then spilled over West Street forming a long ford.



The Water Tower in the grounds of Carshalton House dates from the around 1715-20. It was built for the financier Sir John Fellowes who was sub-governor of the notorious South Sea Company which was at the centre one of the first speculative bubbles. It housed a fine cold bath, a water driven pump and an orangery for over wintering plants.

## The Grotto



The **Carshalton Park grotto**. This was built by Thomas Scawen as part of the landscape around a very grand house which was never completed. The grotto was covered with glass waste, sea shells, fake red coral and other material so it was originally a sparkling fairy tale structure. By the time this was taken – perhaps in the 1880s or 1890s – it was a ruin.



**The Grotto Canal** by Winifred Madder, 1920. The Carshalton Wandle has several sources including the Grotto Canal in Carshalton Park. In the past this was always full of water.

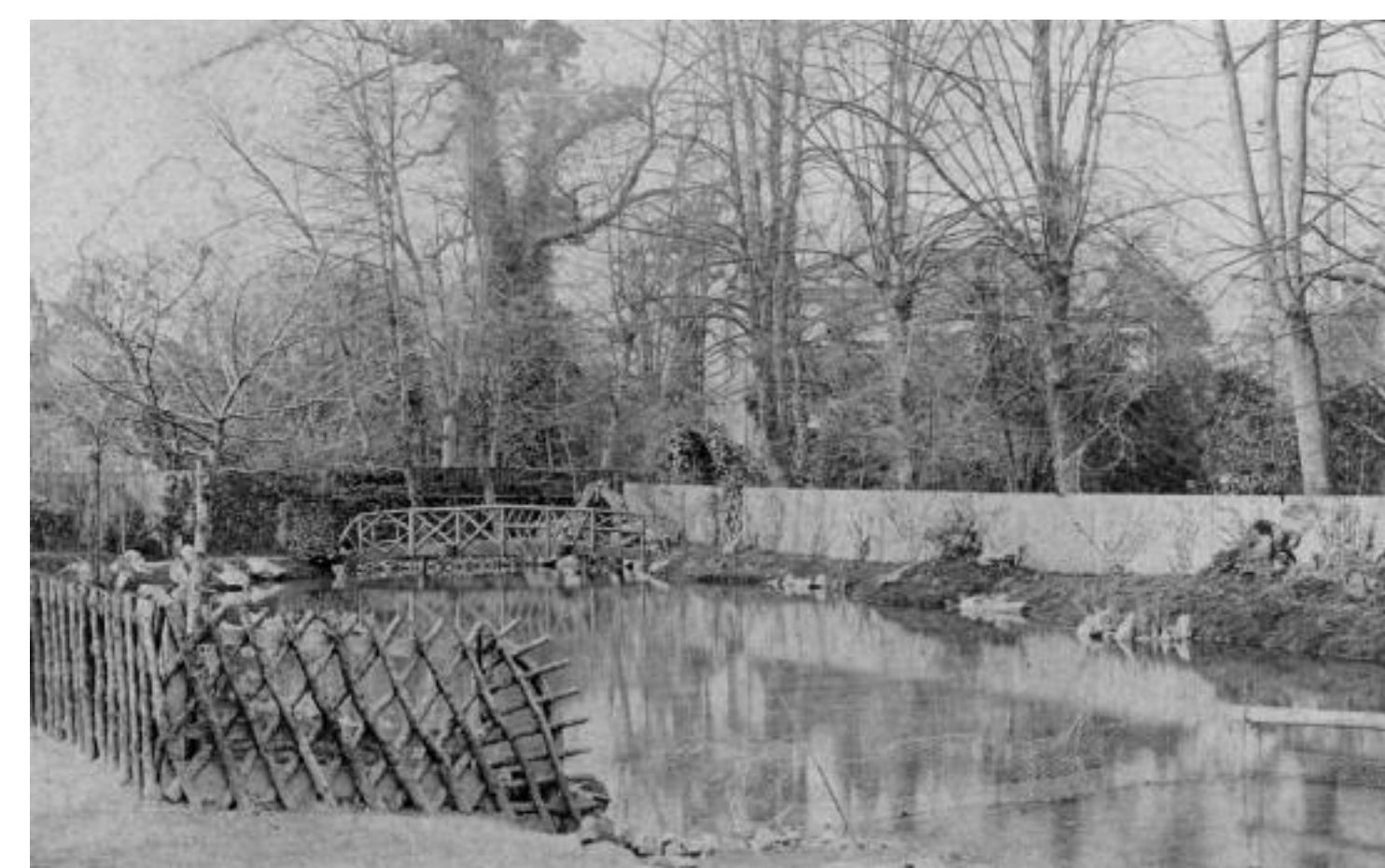


The Grotto today. Part of the park was eventually acquired by Carshalton Council. Children were climbing up the ruin and the Council though this dangerous so the structure was refaced in 1915 to produce its modern appearance.

**The Grove Iron Works Mill.** This stood near the Wandle opposite Mill Lane on the site of the Paper Mill Close. It was powered by water from the Westcroft Canal. When first built in the 1780s the mill was used for grinding tobacco into snuff. It later became an iron works specialising in mill machinery.



**Dame Duffin's Cottage and Anne Boleyn's Well** by 'WJT', 1897. This is copied from an earlier picture as Dame Duffin's Cottage was demolished in 1836. The circular fence guards a spring called Anne Boleyn's Well. This is almost certainly a corruption of Bullen Well – that is bubbling well.



**Margaret's Pool** about 1880. This pool is at the corner of West Street and Pound Street. It was once part of the West Street ford and became a separate pond when that was filled. In the 1870s John Ruskin had the pond tidied up and decorated with rocks from the Lake District. However, he soon lost interest in the project.