

Discover the River Wandle's
Mapping the Mills:
Walks & Guide

The Building Exploratory helps communities discover the secrets of their local area, working across London to celebrate the built environment: its heritage, buildings and public spaces.

Project Partners

Living Wandle Landscape Partnership conserves, restores, and celebrates the River Wandle's built and natural heritage. www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/the-living-wandle-partnership

Wandle Industrial Museum is dedicated to sharing the heritage and history of the industries and people of the River Wandle. www.wandle.org

The Building Exploratory would like to thank the following for their help:

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Walk One High Street Carshalton to Hackbridge

This walk celebrates the power of water within the historic industries of the River Wandle.

Start: Horse and Coaches Pub Carshalton (Carshalton Station, Buses: 127, 157, 407, X26)

End: Hackbridge (Hackbridge Station, Buses: 80, 127, 151)

Distance: 1.5 miles
Duration: 1.5 hrs

High Street Mill (8) was located on the site of the present Coach and Horses pub, originally built for grinding corn.

To its south, lies Carshalton Park with its Grade II listed **Carshalton Grotto (A)**. The Grotto forms the head of a former canal that fed the millpond for **Grove Mill (10)**. Part of **West Croft Canal (B)**, built to supply water to Grove Mill, survives nearby.

On West Street overlooking Carshalton Ponds sits the **Honeywood Museum (C)**. Grade II listed with restored period features, the house was built across the outflow from a line of springs, possibly to provide a cold bath, a popular cure-for-all during the 17th and 18th centuries. Nearby, the **Carshalton Water Tower (D)** dating from c.1715, can be found.

In the grounds of the Grove a waterwheel and millstone belonging to **Upper Mill (9)** are still visible. Listed in the Domesday Book 1086, the mill was used for grinding corn for many centuries, but by 1895 it had been rebuilt and became the first hydroelectric plant in England.

Further south on the east bank, the **Paper Mill (11)** was to be found. Regarded as the earliest on the Wandle, the history of the mill is peppered with misfortune including death, and destruction by fire in 1886. On the opposite west bank was the site of the **Snuff Mill Carshalton (13)**. The original mill building remains and is currently occupied by STR Design & Print Ltd.

To the south of Wilderness Island, above Butter Hill Bridge, stood the **Calico Works Carshalton (14)** built by George Ansell c.1782.

Just south of the Bridge was **Lower Mill (12)**, dating from 1235 it milled corn for its first 400 years. From 1650 it produced gunpowder, then copper, calico and paper before its closure in 1927.

Upstream sat **Hackbridge Mills (15)**, a group of three with multiple uses over time including fulling, dye, gunpowder and copper making. Many of the mill owners were also proprietors of the Surrey Iron Railway, a horse-drawn railway that transported goods along the Wandle from 1803 to 1846.

North of **Hackbridge (E)** looking downstream, the River Wandle divides forming a large island across which present day Culvers Avenue runs. This area was the calico bleaching grounds for the **Culvers Mill (16)** c.1730.

Map Key Historic Mills & Works

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Old Palace Works | 19. Corn Mill Beddington Corner | 34. Phipps Bridge Works | 45. Calico Works Garratt Lane |
| 2. The Barracks | 20. Calico Works Beddington Corner | 35. Merton Abbey Works, Liberty's | 46. Adkins Mill |
| 3. Malt Mill | 21. Leather Mill | 36. Morris' Works Merton Abbey | 47. Dyeworks Garratt Lane |
| 4. Waddon Mill | 22. Calico Works, Mill Green | 37. Amery Mills | 48. Upper Mill Wandsworth |
| 5. Beddington Mill | 23. Wandle Tannery | 38. Merton Bridge Works | 49. Calico Works Wandsworth |
| 6. Wallington Bridge Mill | 24. Mitcham Mill | 39. Merton Mills | 50. Dyeworks High Street Bridge |
| 7. Calico Works Wallington Bridge | 25. Logwood Mill | 40. Wimbledon Mill | 51. Middle Mill Wandsworth |
| 8. High Street Mill | 26. Willow Lane Works | 41. Calico Works Summerstown | 52. Lower Mill Wandsworth |
| 9. Upper Mill Carshalton | 27. Paper Mill | 42. Garratt Mill | |
| 10. Grove Mill Carshalton | 28. Glover's Snuff Mill | 43. Duntshill Mills | |
| 11. Paper Mill Carshalton | 29. Crown Mill | 44. Calico Works Kimber Road | |
| 12. Lower Mill Carshalton | 30. Grove Mill | | |
| 13. Snuff Mill Carshalton | 31. Ravensbury Calico Works | | |
| 14. Calico Works Carshalton | 32. Ravensbury Mill | | |
| 15. Hackbridge Mills | 33. Morden Hall Snuff Mills | | |
| 16. The Culvers | | | |
| 17. Rushy Meadow | | | |
| 18. Drug Mill | | | |

Places of Historic Interest

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| A. Carshalton Grotto | F. Stone Bench | K. Bunce's Meadow |
| B. West Croft Canal | G. Fisheries Cottages | L. The Wheelhouse |
| C. Honeywood Museum | H. Morden Hall | M. Merton Priory Chapter House |
| D. Carshalton Water Tower | I. Wandle Villa | N. Priory Wall |
| E. Hackbridge | J. Everett's Place | O. Penwith Bridge |
| | | P. King George's Park |
| | | Q. Downe Lodge |
| | | R. The Ram Brewery |
| | | S. The Causeway Plaque |

The Walks

This map outlines four walks for exploring the River Wandle's industrial heritage. A description of each includes directions, and notes places of historic interest.

Locations and names of 52 mill sites are identified as numbered points. Other places of historic interest are identified as letters A to S. Surviving buildings are shown in colour, those no longer in existence in sepia.

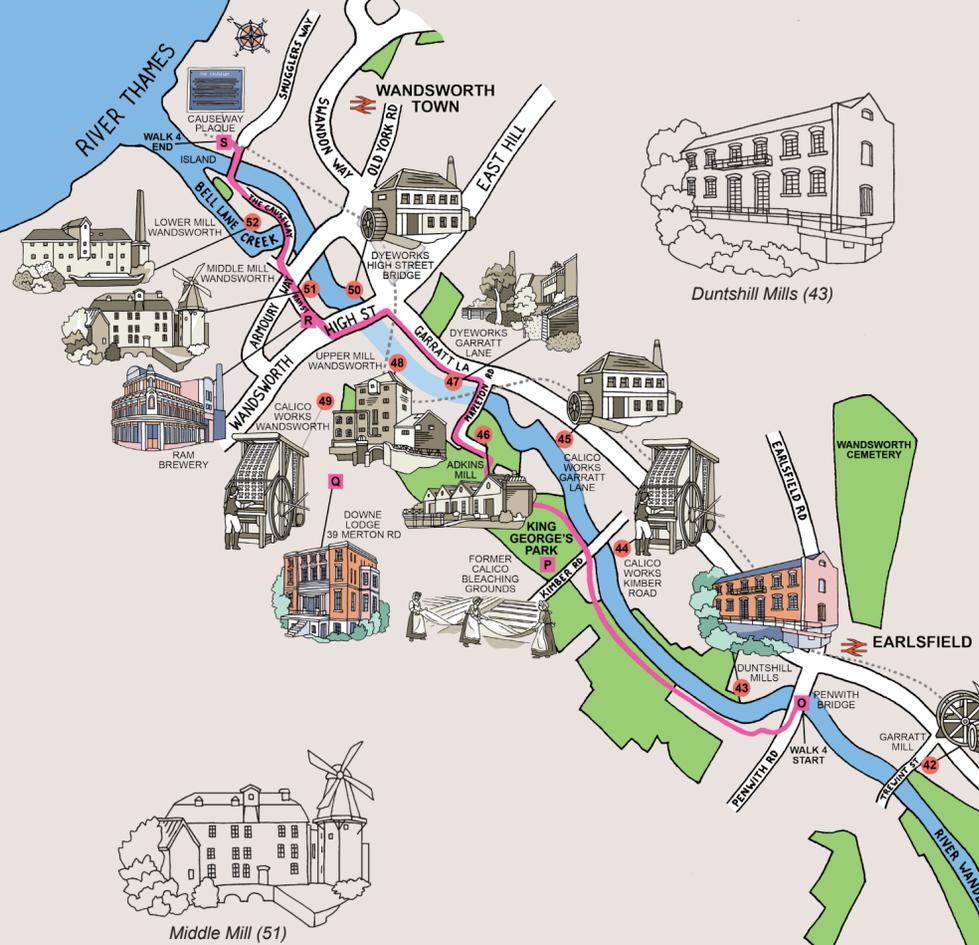
We hope the map provides a source of inspiration for discovering the fascinating history of this remarkable river. For more information about each walk, visit the Mapping the Mills walks series on www.izitravel or on the izi.Travel – City Guides App

Mapping the Mills

This Guide has been produced as part of a year long project delivered by the Building Exploratory, working closely with a dedicated team of volunteers.

Our research is presented in this map and a series of guided heritage walks.

All materials can be found on the Wandle Library: www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/digital-archive



Walk Two Watermeads to Morden Hall Park

Some of the best preserved industrial heritage on the River Wandle will be encountered on this walk.

Start: Watermeads Nature Reserve (Mitcham Tram Stop, Buses 118 & 280)
End: Morden Hall Snuff Mills (Morden Underground Station, Buses: 80, 118, 154, 157, 164, 201, 470, K5)

Distance: 2 miles
Duration: 1.5 hours

The four mills at the start of this walk were collectively known as Mitcham Mills, two remain today converted to housing. On the bank of the Wandle entering Watermeads from Bishopford Road, the brickwork from the wheel race of **Glover's Snuff Mill (28)** can be seen. Further along the riverbank sat **Paper Mill (27)**, which was demolished by 1894 but the tumbling bay and tailrace still remain.

Nearby and set back from the riverbank is a **Stone Bench (F)** in memory of Miranda Hill, donated in 1911

by her sister Octavia Hill, founder of the National Trust.

Walking back to the entrance of Watermeads, on the opposite bank sit the wonderfully preserved **Fisheries Cottages (G)** appearing to float almost on an island or at the edge of a millpond.

Immediately behind are the majestic **Grove (30)** and **Crown Mills (29)**. It is thought that Grove Mill, on the left, is the oldest site in the group. Mentioned in the Domesday Book, it milled corn between 1632 and 1786 and in later years produced snuff, then copper.

Crown Mill built in 1789 was known for producing fabric mostly for the military, including Lyxhair, a synthetic hair used to stuff mattresses and furniture in WW1 and WW2. The mill burnt to the ground in 1964 and was rebuilt as housing.

There has been a mill on the site of **Ravensbury Mill (32)** since the 1680s, that which remains was built in 1800 and produced tobacco and snuff. The final buildings on this walk are **Morden Hall Snuff Mills (33)**, which stand proud, one still with its wheel. Bequeathed by snuff manufacturer Gilliat Hatfield, along with the park and **Morden Hall (H)** to the National Trust in 1941.

Walk Three Morden Hall Park to Colliers Wood

Discover how industries used the Wandle and its surrounding landscape, and view the contrast between homes of mill owners and workers.

Start: Morden Hall Snuff Mills (Morden Underground Station, Buses: 80, 118, 154, 157, 164, 201, 470, K5)
End: Merton High Street (Colliers Wood Underground Station, Buses: 57, 131, 152, 200, 219, 470)

Distance: 2 miles
Duration: 1.5 hours

Starting on the bridge and looking on to **Morden Hall Snuff Mills (33)**, only one has its water wheel still intact, though not in working order. Walk across the park, passing Morden Cottage on the right, towards Phipps Bridge Road via the tram stop where the elegant **Wandle Villa (I)** and coach house stand.

By contrast, a little further along sits **Everett's Place (J)**, cottages built in 1824 to house mill workers from **Phipps Bridge Works (34)**. At the end of the terrace is a strange flint tower, a gothic folly built in the 1870s to prevent it from collapse.

Just past the folly on the left, Phipps Bridge leads to the open area known as **'Bunce's Meadow' (K)**. Now occupied by Deen City Farm but originally bleaching fields for nearby calico and linen works.

Leaving the City Farm behind, cross Windsor Avenue and take the footbridge over the River to **Merton Abbey Mills (35)**, a former textile works established by Huguenot weavers in the early 18th century. Best known today as the works of Liberty & Co. 1904-1982. Many of the Liberty era buildings survive and display boards outline the history and former use of each of the buildings on the site. The **Wheelhouse (L)** is worthy of a special mention, well preserved, it is the last surviving working mill on the River Wandle.

Cross Watermill Way into Chapter Way and then left to **Merton Priory Chapter House (M)**. This was once part of a major Augustinian priory associated with key historic events. Its foundations were hidden for years under Merantun Way and have recently been renovated. Take a peek through the glass windows into this evocative ruin. Parts of the **Priory Wall (N)** are also visible and indicate Merton Priory's northern-most boundary.

The location of **Morris Works Merton Abbey (36)** is marked by a small plaque in the ground on the edge of the 'Wandle Trail'. An idyllic spot suiting the home one of the 19th century's most revered designers. A textile printing works from the mid-1700s, William Morris produced furnishings in his distinctive designs from 1881 to 1940.

Walk Four Earlsfield Station to the Causeway, Wandsworth

This walk explores the significance of the Wandle in establishing a millennium-long tradition of flour milling in Wandsworth.

Start: Earlsfield Station (Buses: 44, 77, 270)
End: The Causeway, Wandsworth (Wandsworth Town Station, Buses: 28, 37, 39, 44, 87, 156, 170, 270, 337)

Distance: 1.5 miles
Duration: 1.5 hrs

Penwith Bridge (O) offers a view downstream to what would in 1656 have been open fields and **Garratt Mill (42)** which made gunpowder during the Anglo-Dutch Wars.

North on Flock Mill Place, **Duntshill Mills (43)** date back to the medieval period. During the 18th and 19th centuries, parchment, flock and textiles were produced. The old mill building, now office space, is the most northerly surviving mill building on the River.

Walking north to a site now occupied by an industrial estate is **Adkins Mill (46)**, mentioned in the Domesday Book, most famous as McMurray's Royal Paper Mill, 1853 -1903.

At the junction of Mapleton Crescent and Garratt Lane stood the site of **Garratt Lane Dyeworks (47)**, said to be favoured by the cardinals of Rome in the 18th century, for their scarlet-coloured hats. The high quality of 'Wandsworth scarlet' ensured that colour didn't run.

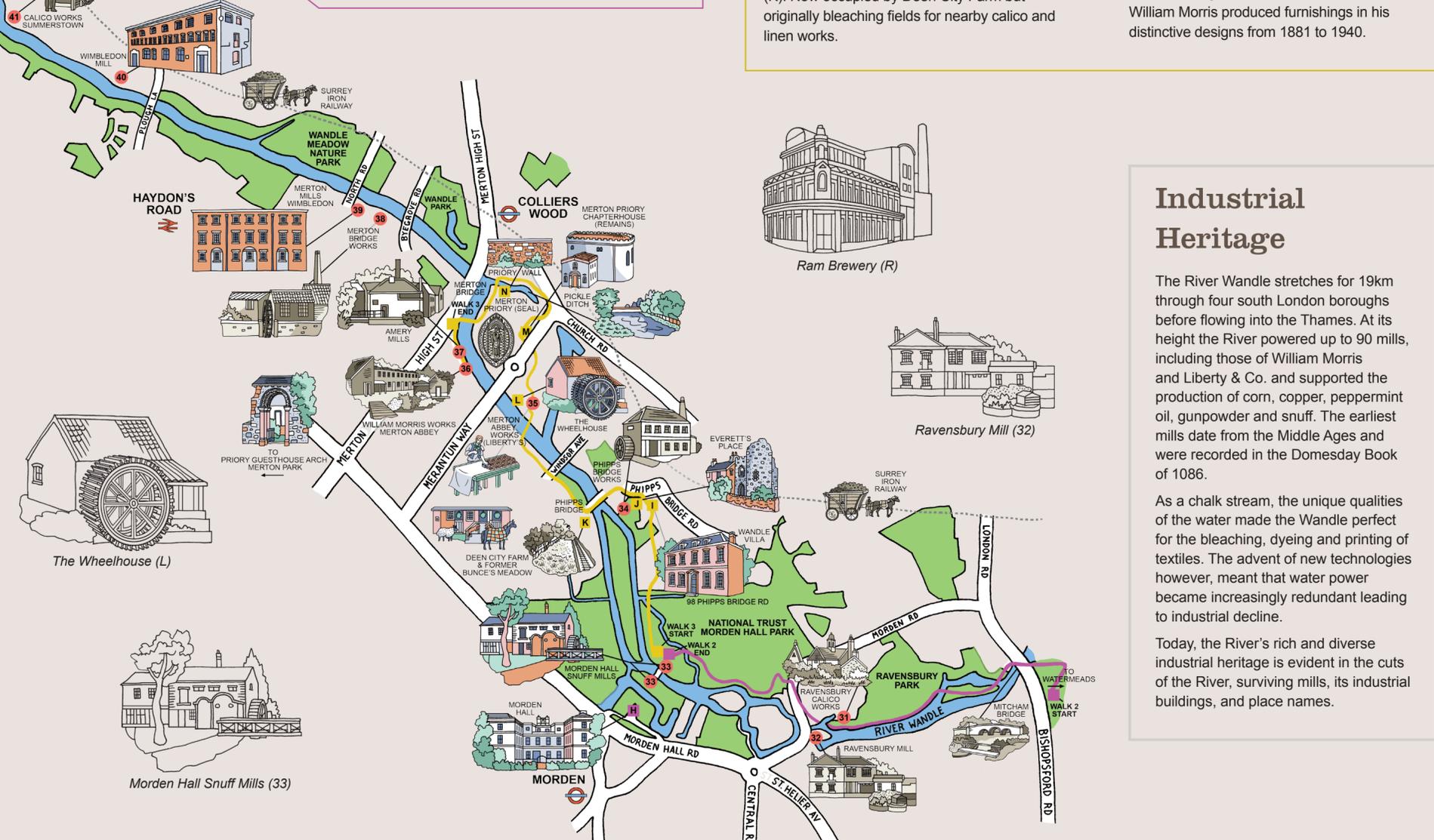
Present day **King George's Park (P)** was the site of bleaching grounds for the **Calico Works Wandsworth (49)**, which closed in 1816. The last owner, Henry Gardiner, resided at nearby **Downe Lodge (Q)** No. 39 Merton Road.

At the point where the River disappears under Southside Shopping Centre, once stood **Upper Mill (48)**, known from 1861 for making flour for 'Wando Bread' produced by the Aerated Bread Company. Its destruction in a 1928 fire brought to an end a millennium of flour production in Wandsworth.

At the corner of Wandsworth High Street and Ram Street stands the former **Rame** public house and **Young's Ram Brewery (R)**, now Grade II listed. The oldest British brewery in continuous operation, it dates from 1581.

Middle Mill (51) was situated on the River south of Armoury Way. During the late 1500s, it produced crimson and purple dyes for clothes. From 1605, the mill ground corn until it closed in 1898.

The Causeway crosses to the last point before the Wandle meets the Thames. Here, **Lower Mill (52)** produced corn from c.1371 until its demolition in 1898. A **plaque (S)** dedicated to the history of the area refers to McMurray's Canal, which connected the River Thames to the Surrey Iron Railway.



Industrial Heritage

The River Wandle stretches for 19km through four south London boroughs before flowing into the Thames. At its height the River powered up to 90 mills, including those of William Morris and Liberty & Co. and supported the production of corn, copper, peppermint oil, gunpowder and snuff. The earliest mills date from the Middle Ages and were recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086.

As a chalk stream, the unique qualities of the water made the Wandle perfect for the bleaching, dyeing and printing of textiles. The advent of new technologies however, meant that water power became increasingly redundant leading to industrial decline.

Today, the River's rich and diverse industrial heritage is evident in the cuts of the River, surviving mills, its industrial buildings, and place names.

