

Old Crawley walk

A walk that takes in meadows, ancient woodland and a watermill, all without leaving Crawley!

Start Point: Goffs Park car park, next to level crossing, Horsham Road

Distance/Duration : 7.5 miles/ 3.5 hours

Difficulty: Easy - Medium, mostly easy walking, some on surfaced paths. Can be very wet and muddy in places so sturdy footwear is recommended

Accessibility: Restricted, as you have to cross two railway bridges, both involving flights of steps. There are kissing gates and uneven ground.

Directions	Information
From the entrance to the carpark, take the path that runs through the middle of the park.	Part of Goffs Park was bought for the town as a memorial for those lost in WWI
Follow the path until you get to the pitch and put hut, then turn right and head down the hill through an avenue of trees. When you get down to the railway line turn left and then follow the path as it bears left away from the railway. Continue along until you meet the road. Turn left and use the footbridge to cross the A23.	
Walk away from the A23 down Gossops Drive, past Filbert Crescent. Before you get to the mini-roundabout cross over Gossops Drive and continue on to Dower Walk.	You are in Gossops Green, and the word "gossop" is thought to derive from the old word for goose, or gosling
Turn left down the tree-lined Dower Walk. Continue on to the end of the road. Cross the road and enter the woodland.	Woldhurstlea Wood is a remnant of the woodland that used to cover much of the south of Crawley.
Head down into the wood until you reach the stream. Turn right, past one bridge and then cross the second bridge over the Broadfield Brook. Follow the path on the other side until you meet the road.	Keep to the high path along the edge as the central path can get very muddy.
Cross over the road bearing slightly to the right and then enter the green space by the yellow gate.	
Walk through the playing field, keeping the stream to your left, until you reach the tarmac path. Turn left and cross over the bridge and then bear to the right.	
On your right is the Ifield Mill Pond.	Ifield Mill Pond is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.
Continue along the path (or the edge of the Mill Pond) until you meet another road.	
Cross the road and enter Broadfield Water Gardens. Follow the path through the gardens and then bear right over the bridge. Keep the lake to your right and continue back to the road.	Look out for the swan sculpture in the lake
Turn left and head up over the bridge over the railway line	This is the same railway line you walked along earlier, just a little further west
Turn right and follow the path between the houses and the verge. As the verge widens take the path on your right through the hedge into the field.	
Continue on until you encounter the Mill Pond again. Head towards the white Mill building, past the weir and information board.	The Mill is operated by Crawley Museum Society and is open on the last of the month between May and September
Continue past the Mill and follow the path out onto the road.	
Turn right along the road past the wide grass verge.	

As this ends cross the road with care and head down the alleyway next to Brook Cottage, following the Public footpath sign.	
You come out into Ifield Meadows. Follow the short mown path along the right hand side of the first field . At the end of the field turn left and enter the woodland and then cross the bridge to go alongside the Ifield Brook	These meadows have probably never been ploughed or had chemicals applied and so they are a rich habitat and designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance. In the fields are at least 10 different grasses, with plants such as black knapweed, fleabane, and common vetch.
Turn right and cross over another bridge back into the Meadows. Keep to the left until the end of the field, where the path bears to the right. Cross over another bridge and continue on the left hand side of this field. Leave the field via a kissing gate and footbridge.	Nowdays the Brook is the boundary between Crawley Borough and Horsham District, but the parish of Ifield used to stretch much further.....
Go straight on into the next field where the path runs diagonally right. Follow the path through a gap in the hedge and then take a right hand fork down to a kissing gate in the hedge. This will lead you out past an old farm pond to Ifield Church.	This first field contains a number of large old Ant hills, which is an indication that the fields have not been ploughed in many years.
Enter the churchyard and turn to left. Exit the church through the lych gate.	Behind you is the Barn Theatre, a 700 year old tithe barn. St Margaret's Church is a 13 th century building, but the site of an earlier, Saxon church.
Walk up the Street and turn left into Rectory lane. Walk a short way and turn right through a gate onto the village green. Head diagonally across the green towards the cricket pavilion. Bear to the left of the pavilion and follow the tree line around until you come to another gateway in the corner of the green. Leave the green and turn left	You are in the centre of the old village of Ifield, mentioned in the Domesday Book. The green used to be common land, used for grazing animals
Head up Mill Lane and then turn right at the end. Pass allotments and continue until the end of the road. Cross the road and continue on into Friston Walk.	
Continue to the end and using the pedestrian crossing head straight down the Mardens until the end.	
You reach the A23 again, but use the subway to cross to the other side. Walk down the residential road until you reach the end. Turn right into Goffs Lane	Look out for the large old pear tree by the subway
Follow the road round and then turn left passing Snell Hatch cemetery.	
Continue to the end of the road and then climb the steps to cross over the railway line.	
You are back in Goffs Park - head straight along the path with the railway line on your left , until you reach the carpark and the end of the walk.	