

CROYDON NEIGHBOURHOOD WALK

Explore Selsdon

1

FOXEARTH SPINNEY



2

KEYHOLE POND



3

FALLEN OAK FIELD



4

WATER TOWER



5

SELSDON PRIMARY SCHOOL



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THE ROSEWOOD HOUSES



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FARM COTTAGES



Image courtesy of the Museum of Croydon

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SELSDON PARK FARM



Aerial photograph, 1929 © Historic England



CROYDON NEIGHBOURHOOD WALK

Explore Selsdon

Distance: 1.5 miles
Time: 60 minutes
The walk includes one steep hill

Selsdon was once a large manor house set in woodland. ‘Selles Dún’ is from the Anglo Saxon meaning ‘manor on a hill’. The area began to change rapidly in the 1920s when it was developed for housing, but in 1931 environmentalists and local Councils raised funds to preserve 61 acres of woodland – Littleheath Woods. This walk explores the tranquil woodland and takes in historic architecture, telling the story of Selsdon’s transformation from hillside to high street.

This walk was researched by Ian Leggatt and the Friends of Littleheath Woods, and paid for by Selsdon Ward Councillors. Photography by Charles Marriott.

CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

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START

Your walk starts at the Selsdon Triangle next to the Clock. After availing yourself of the facilities that Selsdon has to offer, make your way to the footpath next to the Village Club. This path was originally a farm track.

Did you know, the Selsdon Clock was built in 2007 and sits on the plinth of a former public lavatory?

1 FOXEARTH SPINNEY

This small grassy square containing mature trees is called Foxearth Spinney. Much of Selsdon was developed by builders Richard Costain Ltd in the 1920s and 30s. The Costain family gave the Spinney as a gift to the Council, so as to preserve a group of mature beech trees that were growing here.

Can you find any beech trees still growing in the Spinney? (Hint - the drawing on the front of this map shows the shape of a beech leaf).

2 PONDS

Look out for the footpath sign as you head in to Littleheath Woods then turn left after the gate. The route takes you past Keyhole Pond and Old Pond. Frogs gather in the shallow edges of Keyhole Pond in the spring to lay their spawn. In the summer you can see dragonflies and damselflies gliding over the water.

Old Pond was filled in in the 1940s. It was recently re-excavated, but it doesn’t hold water all year round.

How many different creatures can you see living around the ponds?

Speckled Wood Butterfly

Southern Hawker Dragonfly

3 CLEARS CROFT TO FALLEN OAK FIELD

There are two fields in the woods. These were originally farmland and date back over 200 years. Pause at Clears Croft and take in the view. Fallen Oak Field was used to graze animals. You won’t see any cattle these days, but look out for other woodland animals as you walk along Fields Path. The woods are home to many types of birds as well as rodents and larger mammals.

As you turn right you join the Vanguard Way (VGW), a long distance footpath that continues to the south coast. Look out for the finger post where the London Loop also joins this path.

Which woodland animals come out at night?

Badgers and foxes are both nocturnal.

The red fox

The nuthatch

4 WATER TOWER

It’s easy to miss the Water Tower in the summer as it is hidden by foliage. This dramatic concrete structure was built in 1958.

Water towers use gravity to deliver water to nearby buildings. This location was chosen because it is high ground, so the water tank is above nearby buildings.

Can you find the mobile phone mast disguised as a tree?

5 SELSDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Selsdon Primary School opened in 1928 to serve the growing population. It was nicknamed the ‘tin school’ as classes were held in a temporary building at first. The current building opened in 1931 with the secondary school occupying the upper floor. The secondary school closed in 1965 and since then the primary school has been the sole occupant.

6 THE ROSEWOOD HOUSES

These unusual houses were built by Richard Costain Ltd in the 1930s. The design of the houses is influenced by the ‘International’ and ‘Art Deco’ styles, reflecting the latest architectural thinking at the time. They were white rendered cubes with no mouldings or decoration and strong horizontal lines.

By the 1930s, many families owned their own car. These modern houses, originally marketed for £600 each, had convenient garages at street level.

7 FARM COTTAGES

Selsdon once had a large farm serving Selsdon Park (the manor house which is now in use as a hotel). The farm was built in 1809 along with six pairs of cottages on the lane to Addington to house workers from the farm and the manor. 240 and 242 Addington Road are the last remaining pair.

8 SELSDON PARK FARM

The Selsdon Park farm buildings were laid out in a courtyard arrangement and stood for over 100 years. The plan below shows the layout in 1847. The site is now an Aldi and offices.

MORE INFORMATION

For information about self-guided walks:
www.croydon.gov.uk/neighbourhoodwalks

For information about Littleheath Woods:
www.folw.co.uk

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