

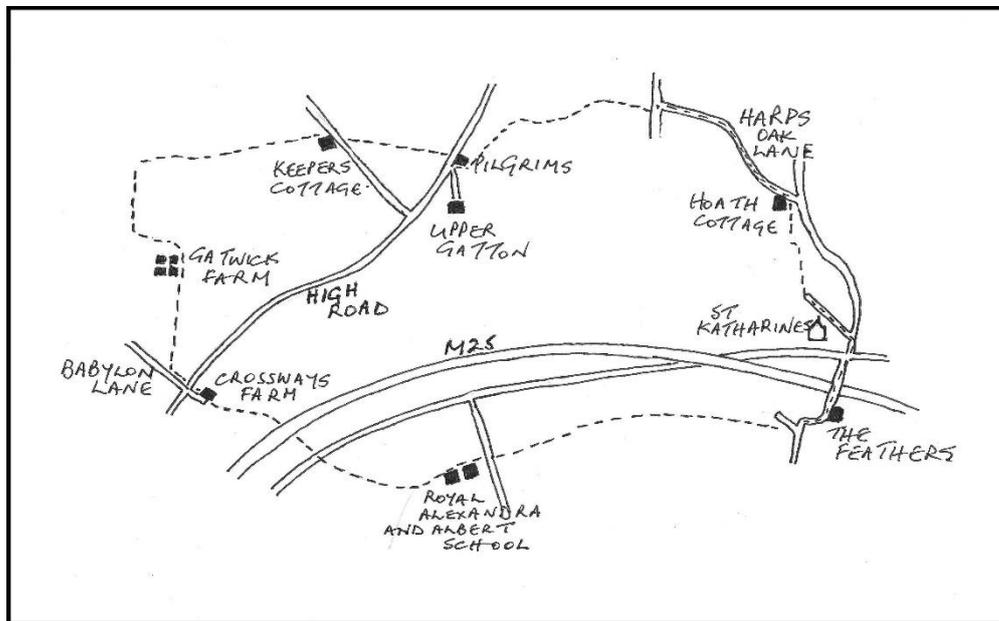


Historical Chipstead walks

5. Merstham, Gatton Park, Gatwick Farm, Upper Gatton Park, St. Katherine's Church

Overview

The walk is about 6 miles. Being circular you can, of course, start anywhere but you may choose to start at The Feathers in Merstham. There is plenty of parking on the bridge over the M25 and you can have a deserved drink in the pub afterwards as a reward. The route follows established footpaths and is obvious for most of the route.



Directions	Things to see
<p>Starting at The Feathers, cross the A23 into Quality Street and immediately turn left along the North Downs Way. The path bisects Merstham Cricket Club and then Reigate Hill Golf Club until it eventually meets Rocky Lane. Turn right and after 100 yards enter the grounds of Gatton Park /The Royal Alexandra and Albert School. Bear right at the first fork in the drive and skirt the school buildings. Follow the drive and just outside the school grounds pass the Millennium Stones. Continue along the drive to the right of the stones until you reach Tower Lodge.</p>	<p>The M25 opposite the golf club was the location of the now demolished Merstham House – once the primary residence of the Joliffe family who owned the Merstham Quarries and, since 1784, much of Chipstead. Gatton Park was a Rotten Borough up until the Reform Act of 1832. The Royal Alexandra and Albert School, opened in 1947, incorporating parts of Gatton Hall the former residence of Lord Monson. In 2000 a stone circle was created to mark where the North Downs Way joins the Pilgrims Way.</p>

<p>At Tower Lodge go straight across Gatton Bottom, through a metal gate and continue up a track passing under the M25 to Crossways Farm. Pass the farm and cross the High Road into Babylon Lane. After 300 yards turn right through a rather hidden gate in the hedge and walk along the hedge at the top of the field. At Gatwick Farm do not turn left into the converted houses but go straight ahead through a gate and pass the Granary and the Malt House. At the end after crossing the drive turn left and after about 100 yards go right. Follow the side of the field and after about 400 yards, when the houses in Mugswell are clearly in view, turn right into the neighbouring field. Keep to the edge of the field and head towards Keepers Cottage in the distance.</p>	<p>The old track that passes under the M25 may have been an ancient path used to herd cattle from Coulsdon to Gatwick. Both Crossways and Gatwick Farms date back to the Tudor period.</p>
<p>At Keepers Cottage cross Fair Lane and the stile the other side and walk across the middle of the grassland to a stile in the middle of the hedge alongside High Road.</p>	<p>After Keepers Cottage you get at view on the left of the Old Rectory and its formal garden.</p>
<p>Cross the High Road. At the entry to Upper Gatton Park take the path beside the house named Pilgrims. Do not enter the wood but continue along the grass until Upper Gatton Park comes into view on the right. Pass one brick air raid shelter and then a second one just as you enter a wood. Walk through the wood for about 300 yards. As you emerge from the woodland descend along the left side of a sloping field. About half-way down cross through two metal gates into the adjacent field and follow the hedge down to a stile at the bottom.</p>	<p>Until 1884 Upper Gatton Park was owned by Rev. John Tattershall (owner of the Merstham limestone quarries). The gardens were laid out by Capability Brown. The condition of the mansion deteriorated especially in the second world war when it was in army occupation. After the war Upper Gatton Manor was demolished and its Georgian stable block was converted into the modern residence</p>
<p>When you reach Markedge Lane turn left and after 30 yards turn right into Harps Oak Lane. Follow Harps Oak Lane for half a mile past Boors Green Farm and Merstham Lodge until you reach Hoath Farm Cottage. In its drive take the poorly signed path along the side of a field. After 100 yards cross into the field on the left and walk diagonally across two fields following the footpath markers until there is a stile to a path through woods. Follow the path until it enters Church Lane. Turn right and pass St.Katherine's Church. Turn right at the A23 and soon you have completed the circuit.</p>	<p>The tower, nave, aisles and chancel of the St Katherine's Church were built during the first half of the 13th century. The church was renovated by the Victorians, hence the date 1897 above the door.</p> <p>The other side of the A23 at its junction with Church Hill is the remains to the cutting of the Croydon, Merstham and Godstone Iron Railway (1805 – 1837) in which the horse drawn railway ran.</p>