



Local Walks from the Storrington and Sullington Community Partnership



A short Historical Stroll around Storrington Centre Estimated to take about 45 minutes

The walk starts at the Mill Pond and Library car park but please check the parking restrictions on the board before you set off.

The pond is fed by the River Stor which enters at the south side. Leave the car park up the steps near the library into Rycroft Lane. Turn left and then right into North Street. This is the site of the Ropewalk where ropes were made. On your right note the terrace of split flint walled cottages built in the 1800s by George Duke. (Photo below left).



Continue past the end of Spierbridge Road noting the row of Victorian cottages - Sunnyside - on your left. (Photo above right) 50 yards on, turn left into the twitten (a Sussex word for a path or alleyway).

At the exit of the alleyway on the lefthand side is Stable Antiques (Photo below). This building used to be an old dairy. The cobbled stone floors and stalls can still be seen at the back of the shop.



Turn right past Southdown House, parts of which are over 200 years old. This was the home of successive Storrington Doctors and was used to billet Canadian Officers during the second world war. Cross the road to the Village Hall which was built in 1894 on land gifted by the Rev. George Faithful and by public subscription and the funds from the disbanded Eighth Sussex Rifle Volunteers (Photo below left).



At the Village Hall turn into the twitten leading to the Glebe field by way of a kissing gate. Follow the footpath through the pinchgate and take the upper path leading through another gate into St. Mary's Churchyard. Along this path, looking to your right, there is a large building which is the Monastery (Photo above right). Near here there was a cottage which was a pill factory making Mr. Dixon's "Pink Pills for all Ills" and the lady who made them lived to be 100.

The parish church is worth a visit. A church is mentioned in the Domesday Book but it is thought to stand on a pre-Christian site. The oldest walls are the north and east walls of the North Aisle and the Lady Chapel. (Photo below).



Opposite the church is the Old School erected on the Bell Acre in 1868. It was the National School and is now used as a Parish Community Centre and Museum. Go to the right hand side of the church and take the 2nd lot of steps on the right, leading down to the junction of Church Street/School Lane & Greyfriars Lane. Opposite is Abbey Lodge and St. Joseph's Dominican Convent which was the site of Storrington's oldest Parsonage. This has now been converted into apartments. Originally a house it was restored by Walter Mattock in 1621 and continued as the Rectory until about 1881 when it became a private residence. Many old features remain including the door of Walter Mattock's Parsonage with his initials WM and the date 1623 carved into it. This door is no longer at the front of the building but at the back, which cannot be seen, now it serves as a garden door.

The last private owner of the Rectory was Colonel Herbert Valentine Ravenscroft and after his death in 1952 it was sold to become St. Joseph's Dominican Convent School officially opened on the 18th Sept. 1953.

Turn left down Church Street noting the intricately carved doors set in the wall on the corner of Browns Lane. (Photo below left). These were installed by Alfred Bethell in 1911. He was an antique collector and made reproduction furniture. These doors are a reproduction of Indo-Islamic art copied from the Punjabi style. The wood is probably teak.



Some of the oldest houses in Storrington are to be found in Church Street. The cottages at the corner of Church Street and Browns Lane are well over 200 years old with walls constructed of "clunch" (limestone). On the west side of the street is a fine red brick Georgian house behind iron railings. The Old Forge Restaurant (Photo above middle) is 15th century and the forge was for wrought iron and leaded light windows, an example of which can be seen over the door.

The red brick exterior of the last house on the left is a 19th century casing of a timbered framed 4 bay house which probably dates back to 1550. These premises and the shops on the right and the flats above were once a college renowned for its reputation as an army crammer for aspiring Officers. Turn left into the High Street. Cross the road at the traffic lights, turn right and walk down the High Street, crossing North Street.

On the opposite side of the road is The White Horse (Photo above right) which is a small hotel and restaurant. It is thought to have been built about 1500. Sir Arnold Bax lived here from 1941 - 1953. Look out for the plaque noting he was a Composer who lived from 1883 - 1953.

Continue a few yards down the road noting on the left Brewers Yard, a cul-de-sac of pretty cottages. Further down the High Street you will pass an old cottage on your left which has a good example of an ironstone wall which can be seen on its left side. The front of the building is built of red bricks at the bottom and at the upper level there are rows of pebbles, a popular method for walls in West Sussex. (Photo below).



Turn left into Old Mill Drive and you pass Place de Villerest, a symbol of our twinning with a town in the Loire. Carry on and approximately 100 yds on the left hand side, near to the pond, there are two notice boards, one showing the ecology of the pond and the other telling you about the Heritage Trail. Keep to the right hand side of the pond and return to the library and the car park via the path and the bridge.



THERE IS A LONGER WALK which takes you to the foot of the downs, starting by the church. This will add another 25 mins. to the walk.

Turn right into Greyfriars Lane passing Gerston Lodge on the right and the entrance to St. Joseph's hall which was the residence of the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, built about 1912 by George Trotter. The roof is of old Horsham stone tiles and in 1959 the house was used as a home for refugees from Hungary and Yugoslavia. In 1965 it became the Bishops' residence. This residence can be seen more clearly as you continue up the lane.

Continuing up the lane past Gerston Farm on your right, walk further on to the point where the lane narrows. Continue to the end of the lane where a signpost indicates footpaths to left and right. The left hand path climbs up Kithurst Hill leading to the Southdowns Way.

Take the right hand footpath leaving the duck pond on your right and pass the Cottage keeping to the left noting the magnificent view over the Downs. Also note to your left in the far distance, the masts at Bignor.

Cross the stile and proceed along the footpath due north over the field until you reach the gate and little bridge. Follow the path straight on until you reach the top of Kithurst Lane.

Continue straight on down the lane passing Cherry House on the right which was built on the site of the Old Black Mill. Also there was an old quarry on the lefthand side at the back of April and Quarry cottages.

On the left is Norbert House converted from the old Catholic School which was closed in 1953 when the Convent was opened. Crossing Monastery Lane into School Lane the Catholic Church of Our Lady of England, built in 1902 - 1909 and the monastery are on your left. In 1889 the poet Francis Thompson convalesced for a year in the monastery during which time he wrote his famous poem "Ode to the Setting Sun". Another visitor who stayed in the monastery in 1906 was Hilaire Belloc. During World War II it was occupied by troops, the Home Guard and the ATC Training Corps. The Priory was re-opened on 21st August 1952 following extensive restoration. Continue down School Lane stopping at the gate into St. Mary's churchyard on your left to look at the Old Pump. This was the site of the old Pillery Gardens.

At this point you then re-join the short walk turning left into Church Street at the Church.

Printed out from the Storrington village website: <https://www.storrington.org.uk/attractions/outdoor-activities/>