



Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust

Riverside Walks

Walk 5 – Slaugham Furnace and Mill Ponds. (OS Map – Explorer 134)

This is an easy walk of approximately 3 ½ miles. It takes in the delightful village of Slaugham, and is as close to the source of the Sussex River Ouse as it is possible to walk using public footpaths. The actual source of the river is about 1 mile west of the westernmost part of the Slaugham Mill Pond.

Directions



Slaugham Furnace Pond

Start – TQ25022810, Car park beside Slaugham Furnace Pond. Now used by anglers, but when the Wealden Iron Industry was at its peak the water from this pond would have turned the wheel that drove the hammer and bellows in the forge. From the car park walk uphill along the lane for just under ½ mile to a footpath stone on the right.



Waypoint 1 – TQ2512 2852, Turn right along the footpath by the footpath stone indicating you are now on the High Weald Landscape Trail. Follow this path into woodland and then across a stream that feeds into the Slaugham Mill Pond. As you pass back into open countryside observe the views to the right of Slaugham village and church. Continue through a kissing gate onto the lane. Turn right into the village passing the quaint cottages, and the white telephone box on your right (one of only three in England) to reach the Norman church with its 13th Century tower and Victorian clock.



The post box and old village pump at Slaugham



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The Norman church at Slaugham with its 13th century tower

Waypoint 2 – TQ2573 2811, At St.Mary's Church follow the footpath sign into the churchyard. Within the churchyard (against one wall of the church) is the tomb of Catherine Matcham the favourite sister of Admiral Horatio Nelson. In the churchyard the footpath splits, follow the branch that takes you straight ahead through the graveyard rather than around the church. Leaving the churchyard continue straight ahead past a plantation of young oak trees on your left. Beyond these trees (but not visible from here) is Slaugham Place. The original staircase from the remains of this Elizabethan Mansion is now located in Lewes Town Hall.

Continue down the path to Slaugham Mill Pond. As the path bends to the left by the finger post observe the 'tank traps' on both sides of the path. These concrete structures were built in WWII as anti-tank defences should their be an invasion. As you start to walk along the eastern end of the mill pond you may hear water cascading out of the pond and into a lower pond on your left – this being the point at which the River Ouse exits the pond. We walked on a summer's day following a prolonged drought and the stream bed leading out of the pond was completely dry as was the 'waterfall'. You pass a residence which is the converted corn mill. This building was constructed to replace an earlier mill that was destroyed by fire in 1795. However this pond was originally created for the iron industry, and the corn mill was only established in 1653 at the end of the iron industry. The corn mill business closed in 1873, after which a turbine was installed supplying electricity to Slaugham Place until 1900. Continue around the pond to the track.

Waypoint 3 – TQ2585 2764, Turn right, walk a very short distance to footpath junction, turn right again onto the path bordering the mill pond to its south. This pond like the furnace pond is now a haven for anglers, birdwatchers, and wildlife. As the path leaves the pond cross over the stile and head across the corner of the field to a double set of stiles. Once over these go across the field to Old Park Farm. Notice the clock tower with a weather vane.

Waypoint 4 – TQ2547 2717, Pass between the farm buildings and follow the rail fence to the end. Keep following the footpath signs keeping the stream on your left. Pass between the posts and then straight across the field towards the electricity lines, and then through the kissing gate.

Waypoint 5 – TQ2500 2645, Turn right along the road past the Southern Water Treatment Works on your left. The road then passes over a small stream. In low flow conditions particularly during the summer months there is a noticeable smell of 'drains' and a major proportion of the flow in the stream will comprise treated effluent discharged from the treatment works. After a left hand bend in the road two further pairs of 'tank traps' are visible one pair on each side of the road, during wartime there was probably a road block here. These also mark the point that the road crosses the River Ouse.

Waypoint 6 – TQ2512 2721, Continue on up the road until you reach your starting point with the furnace pond and car park on your left.



WW2 tank trap beside the River Ouse nr Slaugham Common