

9 Croham Hurst - Addington Hills - Shirley Heath

Croham Hurst - TQ 337 662 – 34.3 ha
Addington Hills - TQ 352 644 – 52.6 ha
Shirley Heath - TQ 370 646 – 27.5 ha
Tel: 020 8726 6900

These three sites form part of a chain of popular open spaces in the Borough of Croydon. Heathery areas have persisted here on the free-draining, pebbly, acid soils. In addition to both wet and dry heath, the visitor can enjoy woodland and acid grassland areas, or simply enjoy the views across the surrounding countryside. Part of the character – and protection – of these hilltop sites comes from their steepness but all three offer flat areas that accessible to all.



The three sites were gradually preserved and added to as the surrounding neighbourhoods became ever more populated. The history of Croham Hurst is typical of sites traditionally enjoyed by local people where threats of sale and development prompted popular action against such proposals. Following three years of protest – at the end of the century before last – the Whitgift Foundation finally abandoned their plans and sold Croham Hurst to the Croydon Corporation in 1901. Evidence of earlier occupation is provided by the traces of a late Mesolithic settlement and a Bronze Age barrow.

As with other popular sites, balancing recreational uses with conservation objectives whilst controlling the spread of pine and invasive species is an ongoing process. Management works continue to remedy past heathland losses, whilst furthering public enjoyment.

The heathland areas are dominated by heather, with some bilberry and goldenrod. Drier spots are indicated by the occurrence of bell heather. Fine-leaved fescues, wavy hair-grass and purple moor-grass dominate the acid grassland areas with a mix of wood sage, heath bedstraw and other typical species. Marsh violet and hard fern – both London rarities occur in the damper areas of Addington Hills. The invertebrate fauna plays an important part in supporting a range of birds and reptiles – and all benefit from the varied mosaic of open and scrubland habitats.

Getting there

Croham Hurst

● West Croydon/East Croydon then bus 412 or East Croydon and bus 64, 409 or T33 to Croham Road

● 64, 409, 412, T33 **M25: J6**

Foot: A footpath runs along the NE boundary from Bankside to Upper Selsdon Road

Addington Hills

● Norwood Junction and bus 130, or East Croydon and bus 466

● 130, 466 **M25: J6**

Tramlink Route 3 to Coombe Lane

Car park(s) off Shirley Hills Road and Oaks Road, at the junction with Coombe Lane

Foot: The London LOOP runs through Addington Hills

Shirley Heath

● Hayes and bus 314 or 353

● 119, 138, 198, 246, 314, 353

Tramlink: Route 3 to Addington Village

M25: J6

Foot/Cycle: The Waterlink Way runs through Shirley Heath