

# Mod Map

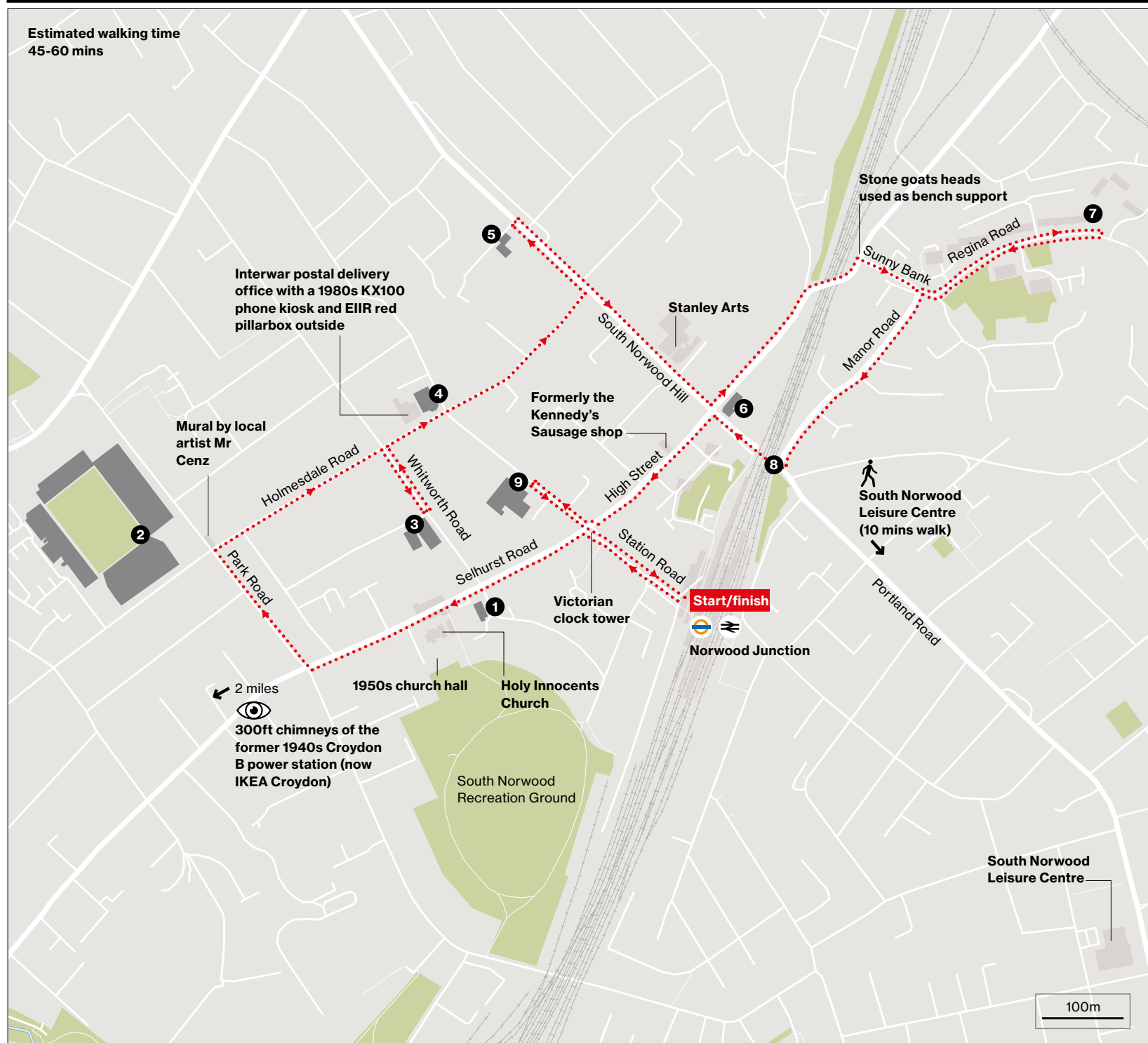
South Norwood

C20



## The sights of South Norwood

South Norwood may primarily be a product of Victorian industrialisation and the coming of the railways in the 19th century, but it is dotted with fascinating and stylistically diverse modern heritage. From this, we can learn much about the way London has developed as a city, and how the contemporary Britain we know today was shaped in the mid to late 20th century.



## Plotting your route

We start our route at Norwood Junction – the busiest station in the borough outside of central Croydon. Heading up Station Road towards the Victorian clock tower, on the left we pass the former site of the Odeon cinema, opened in 1937 and closed in 1971, now a supermarket complex.

Taking a left at the top onto Selhurst Road, continuing past a handsome parade of independent shops and cafes (a good spot to stop for refreshments), we soon arrive at **1 South Norwood Library**.

Keep going straight on past Holy Innocents Church, looking out for the 1950s church hall to the rear, a pebble-dashed prefab survivor from the postwar period. At the crossroads, take a right onto Park Road, glimpsing the 300ft chimneys of the former 1940s Croydon B power station on the left (now IKEA Croydon), our second stop soon announces itself with the striking sight of floodlights rising above the rooftops: **2 Selhurst Park**, home to Crystal Palace Football Club.

Crossing the road opposite the bold new mural by local artist Mr Cenz, we then head down Holmesdale Road. At Whitworth Road take a right and make a short detour to see the first of two churches – the Italianate **3 St Chads RC Church**.

Return to Holmesdale Road and turn right, past the discreet but dignified interwar postal delivery office with a 1980s KX100 phone kiosk and EIRR red pillarbox outside; both recent models of classic archetypes. Immediately next door is our second church, the octagonal **4 South Norwood Baptist Church**.

Continuing to the end of Holmesdale Road, we reach South

Norwood Hill and venture left for a short detour up the hill to see the recently restored **5 Balmoral Court**.

Returning down the hill, we pass the magnificent Edwardian-era Stanley Halls (1901–04, Grade II listed), now a thriving local arts and community centre. Turn left at the junction onto the High Street, pause to admire the finely detailed **6 63 High Street** opposite.

Follow the road as it bears up and over the railway, taking an immediate right after the bridge onto Sunny Bank. Look out for the stone goats heads used as bench supports, salvaged from an interwar pub that once stood on the site.

Turning left shortly after the bench brings us to **7 Regina Road Estate**. Continue along for a few hundred yards, to see a range of postwar housing. As the road segues into Victorian housing, double back and head straight down Manor Road.

At the end of the road, one can make an optional excursion left down Portland Road, to visit South Norwood Leisure Centre (by Hugh Lea, the architect of South Norwood Library), or bear right to return to the High Street. Under the railway bridge resides the **8 Roots, Routes, Roots** mural.

At the junction we turn left onto the High Street and work our way back to the station. On the opposite side of the road is No.18A – formerly the Kennedy's Sausage shop. Grade II listed for its ornate interiors, a glimpse of which can be seen in the Deco sunburst glass windows above.

Making a final detour up Oliver Grove see the **9 Harris Sixth Form**, we return to our starting point at the Station.

## Partners



The South Norwood Mod Map is funded by Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zones (HSHAZ) as part of the South Norwood Regeneration Programme.

## High Street Heritage Action Zone

South Norwood is one of 68 new High Street Heritage Action Zones across the country, with investment awarded from Historic England to unlock the potential of South Norwood's high street, fuelling economic, social and cultural recovery and breathe new life into the area for future generations.

Walking tours are popular events in South Norwood, bringing new arrivals and long-time residents together to discover and celebrate their area. This project was commissioned to complement the existing walks created

by the community and local historians.

The walk is launching during Croydon's year as London Borough of Culture 2023. The programme promises to be a big, bold and cross-cultural celebration of Croydon's unique identity, heritage and character, with lots of opportunities to take part. *To find out more about these programmes, visit [historicengland.org.uk/culturecroydon.com](http://historicengland.org.uk/culturecroydon.com)*

## About C20

This guide was produced by the Twentieth Century Society – the national charity for the protection of Britain's modern architecture and design heritage. For over forty years, they've helped save countless landmarks for the nation. From iconic red phone boxes to Art Deco lidos, modernist housing estates to brutalist bus stations – even helping the redundant Bankside power station to become the cathedral of art, Tate Modern. Their campaigns lead public debate on the built heritage of the future, advancing environmental arguments and

championing grassroots community solutions.

C20 believes our shared twentieth and twenty-first century heritage is an integral part of Britain's rich and varied landscape, with programmes and publications that celebrate and study this legacy.

*To find out more and support their vital work, visit [c20society.org.uk](http://c20society.org.uk)*



### South Norwood Library

1 The South Norwood Library was designed by Croydon Borough Architect Hugh Lea and opened in 1968, replacing a 19th-century library on the same site. A highlight of this walk and the focus of a spirited community campaign in recent years, the library is a distinctive Brutalist design, built on a small scale to respond to the character of the streetscape, and with an interior cleverly planned to make the most of its restricted site. Compact and box-like, it's faced with glass and rough corduroy concrete, and still proudly bears its original 'LIBRARY' sign in a condensed grotesk typeface.



### Selhurst Park

2 Selhurst Park was opened in August 1924 by the Lord Mayor of London. The site, a former brickfield, was purchased by Crystal Palace FC in the 1920s and a new 5,000 capacity stand was designed by Archibald Leitch – Britain's 'foremost football stadium designer of the early 20th century'. This original 1920s stand, though extended and altered, is due to be redeveloped as the club plans for the twenty first century. Moreover this characterful type of ground – a series of stands enclosed by surrounding streets – is now becoming increasingly rare in the Premier League.



### St Chads RC Church

3 St Chads was dedicated by the Bishop of Southwark on 2nd March 1933, marking what the Norwood News called "a red-letter day in the lives of South Norwood Catholics" who "for the past twenty-five years [...] had to worship in an iron building at Clifford road". It's a red-and-plum-coloured brick building with Westmorland slates, combining the Italian Romanesque and Arts & Crafts building motifs. Its basilica plan seats 300-400 people, while externally it features a tower with gilt cross and copper hooded porch to Whitworth Road, protecting a Della Robbia figure of Our Lady and Child.



### South Norwood Baptist Church

4 Planning permission was granted for a new Baptist church in 1996, following the demolition of the former church two years earlier, and work was completed in 2007. Designed by John Marsh of MEB Partnership, it's a striking building which is octagonal in plan with an L-shaped block behind, featuring red brick elevations bearing cross-shaped fenestration and clerestory windows. The council's Conservation Area Appraisal describes the church as "unusual and modern in its massing", and notes that "it adds to the interest of the streetscape", responding to the residential character of the area in its materiality and scale.



### Balmoral Court

5 Built in 1937, Balmoral Court is a three-storey block of nine flats, designed in the fashionable Art Deco style of the period. It has an L-shaped plan and eye-catching white-rendered elevations, its entrance to South Norwood Hill articulated by stylised banded columns, double-height glazing and decorative stepped parapet motifs. Designed to be modern and avant-garde, Balmoral Court sought to attract a new type of aspirational resident to this growing part of London. The flats have recently been refurbished and windows replaced, but the building retains its 1930s character.



### 63 High Street

6 Standing in a prominent location at the junction of Portland Road and South Norwood High Street, no. 63 was built circa 1926 and in use as a Lloyds Bank from January 1927. With brick elevations laid in English bond, casement windows, a corbelled porch, ironwork balcony and pair of classical Doric columns above, this is a sophisticated interwar building designed to be distinguishable from its neighbours. Originally built to two storeys, the building was extended by an additional storey in recent years, enabling the upper floor to be used as a flat and raising the pierced scalloped screen at parapet level.



### Regina Road Estate

7 The estate was commissioned by Croydon Borough Council and includes three 11 storey tower blocks, each containing 44 dwellings. The first was completed in 1964 and the following two in 1966. The wider estate includes groups of low-rise dwellings, including two-storey homes with exposed brick, rendered elevations and pitched interlocking concrete tile roofs, alongside three and four-storey brick blocks with hanging tiles, shallow-pitched roofs and prominent chimney stacks. Built at a time of severe housing shortages, they were an innovative design and construction response.



### Roots, Routes, Roots

8 The mural was created in 1997 by school children and members of the local community, under the guidance of the artists Gary Drostle and Rob Turner. It is a nine-panel predominantly white and green mosaic, exploring the area's origins and history – its 'roots' – and its growth and the movement of people, 'routes'. Its agricultural and industrial past are depicted, as is its cultural and literary history, alongside scenes from everyday life. You can find another good example of community mosaic (Designed by Tamara Froud in 2006) at the Library forecourt, where this walk started.



### Harris Sixth Form

9 Formerly the South Norwood Police Station, the building was built in 1986-88 by Raymond Smith & Associates for the Metropolitan Police. The 5-storey structure is constructed from a reinforced concrete frame and clad in brick, with darker brick detailing and windows set within deep reveals. Its character could be described as a hybrid of brutalism and postmodernism, being clearly of its time yet evoking, through its materiality and features, such as its pitched roofs and segmental arch windows, Victorian institutional architecture. The police vacated in 2011 and it is now the home of the Harris Professional Skills Sixth Form.