

Cromford village

Welcome to Cromford, an early rural factory village, built by the Arkwright family, which survives largely intact and unaltered from the late 18th century. It is now one of the key historic communities within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

Cromford has been a settlement for more than a thousand years. Before Richard Arkwright arrived, it was a scattered community stretching from the river to the top of Cromford Hill. The main industrial activity was lead mining and smelting. Calamine (a zinc ore) was also mined and processed.

Arkwright built his first water powered cotton spinning mill here in 1771, quickly followed by a much larger mill in 1776. Further mills were built along the Derwent Valley in the next few years, including Masson Mill.

Arkwright required a large workforce and built houses to attract workers to the village. He also built the hotel and established a market.

Cotton spinning ceased at Cromford Mills in the 1840s when the water supply was disrupted, but Masson Mill became part of the English Sewing Cotton Company and produced sewing thread until its closure in 1991.

Cromford Market Place c.1925



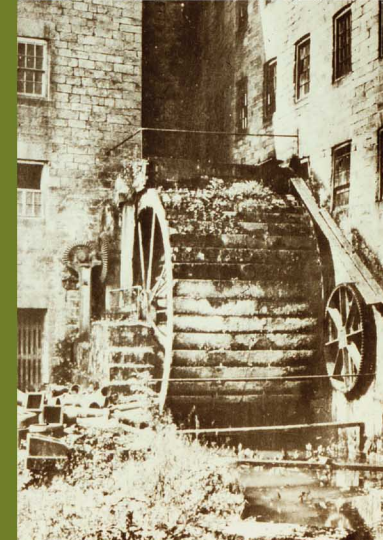
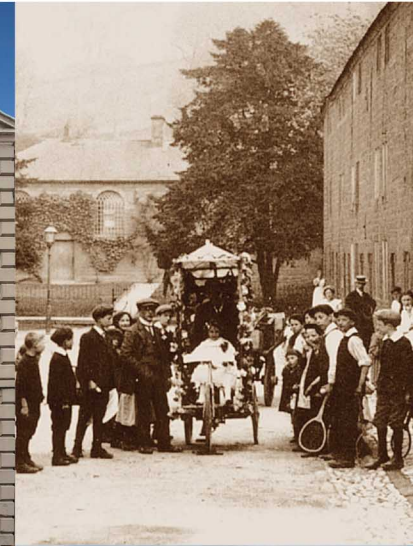
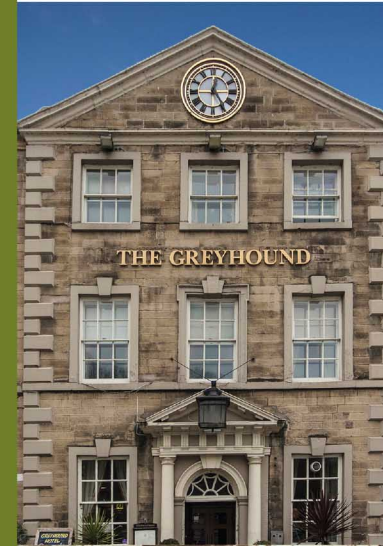
For more information about Cromford visit www.derwentvalleymills.org and www.cromfordmills.org.uk

Front cover (clockwise from top left): The Greyhound Inn, Cromford Market Place; Celebrations in North Street, with the School behind; St Mary's Church; one of the water wheels which once provided power at the Cromford Mills site.

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Cromford Village

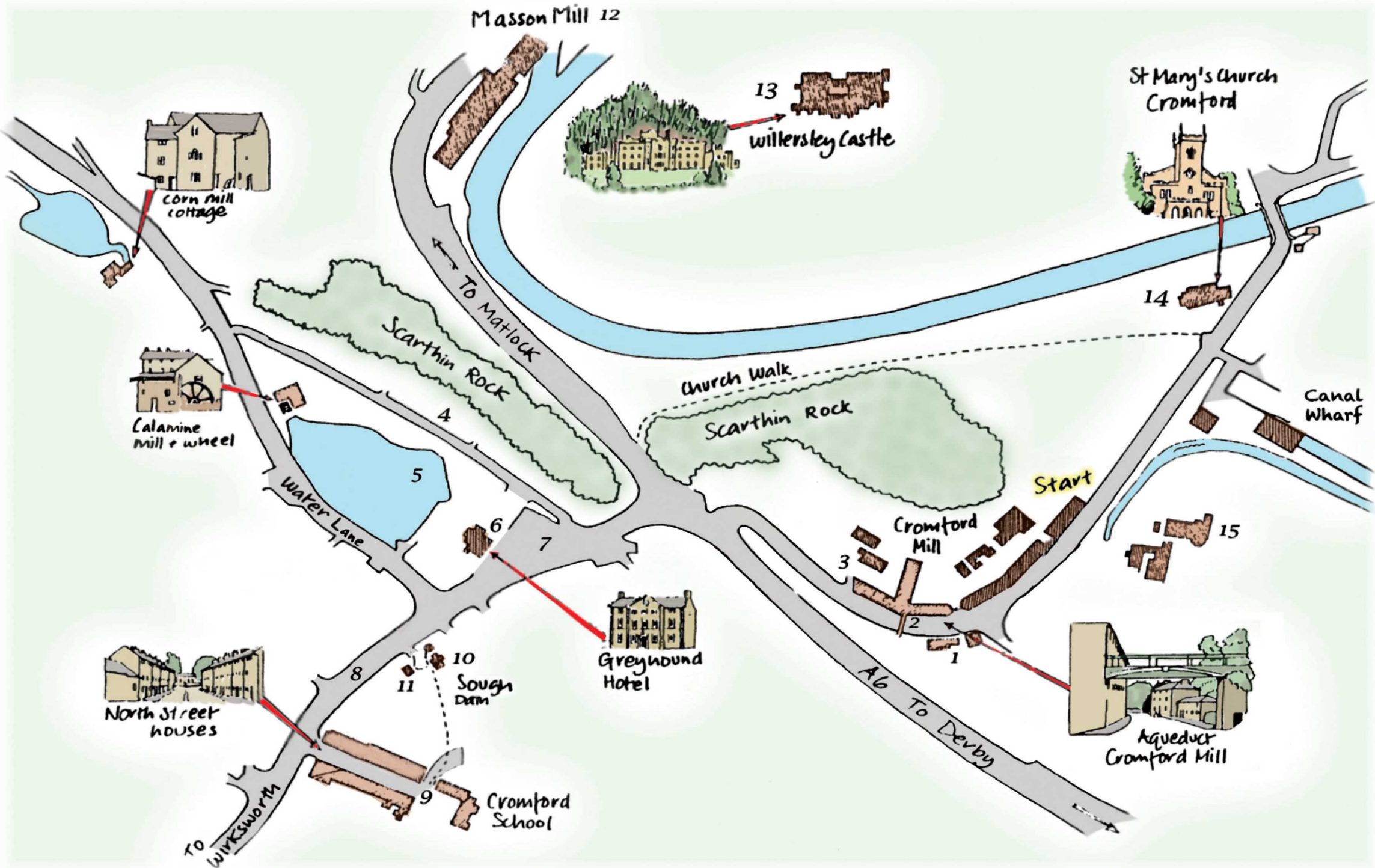


Derwent Valley Mills
World Heritage Site



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Derwent Valley Mills
inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001

CROMFORD WALK



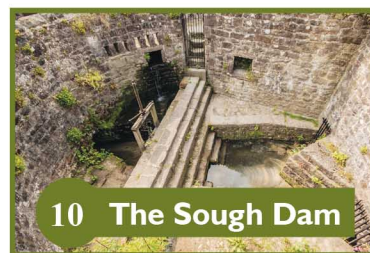
Starting at the Cromford Mill Complex, follow the numbers on the map to explore the community of Cromford and some of its hidden historic gems.

- 1 Leaving the mill complex, turn right towards the village. On the left is the **Mill Manager's House**, built in 1796 by Richard Arkwright Jnr, overlooking the main gate to the mill. The low building next to it was built in 1771 probably as cottages, though later used for stabling.
- 2 Continuing along the road, you'll see above you an inlet into the mill complex. This was where an **aqueduct** carried water to the large overshot wheel on the eastern side of the first mill (pictured on the cover of this leaflet). The aqueduct is no longer here - it was hit by a lorry in 2002 and is in pieces awaiting restoration.
- 3 Turn right at the end of the buildings into the yard. This would have been the original entrance to the mill complex, showing the west side of the first mill with its protruding central bays. The entrance is flanked by two storey buildings which were originally workers' cottages. The three storey building was built later and was a loom shop.
- 4 Cross the A6 and then cross to the right hand side of the road. As you reach the Market Place turn right up a narrow street called **Scarthin**. The old cottages here are the remains of the early lead miners' settlement in this area. Scarthin was a separate community and part of Matlock parish, not part of the manor of Cromford.
- 5 Arkwright dammed the Bonsall Brook to form the **Greyhound Pond**, seen on the left. It stored water to ensure there was sufficient to power the Cromford Mill wheels. A sluice gate at the corner of the pond near Water Lane controlled a link to the Sough Dam (see 10) so that water could be moved from sough to pond and vice versa. The outflow from the pond to the mills can be heard in the far corner.
- 6 Return to the Market Place, and you can't miss the **Greyhound Inn**, built in 1778 and Grade II* listed. Travellers and visitors would have stayed overnight



and there is reference to the Arkwrights using it for business. Richard Arkwright Jnr wrote to ask Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire to leave him a message there about her debt to him which was being kept secret from her husband, the Duke.

- 7 The **Market Place** was developed after Arkwright bought the Manor of Cromford in 1789. Markets were held on Saturdays and Arkwright encouraged traders to attend by offering prizes as incentives to those selling the most goods. To the right of the Greyhound Hotel and on the other side of the road stand three-storey houses, some of which were later converted to retail use, including the fine example, now Arkwright Stores. The Market Place also boasts the rare survival of a Georgian Shambles, the single storey row of purpose built market shops.
- 8 Use the crossing outside the Greyhound Hotel and walk up **Cromford Hill**. The houses of Victoria Row were built in 1839, they are set back behind front gardens and have a row of self flushing privies in the back gardens. Nos. 37 and 39 have their original cast iron window frames, a pattern which followed the fashion for slim glazing bars which earlier would have been in timber.
- 9 Turn left into **North Street**. The first 27 houses to accommodate workers were built here in 1776, 16 on the top row, 11 on the bottom. They had one room each on the ground and first floors and a second floor workshop (note the long windows). The Bell is one of the few early red brick buildings in Cromford. The two storey house opposite the Bell pre-dates the workers' housing and was the Cock Inn. It and its outbuildings were later converted to dwellings. The stone trough in front of the school was the water supply for the street. The school opened in 1832 and catered for 200 girls and boys with a pair of houses at the right side for the schoolmaster and schoolmistress. The wing to the left of the school was added in 1893.
- 10 At the end of North Street, turn left and when you reach a



break in the left-hand wall, follow the path past the allotments. You will reach the **Sough Dam**, also known as the Bear Pit, built in 1785 to control the flow of water from the Cromford Sough. It and the pig cote (sty) next to it are Grade II listed.

- 11 Turn left here into a yard, on the far side of which the **Village Lock-up** was created in 1790 from the central cottage in an existing row of three.
- 12 Walk through the yard to Cromford Hill and turn right. Cross back over the A6. Turn left immediately and follow the A6 to **Masson Mill**. The original mill, (1783-4), is the furthest along in the complex. Built in red brick and powered by the River Derwent, it was a showpiece in Arkwright's estate and remains one of the best preserved Arkwright mills. It is 21 bays wide and 6 (originally 5) storeys high with a decorative three bay central projection with lunette and venetian windows. The engine house with its 150ft chimney was added in 1900 when English Sewing Cotton owned the mill.
- 13 Walking back along the A6, you will come to some gates, through which you can follow Church Walk, which offers views to the left of **Willersley Castle**, built by Sir Richard Arkwright but not completed by the time of his death. It was lived in by members of the Arkwright family until 1927.
- 14 At the end of **Church Walk** is St Mary's Church, built at the same time as the Castle and originally intended as a private chapel for the family. When completed in 1797 it was opened for public worship. Enlarged and gothicised by Peter Arkwright in the 1850s, it became the Cromford Parish Church in 1869. It is Grade I listed. There is an information board next to the Church.
- 15 Returning to the Cromford mill complex, you will be able to see glimpses of **Rock House** on the cliff facing the mills, across the road. This was the home of Sir Richard Arkwright from 1776 until his death in 1792.





The Cromford Canal

Just across the road from the Cromford Mills is Cromford Wharf, the terminus of the 14.5-mile Cromford Canal.

The canal opened from the Erewash Canal to Pinxton in 1792, and to Cromford in 1794. It was used for carrying heavy goods such as coal and limestone.

The canal provides a very simple but enjoyable walk along the towpath. It is exactly a mile to **High Peak Junction** and **Leawood Pumphouse**.

High Peak Junction (part of the Cromford and High Peak Railway which closed in 1967) features some of the oldest surviving railway workshops in the world.

A little further along, the impressive Leawood Pumphouse has a magnificent steam beam engine

which still operates on selected weekends over the summer (see www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/countryside-sites/wildlife-amenity/leawood-pumphouse.aspx for details).

For those who would prefer an alternative to walking, visitors can take a trip on the Birdswood narrow boat between Cromford and High Peak Junction. Running times and days for Birdswood can be found at www.birdswood.org/bookings.



Lots of options when visiting Cromford

Cromford village was developed by the Arkwrights as a community to service their cotton mills. You can learn more by visiting the Cromford Mills site on Mill Lane. There are guided tours and audio tours and an interactive Visitor Centre as well as shops and restaurants. Surrounded by beautiful Derbyshire countryside, the Cromford area is also an ideal place for visitors to walk and explore.

As well as the village and canal walks presented here, there are numerous walks of varying lengths and difficulties taking in both countryside and history.

Visit the Cromford Mills website for suggestions of other walks – www.cromfordmills.org.uk.