

Crompton Moor is an area of beauty, please help us to keep it that way by taking your rubbish home.

**'Take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints'**

Please help us in our aim to gather information by telling us what you think of Crompton Moor or any other greenspace by visiting [www.greenstat.org.uk](http://www.greenstat.org.uk)



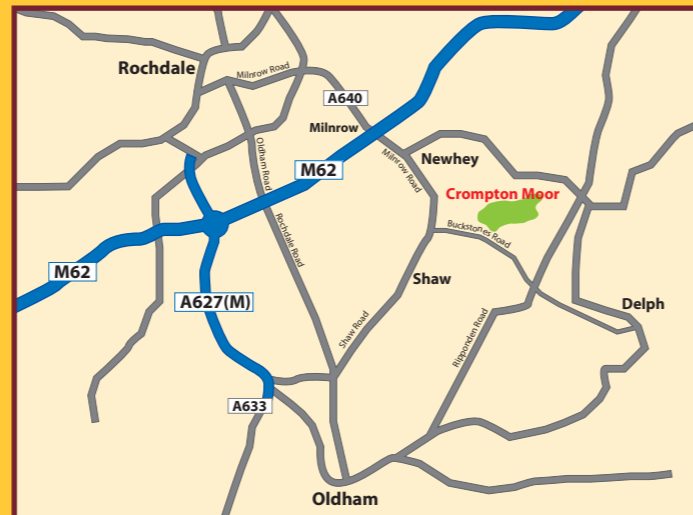
**Crompton Moor is managed by Oldham Countryside Service from the Tandle Hill office. Contact details:**

**Oldham Countryside Service**

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Tandle Hill Road, Royton, Oldham OL2 5UX  
Telephone: 0161 627 2608 or email [env.tandlehill@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:env.tandlehill@oldham.gov.uk)

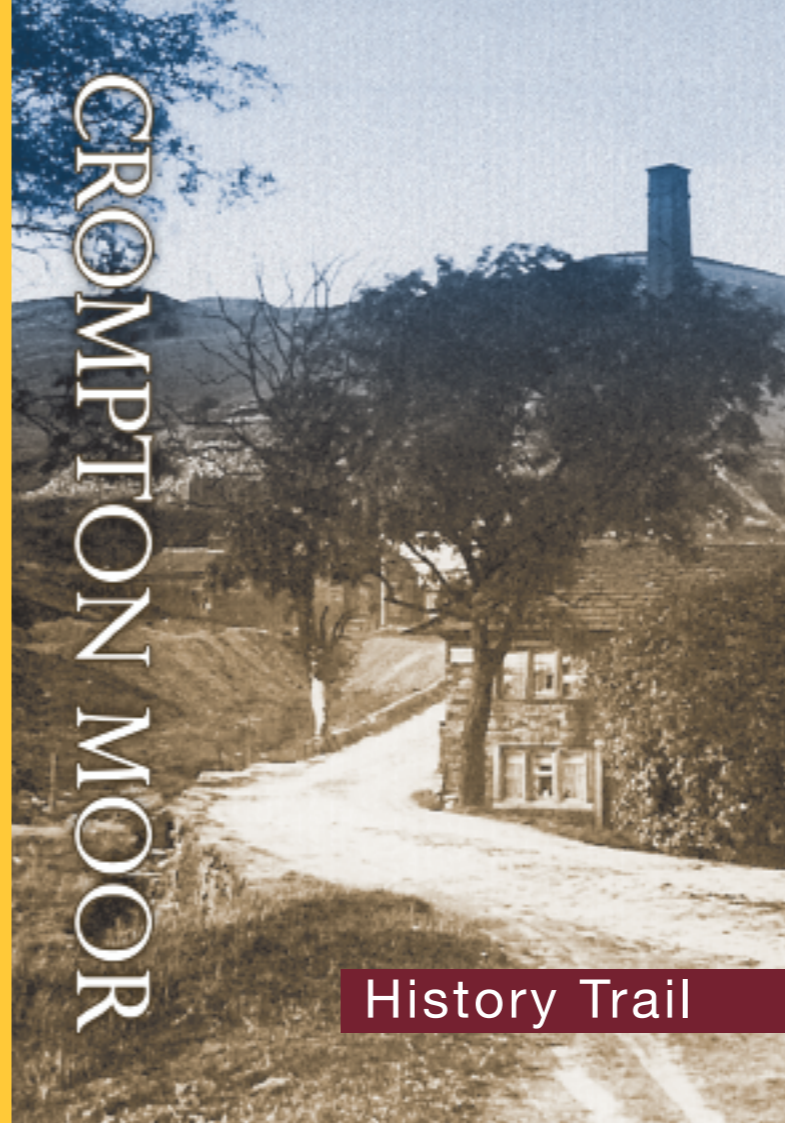
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# CROMPTON MOOR

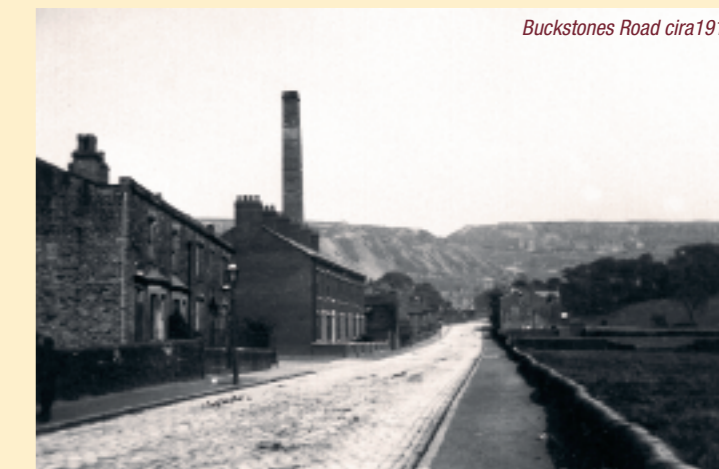


## History of Moorland use

*In the 13th Century, Brushes Clough was known as Leornardin Brook*

Crompton Moor was originally all open heather moorland used as a grazing common and summer pasture. In the 16th Century there were 466 acres of common land in the Crompton area, today 80 acres remain as common land on the moor. Each area of common land had a name eg. 'Great Rough', or 'Black Hey Common'.

Following the General Enclosure Act in 1845 a number of farms were established on the site including Browns Barn, Crow Knoll and Bowling Green. It was at this time that dry-stone walls were constructed to enclose and improve pasture from the heather common.



*Buckstones Road circa 1910*

Oats, wheat and barley would also have been grown along with the farming of cattle, sheep, poultry and pigs. The inhabitants of the farms had rights for stone, turf and coal on the common land. The coal seams are near to the surface and coal could be obtained by digging into the hillsides without the need to sink a shaft, particularly in Brushes Clough. Farming continued on the moor until the 1930's.

Transport was by packhorse or horse and cart. A number of original walled tradeways can still be seen on the site which linked farms to the town of Shaw.

In the late 17th Century the cottage textile industry flourished in this area. With increasing industrialisation stone for mills and houses was quarried locally. With the introduction of steam driven machinery in the mills, fuel was required in larger quantities. It was at this stage that larger shafts were sunk on this site. Coal was taken down into Shaw by horse and cart.

## Quarrying

Extensive quarry operations for the extraction of the Helpet Edge Rock took place in the latter part of the 19th Century and the early 20th Century over the western part of the site at Pingot and Brushes Clough Quarries. The old quarry working faces and waste heaps remain on the site.

Sandstone was crushed at Pingot Quarry for sand supplies. Stone from Brushes Clough Quarry was used for road construction including stone setts and flags.

## Coal Mining

There are records of extensive underground mining having been carried out beneath the site towards the end of the 19th century. The main seams worked were referred to as:

- Upper Foot mine
- Lower Mountain mine
- Lower Mountain mine
- Bassy mine

Records indicate that there were 28 old mine entries within the site area and a further 9 adjacent to the site boundary. From the 1820 Poor Rate Valuation book for Crompton, it is recorded that John and James Mills had two pits at Crow Knowl.

The recorded mine entries are made up of 18 vertical shafts or pits and 19 adits or 'day eyes'. Adits are inclined roadways or tunnels driven into the hillside generally at or near to the outcrop of the seam. These features vary from small holes excavated on a 'one man' basis for limited extraction to purpose built brick or stone lined portals leading to a supported roadway used as an access to extensive workings. These adits were thin coal seams, some only inches thick, which outcropped on the hillside - this made it easier to tunnel horizontally rather than sink a shaft.



*Air shafts, Shore Edge circa 1970*

Vertical shafts in this locality were generally circular brick or stone lined features varying in diameter from as little as 1m up to 3m and varying in depth from 5m to 100m. The writer Daniel Defoe, on a visit to Oldham, described it as a place of "...Coals...upon the top of the highest hills" in reference to the accessibility of coal seams lying so near to the surface that little, if any, digging was necessary. (Manchester UK website).

During the latter half of the 19th Century a band of desperadoes called the 'Shore Edge Thieves' had their HQ on Crompton Moor. They were feared by the surrounding community (Oldham Chronicle - 8/1/1966).

## Current Uses

The area was sold to the local council in 1975 after a public protest against a proposal by the owners of the area to begin quarrying again. There followed an extensive land reclamation scheme in 1976/77, in which the mine shafts were filled in, the quarry waste was landscaped and several thousand trees were planted. The moorland is now a haven for wildlife and is used by people for recreation only.

## Wildlife

Designated a Site of Biological Interest (SBI) in 2003, this extensive area of moorland consists of a mixture of acid grassland, marshy grassland, dry heath and wet bog. Much of the site is dominated by purple-moor grass with areas of significant heather cover. There are also coniferous plantations and woodland cloughs. Old Brook is the main stream that flows through the site, which falls over the edge of Pingot Quarry to form an impressive waterfall.



*Crompton Quarry circa 1970's*

The site is of considerable value to birds with a large variety that can be found including kestrel, red grouse, golden plover, snipe, curlew, skylark and meadow pipit. Animals that can be seen include fox, weasel, common shrew, stoat and hare.

## Recreation

**Walking** - There are several walks on the moor of different levels, and a history trail depicting various features of interest on the site. Various public footpaths and desire lines criss-cross the moor, and the Oldham Way and the Crompton Circuit walks also run through the site. Details of all these walks can be found in leaflets at all countryside centres in Oldham.

**Orienteering** - In conjunction with the Greater Manchester Orienteering Council a permanent course has been installed on the moor. There are several courses including a challenging 'light green' course for more experienced orienteers. Maps are available by calling 0161 620 8202.

**Horse Riding/Cycling** - A concessionary bridleway circuit for horses and cyclists links Brushes Clough Quarry with the moorland - follow the horseshoe signs.



# CROMPTON MOOR History Trail

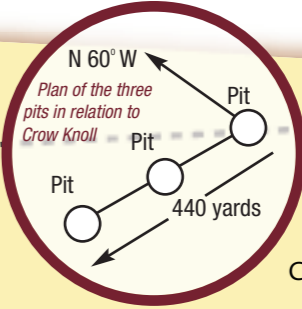
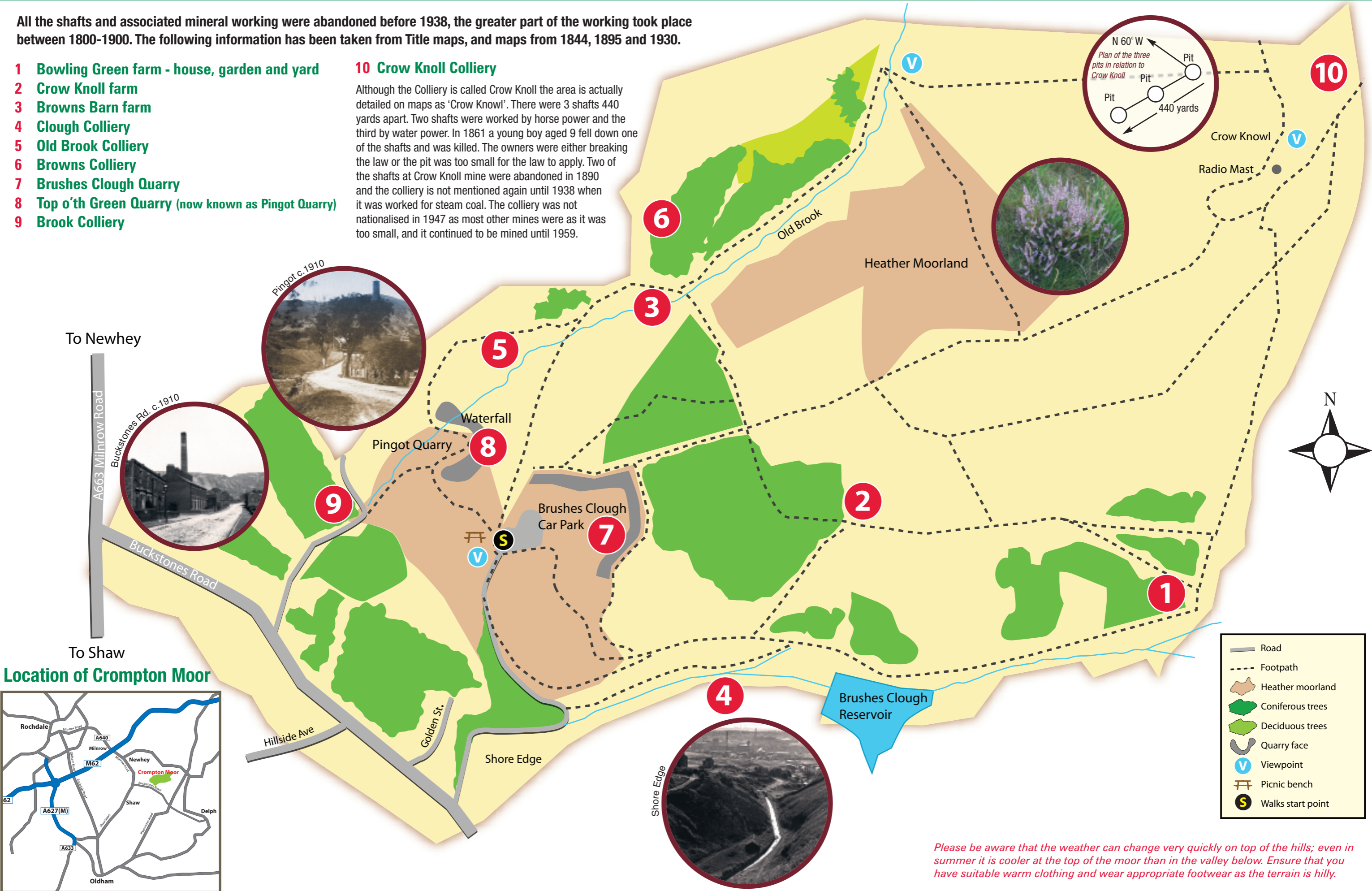


All the shafts and associated mineral working were abandoned before 1938, the greater part of the working took place between 1800-1900. The following information has been taken from Title maps, and maps from 1844, 1895 and 1930.

- 1 Bowling Green farm - house, garden and yard
- 2 Crow Knoll farm
- 3 Browns Barn farm
- 4 Clough Colliery
- 5 Old Brook Colliery
- 6 Browns Colliery
- 7 Brushes Clough Quarry
- 8 Top o'th Green Quarry (now known as Pingot Quarry)
- 9 Brook Colliery

## 10 Crow Knoll Colliery

Although the Colliery is called Crow Knoll the area is actually detailed on maps as 'Crow Knowl'. There were 3 shafts 440 yards apart. Two shafts were worked by horse power and the third by water power. In 1861 a young boy aged 9 fell down one of the shafts and was killed. The owners were either breaking the law or the pit was too small for the law to apply. Two of the shafts at Crow Knoll mine were abandoned in 1890 and the colliery is not mentioned again until 1938 when it was worked for steam coal. The colliery was not nationalised in 1947 as most other mines were as it was too small, and it continued to be mined until 1959.



	Road
	Footpath
	Heather moorland
	Coniferous trees
	Deciduous trees
	Quarry face
	Viewpoint
	Picnic bench
	Walks start point

Please be aware that the weather can change very quickly on top of the hills; even in summer it is cooler at the top of the moor than in the valley below. Ensure that you have suitable warm clothing and wear appropriate footwear as the terrain is hilly.