

See Worksop
in a Completely
New Way

Worksop Heritage Trail



1 The trail begins at the Library on Memorial Avenue

Please do come in and have a look around or a cup of coffee in our excellent café.

2 Walk across the Library access road and into the Park

You will pass an old stone drinking trough and the old Library, a listed building and a fine example of 1930s architecture opened in 1937. At the outbreak of war it was used as the Worksop and District Food Office.

3 Walk through the gardens towards the Priory Church. Just before the sunken Rose Garden go left to the dam on the little River Ryton. This area is known as the Canch

The Canch was the dam providing power for the Priory Mill which stood on this site. At the beginning of the 20th Century it was owned by William Bramer who made Windsor chairs until 1912.



Worksop Canch 1906

The whole area from the Priory to the town centre, was for centuries open farmland. Known as the Buslings, from the Norman Lord of the Manor, Roger de Busli, it was often flooded and marshy. In medieval times the gallows stood near this spot.

Welcome

Explore Worksop at its best, full of history and heritage just waiting to be discovered. This trail should take a couple of hours to complete and will take you through Worksop's key areas of interest, ranging from medieval history to recent times. There are plenty of cafes, pubs, restaurants and food outlets along the way should you get hungry or fancy a drink.



Priory Church 1906

4 Walk back through the garden and cross the road to visit the Priory Church

The Priory Church of St. Mary and St. Cuthbert was part of an Augustinian Monastery founded by William de Lovetot in 1103 and originally known as Radford Priory. Radford and Worksop were then two separate settlements. On the north side of the church were the cloister and convent buildings; today only traces remain.

It is probable that the refectory and dormitories overlooked the stream which runs past the stone buildings of the old Abbey School, and that the foundations still lie under the school. Much was destroyed after the Dissolution in 1539 when all the monastic land passed to the Lord of the Manor, the 5th Earl of Shrewsbury.

The Church itself has a beautiful Norman nave and pure Early English Lady Chapel, added in the 13th Century by Maude de Lovetot. Her son Thomas de Furnival, was killed in the Crusades and buried north of the church near William. All the Medieval tombs have now gone. The founder's survived to the 19th Century, when it seems to have been used as a kitchen sink and then disappeared.

There are three badly damaged effigies in the church which date from the early Middle Ages: Thomas, Lord Furnival, who fought with Edward 3rd at the Battle of Crecy, his niece Joan and her husband, Sir Thomas Neville, High Treasurer of England.

The reredos now in the North transept was a gift from the Duke of Newcastle in the late 19th century, while the chancel was remodelled in the 1970s thanks to the legacy from a former choirboy... Look for a glass case near the vestry door, containing a rather gruesome relic – a skull pierced by the tip of an arrow. The south door is original, made in the 12th Century of Sherwood Forest Yew; its elaborate iron scrollwork is reputedly the oldest of its kind in England.

The most famous of the Priory's treasures, a beautiful 14th Century psalter, is sadly many miles away; written by John Tickhill, prior from 1303-14, it is known as the Tickhill Psalter – and kept in New York.

5 Walk round to the south side of the church and look for the large bullet holes made in the wall by Cromwell's men, then go through the little avenue of trees towards the Priory Gatehouse

The cobbled way on your right was the main road until 1894, running beneath the Gatehouse arch to the Priory. Because the traffic vibrations were weakening the building and the narrow archway limited the size of the wagons, the road was diverted to its present course west of the gatehouse.



Priory Gatehouse 1910

- 6 Returning to the Priory turn left along Memorial Avenue opened in 1928 by King George V and Queen Mary on a visit to Welbeck Abbey. Go left past Asda (built on the site of the old Victoria Hospital) and walk along Watson Road



Worksop Town Hall 1970

- 7 Cross over Potter Street and look down it to spot the Boundary Inn, on the old boundary between Worksop and Radford. Then walk up the street towards the Town Hall

Potter Street, where the Potters once set out their stalls was called Pottergate (*gata*=street) and is one of Worksop's oldest thoroughfares.

Georgian elegance and influence arrived in the 18th Century with the building of some fine houses. Some still remain on the north side, though a row opposite was demolished in 1969. Dunstan House (nos. 33-35) was built by Henry Dunstan, Sheriff of Nottinghamshire in 1745. On his death Dunstan's relatives came to blows outside and it was recorded that '*there were bruises and broken heads were plentiful and one man was killed on the spot*'. The riot finally had to be settled by the Duke of Portland.

Near the top of the street is the French Horn with its ornate Edwardian frontage of terracotta and Burnantofts faience. Opposite are the Town Hall and offices of Bassetlaw District Council, opened by the Queen in 1981.

The Town Hall dates from 1851 and was built as the Corn Exchange, described by a contemporary historian as '*a neat and useful building in the Italian style*'. Behind it were slaughterhouses for the nearby market. Look for the arms of the Duke of Newcastle carved on the front of the Town Hall; the Duke also presents the clock. From 1852 the Corn Exchange also housed the library of the Reading Society and Mechanics Institute until it became Worksop Public Library and moved in 1902 to Watson Road.

The market place beside the Town Hall was originally surrounded by buildings, including shops and a public house, and was entered through two narrow lanes. The last of these properties was demolished over 60 years ago.

- 8 From the market place look at the interesting range of buildings opposite

The Lion Hotel is a splendid Georgian building, beautifully restored. In the wrought ironwork of the balcony above House of Elegance is the evidence that this was once the Royal Hotel; it is ornately Victorian in comparison. The pillars incorporated into the frontage of the Lion were part of a colonnade which ran the whole length of this row; you can see more of these in some of the shops nearby.



Lion (Royal) Hotel 1887

9 Cross over to the Lion Hotel and walk into Bridge Street

Follow the pedestrianized area as far as the off licence building; its architecture has changed little since its days as the George Inn. Opposite is one of a number of cobbled alleyways which date from medieval times. Some still have their drainage channels. See how many more you can find.

10 Walk back past the Lion Hotel and the market place to the Old Ship Inn

The Old Ship, a timber-framed Tudor building, has stood on this spot since the reign of Henry VIII, though it has undergone many changes. Opposite is Newgate Street, mentioned in records of 1345.



11 Continue walking south along Park Street, once the entrance to Worksop Manor Park, as far as St Mary's Roman Catholic Church

On your left are some 18th Century cottages and a fine Georgian terrace, with a delightful quiet corner tucked away in Park Place. St Mary's Church was built near the park gates in 1838-9 for the Duke of Norfolk.

The gates were later dismantled and re-erected on Mansfield Road.

The great Manor House had been built in the 1580s for the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, husband of Bess of Hardwick; it was probably designed by Robert Smythson, architect of Hardwick Hall. Probably the greatest house in the north of England, it played host to Mary Queen of Scots, Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I. In 1761 it was burned down and its owner, the Duke of Norfolk, commissioned a replacement – the largest country house since Blenheim. This was never finished and the property was demolished in 1840 by the Duke of Newcastle.

The houses opposite you were built on part of Worksop Manor Park. In its heyday this area was covered in magnificent trees, including cedars said to have been brought back from the crusades.

(The entrance to the park and manor today is south of the town on Mansfield Road; it is private property)

12 Retrace your steps to Westgate. Turn left and go as far as Slack Walk

In this area were some of the liquorice gardens for which Worksop was famous. As early as Elizabethan times it was noted that '*near Worksop growth plenty of liquorice, very delicious and good*'.



13 Cross over into Lead Hill, noticing again the cobbled alleyways running up from the market place and Bridge Street

In very early times Lead Hill possibly lay within the grounds of the town's castle. It was so called because pack-horses from Derbyshire lead mines deposited their lead here, to return laden with malt. From Worksop the lead would be taken to Bawtry or Gainsborough for transport by water to London.

In a survey of 1636, Lead Hill with Bedlam Square beyond, was referred to as Tenter-Green, an area where locally woven material was stretched out (on tenter-hooks) to dry. Early in the 18th century a bull ring was laid out on the hill to comply with a by-law that *'no bull shall be killed or sold in the market of Worksop without having first been baited in the bull ring'*. Baiting was supposed to make the meat more tender!

One of the poorest parts of the town, this was also the site of the sheep market. It may well have been where John Wesley preached on his visit in 1780 *'in a lamentable place full of dirt and dust'* – though another report has Wesley preaching outside a butchers shop in Bridge Street *'where he was pelted with sheep's garbage'*.

14 Continue along Lead Hill

The building on the corner of Hill Street and West Street was the old mission room; opened in 1868 it was used until St Anne's Church was built in 1911.

15 Walk through the car park opposite to reach Castle Hill

This is an ancient man-made mound, *'a place invironyd with trees, cawlyd the Castelle Hille, where the Lovertoftes had sumtime a castel'*. Its timber keep would have guarded the early town of Werchesope. Though the timber keep was probably replaced by a stone one, we know that by Henry VIII's time nothing remained. "The old castelle, on a hill by the town", wrote Leland, "is clene downe, and scant knowen wher it was."

With Extra Time...

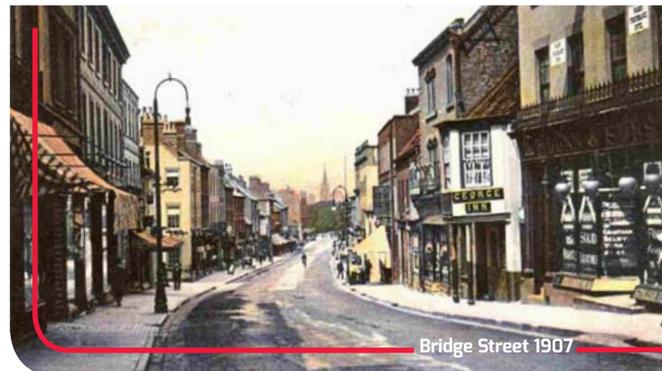
...Walk to the top of the hill, marked by a piece of Steetley stone.

Below you lies Norfolk Street, built in 1795 to house mill workers. In the middle distance you may be able to spot the Manor Lodge (1593), a five storey Elizabethan building by Smythson again; now a private property, it was built as a guest and hunting lodge in Worksop Manor Park.

16 Walk back towards Lead Hill, turning left into Castle Street to reach Bridge Street once more

Bridge Street is full of interest. With Potter Street this was the most important area of the town in the 16th century. From 1296 until an open space was cleared next to the Corn Exchange the market straggled along Bridge Street; it has always been the chief trading street. Space in such an important street was at a premium. The narrow frontages, to accommodate the maximum number of buildings, have long narrow strips of land behind.

Moving about Bridge Street is easy now since its pedestrianisation in 1989. The scheme has allowed buildings like the Lion Hotel to regain some of their dignity. At this end of the street particularly there are some fine buildings, though you will have to look above shop level to appreciate them.



Bridge Street 1907

The pedestrianisation of Bridge Street celebrates the town's status as capital of the Dukeries and has won for Worksop a prestigious national street design award. The coats of arms of the five dukes are beneath your feet in granite setts; look out for them as you walk down Bridge Street.

Two massive heraldic emblems, the lion and the unicorn, are there too in brick mazes – and the seats and information kiosks are supported by heraldic beasts and ornate ironwork. Among the greenery are three Ginkgo Biloba trees; these date back to the coal seams on which Worksop grew and prospered.



Bridge Street

17 Walk away from the Town Hall towards Newcastle Avenue, where traffic crosses Bridge Street

Barclays Bank and its neighbours occupy the site of the old cattle market, which moved here in 1878 from the area near the Corn Exchange.

In 1902, when the cattle were moved to Memorial Avenue, the Arcade was built on the site – a good example of Edwardian, though some of its first floor bays have been removed.

Just beyond the lion maze, look for four panels in the paving, one for each of Bassetlaw's twin towns. Their coats of arms are among those decorating the information kiosk nearby; how many of these crests can you identify?

18 Continue past the heraldic banners, beyond Bridge Street to the bridge over the Chesterfield Canal

When permission for building of the canal was granted in 1772 the church bells are said to have rung for four days. Its opening in 1777 brought new prosperity to Worksop, with maltkilns, mills, warehouses and taverns attracted to its banks as the town expanded northwards. The first canal bridge, dating from 1773, was narrow and steeply hump-backed; the present one was built in the 1950s with no regard for the lock below. This is Town Lock, at 6ft 10ins (2 metres) one of the narrowest on the canal; many a loaded boat has got stuck here! Nearby is a bi-centenary stone and plaque but you will have to make your way through the car park behind the Heart Foundation shop if you wish to read it.

This car park was once a large canal basin lined with maltings, warehouses and wharves. It is said that sunken boats still lie beneath the tarmac!

Not far beyond was for many years the head of navigation 26 miles from the canal's beginnings at its confluence with the Trent at West Stockwith. Goods including coal, stone, grain and livestock were transported along the waterway in long narrow boats or 'cuckoos'. This almost halved the price of coal. Local stone passed through here on its way to help build the Houses of Parliament.

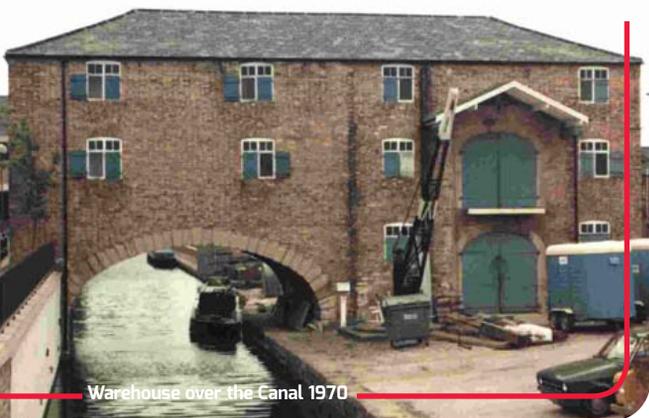
A few yards further on, facing the traffic junction of Victoria Square, was the Golden Ball, now home to the work of Poplars Church.



Victoria Square

In the late 18th century this inn was known as the Red Lion and it was here that the first public meeting was held to discuss the building of the canal.

Early in the 20th Century the Golden Ball Friendly Society, one of a number in the town, would march from here every Whit Sunday to the Priory Church in the company of the Worksof Brass Band. Processions of vehicles also left here to visit the ducal estates. Trippers arriving on special trains from Yorkshire and Lancashire would assemble outside (after appropriate refreshment!) and climb into the splendid horse-drawn charabancs of the Dukeries Posting Properties Association to begin their tour. Vehicles could carry up to 24 people and rules to ensure good behaviour were strict; infringement meant that the coaching proprietor lost the privilege of taking any more visitors.



Warehouse over the Canal 1970

19 Return to the main road and cross (with care!) to the opposite side of the bridge

From here you have a view of the fine depository straddling the canal. Tolls in the form of goods were levied and placed here to be resold later.

20 Turn left into Church Walk and follow the stone wall round to reach the canal

On your right used to be the Canal Tavern (1880) originally called the Gas Tavern because the gasworks were close by.



Construction of Albion Mills 1906

21 Walk on until you spot an unusual tower ahead to your right; this was the tower of the old fire station. If you have time walk down to the old station yard

The garage in the middle of the yard was the fire station itself, while the buildings to the left were the stables for the horses that pulled the fire tenders.

To the rear were the buildings of Grants of St James's, on the site of the old Priorswell brewery. In the late 19th century there were nearly 30 maltkilns in Worksof – the most important industry before the mines came.

Across the canal is the towering structure of Smith's Albion Mills. When it was built in 1906 the mill frontage was one long wharf, but by the 1920s narrow boats were being replaced by steam lorries. The last fully commercial traffic on the canal left Smith's in the early 1950s and the navigation is now used only by pleasure craft.

22 Walk back, turning left into Beaver Place past the old gas offices and cross two footbridges to reach the car park behind the library

This was the site of the cattle market after its move from Bridge Street until 1981. In times past the smell from Mansfield Hide and Skin Company next door would have done nothing to add to Worksof's charms!

We do hope that you have enjoyed your walk and perhaps seen Worksof in a new light.

Produced by Jennie Johnson and
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