



# *Bradford's* HERITAGE TRAIL

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**BRADFORD**  
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**City of Bradford MDC**

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*A self  
guided walk  
around some  
of Bradford's  
architecture*

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# BRADFORD CITY CENTRE HERITAGE TRAIL

The self-guided walk takes the visitor round Bradford City Centre and highlights the best examples of its architecture and other features of interest, as an illustration of Bradford's colourful history. It looks at buildings of all ages and styles - from medieval to the modern, to show how Bradford has developed over the ages.

The walk starts near the City Hall, ranges widely over the City Centre and can be picked up and followed at any point on the route. The first part of the route covers **Old Bradford** north of City Hall: it takes about two hours if followed as a complete circuit arriving back at City Hall again. It can be shortened if required. Alternatively, the walk can be continued to **Merchant's Quarter** east of the City Centre, including Little Germany and terminating at the Cathedral which merits a special visit.

The route and its key points of interest are shown on the plan.

*Cover illustrations -  
The Wool Exchange, Hustlergate (front).  
Bradford District Bank, Market Street (rear).*

## BRIEF HISTORY

Bradford stands at a crossing point, originally a ford of a large stream, probably where it was crossed by a Roman road running between Elslack (near Skipton) and Castleford. The "Broad ford" from which Bradford gets its name was probably at the foot of Church Bank, near Forster Square.

Iron was almost certainly extracted near here during the Roman occupation, but the first settlement dates from Saxon times, as recorded in the Domesday survey; by the Middle Ages this had become a small town centred on Kirkgate, Westgate and Ivesgate. The "Manor of Bradford" was first held by the de Lacy family until 1311 and then in turn by the Earls of Lincoln, John Gaunt, and the Crown, before passing into private hands in 1620. A small castle for the Lord of the manor almost certainly existed in the 12th and 13th centuries, to be replaced by a succession of manor houses.

The stream (Bradford Beck) now runs in a culvert under the City Centre and is hidden from view, but the street names "Jacobs Well" and "Eastbrook Well" are reminders of the watercourses which still lie underneath.

Bradford's prosperity rose from its woollen industry using rich local resources of water, coal and iron. A water powered corn mill and a fulling mill existed in 1311 near Aldermanbury suggesting that woollen manufacturing was already being carried out, and coal extraction began at about the same time. In the reign of Henry VIII Leland records that "Bradforde is a praty quik market toun ... it standith much by clothing".

Bradford's fortunes slumped as a result of the Civil War, in which the City supported the Parliamentarian cause. After several bloody sieges the Royalists took the town in 1643 and sacked it, reducing it to a third rate town for the next 50 years. However, the manufacture of worsted goods began to flourish in the early 18th century and the Industrial Revolution transformed the city's fortunes. The first steam powered worsted mill was built in 1798 and power looms introduced in 1825.

By 1841 there were 38 worsted mills in Bradford town and 70 in the borough, and it was estimated in 1831 that two thirds of the country's wool production was processed in Bradford. Essential transport was provided by new turnpike roads, the Bradford-Shipley Canal (opened in 1774) and the Bradford Leeds railway (opened in 1846). Coal mining, iron smelting and machine manufacturing also flourished. In 1841 Bradford was described as "*the Metropolis of the Worsted Trade; its hundred streets, stretching their wide arms for miles; filled with tens of thousands of busy merchants and manufacturers, artisans and operatives; and the immense products of its stupendous mills - where hundreds of clacking power-looms and thousands of whirring spinning-frames din the ear - exported to almost every civilised country of the globe*".

Industrial growth lead to the rapid expansion of the City. Between 1800 - 1850 Bradford changed from a rural town amongst woods and fields to a sprawling town filling the valley sides. The population of 6,400 in 1801 had increased to 104,000 by 1851 presenting major problems of health and sanitation, whilst the wealthier citizens escaped the increasingly polluted environment by moving to the suburbs. The town centre expanded and its old buildings were largely replaced by new ones to meet the new commercial needs. This was made possible by a plentiful supply of sandstone building material from local quarries, of sufficient quality and quantity to support an export trade to Australia and the Far East. For the commercial buildings, the best architects and builders in the area were engaged, and those which survive show the highest qualities of Victorian design and stone masonry.

During the twentieth century, falling markets have again tended to reverse the economic fortunes of the City, but the local industries have diversified and found new outlets. Much of the City has been redeveloped in recent years, but Bradford still boasts some fine examples of buildings from the Industrial Era to the present day.

*Before entering the city centre, make a short detour and climb the steps between the Magistrates Courts and the Police Headquarters to the edge of Inner Ring Road.*

This short detour takes in a handful of interesting 20th century buildings.

The new Magistrates Courts (1) were built in 1972 and designed by Clifford Brown, the City Architect, using local "Bolton Wood" stone. Although quite different in character from the ornate buildings of the 19th century it has quality and formality which suits its position next to the City Hall and a main Civic Square. To the south, a landscaped walk skirts round the building and is lined with huge rough-hewn boulders, many showing the "drill-holes" from quarrying: it is interesting to see both the rough and finely finished stone in such close proximity.

A vantage point near the subway provides a good view of the modern Central Library and the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television (2), opened in 1983. the museum is part of the Science Museum based in London and contains the largest cinema screen in Britain (the "IMAX"). In the foreground stands the statue of the playwright and novelist J. B. Priestley (3) (1894 - 1984), in characteristic hat and flowing cape. 'J.B' was born in Bradford and learned his craft as a columnist for the local newspaper.



3

Further to the right stands the Victoria Memorial (4), sculptured by Alfred Drury and unveiled by the future George V in 1904. This impressive bronze statue, which is twelve feet high and weighs 3 tons, shows the queen dressed as she appeared at the jubilee of 1887. Before it

stands the City's war memorial. The Alhambra Theatre (5) was built in 1914 as a variety theatre for the Edwardian "King of Pantomime" Francis Laidler. The architects were Chadwick and Watson of Leeds. The sloping and tapering site has resulted in quite a unique building with a richly plastered interior, recently restored and extended.



5

Finally the Former Odeon Cinema (6) is one of the few buildings in Bradford to survive from 1930's. Built in 1930 as a combined cinema and theatre, with a spectacular cinema organ, and designed by the architect William Illingworth, it was one of the largest cinemas outside London.

*Retrace your steps to Centenary Square in front of City Hall.*

Bradford City Hall (7) is one of Bradford's most distinctive buildings, designed to rival the new town halls of Leeds and Halifax. The original building, with its 'Italianate' clocktower, was opened in 1873 and was designed by Bradford architects Lockwood and Mawson, after an open competition. The upper parts of the elevations contain (in left to right order) the 35 statues of the Kings and Queens of England and Oliver Cromwell, by the London masonry firm Farmer and Brindley. The detailing around the main entrance - flanked by Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria - shows local stone and stone carving of superlative quality. The extension at the rear, completed in 1908 in a "Gothic/Tudor" style carefully designed to harmonise with the original, was chiefly the design of the famous architect Richard Norman Shaw.

*Cross Aldermanbury to the foot of Sunbridge Road.*

The Prudential Assurance Company Buildings (8) is unmistakeable in Bradford as the only major building to be built of red brick and terracotta. It was built in 1895 and designed by the famous Manchester architect Alfred Waterhouse. Whilst a building of some interest, the style and materials owe little to Bradford, but were those chosen by the company for all its new buildings to promote its national image.



8

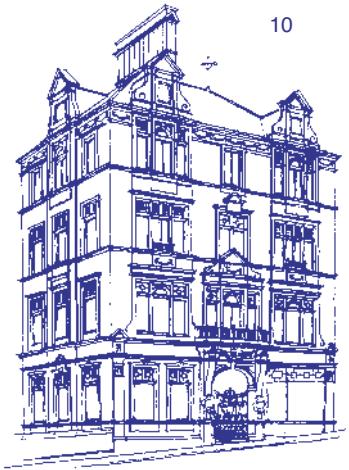
*Walk up the left side of Sunbridge Road and cross to upper Millergate, noting the buildings opposite on the way.*

The north side of Sunbridge Road (9) consists of a fine group of Victorian commercial buildings, in varied Gothic and Classical style. They were built in the period 1873 - 80 following the construction of Sunbridge Road to bypass Ivesgate and the City Centre. The view as a whole down Sunbridge Road and Bridge Street is of relatively intact and high quality Victorian frontages.

*Make a short detour to the top of Sunbridge Road before returning to walk up Upper Millergate.*

Queen Anne Chambers (10) was built in 1880 and designed by Waugh and Isitt of Leeds. Victorian taste revelled in the revival of past architectural styles - generally Classical or Gothic - but this building is clearly based on the 'Queen Anne' style of the early 18th century and originally had highly decorative windows (see sketch).

10



Sunwin House (11) is another building of the 1930's, built in 1935.

Unlike the classical designs of the Alhambra and the Odeon, Sunwin House was totally modern in its design and inspired by the new architecture of Europe and America.

*Walk up Upper Millergate to the corner of the Kirkgate Centre.*

The junction of Kirkgate and Ivesgate is one of the oldest parts of Bradford, and the original site of the old Market Cross and pillory. Market rights were granted by the king in 1251 and the market held here was formerly in the churchyard.

Although Ivesgate (12) retains no original buildings the view from Kirkgate is still one of a steep, narrow medieval street. At the top corner of Ivesgate (opposite the Kirkgate Centre) stood the medieval Toll booth with the manorial court house (or "Hall of Pleas") above it, and the town dungeon below. The dungeon still exists below the corner building, and a plaque records the imprisonment here of John Nelson, the prominent Wesleyan methodist preacher, in 1744.

*Walk up Westgate noting the boldly modelled entrance to the modern Kirkgate Centre and turn right along Godwin Street.*

Notice a modern office block (101-109 Godwin Street) on the opposite side of the road. This is another commendable design which uses traditional local stone in a modern manner.

*Turn second left up Rawson Place and across John Street to the far side of Rawson Square.*

The right hand side of Rawson Place consists of a fine terrace of houses of about 1800, except for a later and more elaborate insertion of 1890 (nos. 10-12). At the corner of John Street is the eye catching Rawson Hotel (13). Built in 1899 but bomb damaged in 1940, it originally formed one end of a long symmetrical frontage to the market. The architects were Hope and Jardine. The corner tower with its domed drum is a distinctive feature in the townscape.

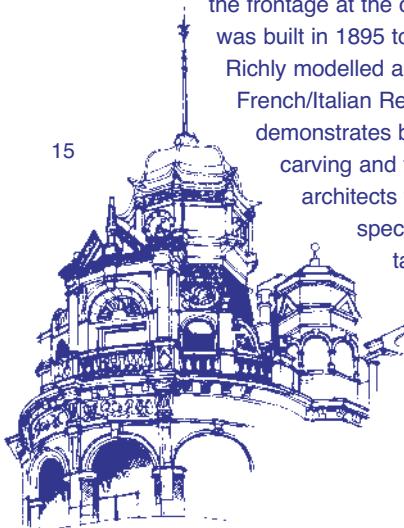
*From Rawson Square - the site of the former Christ Church - walk up the left side of North Parade.*

Note on your left hand side no. 15-17 with its colourful 1930's 'Art Deco' glazing displayed on both floors.

The east side of North Parade (14) is one of the finest office frontages in the city, with a wide variety of styles. Church House (1871-73) by the architects Andrews and Pepper, is in heavy "French Gothic" style. Devonshire House (Nos. 30-34 dated 1898) includes both "Jacobean" and "Arts and Crafts" details and the remaining buildings (1907-10, by the architect J Ledingham) borrow Jacobean and Dutch Renaissance motifs. Due to the skill of the architects the effect is varied but harmonious.

The Yorkshire Penny Bank (15), terminates the frontage at the corner of Manor Row, and was built in 1895 to Ledingham's design. Richly modelled and profusely decorated in French/Italian Renaissance style, it demonstrates both excellence in stone carving and the ability of Victorian architects to create a dramatic spectacle out of an awkward tapering site. Notice particularly the entrance vestibule, with its mosaic-tiled floor and iron gates raised from below the steps.

15



*Turn right and walk down Manor Row.*

The upper part of Manor Row (16) contains a rare cluster of surviving early 19th century town houses. To the right, Nos. 31-37 are unspoilt houses of about 1820, perhaps an uncompleted crescent of which the pair 35 and 37 were meant to be the centrepiece.

On the opposite side of the road No 32 (now a restaurant) is a house of about 1820 with a grand "renaissance" shopfront extended out in 1880-90.

No. 30 (now a Housing Association Head Office) appears to have been built as a pair of town houses around 1835-40, and later converted to offices for the Bradford Canal Company.

The former County Court (17) lies beyond the houses, on the right of Manor Row. The original building of 1859 (No. 27) is set back with a carriage forecourt, whilst the later addition of 1899 (No. 29) is brought forward to the road line. The stone masonry of No. 27 is particularly fine, with alternating bands of fluted or deeply tooled (vermiculated) stone round the openings.



18

*Stop at the upper corner before turning right into Upper Piccadilly.*

The Register Office (18) on the opposite side of Manor Row forms an excellent 'stop' to Upper Piccadilly. It was built in 1877 as Poor Law Offices to the design of Andrews and Pepper. It presents a well proportioned facade to Manor Row and its masonry detailing changes subtly from pavement to eaves level to reflect its structure and the status of the rooms within.

*Walk up Upper Piccadilly and turn left down Darley Street.*

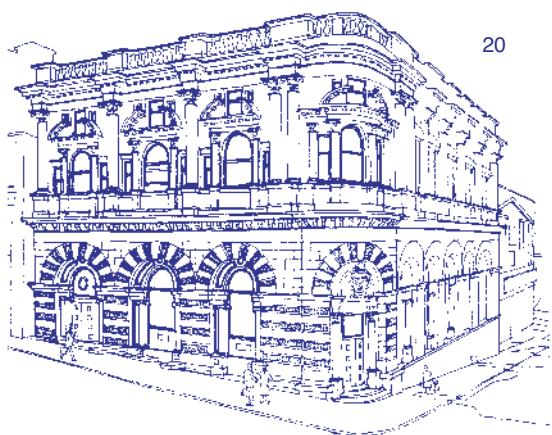
Darley Street has fine Victorian buildings on both sides.

On the left hand corner of Duke Street stands the Bradford Library and Literary Institute (19). It was originally built in 1827 as a two storey house (the Bradford Dispensary) but acquired by the Bradford Literary Society in 1854, as a subscription library, and raised in height and enlarged in 1905. The industrial growth of Bradford in the 18th and 19th centuries was mirrored by a proliferation of charitable and educational societies which still remain part of Bradford's tradition.

*Proceed down Darley Street to Kirkgate.*

The entrance to Bank Street is flanked by imposing buildings of 1876-78, those on the left (the Talbot Hotel) designed by Andrews and Pepper and those on the right (the Old Bradford Liberal Club buildings) by Lockwood and Mawson.

At the corner of Darley Street and Kirkgate stands the Bradford Banking Company building (20), now a building society office. This magnificent building was designed by Andrews and Delauney and built in 1858 as the first prestigious bank building in the city. The banking hall has a particularly fine plaster ceiling, visible from outside, carried on gilded marble columns. The second floor windows are later insertions, and the upper half of the Darley Street elevation is a later addition of 1877 exactly matching the original.



20

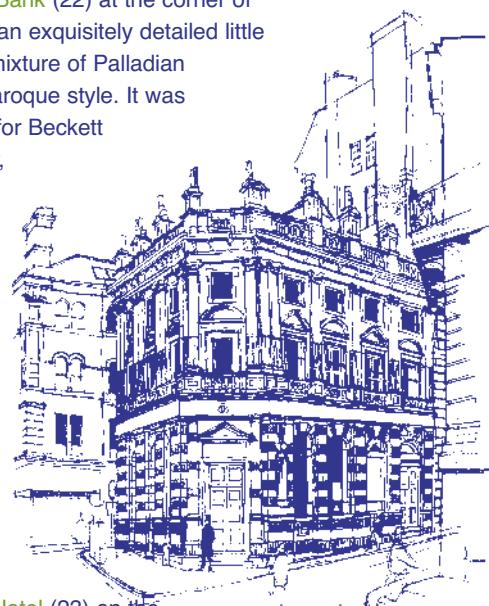
*Turn left along Kirkgate and make a short detour left up Piccadilly.*

The Exchange Rooms (21), on the left and to the rear of the Bradford Banking Company building, were built in 1828 in Greek revival style, to provide public newsrooms, billiard rooms and a ballroom. They were later used as a wool exchange and then as Bradford's Post Office from 1867-87.

*Continue along Kirkgate to Cheapside.*

Note the "Shoulder of Mutton" public house on the left (dated 1825) which is a rare survival so close to the city centre and has a surprisingly attractive beer garden.

Bradford Old Bank (22) at the corner of Cheapside is an exquisitely detailed little building in a mixture of Palladian revival and Baroque style. It was built in 1885 for Beckett and Company, and designed by the architects Milnes and France.



22

The Midland Hotel (23) on the opposite side of Cheapside marks the approach to the former Midland Station (Forster Square). It is a terminus hotel of appropriately bold and lavish design by the chief architect of the Midland Railway and is best seen from a distance where the roof detailing can be appreciated. The many famous names who have stayed here include Laurel and Hardy, Paul Robeson, The Beatles and the Rolling Stones. The famous stage actor Sir Henry Irving died here in 1905 after appearing at the nearby Theatre Royal.

*Walk down Cheapside to the end of Market Street, where Cheapside veers left.*

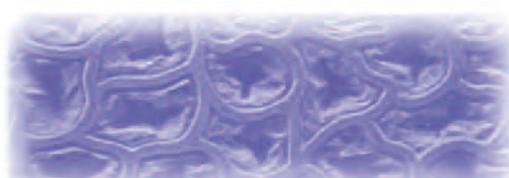
The east end of Cheapside terminates in Forster Square, where the distant view is stopped by the General Post Office (24) built in 1887 and designed by Sir Henry Tanner. Behind lies the Cathedral which is the eventual termination of this walk.

The centrepiece of Forster Square is the statue to Mr W E Forster, Liberal MP for Bradford and Minister for Education, who carried through the 1870 Education Act to provide general schooling for all children.

At the junction of Market Street and Cheapside stands the Bradford District Bank (25) - now the National Westminster Bank - built in 1873 to the design of Milnes and France. It displays a high quality crisp carving in local 'Gaisby' stone and its corner location is again emphasised by a domed drum at roof level.

*Walk down Market Street observing the Wool Exchange to your right and turn right into Bank Street.*

The Wool Exchange (26) symbolises the great wealth and importance which Bradford had gained from the wool trade by the mid-19th century. It was completed in 1867 to the design of Lockwood and Mawson, won in open competition, and the foundation stone was laid by the then Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston. It is ornate 'Venetian Gothic' in style with very decorative roof parapets and pinnacles. Between the ground floor arches are carved portraits of notable people (facing Market Street): Cobden, Sir Titus Salt, Stephenson, Watt, Arkwright, Jacquard, Gladstone and Palmerston and (to Bank Street): Raleigh, Drake, Columbus, Cook and Anson. Flanking the porched entrance below the tower are statues of Bishop Blaize, the patron saint of woolcombers, and King Edward III who greatly promoted the wool trade.

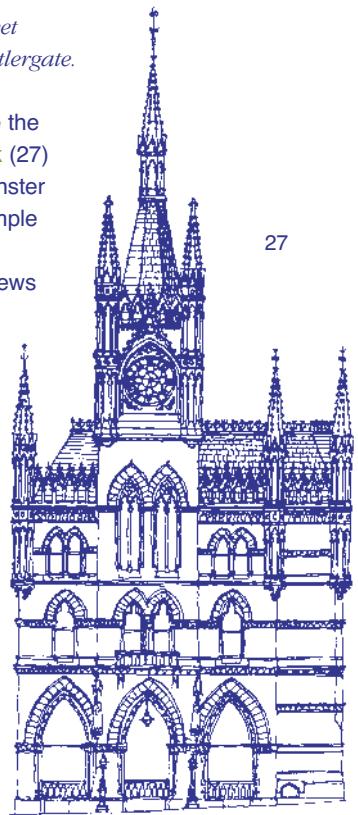


*Stop at the foot of Bank Street before turning left into Hustlergate.*

Facing the Wool Exchange the Bradford Commercial Bank (27)

- now the National Westminster Bank - is another fine example of a Victorian bank, built in 1868 to the design of Andrews and Pepper. It is a fitting neighbour for the Wool Exchange and the banking hall has a decorative vaulted plaster ceiling visible from the outside.

A plaque further up Bank Street records that behind the street frontage once stood the Piece Hall which was the main trading centre for wool from 1773 until the mid-19th century.



27

*Walk westwards along Hustlergate.*

Note the Victorian office building No. 1 Hustlergate, which despite having a tiny frontage manages to command some status through careful design.

*Pass under an archway and turn left into Ivesgate.*

Towards the bottom of Ivesgate, note the fine block of buildings on the right hand side designed by Knowles and Wilcock in 1871.

At the bottom of Ivesgate stands the modern "Ivesgate Arch" - a sculptural "gate" erected in 1988. The arch depicts various aspects of the history and character of Bradford which are explained in a separate leaflet. (The Ivesgate Arch concludes the shorter "Old Bradford" walk).

*Cross Market Street and walk down Bank Street to Hall Ings, noting the view of City Hall as you cross Broadway.*

Facing the end of Bank Street are the **Telegraph & Argus offices** (28). The older building (to the right) was built in 1853 as a warehouse for Milligan and Forbes, Stuff Merchants, and designed by Andrews and Delauney. The style was that of a 15th or 16th century Italian Palace ("palazzo"), designed to impress buyers, and it must have caused a sensation when completed. The modern extension to the left has a totally glazed facade which compliments the old building rather than competes with it.

28



Further right stands **St. George's Hall** (29) built in 1851-53 and the first major public building by Lockwood and Mawson. It is a truly grand building, designed as a classical temple on a podium. Its large concert and meeting hall could seat 4000, and some of the notable people to appear here were Ruskin, Palmerston, Jenny Lind, Captain Webb and Charles Dickens.

29



*Cross Hall Ings and walk up Bridge Street, turning left into Drake Street.*

The modern **Crown Court Building** (30) off Drake Street shows a similar quality of dignity to the Magistrates' Courts and makes extensive use of local stone. The forecourt has been developed as a new urban square, of which the focal point is a sculpture commemorating the Bradford-born composer Frederick Delius (1862-1934).



30

The Crown Court is built on the site of the former Exchange station, one corner of which has been retained above Drake Street to provide a small pedestrian square overlooking Hall Ings.

*Walk along the left side of the Crown Courts, through the square and down to Eastbrook Well, stopping at Vicar Lane.*

The area on the opposite side of Leeds Road is known as **Little Germany** (31) - a compact area of late Victorian warehouses and offices built on a steep slope and having a highly distinctive character of its own. Here merchants could store and sell their goods in their own private premises, rather than through the exchanges. This vast area was developed between 1855 and 1890, the architect for much of it being Eli Milnes (of Milnes and France): it is full of tall, high quality buildings, closely spaced to reduce land purchase costs, and producing some fine street scapes. Little Germany deserves a separate tour to appreciate its architecture but a few examples are included here.

*Cross Leeds Road and make a short detour up Vicar Lane.*

The old American and Chinese Export Warehouse (32) stands on the right, at the corner of Aked Street. It was built in 1871 to the design of Lockwood and Mawson in Italian 'palazzo' style, with fine elevation to Vicar Lane and an elaborately designed corner entrance.



33 and 32

Immediately opposite is the Law Russell Warehouse (33) by the same architects, built in 1873. Here the main elevations are rather plainer, but the tapered end is adorned with tiered columns, which exaggerate the perspective, so as to command the attention of anyone approaching from the city centre.

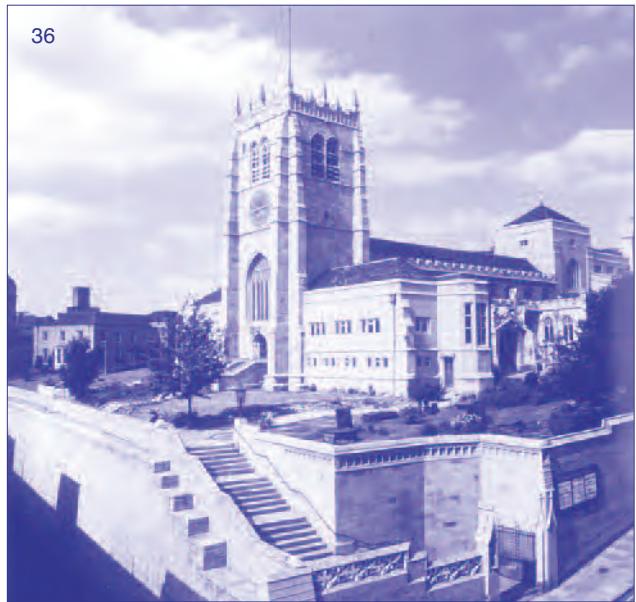
*Return to Leeds Road and turn right along Well Street to Church Bank, observing the building on the right.*

The Well Street frontages appear to have been all designed by Eli Milnes around 1865 and contain some of the best examples of his work. Austral House (34) is built of millstone grit but highly decorated by the use of incised carved sandstone and granite columns. Pennine House (35) - formerly the Bradford Dyers Association building - is an equally ornate design in sandstone, leading round to Church Bank.

Further up Church Bank but just out of sight is the recently restored Paper Hall, dated 1643, which is a rare survival of a yeoman's house near the city centre.

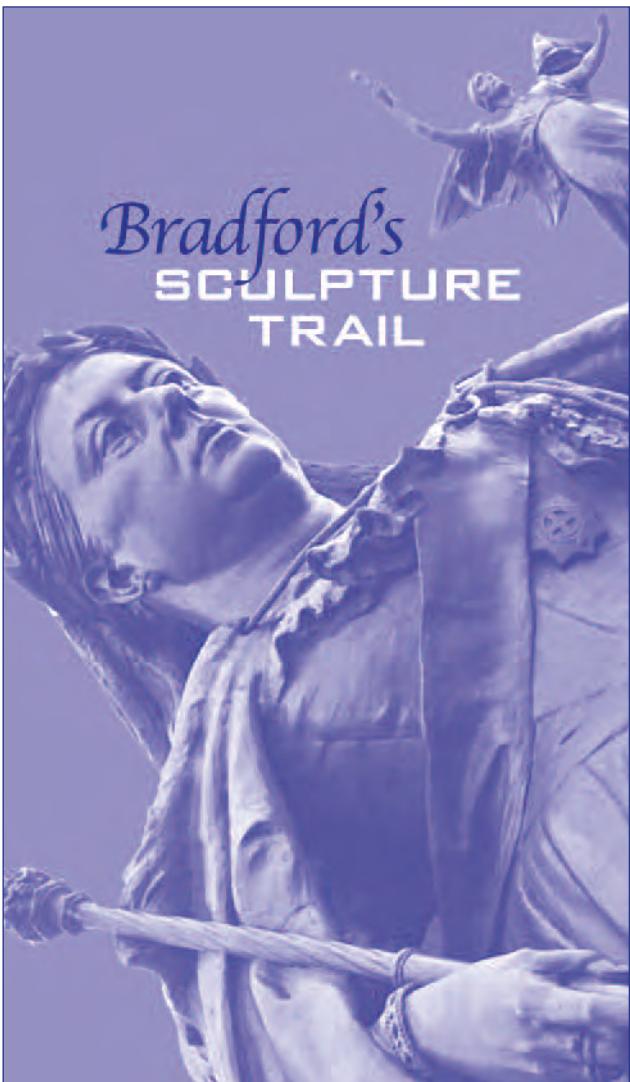
*Cross Church Bank and climb the steps up the Cathedral Close.*

The Cathedral Church of St. Peter (36) has a complex history and requires a specific visit to do it justice. The original Norman church, of which nothing survives, stood in a forest clearing overlooking the stream and was once known as the "Chapel in the Wood". The present church dates largely from the 15th century, incorporating a 14th century nave arcade. The parish church was given Cathedral status in 1919 and the east end remodelled and extended in 1954-63 by Sir Edward Maufe. It contains some fine stained glass from the William Morris workshop (1862) and other valuable monuments and fittings.



*Complete the walk at the steps overlooking Forster Square.*

The Cathedral Close provides a fine vantage point from which to appreciate the townscape and terrain of the City and to conclude this walk. The view from here in Norman times could not be more extreme - a thickly wooded valley, with castle and church facing each other across the stream and ancient fording place, and a few houses huddled together for protection. It is difficult to imagine that from these humble beginnings would emerge one of the greatest manufacturing cities of the Victorian Empire.



# Discover the Heritage of Bradford's City Centre

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If you enjoyed the Bradford Heritage  
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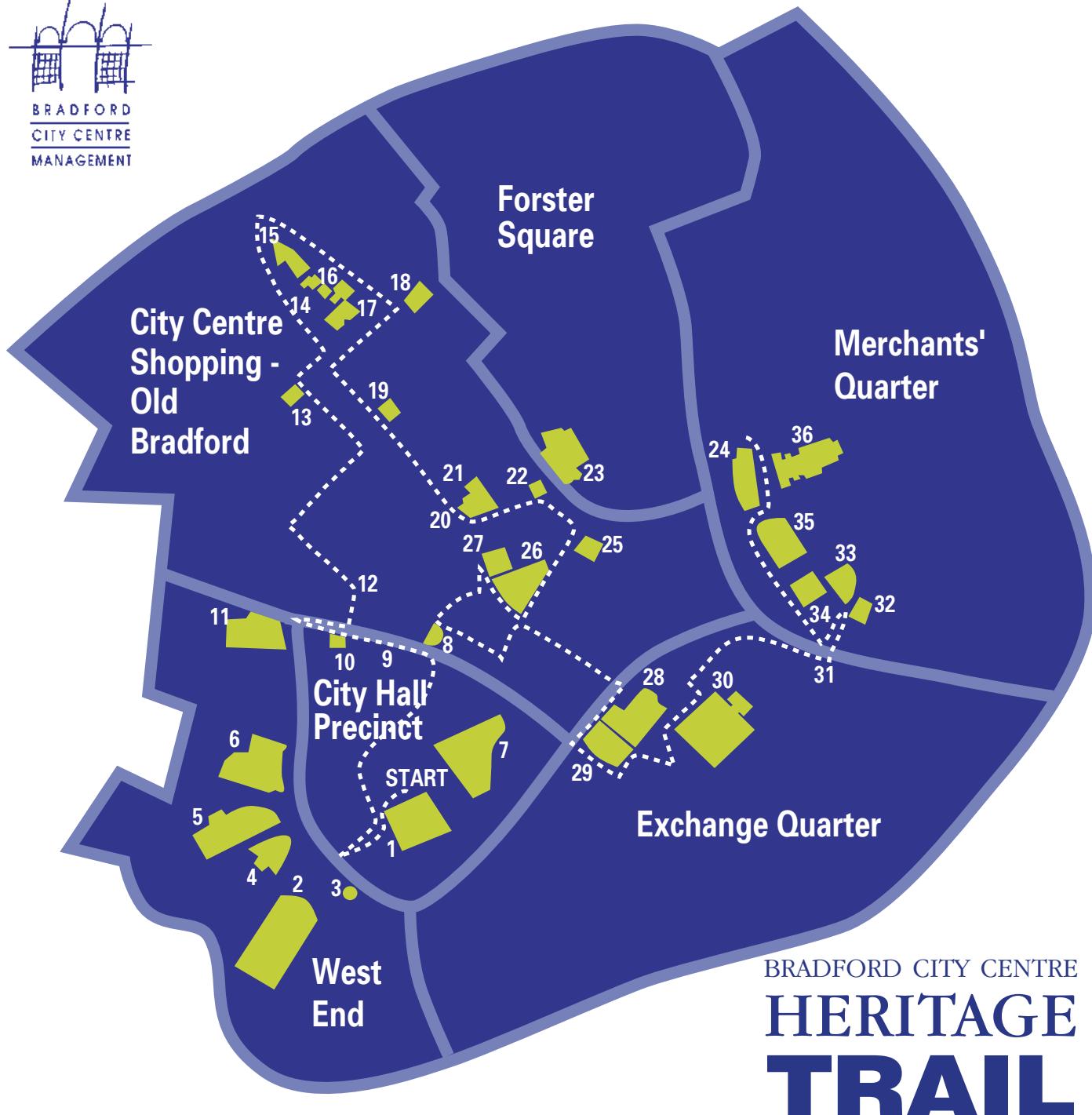
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# Guide

Before entering the City Centre, make a short detour between the Magistrates' Courts and the Police Headquarters to the edge of Inner Ring Road.

## 1. Magistrates Courts

## 2. National Museum of Photography, Film and Television

## 3. Statue of the Playwright and Novelist J B Priestley (1894-1984)

## 4. Victoria Memorial

## 5. Alhambra Theatre

## 6. Former Odeon Cinema

Retrace your steps to Centenary Square.

## 7. Bradford City Hall

Cross Aldermanbury to the foot of Sunbridge Road.

## 8. Prudential Assurance Company Buildings

Walk up the left side of Sunbridge Road and cross to Upper Millergate, noting the buildings opposite on the way.

## 9. Sunbridge Road

Make a short detour to the top of Sunbridge Road before returning to walk up Upper Millergate.

## 10. Queen Anne Chambers

## 11. Sunwin House

Walk up Upper Millergate to the corner of the Kirkgate Centre.

## 12. Ivegate

Walk up Westgate noting the boldly modelled entrance to the modern Kirkgate Centre and turn right along Godwin Street.

Turn left up Rawson Place and across John Street to the far side of Rawson Square.

## 13. Rawson Hotel

From Rawson Square - the site of the former Christ Church - walk up the left side of North Parade.

## 14. North Parade

## 15. The Yorkshire Penny Bank

Turn right and walk down Manor Row.

## 16. Manor Row

## 17. County Court

Stop at the corner, before turning right into Upper Piccadilly.

## 18. Register Office

Walk up Upper Piccadilly and turn left down Darley Street.

## 19. Bradford Library and Literary Institute

Proceed down Darley Street to Kirkgate.

## 20. Bradford Banking Company building

Turn left along Kirkgate and make a short left detour up Picadilly.

## 21. Exchange Rooms

Continue along Kirkgate to Cheapside.

## 22. Bradford Old Bank

## 23. Midland Hotel

Walk down to the end of Market Street, where Cheapside veers left.

## 24. General Post Office

## 25. Bradford District Bank

Walk down Market Street, observing the Wool Exchange to your right and turn right into Bank Street.

## 26. The Wool Exchange

Stop at the foot of Bank Street before turning left into Hustlergate.

## 27. Bradford Commercial Bank

Walk westwards along Hustlergate. Pass under an archway and turn left into Ivecate.

## 28. Telegraph & Argus

## 29. St. George's Hall

Cross Hall Ings and walk up Bridge Street, turning left into Drake Street.

## 30. Crown Court Building

Walk along the left side of the Crown Courts, through the square and down to Eastbrook Well, stopping at Vicar Lane.

## 31. Little Germany

Cross Leeds Road and make a short detour up Vicar Lane.

## 32. American and Chinese Export Warehouse

## 33. Law Russell Warehouse

Return to Leeds Road and turn right along Well Street to Church Bank, observing the buildings on the right.

## 34. Austral House

## 35. Pennine House

Cross Church Bank and climb the steps up to the Cathedral Close.

## 36. Cathedral Church of St. Peter