

Haworth Village Centre

Walking route of Haworth Village Centre taking in the main places of interest including places of worship



1 West Lane Car Park

Starting point for both walks. If arriving by car, park here rather than the Changegate car park which is privately run and operates an infamously stringent clamping policy.

The car park owner and its actions have been the subject of a television documentary and prompted debate in parliament, following the clamping of former Speaker Betty Boothroyd's car in 2008.

2 Brontë Parsonage Museum

The former home of the Brontë family and the place where the three sisters wrote their famous novels. Now a beautifully preserved museum and the home of the Brontë Society.

Patrick Brontë became the minister for Haworth parish church in 1820 and moved into the Parsonage from nearby Thornton with his wife Maria and six children. Sadly his wife and two eldest children died between 1821 and 1825. It was here that the sisters Charlotte, Emily and Anne wrote some of the most famous and best loved novels in the English language, including Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights. Patrick, who outlived his wife and children, lived here until his death in 1861

The Georgian building, which overlooks the parish church and its churchyard, was extended by Patrick Brontë's successor, who also demolished and rebuilt the church. The parsonage is home to the Brontë Society and is a beautifully preserved museum with rooms laid out as they would have been in the Brontë's' time, containing original furniture and artefacts from the family. In addition, there is a changing series of exhibitions and an innovative contemporary arts programme which features work of internationally renowned artists inspired by the Brontë's' genius.



3 St Michael and All Angels

Parish church at the centre of an eighteenth century religious revival which was to shape the course of Haworth's history and English literature.

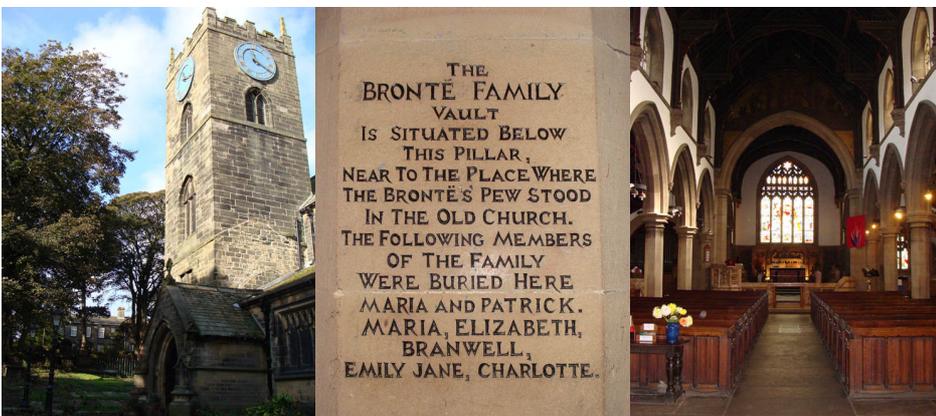
The imposing building that stands at the top of Main Street has a relatively recent history. The present church was built in 1879 but it stands on a site that is thought to have accommodated a church since at least 1137 and possibly earlier. A later church was built in 1488 and some of this building remains in the lower part of the church tower.

When William Grimshaw was appointed parson in 1742 he brought with him a new evangelical style of preaching which was to revolutionise churchgoing in the area. In pre-industrialised times the area's population was mostly made up of farmers and handloom weavers scattered across the hills and valleys in small hamlets and isolated farmhouses. Finding poor attendance at the regular church services Grimshaw rode across the region to preach passionate outdoor sermons that attracted the attention of the communities he met. The largely illiterate crowds found a connection with the rousing hymn singing and fervent prayers and in a short space of time Grimshaw was conducting 30-40 services a week as far afield as Pateley Bridge and Colne. Influenced by connections with the early Methodists he organised meetings into a circuit known as the Great Haworth Round. Many of his converts eventually became Methodists or Baptists and were responsible for establishing a wave of new chapels and Sunday schools across the region. The parish church could not accommodate the burgeoning congregation and by 1756 Grimshaw had raised enough funds to extend the church. Typical of churches of the time it contained high sided box pews, an imposing organ and three tiered pulpit. The addition of first floor galleries to add extra seating must have made the church very dark and cramped.

This was how Patrick Brontë found the church when he was appointed parson in 1820. Brontë was also an Evangelical and it is likely that it was Grimshaw's influence that brought the Brontë family to Haworth. He came to the village from Thornton with his wife and six children and they moved into the Parsonage which had been built by his predecessor. He was an Anglican minister at a time when non-conformists such as Methodists and Baptists formed the majority in the village, but he took his pastoral duties for the whole community very seriously, campaigning against the injustice of the Poor laws and for improvements in sanitation which was causing widespread disease in the village.

Brontë was succeeded by Rev Wade who in 1879 had all but the clocktower of the old church demolished and rebuilt as it is today. There was protest at the time from early Brontë enthusiasts but within the village there had been support for the scheme, especially as the old church had become very cluttered and there was a problem with the drainage from the churchyard underneath the church.

Inside the church you will find a stained glass window dedicated 'To the Glory of God in pleasant memory of Charlotte Brontë by an American citizen' and a plaque on a pillar indicating the position of the Brontë family vault.



4 St Michael and All Angels Graveyard

Atmospheric churchyard dating back to seventeenth century including graves from Brontë contemporaries

The churchyard of St Michael and All Angels lies between the church, the Parsonage and the open fields that lead out onto the Pennine moors. There are estimated to be about 40,000 people buried in the churchyard, interned in close packed graves and marked with a diverse

range of memorials, table and flat gravestones. The overcrowding and poor drainage in the churchyard and its effect on the health of villagers was a cause for concern for Patrick Brontë, who campaigned for improvements. Gravestones were ordered to be placed vertically to allow shrubs to grow and improve decomposition and trees were planted around and inside the site. These now mature trees, the shadows cast by the surrounding buildings and the mist that rolls in off the moors add to the dark, atmospheric feel of the churchyard.

A walk around the churchyard is a sad lesson in social history. In Victorian times, overcrowding and poor sanitation meant that life expectancy in the village was very low. A health report of 1850 stated that 2 in every 5 children did not reach their sixth birthday and this fact is borne out on the inscriptions on the gravestones. The graves of the Brontës' servants Tabitha Ackroyd and Martha Brown can be found here, but the Brontës themselves are buried in a vault inside the church, apart from Anne who is buried in St Mary's churchyard, Scarborough.



5 Haworth Main Street

A fascinating street paved with traditional setts, hosting a range of interesting shops, cafes and events, making the steep walk worthwhile

Haworth Main Street is a steep narrow road, paved with traditional stone setts and lined with an interesting mix of independent shops, pubs, tearooms and restaurants. As is to be expected in any tourist destination there is the usual supply of souvenir shops, but also some very appealing speciality shops selling quality items such as organic foods, cheeses, flowers, old fashioned sweets, homeware, traditional toiletries, fair-trade goods and antiquarian books. The plentiful supply of pubs, cafes, restaurants and guest houses to suit every budget make Main Street an ideal refreshment stop or overnight base.

The Haworth community, including the Traders Association work together to create a year-round calendar of events, with Main Street at the centre. Highlights include the 1940's weekend in May, 1960's weekend in June and the Christmas festival. Starting in late November when the spirit of Christmas arrives in the village in the form of the Scroggling the Holly ceremony. The following five weekends are filled with traditional festive carol singing, music and cheer.



6 The Old Apothecary

The druggist shop where Branwell Brontë bought his laudanum is now a gift shop selling a wonderful range of olde worlde remedies and household products

At the time of the Brontës this shop at the top of Main Street was a druggist shop run by Betty Hardacre. Being opposite the church and parsonage, it was a convenient place for Branwell, brother of the famous sisters, to purchase laudanum, a derivative of opium which was sold legally without prescription as a painkiller. Following a series of failures and disgraces in a number of careers, Branwell turned to drink and drugs. His serious addiction masked his illness until it was too late and he died of tuberculosis aged just 31.

When you step inside the Old Apothecary it is not difficult to imagine the druggist shop as it may have looked. Mother and daughter team Patricia and Caroline Rose have recreated a stunning Victorian-style store including authentic polished mahogany display cases, glass bottles, antique advertisements and gas lighting. The shop sells aromatic potions and lotions of its own making as well as remedies, sweets and household products which one had thought had long since disappeared from the shelves.



7 Black Bull

Traditional hostelry where Branwell Brontë brooded over his drink.

In the square at the top of Main Street sits the Black Bull, a homely traditional pub serving meals and full range of drinks including local real ales. It is famously where Branwell Brontë spent many an hour holding court with wild stories and toasts, or brooding darkly over a whisky. As his alcohol addiction increased he was known to travel further afield to inns in Halifax, perhaps to avoid the embarrassment of being hauled home by his father, the vicar of the next door church. The pub proudly displays the chair Branwell occupied, although as it is damaged it is now kept behind a barrier up the short staircase in the middle of the pub.



8 Fleece Inn

Flag stoned real ale pub half way up Main Street

The Fleece is conveniently situated half way up (or down) Main Street and makes a good stopping point to sample the local ales. The Fleece is owned by Timothy Taylor, independent family brewers who have been brewing in Keighley for over 150 years. All 6 of Taylor's award-winning beers are available all year-round including Landlord, which Madonna claims to be her favourite. During the production of The Railway Children, the film company used the Fleece as their base and offices and photographs of the making of the film are on display.

9 Bed and breakfast

Several bed and breakfast establishments are based on Main Street

Nothing to see here.

10 Haworth Old Hall

Early seventeenth century house, now an atmospheric pub and restaurant with real fires

Standing at the bottom of Main Street, the Old Hall is one of the oldest buildings in the village, dating back to late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Formally known as Emmott Old Hall the building was the home of a succession of local landowning families. Underneath the building are vaulted cellars which some believe were once connected to tunnels used as escape routes for priests and other people, and later by other non-conformists who used the building as a meeting house. The Emmott family were recusants, Roman Catholics who kept the faith despite it being outlawed during periods from the reign of Elizabeth I to George IV. In failed attempts to establish one national church to which everyone adhered, anyone found to be practising Catholicism faced persecution and harsh penalties. However as the Emmotts did not inherit the Old Hall until 1746 it is likely that the tunnels story is no more than local folklore.

In its time the Old Hall has been a court house, private dwelling and now a public house and restaurant with accommodation. Over the centuries there have been some additions to the building but on the whole it has kept true to its seventeenth century origins. A heavy oak door opens into the bar area with stone flag floors and polished oak beams. The dining room is in what was the grand hall of the house and retains two magnificent fireplaces, a great place to sit, eat and soak up the atmosphere after a walk on the moors.



11 Hall Green Baptist Chapel

18th century Baptist chapel built in the Italian Renaissance style

Hall Green Baptist Church was the second Baptist church to be built in the village. The reason for the split of some of the congregation from West Lane Baptist Church at the top of the village, established in 1752, is not clear, but by 1821 a number of Baptists were worshipping in a barn at the bottom of the village which still stands to the right of the bridge at the bottom of the hill. There are suggestions that the dispute could have been over the use of instruments to accompany the singing or differences of opinion with the Rev Miles Oddy who was known for his steadfast views. Whatever the reason, it is unlikely that they were doctrinal as at this time both the West Lane and Hall Green Churches were Strict and Particular Baptist churches, a branch of the church adhering to the doctrine of Calvin.

The breakaway group formed a church and by 1825 a new Baptist chapel had been built at Hall Green. Today the interior of the church is as it was in the nineteenth century; built in the Italian Renaissance style it is light and airy with an ornate pulpit, grand organ and first floor gallery. The Chapel runs popular services for the community such as a toddler group, youth club, Christian book shop and library.

Haworth manages to support two Baptist chapels as over the years each has gone in a different direction. Whereas West Lane joined the Baptist Union, Hall Green has remained independent. Following a review in the 1970's the description Strict and Particular Baptist was dropped in favour of the more accessible Grace Baptist Church. Hall Green favours an evangelical style of ministry, helping to establish a church with Pakistani Christians in Bradford and working with other churches in the Yorkshire Gospel Partnership.



12 Central Park

Pleasant park with flowerbeds, children's playground and bowling green

Central Park slopes down from the bottom of Main Street almost to the railway line and river at the valley floor. The land was sold to the Haworth district council from the Emmott Rawdon estate in the 1920's. When it was originally laid out its steep slope created a problem for landscapers and inclusion of a bowling green was deferred until further money could be found.

The park today boasts a bowling green and pavilion, a children's playground, small basketball court, two tennis courts and a new toilet block. Bradford Council maintains the grass lawns and some attractive flowerbeds laid out in a formal style. A border of mixed shrubs and diverse mature trees acts as a screen to surrounding noise, pollution and winds, ensuring a stroll through Central Park is a pleasant, relaxing experience at any time of year. In 2006 the Park received the prestigious Green Flag, a national award recognising high quality green spaces. The Friends of Central Park are a dedicated group of local residents committed to maintaining and improving the park. They are currently actively fundraising to reinstate a bandstand in the park to benefit locals and tourists alike.



13 Children's Playground

Children's play area with traditional equipment for toddlers and children

Children's play area with traditional equipment for toddlers and children.



14 Butt Lane

Tree-lined lane paved with setts runs alongside the park, leading from the village down to the steam railway line. The Victorian infant and junior school buildings are now converted to houses.

Tree-lined lane paved with setts runs alongside the park, leading from the village down to the steam railway line. The Victorian infant and junior school buildings are now converted to houses.



15 Haworth Station and Keighley and Worth Valley railway

Restored station and heritage railway line made famous by the 1970 Railway Children film

The Keighley and Worth Valley railway opened in 1867 connecting Haworth and the Upper Worth Valley with the mainline station in Keighley and therefore the major cities of Leeds and Bradford. Locomotives brought coal up the valley to power the looms in the textile mills, the remains of which still line the route. The line was closed to passenger traffic in 1961, (the first of British Rail's privatisations, prior to the Beeching cuts) but almost immediately the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway Preservation Society was formed. The group began to bring in and restore heritage stock and finally purchased the line from British Rail in 1966, reopening to passenger traffic in 1968 and operating continually ever since.

The heritage line is entirely owned, operated and managed by volunteers and runs trains every weekend and daily in the school holidays. Most services are operated by steam trains, but the railway also owns and runs a diesel railcar which serves as a regular service for local residents. The heritage carriages include an award-winning real ale buffet car. The Society organises a varied calendar of popular events such as the Steam and Diesel galas, dining train services, the Beer and Music Festival and the original and best Santa Special.

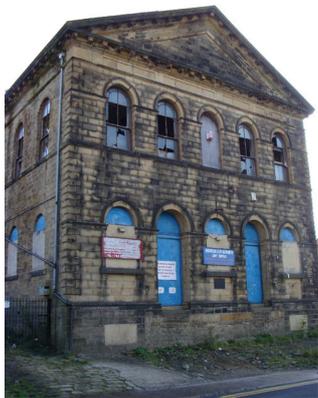
Haworth station, like the others along the line, has been restored to look and feel like the original branch line station with ticket office, real coal fires, gas lights and antique signs. The authenticity of the Keighley and Worth Valley line has made it popular with location scouts and the stations and trains have appeared in many film and TV productions including Yanks, Brideshead Revisited, Last of the Summer Wine and most famously the 1970 version of the Railway Children starring Jenny Agutter, with which it remains closely associated.



16 Mill Hey Methodist Chapel

Primitive Methodists chapel built in 1836

The growth of the Methodist movement in the early nineteenth century saw a blossoming of chapels and Sunday schools in the Upper Worth Valley. The Methodist Chapel on Mill Hey was built by the Primitive Methodists, a more politically radical branch than the Wesleyan Methodists. They began meeting in a cottage in Mill Hill in 1820 and opened the chapel with Sunday school in 1836. As congregations began to fall in the twentieth century the Methodist chapels in the area were rationalised, bringing congregations together under one roof. The Mill Hey Chapel was closed in 1954.



17 Masonic Lodge

Masonic lodge with Brontë connections

The Freemasons have been active in Haworth since the end of eighteenth century when the Prince George Lodge first met at the Old White Lion at the top of the village. Another lodge, The Three Graces are recorded to have met at the nearby Black Bull and by 1812 the two lodges had been amalgamated, later moving to private rooms in Lodge Street. Branwell Brontë was proposed and accepted into the Masonic lodge here on 29 February 1836, becoming secretary in 1837. His last recorded meeting is in 1842.

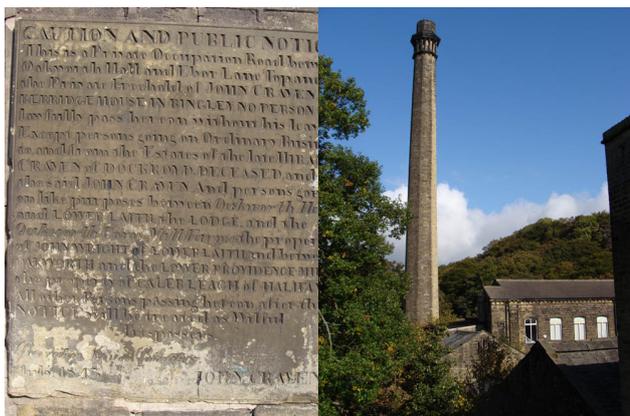
The Lodge at Mill Hey was built in 1907 and held its first meeting in December of that year. It continues as a Masonic lodge to this day.

18 Toll Sign Ebor Lane

Nineteenth century toll road

The plaque at the junction of Ebor Lane and Mill Hey reads;

CAUTION AND PUBLIC NOTICE



19 Bridgehouse Beck

Small river which powered the textile mills further up the valley

The river Worth, which gives the valley its name, is fed by streams that start their life high up on the Pennine Moors. Just downstream of this bridge the beck meets the Worth and flows all along the valley bottom to Keighley where it joins the much bigger River Aire. In the early days of the industrial revolution it was water, rather than coal that powered the mills and all across the Worth valley the remains of small mills and mill ponds are found alongside the numerous becks and streams. Water wheels were replaced by water turbines and later steam engines, which also needed copious amounts of water. All the way to Keighley, the River Worth is lined with dark chimneys and mill buildings, although most are now an empty shell or have been converted to other uses.



20 Our Lady of Lourdes

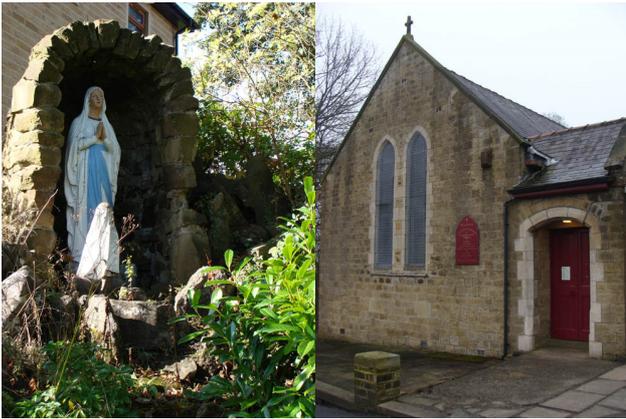
Haworth's Catholic parish church

Our Lady of Lourdes, the first Catholic church in Haworth, was built in 1925 and is a relative newcomer to church scene in the worth valley. Prior to this date Catholics would travel to the older churches in Keighley to attend mass. During the first world war when fuel was rationed it made more sense for the priest to travel to his flock and mass was regularly conducted in an upstairs room of a draper's shop on Mill Hey, belonging to the Pedley family. In 1922 the Haworth parish was founded and Haworth gained its first resident priest, Father Jeremiah Twomey who moved into the newly acquired presbytery, a former gentleman's residence on Ebor Lane (next door to the church). An appeal for funds quickly raised enough money to build a church and in 1924 the foundation stones were laid by the Bishop of Leeds and a local donor.

Inside it is hard to imagine the church is less than a century old. Wooden pews face a stained glass window beneath which is the altar, donated from St Paulinus in Dewsbury, so may have links with EW Pugin, the well known ecclesiastical architect who designed that church. There is a beautiful 1920's hand carved statue of the immaculate conception commissioned from a company in the Tyrol. The church has generous grounds (formally the tennis courts of the gentlemen's residence) which it uses for summer events and barbecues. The Our Lady of Lourdes grotto was created in the 1950's and dedicated in a grand open air service lead by Bishop Heenan, who later became the Archbishop of Westminster.

Our Lady of Lourdes is the Catholic parish church for an area stretching up to Cullingworth and Denholme. The congregation grew in the middle of the twentieth century as Irish girls were enticed over to England to work in the mills and factories. Living away from their families in hostels, the parish provided sporting events and parties to keep them entertained, as well as a minibus to bring them to mass on Sundays. Today Our Lady of Lourdes has a thriving congregation, some of whom are second and third generation offspring of these young girls who married local men and stayed in the area.

The Parish is twinned with the Parish of St Joseph, Matli in Pakistan and supports a TB outreach programme there.



21 West Lane Baptist Chapel

Haworth's first Baptist chapel and a key building in the Baptist revival in West Yorkshire

The original West Lane Baptist Church was formed in 1752 by a group of people who had broken away from the Established Anglican Church. The first half of the eighteenth century saw a number of independent religious revivals across the UK led by evangelical pioneers such as John Wesley, Benjamin Ingham and William Darney. Between 1742 - 1763 the incumbent Anglican vicar at Haworth Church, William Grimshaw, was responsible for creating a religious revival through his evangelical preaching. He quickly established a strong following of converts, many of whom wanted him to leave the Anglican church, although he was unwilling. One of Grimshaw's converts, James Hartley also came under the influence of a Baptist ministry in Barnoldswick and formed a small group who broke away from the established church.

There is a history of dissent in the Worth Valley that dates back to the seventeenth century. A strong Puritan tradition combined with the independent streak of local yeoman farmers and weavers meant many resented governance from afar and were keen to have control of their local church. In 1752 James Hartley formed a Baptist church at West Lane in Haworth, the first of many new churches established in the area under the influence of Grimshaw. Hartley became its first minister and remained so until his death in 1780. He is buried in the West Lane churchyard alongside his wife Anne - their gravestones have been laid immediately in front of the front of the building.

The original building was considered unsafe and replaced in 1775 and rebuilt again in 1844 with the building which stands there today West Lane Baptist church celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2002 and is now a mainstream Baptist Union church practising open membership and open communion. In recent years the Baptists have consolidated their space, selling off a lot of the land and the back of the building to private developers and making use of either the upstairs or downstairs space for their regular worship. The chapel is used daily by the community and the congregation for events, prayer meetings, youth groups and choir rehearsals, and even the outdoor space is utilised for growing fruit and vegetables.



22 Haworth West Lane Methodist Church

Chapel with close connections to Grimshaw, the Wesleys and the early days of Methodism

William Grimshaw, the incumbent Anglican minister in Haworth parish church from 1742 - 63 was an evangelical and influential figure in the religious life of the Upper Worth Valley and beyond. As well as his regular church services he also became an itinerant speaker spreading the Christian message to thousands through open air sermons and informal meetings. Through his travels he met John Wesley and was heavily influenced by the Methodist approach to ministry, despite objections from his superior, the Vicar of Bradford.

At this time many Methodists had not separated from the mainstream church and many were worshipping within the Anglican church. Grimshaw was concerned that his successors would not be as sympathetic to Methodism as he, and in 1758 he helped to build the West Lane Methodist Chapel to ensure Methodists had a place to worship. The first trustees of the chapel include the Wesley brothers and Grimshaw himself.

For some time Methodists continued to worship in the Anglican church but by the 1780-90's there is an increasing dissatisfaction with the established Church and the Methodist movement begins to grow and establish in its own right. In Haworth however, the Methodist tendency was so strong that the parish church trustees were influential in securing a line of ministers whose beliefs were acceptable to them. Patrick Brontë, the parish incumbent 1820 - 63, was known to have Methodist leanings and attended West Lane Methodist Chapel with his daughter Charlotte to hear the sermons.

At various points in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the original West Lane Wesleyan Methodist chapel was rebuilt and enlarged and a Sunday school building added. In the 1950's declining congregations and increased costs led to the church demolishing the chapel and moving into the Sunday school building next door, which is the chapel used today. Photographs of the original chapel building show it looked remarkably similar to the West Lane Baptist Chapel just down the street.

The hall at the front is in daily use as a community venue whilst the chapel is at the rear. It is a typically plain interior with a beautifully polished wooden alter and pulpit that have been brought over from the original chapel. William Grimshaw's chair and an eighteenth century bronze plaque commemorating the first Methodist chapel are proudly displayed. On the exterior walls, two engraved stones from the original chapel have been transferred into the stone work, one of which was Grimshaw's favourite Biblical quotation 'To us to live is Christ to die is gain'. Round the back of the chapel, looking out over the Worth Valley are two graveyards containing some interesting headstones and memorials.

