

# Almondbury Trail

## About the Almondbury Trail

Almondbury (or Ambry) originated around 625 BC with an undefended hut settlement on the commanding viewpoint of Castle Hill. Ancient packhorse trails and later turnpikes (1759/77) brought London buyers via Almondbury to northern England's sheep-rearing areas. Edward 1 granted a market charter to Henry de Lacy in 1294. By 1475 Almondbury market's cloth sales ranked fourth out of seventeen in Yorkshire. Leading members of the C12th church established King James's 1 Grammar (1608) and first National School (1818) in the area.

The trail follows a linear route through the heart of the village. A short distance further you can also discover: the Victoria Tower (1897) on Castle Hill (iron age hillfort); King James's Grammar School; Almondbury Common and Northfield Mills (now flats), Sharp Lane; C15th Fletcher House and Plague Fields on Lumb Lane; medieval Finthorpe barn on Finthorpe Lane, C17th Longley Hall, home of the Ramsden family; C16th Woodsome Hall (golf club with original Tudor features), C17th Fenay Hall.

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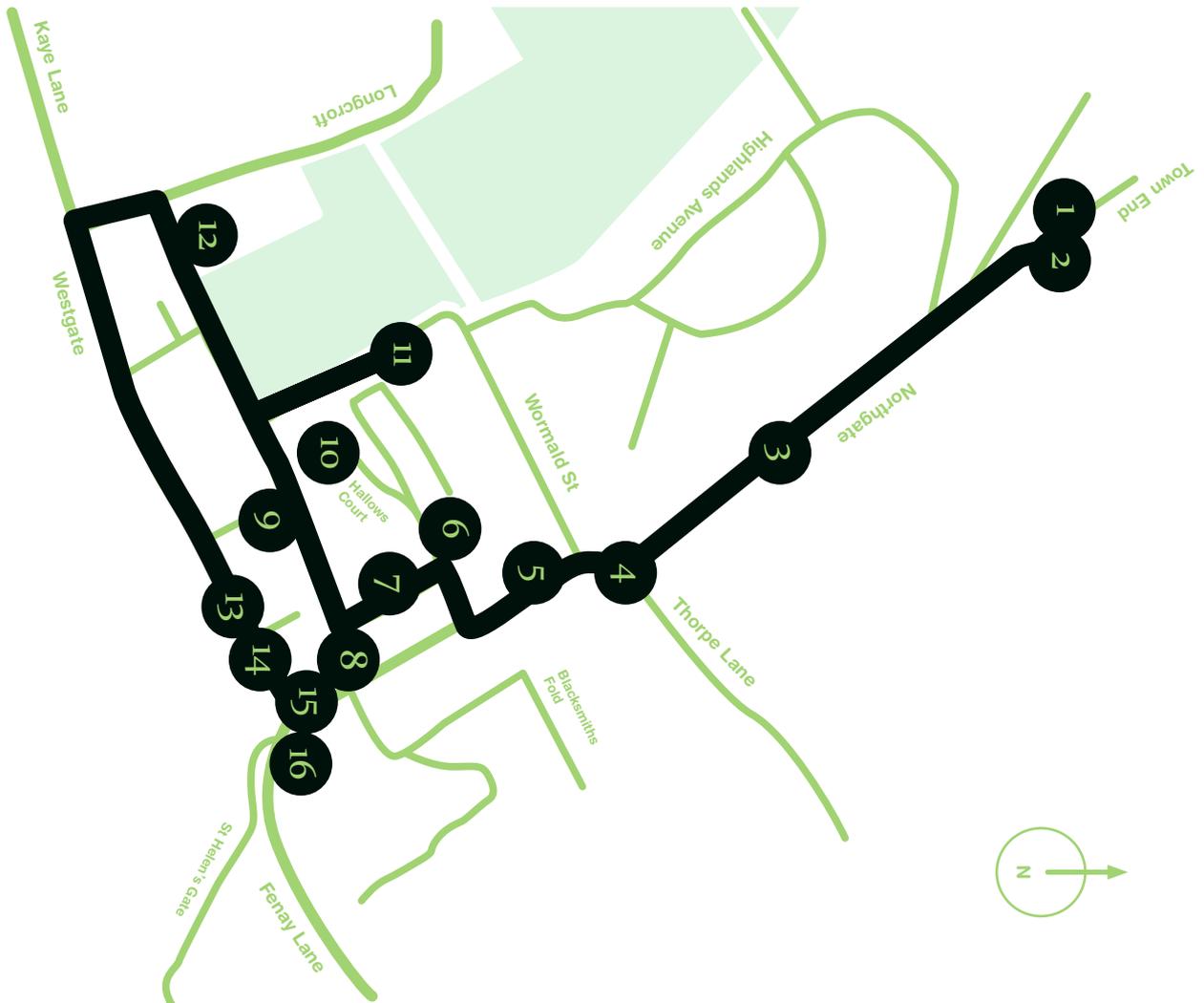
## Information

For more information about Discover Huddersfield or to learn more about the project and how to get involved, please get in touch through the following media:

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Discover Huddersfield offers new ways to experience this amazing Yorkshire town, through guided walks, talks and trails. See Huddersfield at its very best: grand listed buildings and small independent shops; a place for radicals from the Luddites to the Sex Pistols; birthplace of Rugby League; a town rich in creativity, stories, heritage and the odd ghostly encounter.

**1** Edmund Mellor's house, 44, Town End (C16/17)



Here, Cromwell's troops were billeted and the Rev. John Murlin from Birstall conducted the first Methodist service in 1766. South facing windows maximised daylight for weavers as in the C18th clothing mill on nearby Fernside.

**2** Fred Rostron's barn and milking parlour



Fred Rostron's dairy herd grazed in the 'bad fields' above Somerset Road until 1945 and brought here twice a day for milking. Less steep Somerset Road replaced ancient Town End and steep Almondbury Bank as the main north road in 1870.

**3** Police Box, Northgate



Dr. Who fans love this Tardis, a listed 1920s/1930s Police Box beside the former Rose and Crown pub (early C19th). Iron railings from Somerset Bridge over the River Colne front the former doctor's house at no 57.

**4** 95-7, Northgate

The weavers' cottages became shops then restaurants once woollen mills had replaced domestic weaving by 1860.

**5** The Bus Turnaround



Constructed in 1952 following demolition of mid 1700's cottages known as Mark Haigh's 'backside' and shops above Watercroft. Previously trolley-buses had been forced to reverse into Wormald Street. The disused chimney represents the last of four local mills in which the mechanised processes of cloth production were carried out. The expansion of Huddersfield's mills in the mid C19th marked the decline of Almondbury's, textile associations. Watercroft's male mill workers received £1 for 61 hours labour in 1851. Children and females over 13 earned less.

**6** Almshouses in Old School Lane



Robert Nettleton (pictured) in 1894 and Emily Parkin in 1931 built free housing for the elderly. The hut opposite accommodated the British Legion.

**7**

Two houses along the path opposite were formed from a tithe barn for church personnel in 1870. The engraved plaque which came from Almondbury's National School on Westgate (1819), the first in the district, reads 'May every child in my kingdom be able to read the Bible'.

**8** All Hallows Parish Church



Dating from the C12th this 'mother' church to 18 parishes was rebuilt in the late 15th/early 16th centuries, restored in the 1800's and by architect Sir Charles Nicholson in 1936/7. Death watch beetle had rotted roof timbers and the wall plate bearing the Kaye's of Woodsome and other benefactors' emblems from 1522 with John Lydgate's 1450 'picture book' Passion poem for those who could not read. Carved heraldic shields and nave ceiling bosses were replaced. Murals were lost in C18 re-plastering. The nine bells date from 1523. Stocks originally on Stocks Walk are sited by the north gate.

**9** Carnegie endowed Public Library

Huddersfield's first purpose-built library (1905) which more recently provided leisure and after school clubs.

**10** Former National School, 1895



Costing £4,000, funded by selling the former Central School and a three day bazaar organised by a committee overseen by Woodsome's Dowager Countess of Dartmouth.

**11** Clergy House (1894)

Bordering the 1903 recreation ground. Designed by noted Arts and Crafts architect Edgar Wood. It housed Basque child refugees during Spain's Civil War. The 1900 Wesleyan Hall opposite became the Sunday School for the rebuilt 1968 Methodist Church.

**12** Longcroft



William Senior's Map of Almondbury, 1634, indicates strip field farming at Longcroft. Tenants worked the Lord of the Manor's fields growing enough for basic needs.

These strips eventually became allotments before the construction of houses and Longcroft Primary school.

**13** Grasscroft

'Yard' dwellings like Grasscroft without road frontage paid lower taxes. Westgate had over 200 houses and a 'pinfold' (for stray livestock at night) at number 149. 14 Westgate (1876) with the carriage entrance to its courtyard, was one of three Industrial Society stores where flour, sugar and margarine were once weighed from blocks, barrels and sacks into paper packages.

**14** Wormald Hall



The Conservative Club is a distinctive grade 2\* listed building with jettied first floor, with the initials I.W.M. and date 1631 on the carved lintel (although the building is of earlier origin). It belonged to Isaac Wormald, a rich London dyer whose great grandson, Israel's will included a bequest (later the Wormald Charity) to support the schoolmaster of the free school, local schooling and the apprenticeship of poor children.

**15** The War Memorial

The War Memorial (constructed 1920) records those killed in both World Wars and in more recent conflicts. Bodies uncovered from a sealed tunnel when the memorial was built were possibly plague victims.

**16**

The crossroads above St Helen's 'Ell 'Oil' ('hell hole') were shown on Senior's 1634 map of the Ramsden 'manor' of Almonberie but all the shops and houses crowding onto Northgate were demolished in 1952.