

Huddersfield: The Town of Sanctuary Trail

About the Huddersfield: The Town of Sanctuary Trail

Huddersfield's support for people in crisis has nineteenth century roots in philanthropism, non-conformist Christianity and local politics. Championing the vulnerable underpins hospitality and support offered by council, faith and community organisations today.

75 years since the United Nation's launch of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) that enshrines people's basic rights, under international law, civil rights campaigner, Eleanor Roosevelt's words (1958) on where those rights begin, still resonate: "In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world... they are the world of the individual person... neighbourhood... school or college... or office... Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere."

This trail identifies places associated with the activism of socially minded individuals and networks past and present. Traditions of humanitarianism, pacifism and internationalism still help people to rebuild their lives.

Huddersfield Quakers (Friends Meeting House, Paddock) championed Huddersfield becoming the first town to join the City of Sanctuary network (2012). Their commitment continues to welcome and support people fleeing violence and persecution from across the world.

Text: Heather Norris Nicholson • *Images:* Kirklees Local Studies Library, West Yorkshire Archive Service, Reg Napier, David Wyles, Rebecca Gill.

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:

www.discoverhuddersfield.com Email: info@discoverhuddersfield.com

[@discover_hudds](https://twitter.com/discover_hudds) [f](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverHuddersfield) Discover Huddersfield



DASH
Quaker Meeting
House,
Church
Street,
Paddock



Mechanics Institute
(Belgian Memorial)



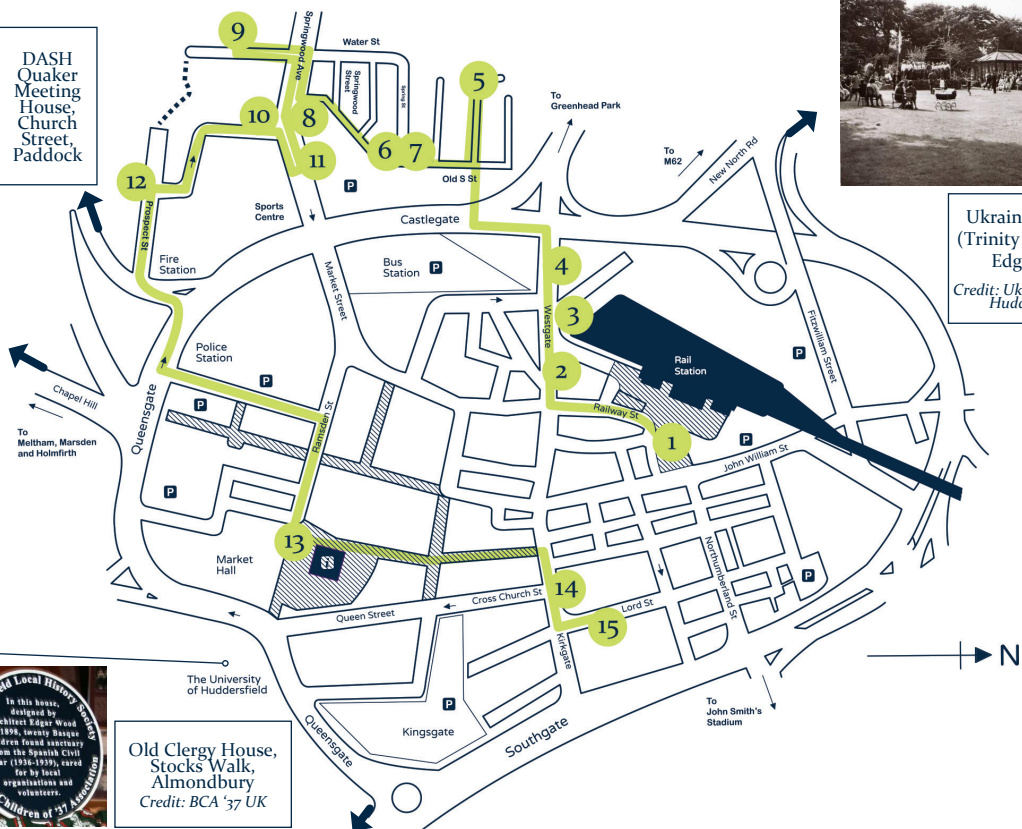
Holocaust Centre North
University of Huddersfield
Credit: HCN/ Tony O'Connel



Old Clergy House,
Stocks Walk,
Almondbury
Credit: BCA '37 UK



Ukrainian Clubs
(Trinity Street and
Edgerton)
Credit: Ukrainian Club,
Huddersfield



Key:

- Pedestrian area
- Parking
- One way traffic flow

Huddersfield: The Town of Sanctuary Trail

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.

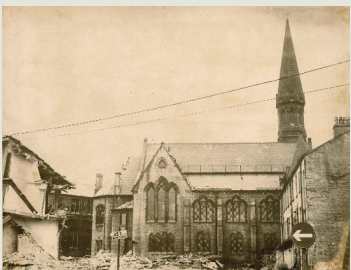


1 Railway Station

Arrivals at Huddersfield Station (built 1850) have included many migrants and refugees. During World War One, Yorkshire hosted approximately 5000 Belgian refugees, including families. Over 540 Belgians came to live and work locally. Hospitality was influenced by class, suffragism, faith, anti-war sentiments, international relief work, charity and politics. Broadly welcomed, despite some employment concerns, most refugees left after 1918, although appreciative memorials remain. World War Two saw Belgian refugees again working in mills, including Crowthers in Marsden.

2 British Czechoslovak Friendship Club (1943-45), 32 Westgate

Nationals displaced by the Second World War formed different refugee organisations. Spaces to meet, fundraise and support each other were initially shared (Anglo Refugee Friendship Club, 17 Dundas Street, 1939) and led on to separate clubs for Poles, Latvians, Ukrainians and other ethnic communities.



3 Brian Jackson Centre/New North Road Baptist Church, Westgate

Yorkshire Children's Centre (formerly the National Children's Centre) recalls pioneering childcare work by Hazel Wigmore and the welcome given to newcomers from China and the Caribbean. From here Welcome Mentors© provide befriending/ support services for local sanctuary seekers.

4 Dalton House, 3 New North Road

Huddersfield's YWCA (opened during WW1, demolished 1971 and replaced by St Patrick's Catholic Centre) was where Elizabeth Wilson, Reg and Dorothy Napier and others launched the Huddersfield and District Famine Relief Committee in 1943, in response to India's famine and hunger in Europe. Commissioned original artwork by Huddersfield Quaker Reg Napier was used on pin-on flags in fund-raising week, door to door collections, as well as on leaflets and stationery. The Market Place gift shop (1963-67) was relocated several times before settling in Queen Street (17 and 6). It closed when merging with Oxfam (1991). Pre-dating its sister organisation, Oxfam, this international relief work reminds us of local help for 20 Basque children who lived in Almondbury during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39).



5 Upper George Street

Jamia Masjid Usman, the town's oldest mosque (c.1962) was funded by textile workers from Pakistan. Formerly the Polish Presbytery, Polish activity and self-help relocated to Fitzwilliam Street with worship, educational and community support concentrated at Nos. 88/108 (demolished for the ring road, and 86 - WWII veterans' centre - becoming an Irish Centre (1999).

6 Punjab Store(s), Old South Street, Springwood (1963)

Huddersfield's first Asian-run corner shop. Abdul Rashid Chowdry, arriving from Pakistan in 1957, provided groceries, halal meat and support for newcomers attracted by Britain's postwar labour shortage following the turmoil during the partition of India and Pakistani independence. Other businesses and services set up in streets nearby reflecting emerging community interests, initiative and resilience against racism, prejudice and discrimination.



7 The Indian Workers Association (IWA), 52 Old South Street (1965)

Focused on helping newcomers from the Indian sub-continent and reflected the IWA's shift, after Indian Independence (1947), from its early role as a national workers' association concerned with labour needs and anti-colonial resistance.

8 Windrush Anniversary Garden

Caribbean-descent led community groups are transforming once neglected space around the railway airshaft into an international garden of welcome. It celebrates Springwood's diverse settlement history, and received a Huddersfield Civic Society Design Award (2021).



9 Spring Grove School (and International Reception Centre now demolished)

Trevor Burgin's educational work (head-teacher, 1958-68) with parents and children from New Commonwealth countries (1950s/60s) gained national attention. Now a School of Sanctuary and the first Rights Respecting primary school (UNICEF UK), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child underpins its work with pupils and their families.



10 The Grove Pub

Promotes Irish music and international humanitarian support. For over 150 years, newcomers from Ireland, the Caribbean, South Asia and Eastern Europe have made Springwood their home and strong bonds grew from shared experiences of prejudice and discrimination.

11 Elim Centre/Oasis, Merton Street

Oasis Youth & Community Centre, based at Elim Pentecostal Mission (founded 1931), offers advice, language classes and faith-based welcome for asylum seekers and refugees.

12 Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Prospect Street

The Sikh temple supports wider community needs via donations, meals and partnerships.



13 Former Central Library (future Museum)

This building opened in 1940 with spaces identified as a decontamination post, first aid centre, and an emergency hospital. Accessible and inclusive library services gained the first national Library of Sanctuary Award (2021, Yorkshire and Humber region).

14 St Peters Parish Church, Huddersfield

Methodist founder, John Wesley (1757) wrote: "I rode over the mountains to Huddersfield, a wilder people, I never saw in England. The men, women and children filled the streets as we rode along and seemed just ready to devour us" Undeterred, Reverend Venn's sermons (vicar, 1754-1771) attracted large congregations and now St Peters provides pastoral outreach via the Inclusive Church Network.

15 The Welcome Centre, Lord Street

Supports people in crisis, whether due to money, hunger, housing, health, violence or fleeing from persecution overseas. Almost 6,000 people, including 2,000 children (2022), received meals, advice, food packs and basic needs. Partnerships include The Mission Café and Destitute Asylum Seekers in Huddersfield (DASH©, founded 2011). Huddersfield Friends Meeting House (Paddock) became a permanent base (2020) for DASH's advisory welfare and community integration work with asylum seekers and refugees.