

BOLSOVER TOWN TRAIL

A 'BLUE PLAQUE' GUIDE

Following the trail, you will notice a series of blue plaques numbered on the map.

These indicate buildings of particular historical or architectural importance within the town.



Look out for the 'Blue Plaques' like the example here



BOLSOVER CIVIC SOCIETY



Bolsover Civic Society was established in 1979. It aims to stimulate public interest in the town, encourage high standards of planning and architecture and secure the preservation, protection and improvement of features of historic or public interest in Bolsover. In addition, it records the historical life of Bolsover.

Every year, the society runs a programme of lectures and visits, and for interested groups, guided tours of the town centre and New Bolsover colliery model village can be arranged.

Membership is open to all. Further details from the Secretary – Bernard Haigh 21 Castle Lane, Bolsover

tel: 01246 822793 or 07529223328
website: bolsovercivicsociety.org.uk

Dave Wharmby is a Bolsover-based photographer specialising in landscape, architecture and wildlife photography, mainly focused on Derbyshire. He can be contacted through his website: www.davewharmbyphotography.com

Books on Bolsover by **Bernard Haigh**, are all available online.

- Bolsover remembered
- More Bolsover Remembered
- Around Bolsover in old Photographs
- Bolsover Voices
- Bolsover Now and Then

Written by Bernard Haigh on behalf of Bolsover Civic Society & Old Bolsover Town Council. Photographs by Dave Wharmby. ©B Haigh & D Wharmby

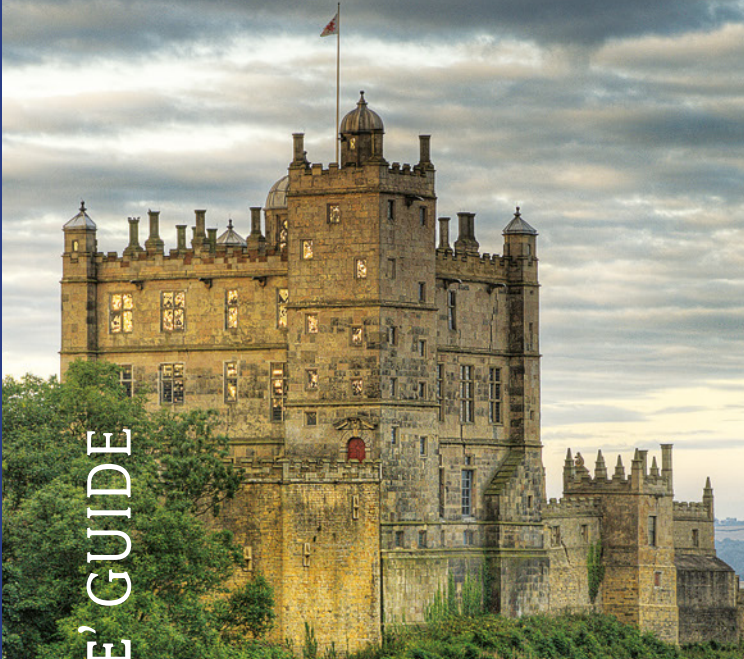


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The Historic Town of Bolsover

The first reference to Bolsover appears in the Domesday Book of 1086. Its origins as a settlement lie in the 11th century when William Peverel was Lord of the Manor. It is probable that he built the original 'motte and bailey' castle which stood on the edge of the limestone escarpment overlooking the Doe Lea valley.

A market soon developed outside the castle gates, which was granted a charter in 1225. The town was planned on a grid pattern and survives in this form to this day. The first stone castle was probably built in the 12th century when, at the same time, defensive improvements were made to the settlement in the form of entrenchments.

Within these entrenchments, which are included in the trail, the town extended to the north and east, the land between the market place and the northern entrenchments being laid out in long strips (called plough selions). The town fell into decline in the 14th century and the castle was in a 'dilapidated' condition in 1395.

In the 17th century, the period of decline was reversed when the medieval castle was swept away and replaced with the 'Little Keep' of the present castle, followed by the Riding School, Terrace Range and Reception Rooms-the 'Fantasy Castle' built by the Cavendish family to the spectacular designs of Robert Smythson, his son John and grandson Huntington. These ambitious building schemes stimulated a new phase of urban development in Bolsover.

Charles I and his Queen visited the castle in 1634 when a masque, specially written by Ben Jonson, 'Love's Welcome' was performed. At the time of the Civil War, the castle was garrisoned for the King but surrendered to parliamentary forces.

"The castle remains a monument of international significance and is in the care of English Heritage"

The more recent development of the town was linked to industry. In the 18th century the town was famous for light metalwork, particularly spurs and buckles and the manufacture of clay pipes until the end of the 19th century. From the late 19th century, it was the emerging mining industry that fuelled the growth of the town and the population more than quadrupled between 1871 and 1901. The model village of New Bolsover, built by the Bolsover Colliery Company is one of the most important survivals of the now vanished coal industry. Restored in recent years with ten million pound Heritage Lottery funding the model village is a conservation area and listed grade 2.



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The Trail

The walk starts at the castle gates.

The original central axis of the town was formed by Castle Street, Middle Street and Church Street. This linear arrangement was completed at its southern end by the parish church and High Street along the limestone ridge.

Walk along Castle Street to the Market Place, stopping at **Old Bolsover Yard** on the right hand side. Although this site housed buildings in the medieval period what remains is early 20th century in origin when the yard was used as butchery and slaughter house premises, now transformed into an attractive small retail area with outdoor seating and cafe facilities. Castle Street was lined on both sides by stone buildings until the mid 20th century. Laid out in medieval times it linked the market place directly to the castle.

The Trail
takes about
60 - 90
minutes

BOLSOVER CIVIC SOCIETY
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BOLSOVER TOWN TRAIL
2011
ST MARY'S HOUSE
A PRETTY 'GOTHIC' HOUSE WITH PROJECTING BAYS
THIS HOUSE SITS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CARRIAGE
DRIVE TO THE CASTLE. BUILT IN THE EARLY 19TH
CENTURY AS THE RESIDENCE OF THE SCHOOL
MASTER AND LATER THE CURATES TO THE PARISH
CHURCH. THE HOUSE WAS REMODELLED IN
THE LATE 19TH CENTURY. TODAY IT IS
A PRIVATE HOUSE.
OLD BOLSOVER TOWN COUNCIL



Starting Blue Plaque outside 'The Pump' cafe

This is the site of the original town pump where residents without their own garden wells drew their water supply. For centuries, the old market place was the focal point of Bolsover. It was extended north to provide a large market area, fronting, the main road through the town.. The War Memorial replaced the remains of the medieval town market cross in 1921.



Blue Plaque No.1 42-46 Market Place

Opposite the War Memorial stands a row of magnesian limestone shops, which are the earliest commercial buildings remaining in the town representing a once larger range of 17th century buildings. They contain elements of cruck trusses in the roof and were refaced in stone in the 18th century. This later phase of rebuilding typifies how the town developed. It would have had largely timber framed houses in the medieval period.

Before leaving the Market Place notice the Italian Restaurant building to the rear of the War Memorial, which has a large stone mullioned staircase window at the rear, typical of the 18th century Derbyshire stone houses.

Continue left of this building, alongside the Middle Street car park. This street was lined with houses until the 1960s when most were demolished. The car park boundary wall follows the former line of buildings.



Go through the archway. This was formerly an arched gateway to a group of now demolished Market Place shops and re erected here in the 1970s.

Go down the steps towards the post office. Two doors to its left stands the building housing Old Bolsover Town Council and **Blue Plaque No.2.**



Built in 1865 as a Primitive Methodist Chapel it later served as a Salvation Army Citadel, Urban District Council Offices, public library and today as Town Council Offices. For over one hundred years this building has played a full and varied role in the civic and religious life of the town.



Walk towards Bolsover library, Built in 1976, of local magnesian limestone with a steeply pitched pantiles roof it was designed to reflect the character of traditional buildings in the town, especially the cottages opposite. See **Blue Plaque No.3.**

Note outside the library the **memorial seating to local writer Fred Kitchen** (Interpretation Board). Look right towards 15-19 Cotton Street and **Blue Plaque No.3.**



The origin of these cottages is late 17th century, although probably remodelled with sash windows in 1762. A date stone can be seen above the doors. These properties are typical of pre industrial Bolsover when the town was a warren of such buildings.

The walk continues along Church Street. The house across the road from the library was originally a farmhouse with farm buildings to the rear and dates from the mid 18th century.

Go through the gates at the end and enter the graveyard to the parish Church of St Mary and St Laurence. This has a 13th century tower supporting a rather broad shouldered broach spire. The church was gutted by fire in 1897 and again damaged by fire in 1960. Excavations underneath the tower have revealed a large 13th century bell pit used for casting the medieval church bell in situ.

If you wish to view the church and it is closed, please enquire at the vicarage on Church Street.

Inside the church, the **Cavendish Chapel** added to the east end of the south aisle in 1624, houses two sumptuous monuments. One to Sir Charles Cavendish and his wife, the other, dating from 1727, commemorates Henry Cavendish, second Duke of Newcastle, his wife and daughter.



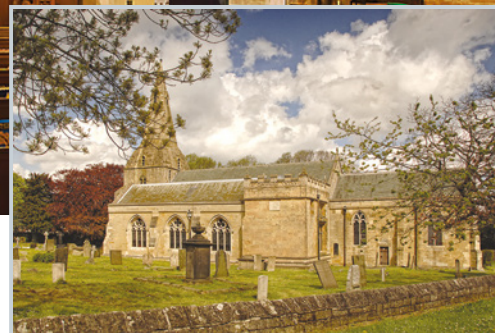
Charles, the younger son of Bess of Hardwick, began building the Keep or 'little castle' in 1612. Just outside the chapel and still inside the church is a memorial to mason architect Huntington Smythson and his father John. Huntington was the grandson of Robert Smythson, Elizabethan architect who designed the houses at Wollaton, Barlborough, Hardwick and Welbeck.

The **east window** at the head of the chancel contains fine Victorian stained glass and commemorates Lady Augusta Cavendish-Bentinck, Baroness Bolsover.

Leave the church, turn right and in the graveyard, against the chancel wall, examine the individual grave of **Thomas Hinde**, clockmaker and humourist. **Complete a circuit of the church and leave by the lych gate on High Street. Turn left, cross the road and take the footpath to the left of the garage, which then curves right along the 'Back Hills'.**



These are part of the magnesian limestone escarpment which provides access to two of the four conduit houses built to provide a water supply to the castle (Interpretation Board). This area provides panoramic views across the Vale of Scarsdale with the Peakland hills beyond, taking in Hardwick Hall, Sutton Hall and New Bolsover model village. Continue along the path to the steps.



Take these up to '**Surprise View**' (Interpretation Board) and emerge back on High Street.

Turn left and continue towards the castle for **Blue Plaque No.4** Fifty yards on your left is 'The Pantiles' no. 39 High Street, a Georgian house with mid 20th century alterations built in local magnesian limestone. This house is typical of the fine Georgian and early Victorian properties which graced High Street until the mid twentieth century.





Fifty yards further on and to your right is **Blue Plaque No.5. 'The Old Meeting House.'** This former Presbyterian Church dates from 1662 and constructed in handmade bricks. It is one of the oldest nonconformist chapel buildings in Derbyshire.

Continue towards the castle and at High Street's junction with Castle Lane and Castle Street look to the house straight ahead and Blue Plaque No.6.

St Mary's House

A pretty 'Gothic' house with projecting bays, it sits at the entrance to the carriage drive to the castle, which passes below the Terrace range. Built as the residence of the school master it was later used by the curates to the Parish Church.



Take a minor detour down Castle Lane on your left

As the road swings sharp right, stroll left onto the landscaped area known as the Backhills. Just above the pathway stands another of the four **Conduit Houses**, which are spaced out along the ridge. These were built on the line of the castle water supply and were connected in 1626. Perhaps their 'watchtower' design is to give a defensive appearance to the setting of the castle. (Interpretation Board).

Return to Castle Street and the castle entrance. Turn left alongside the boundary wall, through the black bollards, towards the main road. Before crossing look ahead to the building housing Blue Plaque No.7.

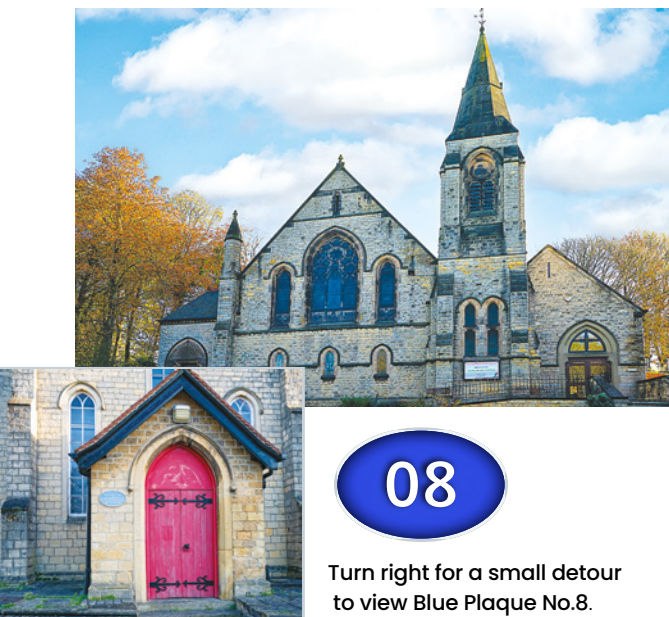
1a Station Road

A good example of early cottage/workshop premises in locally quarried magnesian limestone with a pantiled roof. Former uses include a tailor's premises, printing workshop. Today it serves as a local joinery business.



Cross the A632 and at the side of this property pass through a further 'brek'.

As you emerge onto Hill Top (take care on the road at this point) notice the fine **Methodist Church** opened in 1897. Handsomely restored in 2021, the chapel houses some fine stained glass and is well worth a visit.



Turn right for a small detour
to view Blue Plaque No.8.

Bolsover Assembly Hall

Built in 1866 as a Methodist Chapel and the predecessor of the 1897 chapel, it is a handsome example of its kind. Today, sympathetically restored and extended, it acts as the main community centre for the town.

Return to the Methodist Church and take the gateway to its left. Walk up the drive and emerge in Morrisons car park. Take the gap in the wall to the left of the car park. In front of you is a visible part of the **town's** Entrenchments.

These defensive structures were built in medieval times and are described a few yards further on with an Interpretation Board.



Return to Morrisons car park and walk towards the Market Place. To your left notice **Cavendish Walk**, a small courtyard shopping precinct converted from 19th century small workshops and stables.

At the Market Place crossing you are standing beside the building housing **Blue Plaque No.9.**



Cavendish Hotel

This mock Tudor building is a fine example of a late 19th century public house. Sited in the heart of the Market Place it was built to serve a growing mining town. Cross the road and go in the direction of the castle and the start of your Bolsover tour.

This is the end of the trail.
We hope you have enjoyed it.

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-  **Starting point**
Outside The Pump cafe
-  **Blue Plaque No.1**
42-46 Market Place
-  **Blue Plaque No.2**
Old Bolsover Town Council
-  **Blue Plaque No.3**
15-19 Cotton Street
-  **Blue Plaque No.4**
The Pantiles no. 39 High Street
-  **Blue Plaque No.5**
The Old Meeting House
-  **Blue Plaque No.6**
St Mary's House
-  **Blue Plaque No.7**
1a Station Road
-  **Blue Plaque No.8**
Bolsover Assembly Hall
-  **Blue Plaque No.9**
Cavendish Hotel

Written by Bernard Haigh on behalf of Bolsover Civic Society & Old Bolsover Town Council. Photographs by Dave Wharmby. ©B Haigh & D Wharmby

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