



walkabout tour

Leave the church by the South Door and turn left along Church Lane, left down Appletongate in front of the church, and left again. On the right you will see the Garden of Remembrance and the Song School (10). When Edward VI confiscated the chantries, this was one of the few song schools which survived.

Cross Church Street into Kirkgate. On the right you will see the School of Violin-making (11). Designed in Italian Gothic style by Watson Fothergill in 1887, it was formerly a bank. Further down on the right are some timber-framed houses where it is thought Queen Henrietta Maria (12) stayed when visiting Newark during the Civil War.

At the end of Kirkgate, cross the road and walk down Beastmarket Hill to the River Trent. Here on the right you will find the Ossington Coffee Palace (13). It was built in 1882 by Viscountess Ossington as a Temperance Hotel and has now been converted into a restaurant with apartments above. Its architecture incorporates various styles from previous centuries, notably the half-timbered upper floors and the projecting oriel windows.

Across from the Ossington are the remains of Newark Castle (14), the "Key to the North". It dates from the 12th Century and replaced an earlier fortification. Over the centuries, it has been visited by numerous royal monarchs – King John died here in 1216, while in 1487 Henry VII stayed in the Castle on his way to the Battle of Stoke Field four miles away. James I and Cardinal Wolsey were also visitors. The Castle was used as a Royalist stronghold in the defence of the town during the three sieges of Newark in 1643, 1644 and 1646.

After the Civil War had ended, the townspeople of Newark were ordered to demolish the Castle by Cromwell. The curtain wall of the Castle still remains however, including the Norman Gatehouse which is one of the finest surviving examples in the country. Newark Castle and Gardens have undergone extensive restoration work in recent years.

Within the grounds of the Castle, learn more about the fascinating history of Newark when you visit The Gilstrap Centre (1). Formerly the town Library, it now houses The Castle and Conflict exhibition and the Tourist Information Centre.

On leaving the Castle Grounds, cross the river and visit the Riverside Park (15), venue for interesting events and incorporating a children's play area and café or take a pleasant stroll along the riverside walk to Millgate Museum (16). The building housing the museum stands on the side of the river and was originally an oilseed mill owned by George Clarke & Co., later becoming a warehouse for the Trent Navigation Company.

The museum has three main exhibition floors illustrating the social and industrial life of the town. Travel back in time as you look into the ground floor rooms of a Victorian terraced house. Walk down a street of 19th Century shops and look into a saloon bar which has hand-drawn beer pumps. On the first floor, the Mezzanine Gallery holds temporary exhibitions of local arts and craftspeople. On leaving the Museum, continue along the Riverside Walk towards the Castle and Town Centre.



This information is available in large print format – call 01636 655612 for details.

For further information on places to visit in and around Newark, contact

Newark Tourist Information Centre,

Tel: 01636 655765

Fax: 01636 655767

Email: newarktic@nsdc.info

Website: www.visitnewarkandsherwood.co.uk



walk about tour



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of Newark on Trent



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Newark on Trent is an attractive market town situated where the Great North Road, the Roman Fosse Way and the River Trent come together. Although its most famous period was during the Civil War as a Royalist stronghold, many other facets of history are reflected in its streets and buildings.

Start your walk at the Market Place, one of the largest cobbled squares in the country, which is dominated by the Town Hall (2), designed in the Palladian style in 1776 by John Carr of York. It was originally constructed as two separate houses with the centre part consisting of the portico, entrance hall, Buttermarket and staircases leading to the Council Chamber and Ballroom. However the Assembly Rooms soon grew inadequate, so alterations were made and doors cut through to the two adjacent houses which then became part of the Town Hall. Today, visitors to the Grade 1 listed building can see the Mayor's Parlour, Council Chamber and the elegant 18th Century Assembly Room. Other rooms within the Town Hall comprise a museum with displays of historic civic plate and regalia, an art gallery with a fine collection of paintings by notable local artists, and a temporary exhibition space for local community groups.

To the side of the Town Hall is the NatWest Bank (3), which occupies the site of Alderman Clay's house. Alderman Clay lived in Newark during the Civil War period. While the town was under siege he dreamt three times that his house was on fire. He was so concerned by this that he moved his family out. Soon after, on March 11th 1643, cannon fire from Beacon Hill set the house alight.

Cross over Stodman Street and you will see the timber framed Governor's House (4). This was the residence of the Governors of Newark during the sieges of the Civil War. A diagonal path from the Governor's House to the south door of the Parish Church was laid, so the Governor could walk to the church without soiling his feet. The Market Place has retained this original pattern, with the path marked out by metal studs.

walk about map

- 1 Tourist Information Centre and The Gilstrap Centre
- 2 Town Hall
- 3 NatWest Bank
- 4 Governor's House
- 5 Clinton Arms
- 6 Saracen's Head
- 7 Olde White Hart
- 8 Porter's Provisions (S & J Ridge)
- 9 St Mary Magdalene Church
- 10 Song School
- 11 School of Violin-making
- 12 Henrietta Maria's Lodging House
- 13 Ossington Coffee Palace
- 14 Newark Castle
- 15 Riverside Park
- 16 Millgate Museum



Follow the 18th Century columns at the side of the Market Place and you will find the Clinton Arms building (5) which was in earlier times an important coaching inn on the Great North Road. Lord Byron stayed here when his first poems were published in Newark. Gladstone was another distinguished guest. Newark was his first Parliamentary constituency and he was MP here from 1832 to 1845. It was from the old hotel balcony that he made his first election address.

Continue along the colonnade to the bust of the Saracen set high in the wall. The Saracen's Head Inn (6) is now closed, but in earlier days it was visited several times by Sir Walter Scott and a plaque commemorates Jeannie Dean's stay here in his novel "Heart of Midlothian".

In the south corner of the Market Place is the Olde White Hart (7), named after the emblem of Richard II. Now Nottingham Property Services, it is one of the finest examples of 14th Century timber-framed architecture in England.

To the left, on the corner of Bridge Street is an elegant Queen Anne building (now Porter's Provisions (8) where S & J Ridge, Byron's publishers, had their printing works. Continue past Porter's Provisions towards the church and enter through the south door.



The Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalene (9) with its magnificent spire ranks as one of the finest in the country. When the tower was being built in 1227, Henry III gave a grant of six oaks from Sherwood Forest for the work to be done. Inside the church you will find the Fleming Brass dating from 1363, it is one of the four largest brasses in England and commemorates the life of a Newark wool merchant, Alan Fleming. The font was damaged in 1646 by the Parliamentarians after the surrender of Charles I. The crypt, entered by the Lady Chapel, was used after the 16th Century as a burying place but now houses the Treasury.

of Newark on Trent