

DORKING

Heritage Trail



two easy to walk
trails around the historic
market town of Dorking

DORKING... a town with traditions



Those taking the trails today are following in the footsteps of generations of earlier visitors attracted to the qualities of Dorking.



A Market Town

A glance at the map of Dorking shows the principal streets of High Street, South Street and West Street forming the backbone of the town and of this Heritage Trail. For generations these streets have been the centre of trade and commerce.

As you walk along them it is possible to imagine street markets with cattle tied to the railings that still line the High Street today and traders clinching deals in the public houses.

Imagine also the farm labourer riots that took place in High Street in 1830 when crowds fought with police and cavalry, or the Fair Day when horses were raced up and down the street.

A tradition dating from the early 19th century, until it was suppressed in 1902, was the Shrove Tuesday football matches. These games were played in the streets of the town disrupting it to such an extent that the shops had to be boarded up.

Passing along South Street, picture in your mind the coaching days of the 18th century when travellers between the south coast and London broke their journey and dined in the Bulls Head. Tucked behind these main streets were the breweries, a tanner's yard and a foundry.

The Town Today

Dorking today is still the focus for local business and commerce. As well as many High Street names the town has a large number of independent retailers offering an individual selection of goods and services. Hospitality is still as important to the town's economy as it was in times gone by.

With over a dozen town centre public houses and a fine selection of restaurants and cafés, both local people and visitors enjoy a wide range of food and drink. Although no longer in the High Street, the town holds a bustling Friday market. The sales cries of the modern traders hark back to the sounds heard over 700 years ago when the town's market was granted a Royal Charter.

The Heritage Trail provides an opportunity to see how Dorking has evolved from a mediæval village to the busy and vibrant town it is today. For further information on the history of the town there is the Visitor Information Centre in the Dorking Halls, Reigate Road, and the Dorking and District Museum and its Library in West Street.

The museum is open on Wednesday and Thursday between 2pm & 5pm and on Saturday between 10am & 5pm.



Dorking's reputation for fine scenery, an attractive town and good local food has been a winning combination for many generations. First as a staging post between London and the south coast and then as a resort town, visitors have sung its praises with enthusiasm.

For some it is the landscape setting '*...most beautifully surrounded with wooded heights and picturesque commons.*'

For others it is the '*air fresh and breezy*'. Yet others enjoyed the '*...unmatched number and variety of pleasant rambles it offers by any other town within the same distance of London*'.

Yet others came for its reputation for food, most famously '*The Dorking*' a breed of fowl that took its name from the town.

In this special corner of England, the reasons that brought poets, musicians, writers and philosophers or just ordinary people to Dorking over the centuries are still relevant today.



DORKING Heritage Trails



Trail 1

Plaque Locators

- 1 St. Martin's Church
- 2 Barclays Bank
- 3 White Horse Hotel
- 4 The Almshouses
- 5 Dorking Halls
- 6 Council Offices
- 7 Hamptons
- 8 St. Martin's Walk



Vaughn Williams Statue



St Martin's Church Clock



The Cottmandene Almshouses



A Cottmandene Cottage

where the telephone exchange is now. Outside the Dorking Halls 5 a bronze statue at the entrance to the Halls celebrates the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams who lived in Dorking. Within the Halls a beautiful bronze relief also depicts the composer.

➔ Cross Reigate Road where another bronze statue can be found. This one is of Thomas Cubitt, Victorian builder and local resident who was responsible for the building of large parts of fashionable London.

➔ At this point on the trail you might wish to walk a few hundred metres to the Deepdene roundabout to see one of the town's modern wonders, a giant five-toed 'Dorking' cockerel. This special breed of fowl is the symbol of the town and was supposedly introduced by the Romans.

➔ Return to the Council Offices, 6 a distinctive, modern, red brick building. The Trail then passes Pippbrook House, which now houses the Public Library, and into Old London Road.

➔ Cross with care, opposite Pippbrook Mill. This corn mill was one of several along the banks of the Pippbrook stream. It fell into disuse in the 16th century but was

rebuilt again in the 18th century. A narrow path beyond the Mill leads along the side of the mill pond.

➔ Turn left along a narrow bridge into Wathen Road. A blue plaque on the left side of the street identifies the birthplace of Sir Laurence Olivier, one of Britain's most celebrated actors.

➔ Back into the High Street turn right at Hamptons 7. The shops here represent the late 19th century expansion of the retail heart of the town, including the Oddfellows' Hall, built in 1894 by local architect William Shearburn.

➔ Continue along the street, past the post office. The timber-framed building occupied by Café Rouge, opposite the post office, probably dates back to the 16th century.

Turn into the modern shopping centre of St Martin's Walk, under the projecting clock tower. A plaque 8 on the left commemorates the visit to Dorking of Queen Elizabeth II. At the back of the centre is a path that leads into the churchyard, returning you to your starting point. ■

START TRAIL 1

Begin at the south door of St. Martin's Church.

➔ Take the path into the busy High Street and turn left keeping an eye open for the plaque on Barclays Bank 2 erected to celebrate the year 2000.

➔ Take the pedestrian crossing to the opposite side of road, turning left down the broad High Street. Look left above the roofs and chimneys to the North Downs. The slopes of Denbies Vineyard clothed with vines can be seen above the roof tops and, further round, the open downland of Box Hill provides a dramatic backdrop. You will then pass the White Horse Hotel which is over 400 years old. 3

➔ Continue along High Street, turning right into Dene Street and left up Heath Hill. The road opens out onto Cotmandene. This common land provides fine views towards Box Hill and to the spire of St Martin's. An 18th century painting of a panorama of Dorking shows 'two-stump' cricket being played on Cotmandene. The painting hangs in the Long Room at Lord's Cricket Ground.

➔ Past the Almshouses 4, follow the Trail bearing left into Moores Road. The high brick walls here once enclosed the kitchen garden of the Deepdene Estate, a picturesque landscape centered on Deepdene House, demolished in 1969.

➔ Turn right at the petrol station. One of the many smithies in the town was situated opposite the present garage on the corner of London Road, roughly



opened by the founder of Methodism himself, John Wesley. West Street is one of the town's oldest and most picturesque streets, which has an international reputation as a quality antiques centre. 11

Enjoy the distinctive shop frontages of West Street before turning left into Junction Road. This road was constructed in the 19th century to relieve traffic congestion in the town.

➔ Turn left into South Street, crossing the street opposite the war memorial. South Street was once widened and the war memorial and a bandstand were incorporated into the scheme. By the 1930's, however, the noise of traffic made the bandstand impractical and it was later removed. A doorway to the left of the war memorial is the entrance to the South Street Caves, one of Dorking's most popular visitor attractions.

➔ Turn left down the hill back toward Pump Corner, passing Butterhill House, the entrance to Rose Hill 12 and the Bulls Head public house 13.

➔ The trail leads back into High Street. Walk along High Street to view the beautiful bow-fronted shop of Robert Dyas 14 before doubling back to cross at the pedestrian crossing and into the oasis of Kings Head Court. 15

From there walk back along the High Street and left into the churchyard to complete your trail. ■

START TRAIL 2

From the west end of St Martin's Church take a route through the church gates into Church Street. The row of neat 19th century cottages is dwarfed by the church spire, one of the tallest in England.

➔ Turn left into North Street and you will emerge into the historic heart of the town at Pump Corner.

➔ Turn right into West Street. Fifty metres on the right is the entrance to the interesting Dorking and District Museum 9. Numbers 58-61 was the home of William Mullins, one of the Pilgrim Fathers. A blue plaque commemorates him and the journey he and his family made to America on The Mayflower in 1620. The Italianate Church by local architect William Shearburn stands back from the street. 10

Outside 44 West Street is another blue plaque indicating the site of Dorking's first Methodist chapel

Plaque Locators

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| ➔ St. Martin's Church | 12 Rose Hill Arch |
| 9 Dorking & District Museum | 13 Bulls Head |
| 10 United Reformed Church | 14 Robert Dyas |
| 11 Harman's Antiques | 15 Kings Head Court |

Trail 2



Church Street



North Street



West Street



South Street

a remarkable town

It is surrounded by the Surrey Hills a nationally important landscape.



To the north, visible down many of the town centre streets, are the chalk hills of the North Downs. To the south, the Greensand Hills provided a prestigious location for the Victorian and Edwardian expansion of Dorking.

This picturesque setting and the varied architecture, streets and public spaces, reflecting the history of Dorking from Roman times to the present day, provide the raw material for the Dorking Heritage Trail.

A walk around Dorking is an opportunity to step back in time and explore the rich and eventful past of this historic market town.



FIND OUT MORE

For more information on Dorking and surrounding areas visit these websites:



visitdorking.com

Dorking's official website, packed with information on Dorking and its surrounding villages and countryside.



visitleatherhead.com

The official website for Dorking's sister town to the north, connected by the Mole Gap Trail.



surreyhills.org

The official website for the Surrey Hills AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).



nationaltrail.co.uk

Go to the North Downs Way section to discover information about this famous trail running from Farnham to Dover, through Dorking.



visitsurrey.com

The official website for Surrey Tourism. Contains information of the whole of Surrey and has an accredited accommodation listing.

getting online in Dorking

You can access all these websites for free either at the internet access stations situated at Hasketts Tea Room in South Street or the Intermission Café in Dorking Halls, adjacent to the Visitor Information Centre. (see map)

