

# Leek



# Architectural Trail



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# Introduction

A short walk around Leek's main streets soon reveals the Victorian influence, particularly under the design of the Sugdens, a local firm of architects who designed many buildings in the town in the Arts & Crafts style.

William Morris, founder of the Arts & Crafts movement, lived and worked in Leek for long periods between 1875 and 1877. Much of his time here was spent investigating new techniques of dyeing with Thomas Wardle and he also encouraged Elizabeth (Thomas Wardle's wife) to found the Leek School of Embroidery.



Sir Thomas Wardle



William Morris



# Architectural Trail



## 3. Market Place

Leek's first market was established by Royal Charter in 1207. Today the town continues this tradition with regular indoor and outdoor weekly general markets; a Saturday Antiques Market and a monthly Sunday Supplement Market. The Market Cross, which now stands in the Market Place, was originally erected, near the junction of Sheepmarket and Stanley Street, by the Joliffe family in 1671. It was moved to Cornhill on Cheddleton Road in 1806 and in 1857 was moved to the new cemetery. Since 1986 it has stood near to its original site in Leek Market Place.

**Telephone kiosk Grade 2 listed Type K6.** Designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and made by various contractors out of cast-iron. It is a square kiosk with domed roof and un-perforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door.



## 5. The Nicholson Institute, Museum & Art Gallery

Don't miss a visit to Leek's iconic Grade 2\* listed building - an impressive example of Arts & Crafts heritage with its Renaissance style tower and copper dome, a fine example of a Sugden building in the Queen Anne style. Completed in 1884 and funded by local industrialist and silk mill owner Joshua Nicholson, the Institute offered the people of Leek an opportunity to learn and expand their cultural horizons. The Nicholson has seen many famous people pass through its doors including the likes of Oscar Wilde, John Betjeman and D H Lawrence. The Nicholson Institute, Museum & Art Gallery is one of a few buildings in the country still being used for the purpose for which it was originally built and was recently refurbished.

The Nicholson Museum & Art Gallery has an exciting programme of exhibitions and events through the year, and is located on the first floor. To the right of the Institute is the extension opened in 1900 as Leek Municipal Technical and High School and County Silk School. Note the low relief plaster decoration.

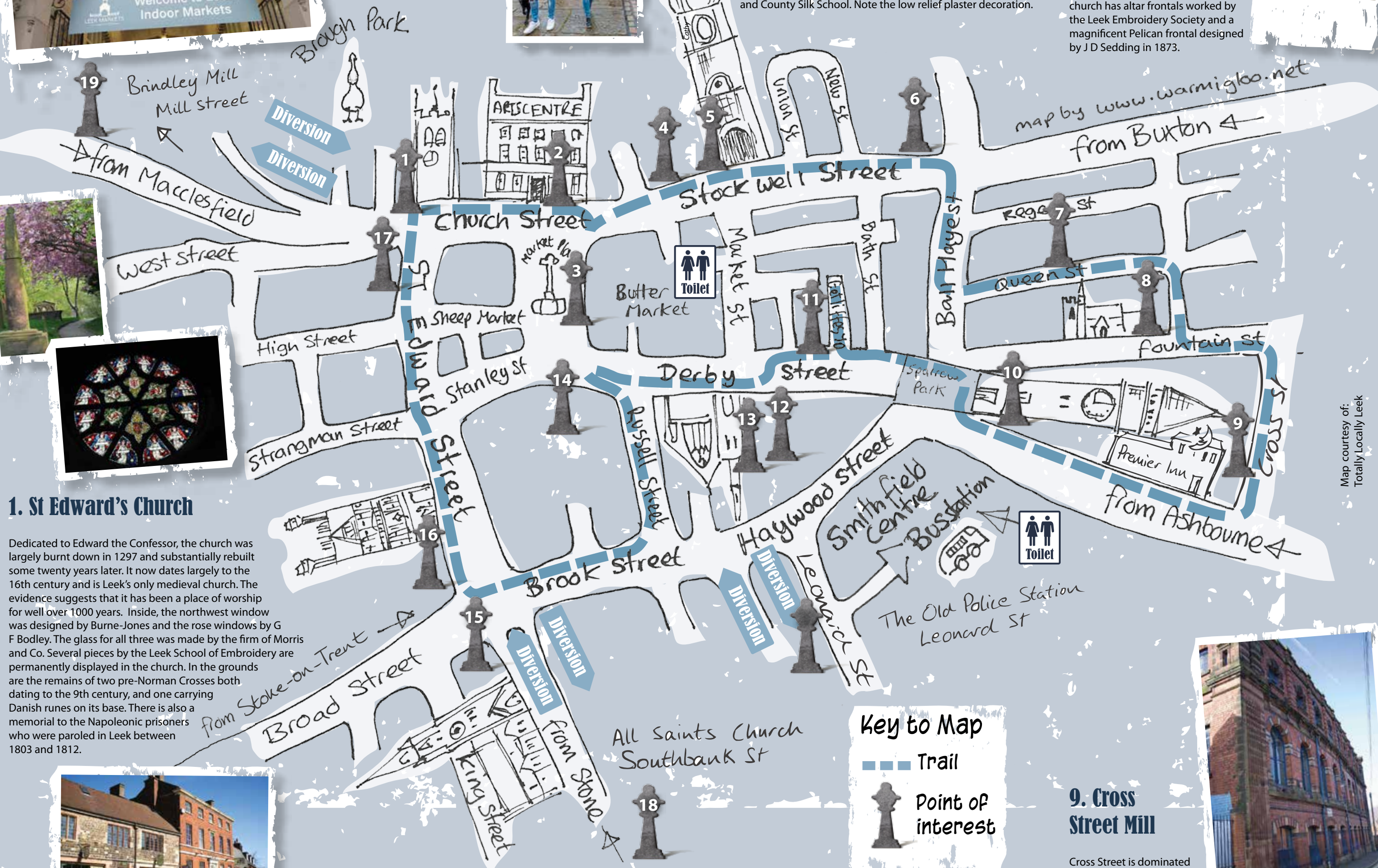


## 7. Queen Street

Houses on this street were built at different times hence the selection of Edwardian and Victorian town houses interspersed with terraced and earlier cottages. Numbers 29, 29a and 29b Queen Street were designed and built in 1877, by Larner Sugden. He and his French wife Marie, lived at number 29. Note the decorative chimney stacks, arched and pointed windows, floral motives and the terracotta details beneath the second floor windows. The initials of William Larner Sugden and his wife Marie are embossed in brick on the front of the house. The smaller houses, numbers 29a and 29b, were also built by Larner Sugden. Larner's father, William, lived at 29b which while still exhibiting the typical Sugden style is less impressive in its design than number 29.

## 8. St Luke's Church

St. Luke's Church was consecrated in 1848, to serve a new Anglican parish. It is built in sandstone in a Gothic style and designed by F J Francis of London. In 1873 the chancel was extended to a design by John Dando Sedding. The church has altar frontals worked by the Leek Embroidery Society and a magnificent Pelican frontal designed by J D Sedding in 1873.



Map courtesy of:  
Totally Locally Leek

## 1. St Edward's Church

Dedicated to Edward the Confessor, the church was largely burnt down in 1297 and substantially rebuilt some twenty years later. It now dates largely to the 16th century and is Leek's only medieval church. The evidence suggests that it has been a place of worship for well over 1000 years. Inside, the northwest window was designed by Burne-Jones and the rose windows by G F Bodley. The glass for all three was made by the firm of Morris and Co. Several pieces by the Leek School of Embroidery are permanently displayed in the church. In the grounds are the remains of two pre-Norman Crosses both dating to the 9th century, and one carrying Danish runes on its base. There is also a memorial to the Napoleonic prisoners who were paroled in Leek between 1803 and 1812.



## 2. The Foxlowe Arts Centre

A well-established arts venue which has developed a reputation as the place to go in Leek. It has a very popular cafe, live music venue, gallery and cinema/lecture room, all housed in an impressive Georgian building overlooking the Market Place. This large house together with a considerable estate was the family home and offices owned by both the Mills and Cruso families, who were prominent solicitors in the town. It was used by the Red Cross as a convalescent home for soldiers returning from the Great War and later became the headquarters of Leek's Textile Union.

## 4. Greystones

With its symmetrical stone front, hooded porch and mullioned windows, Greystones was built in the 17th century. Subsequently owned by Joshua Nicholson and occupied by his son Arthur. You can see the initials AN on the tie irons on the front of the house above the bedroom windows. Greystones was saved from demolition by Thomas Wardle and William Morris as members of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings.



## 6. Sugden House

Formerly the Alsop Memorial Hospital and built in memory of James Alsop by his wife. Designed by William Sugden and opened in 1870 it was extended in 1909 and is a fine example of Sugden architecture, which often incorporates, pointed or arched windows, decorative roof and ridge tiles, coloured brickwork and insertions of stone and terracotta tiles. Today it has been sympathetically restored and converted into flats. It is a fine and relatively rare example of a Cottage Hospital.

## 9. Cross Street Mill

Cross Street is dominated by the elegantly curved façades built for Brough, Nicholson and Hall. These were designed in 1860 by William Sugden, and extended later by his son Larner. In its heyday more than 2000 people worked in Brough, Nicholson & Hall's silk mills. Don't be fooled by the date of 1815 on the corner of the building. This indicates when the firm of J & J Brough started.



Trail Continued... >



## 10. Nicholson War Memorial



The Nicholson War Memorial is 90 feet high, built in Portland stone, and with four clock faces it is one of the largest war memorials in the country. It was the gift of Sir Arthur Nicholson "in memory of his Son Lieut Basil Lee Nicholson and all others from the Town of Leek and surrounding neighbourhood who fell in the Great War 1914-18" – it also remembers the district's dead from subsequent conflicts. See the information board to the rear of the Monument. Free guided tours are available on the 1st Sunday of each month from February to November.

## 11. Getliffe's Yard

In Derby Street is the hidden entrance to Getliffe's Yard, through which you can travel back in time to a bygone era.

Several three-storey weavers' houses and warehouses stood in Getliffe's Yard in the 19th century. They had fallen into disrepair until the owners saw their potential for development in 1987.

Today, Getliffe's Yard is a vibrant community of shops, businesses and cafes. Original cobblestones below a magnificent glass dome offer a relaxed atmosphere.

Easy to walk past, but impossible to ignore once discovered, Getliffe's Yard is a destination you won't want to miss.



Justin Sutcliffe

## 12. 24 Derby Street

Formerly the National Westminster Bank, it opened in 1882 as the Manchester and Liverpool District Banking Co.

Designed by Larner Sugden, it has a fine brick façade with stone dressings and elaborate pargetting. Inside the porch are tiles designed by William de Morgan.



## 13. The Roebuck

Built as a private house in 1626 this building has long been in use as an inn, with extensive stabling and land to the rear. It is timberframed and has mullion and transom windows.

The projecting section was once a two-storey porch to the main entrance.



Cathy Bower

## 14. 10 Derby Street

This elegant Georgian House, built in 1760, was the home and offices of the Challinor family who were noted solicitors in the town. It has an early courtroom to the rear.

## 15. Alms Houses

The Alms Houses were endowed by Elizabeth Ash in 1696 and restored in the early 20th century. They were intended for "maids or widows of the parish". There was a house for each local Parish. Those living in the Alms Houses had to abide by rules, some of which remain today! These included: be regular churchgoers, must not have male visitors and promises not to scold neighbours!



# 16. St Edward Street

## (Numbers 64, 62 and 54)

With its wide pavements and Georgian town houses, this is considered to be Leek's finest street. The large black and white building on the corner, Victoria Buildings, was built in 1897. Spout Hall, also an impressive black and white building, was designed by Richard Norman Shaw in 1873.

Number 64, built in 1747 is an elegant Georgian house once the home of Hugh Sleigh, a wealthy silk manufacturer

Number 62 dates to 1724 and was built by Joshua Strangman, a Quaker buttonman. His son, also Joshua, entertained John Wesley here in 1774. The house was for many years the home of Sir Thomas Wardle and his family who had moved here from Leekbrook in 1866. They entertained William Morris here, in the years 1875 to 1877, when Morris was exploring the use of natural dyes to produce traditional colours. Number 54, another Georgian property, is often referred to as the "Wardle home". It's true that the Wardles moved here but not until after 1881. The shop next door, with the bay window, was used as a schoolroom, workshop and commercial outlet, selling both materials and kits made by Elizabeth Wardle's embroidery pupils.



# 17. The Green Dragon

The Green Dragon can be traced back to the 1560s and had its present name by the 1690s. It's previously been known as "The Angel" (1781) and "The Swan" (1786). The fine 18th century Assembly Room at the rear was opened in 1787 and now serves as the bar.

# Diversion

## 18. All Saints Church

All Saints Church is a beautifully maintained Grade 1 listed building on Compton. Designed by Richard Norman Shaw, and built in 1885–87. It has a central tower with a pyramidal roof. Due to the slope of the land, the vestry is underneath the chancel. Inside the church, the walls of the chancel, and the east walls of the Lady Chapel, were painted by Gerald Horsley. The Lady Chapel walls were painted by a local man, Edgar Platt, who trained and taught at Leek School of Art. The majority of the stained glass was made by Morris and Co. Also in the church is work by the Leek Embroidery Society. (Add another hour to the trail time).



## 19. Brindley Mill

This is the only known corn mill attributable as the work of Leek's famous son, James Brindley, the 18th century engineer who built much of the early canal network. This water-powered corn mill built in 1752 (on the site of an earlier mill) in Mill Street has been restored and now houses the Brindley Water Museum which is devoted to his life and work. The mill was formerly much larger as part of the building was demolished for road-widening in 1948. However, the waterwheel and all its machinery are intact and in working condition. Visitors can see corn being ground and displays of mill-wrighting skills. Please confirm opening times at [www.brindleymill.com](http://www.brindleymill.com) (Add another hour to the trail time).

## 20. The Old Police Station

Larner Sugden designed the Leonard Street Police Station in a Scottish Baronial style (1891).

The superintendent's house built at the same time, is just the other side of the archway. (Add 10 minutes to the trail time).



# Need to Re-fuel?

In need of refreshment?

Maybe a spot of retail therapy? Leek town centre offers you a range of independent shops and boutiques alongside the regular high street names. Why not visit one of the many bustling speciality markets?



Cathy Bower



Cathy Bower

If you are looking for a place to eat, you will not be disappointed. Leek has a large number of eateries from vintage style tearooms and coffee shops to family friendly pubs and more.

## Walk Information

The walk will take about one and a half hours. We have also included several diversions if you want to extend your walk. For safety reasons we advise you to cross the roads at Pelican Crossings where possible.

Toilets are situated at Silk Street Car Park and the Bus Station.

### **For more information and opening times:**

Contact Staffordshire Moorlands Tourism

email: [tourism@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk)

**[www.discoverstaffordshiremoorlands.co.uk](http://www.discoverstaffordshiremoorlands.co.uk)**

Please scan the QR code.



Leaflet racks with town centre maps and more local information are located within Leek Indoor Market (Market Place) and SMDC (Moorlands House, Stockwell Street, ST13 6HQ).



# Getting Here



## By Car

From North West: Exit M6 jct 16. A500 towards Stoke. A53 to Leek.

From North East: Exit M1 jct 28. A38 towards Derby. A52 to Ashbourne. A52/A523 to Leek.

From South West: Exit M6 jct 14. A34 to Stone. A520 to Leek.

From South East: Exit M1 jct 23A. A50 towards Uttoxeter/ Stoke. A520 to Leek.

## By Rail and Bus

The nearest railway stations are Stoke-on-Trent (12 miles), Macclesfield (13 miles), Buxton (13 miles). Frequent connecting bus services are available from Stoke and regular connecting bus services available from Macclesfield and Buxton. For more information contact Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

