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Bakewell History Walk

Distance: 1.5 miles.
Time: 1 to 2 hours (not including museum visits).
Difficulty: Easy urban – Some hills, including one steep descent. Some chance of mud.
Maps: None, or Bakewell town plan.
Toilets: On Granby Road, next to Boots.

The town of Bakewell is notable for many reasons. It is the only town to be found within the boundaries of the Peak District National Park. It is home to the headquarters of the National Park and to the annual Bakewell Show. And, most famously, it is where the world-famous Bakewell Pudding was created. This short walk around town is designed to show you some of the best and most interesting of the many historic buildings to be found in the town of Bakewell. This walk should be suitable for all and, with a few slight changes as noted in italics below, is fully wheelchair-accessible.

Begin outside the Bakewell Tourist Information Centre in the old 17th-century Market Hall. After taking a few minutes to appreciate this fine building, turn right to head towards the bridge over the river, walking against the flow of the traffic on the one-way street. At the start of the bridge, take the path to the right down to the river. This gives you the ideal viewpoint to admire one of the most historic structures in the town. With its five pointed arches crossing the River Wye, Bakewell Bridge is a very ancient structure dating back to circa 1300. Today, the bridge is not just Grade I listed, but has also been given additional protection as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Returning to the road by the same route, cross the road and continue ahead along Castle Street with its terraces of late-Georgian houses. When you reach the "private road" sign at Milford Bridge, turn left to follow the waterside path along Brookside. The stream here is the tailrace of Victoria Mill, which you will soon see ahead of you, as it heads back to rejoin the River Wye. As Brookside joins Mill Street, look out for the unusual small stone obelisk on the corner of the bridge over the tailrace.

Walk ahead along Mill Street to join the A6 Buxton Road and turn right. The large building to the right as you turn the corner is Victoria Mill and, as you round the corner, note the large waterwheel in the yard. Built as a corn mill around 1800, Victoria Mill remained in use until sometime around 1945, but now houses a number of small industrial units. Unusually, in addition to the mill building itself being Grade II listed, the waterwheel and associated sluice form a separate Grade II listed structure.

Continue along the A6 past the Fire Station and follow the road around to the left and up the hill. After a short distance, you will see a large complex of industrial buildings to the right. This is Lumford Mill. The three-storey stone building closest to the road with a row of eight windows on each floor is the original Lumford Mill building, with all of the others on the site being later additions. Opened in 1782 by Richard Arkwright, Lumford Mill was built to a design based on his earlier mills at Cromford. Powered by the River Wye, its construction caused a dispute between Arkwright and the Duke of Rutland, who claimed that the mill interfered with the

water supply for his corn mill. After much litigation, Arkwright eventually lost the dispute and was forced to pay £10 per year to the Duke for the use of the water from the river. In 1860, the Arkwright family sold the mill to the Duke of Devonshire. After cotton spinning ended there, the site was used from 1898 until 1970 as the factory for the D.P. Battery Company Ltd. Founded in 1888, the company made heavy-duty lead acid batteries, including submarine batteries for the Royal Navy.

From Lumford Mill, turn around and head back down the road. Just before the speed camera, turn left off the A6 to cross over the river on Holme Bridge (also known as Packhorse Bridge). Dating from 1664, Holme Bridge, like Bakewell Bridge, is both Grade I listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Look to your left just before crossing the bridge and you may spot the stone walls of an old sheepwash enclosure at the side of the river. At the far side of the bridge, turn right and walk along Holme Lane until you reach a small wooden gate to the right leading onto a marked footpath across the fields. Following this footpath (which may be muddy in places, so be prepared) takes you past a number of weirs as you follow the river to join the road at the north end of Bakewell Bridge. *If you would like to avoid any chance of mud altogether, or are doing this walk with a pushchair or wheelchair, do not use the footpath, and instead continue along Holme Lane to join the A619 Baslow Road, and then turn right to follow this down to Bakewell Bridge.*

As you rejoin the road, look across the road for the unusual combination streetlight and drinking fountain. Cross the road here to the right-hand pavement, taking care as it is a busy main road, and walk the short distance up Station Road to the junction with Coombs Road. Follow Coombs Road past the car park to the signed footpath on the right just before Long Meadow House. This footpath leads into the car park of the modern Bakewell Agricultural Centre, which is at the heart of the busy agricultural community surrounding the town. At the end of the footpath, turn right and follow the car park around to the footpath on the right leading to the town centre.

Having crossed the river on the modern footbridge, continue ahead to join Granby Road, then turn left to follow the road down to join the A6 Matlock Street. If you do this walk on a Monday, this will take you past the very popular weekly market which, unlike many other markets up and down the country, is still thriving. Having joined the A6 Matlock Street, turn right and use the crossing to cross the road. Continue along the road towards the traffic island in Rutland Square, but turn left up King Street before you get there.

Follow King Street as it bears right and climbs the hill to become South Church Street. On the right-hand side of the road as it bears to the right stands the old Town Hall and the attached almshouses of the old St John's Hospital. Built in 1602, the old Town Hall originally served as the town hall on the upper floor with St John's Hospital on the floor beneath. In 1709, the almsmen were moved to a range of six newly-built almshouses to the side of the Town Hall. The Town Hall itself later served as the Buttermarket, and also as the original home of Lady Manners Grammar School, the predecessor of the current Lady Manners School which still exists in the town.

At the corner of the Almshouses, turn right into Church Alley and take the steps on the left up into the churchyard of All Saints Church. Follow these up into the churchyard and take the path to the left of the church. Originally founded in 920AD, parts of the current building date from the 12th century, and it is thought that it also includes some earlier Saxon masonry. Outside of the building stand two ancient crosses. The larger of these, which stands in a railed enclosure close to the building, dates from the early 9th century, while the other, to the right of the path a little further on, is from the 10th century. *If you need to avoid the steps up into the churchyard from Church Alley, continue up South Church Street to the junction with Church Lane, which is a sharp climbing hairpin turn on the right.*

Follow the path around the church and into Church Lane. Turn right along Church Lane and follow the signed footpath left to the Old House Museum on Cunningham Place. This local history museum is located in a 16th-century house formerly rented from Phillip Gell by Richard Arkwright, who converted it into six cottages for workers from Lumford Mill. *Please note that*

the path up to the Museum is narrow and has steps, so wheelchair and pushchair should continue along Church Lane to the bottom of Cunningham Place, which gives step-free access to the Old House Museum.

From the Old House Museum, walk down Cunningham Place to the junction with Church Lane by the Gospel Hall. Turn left here along Church Lane, then bear right down the steep Fly Hill. At the end of the road, continue down the trackway to join the base of Bagshaw Hill and the A6 Buxton Road. *Due to the steepness of Fly Hill, wheelchair users and others looking for a more gentle descent may wish to consider using Bagshaw Hill instead, crossing Church Lane at the base of Cunningham Place and walking down the left-hand side of the Gospel Hall. However, if you do this, please be aware that some parts of Bagshaw Hill are quite narrow and have no pavements.*

When you reach the A6, cross the road and turn right, heading back into the centre of town. You will soon pass a large and impressive three-storey late-Georgian house standing just back from the road behind a row of iron railings. This is Rutland House, built sometime in the late 18th or early 19th century. By 1857, this was the home of James Syson Nibbs, an inventor and manufacturer of lamps. Probably his most famous customer was Florence Nightingale, who took a number of his lamps with her to the Crimea. So when people talk about "the Lady with the Lamp", the lamp to which they are referring was very likely manufactured in Bakewell.

Continue along the road and around the left-hand bend back to Rutland Square. Standing on the western side of Rutland Square is the famous Rutland Arms Hotel. Built in 1804, this magnificent late Georgian building has played host to many famous visitors to the town. It is believed that Jane Austen stayed in room number two while visiting nearby Chatsworth House and, while there, revised the last chapters of *Pride and Prejudice*. However, the building's best-known claim to fame is as the reputed birthplace of the Bakewell Pudding. The actual origin of the Pudding is somewhat unclear and disputed, but the generally accepted story is that it was created by accident in 1820 in the kitchens of the Rutland Arms, then called the White Horse Inn. When the landlady, Mrs Greaves, left instructions for her cook to make a jam tart, the cook failed to follow the instructions and, instead of stirring the eggs and almond paste into the pastry mix, spread it on top of the pastry. When the dish was cooked, the egg and almond paste mix set into a custard-like form and the Bakewell Pudding was born.

From Rutland Square, it's just a short walk along the road back to the start point of the walk outside the Tourist Information Centre.

Useful Information:

There is plenty of pay-and-display car parking in Bakewell. The recommended car park for this walk is Bakewell Bridge, off Coombs Road. Use the postcode DE45 1AQ for sat-nav.

If you prefer public transport, Bakewell is served by regular bus services from Derby, Matlock, Buxton, Manchester, Chesterfield and Sheffield, many of which run hourly. Information on bus services can be found at www.travelineeastmidlands.co.uk/.

The Old House Museum is normally open between the end of March and the start of November. Please check opening times before visiting.

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