

Caribbean Heritage Trail

About the Caribbean Heritage Trail

This trail identifies key locations associated with the pioneering decades and early cultural contribution of Huddersfield's Caribbean community. Labour shortages within the UK's post-war transport, health and other key public services and industries, prompted economic migration that is often but not only linked with the *SS Empire Windrush* (1948). The Jamaican government discouraged people from leaving, but UK agencies promoted employment opportunities. The invited newcomers came principally from Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, Grenada, Carriacou and St Lucia between 1948 and the late 1960s. Migration was effectively over by 1973 but by then there was a new British born generation and Huddersfield's Caribbean community was becoming a small but increasingly visible part of local life.

This trail is part of larger plans to bring Huddersfield's Caribbean history and heritage more fully to wider audiences via published and online sources.

Text: Denzil Nurse, Natalie Pinnock-Hamilton and Heather Norris Nicholson

Images: Courtesy of The Huddersfield Examiner, Huddersfield Local Studies Library, Kirklees Image Archive, Heather Norris Nicholson

Information

For more information about Discover Huddersfield or to learn more about the project and how to get involved, please get in touch through the following media:

www.discoverhuddersfield.com

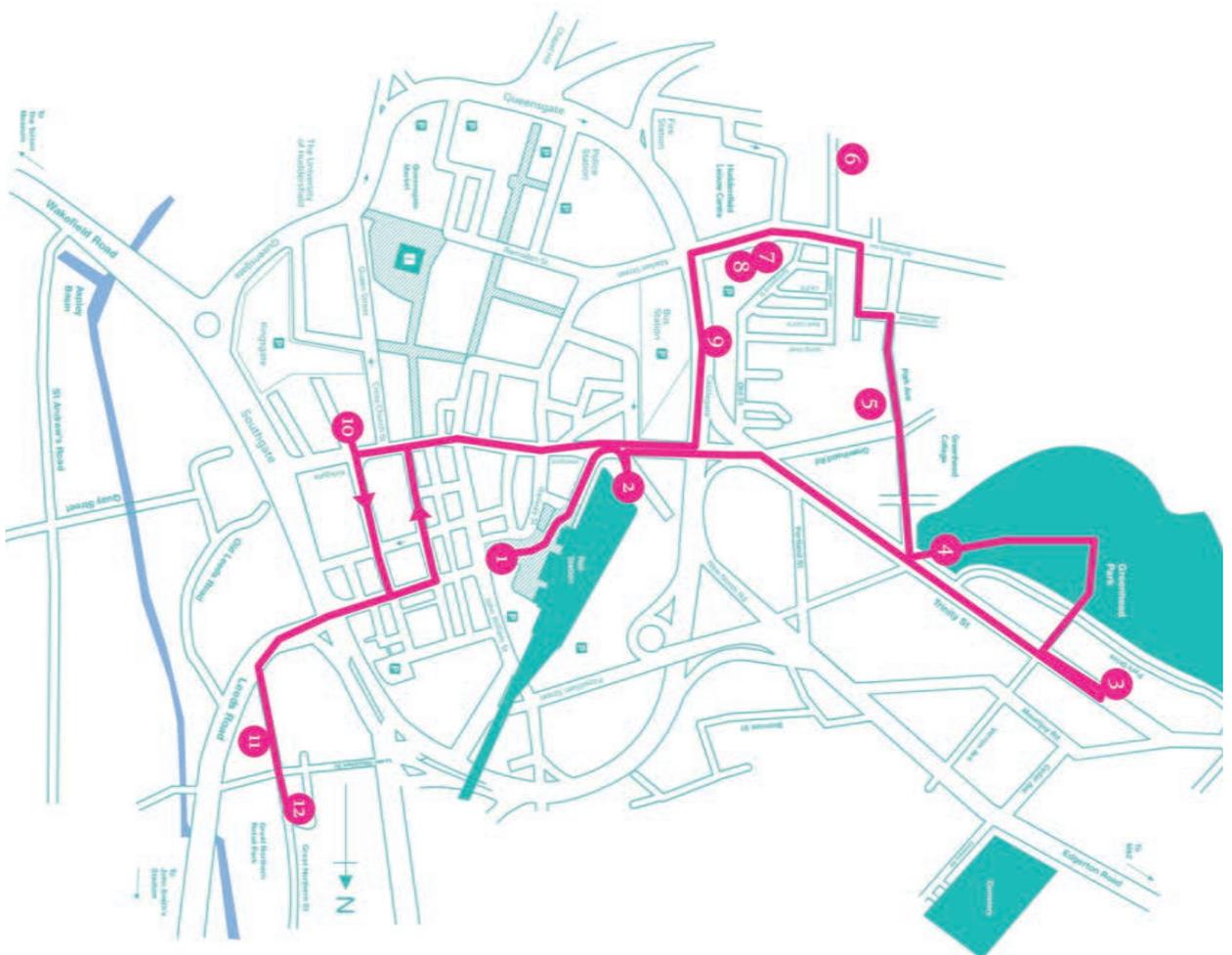
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Image: Courtesy of The Huddersfield Examiner



Key:
 Pedestrian area
 Parking
 One way traffic flow

Caribbean
Heritage Trail

Discover Huddersfield offers new ways to experience this amazing Yorkshire town, through guided walks, talks and trails. See Huddersfield at its very best: grand listed buildings and small independent shops; a place for radicals from the Luddites to the Sex Pistols; birthplace of Rugby League; a town rich in creativity, stories, heritage and the odd ghostly encounter.



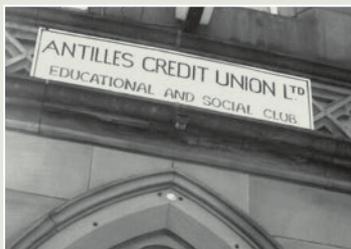
1 St George's Square

Early post-war Caribbean newcomers reached Huddersfield by train. The statue of Prime Minister, Harold Wilson recalls tightening immigration policies and racial tensions during the 1960s, as well as the first Race Relations Act (1965). Huddersfield African Caribbean Cultural Trust (5-7 Station Street) now hosts Huddersfield Carnival that started as a single float at the Mayor's parade in 1968.



2 Brian Jackson House/New North Road Baptist Church, Westgate

Yorkshire Children's Centre (formerly the National Children's Centre) moved here from Longroyd Bridge in the 1970s. Central to these early initiatives for children's wellbeing (the Saturday Club and childminding) was Hazel Wigmore. Through her outreach, the nearby New North Road Baptist Church gained a reputation for welcoming Caribbean newcomers.



3 Antilles Credit Union Ltd., 163 Trinity Street

In the Caribbean credit unions helped working people cope with

post-war poverty and five pioneering settlers developed this local initiative. Their credit union offered financial help and advice. It fostered resilience at a time when racism was widespread. 'No blacks here' signs prompted many families to share rented accommodation until they could afford to buy their own homes. The credit union eventually bought this Victorian building and it became an important educational and social centre.

4 Greenhead Park

Popular as a place to visit on Sundays, the Caribbean Carnival ended here for many years although St George's Square has been used more recently. Spectators gathered at the main park entrance to cheer masqueraders on the final stretch of the parade route while music, dancing, costumes and international food stalls transformed the park.

5 Trinity Street/ Greenhead Road

Many of Huddersfield's first post war babies of Caribbean origin were born at the Princess Royal Maternity Hospital and St Luke's. Government recruitment and training of Caribbean nurses, hospital auxiliary and domestic workers lasted here from 1949 until the early 1970s. Midwifery and mental health services were also delivered by staff from the Caribbean.



6 Springwood Avenue/ Water Street

Children from Caribbean families attended Spring Grove School which, under Trevor Burgin's leadership, gained a national reputation for its commitment to educational opportunity and diversity. Nearby, Springwood Adult Education Centre functioned as a reception centre and a petition for local racial harmony was co-ordinated here when its international club opened shortly after Enoch Powell's inflammatory 'Rivers of Blood' speech in April 1968.

7 Merton Street/Springwood Street

Many early Caribbean families lived in this area, some in the 'railway houses' adjacent to the red brick ventilation tower which became a popular meeting place. Local residents called it the 'Houses of Parliament' as its benches were a place to discuss current issues. Nearby, Bhullar Brothers' shop supplied Caribbean groceries. Bath Street was another residential focal point while pioneering Caribbean businesses included Bouncer's Records, Blacker Road; a Caribbean restaurant, Packhorse Centre; Rose Marie, later Chic, hairdressers, Birkby, and Donald Wong's (aka Chin) photographic studio.

8 Oasis Centre, Merton Street

Now a support centre for asylum-seekers and refugees, this former Elim Pentecostal Church reflects the importance of faith in the Caribbean community. Other churches also became important. St. Thomas' Church was mentioned in *Faith in the City* report, 1985, following urban riots and social unrest and hosted many community events.



9 Sparrow Park

Huddersfield Bus Station (1974) was built over Sparrow Park which gave its name to the Sparrow Park Club (formerly Shalimar nightclub) that became a popular music venue during the 1960s and 1970s.

10 Venn Street

The heart of Huddersfield's renowned Caribbean music scene was once here. Different venues, including the West Indian Social Club (1967), Cleopatra's (1970s), Silver Sands (early 1980s) as well as the Empress Ballroom, hosted many international reggae artists as well as local musicians. Venn Street also became part of the town's sound system culture along with venues



including the Sun Inn, Manchester Road; Fartown International; Black Star (which moved from Black Power House in Springwood to Chapel Hill) and the Arawak Club, Paddock. The Plaza Sunday disco was one of several venues for young people.



11 New Testament Church of God (NTCG)

At 8A Great Northern Street is the NTCG a former Victorian Congregational Church. Houses in Water Street and Station Street accommodated meetings and worship before NTCG found a permanent base. Worship, outreach and pastoral services continue to reflect community relations, attitudes and needs.



12 The Hudawi Centre

The Hudawi (Huddersfield African and West Indian) Centre symbolises local struggle and endeavour. School buildings made redundant by urban redevelopment became pivotal in community self-help and fostering cultural identity. The Caribbean Association and Black Unity gained early funding that supported many cultural, practical and social initiatives. The centre was constructed after fire destroyed the building (originally Beaumont St. School) in 1993. This is the starting point for Huddersfield Carnival and the venue for the celebratory Showcase that concludes Black History month (October).