

Driffield

A historic town walk

A small town with a long history. Driffield is home to renowned inventors, entrepreneurs, record-making Ashes cricketer and the burial place of a King. An historically significant settlement with a heritage stretching back to Neolithic times. Its status as a market town was cemented with the opening of the canal (1770) and railway (1846). Driffield has also hosted one of the country's largest one-day agricultural shows since 1851. The map (overleaf) will help guide you around notable historic and heritage sites. Allow up to two hours to stroll the route.



Public toilets (WC) are available on Cross Hill and North Street.
Car Parks (P) are situated on Cross Hill and off Eastgate South
Visitor information (i) is available at the town council office on Cross Hill during office hours

Places to eat Driffield has many places to eat in and around the town centre. Visit www.driffieldtowncouncil.org.uk for a full list

Public Transport Driffield is on the Scarborough Hull train line (www.nationalrail.co.uk) and the 121 bus route (East Yorkshire Motor services 01482 222222)

1 Cross Hill (formerly known as Pinfold Hill)

A location that could tell some stories. Hundreds of farm workers used to gather here to compete for jobs at the annual hirings. It has been used as a market and fairground (a travelling fair still visits in September) and has housed a pillory and iron foundry. Driffield's first workhouse was built here in 1842. It was replaced by a new institution in 1868. Former "workhouse boy" Les Daniels (1922-2000) chaired Driffield Urban District Council in 1967. The town's library is in the south west corner opposite the Infants School.

2 Market Place

You are standing at the commercial "heart" of Driffield where the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, preached in 1772; close to the birthplace of legendary Yorkshire cricketer John Thomas Brown (usually referred to as "JT"). His innings of 140 in the final test of the 1894-5 series brought the Ashes back from Australia. He is still the only player to score two triple hundreds for Yorkshire.

Look at the balcony of the 18th century Bell Hotel. General Election results for the Buckrose constituency used to be announced from here. The Town Hall (formerly the Corn Exchange) was incorporated into The Bell Hotel in 1986.

Another great experience in Driffield

9 River Head

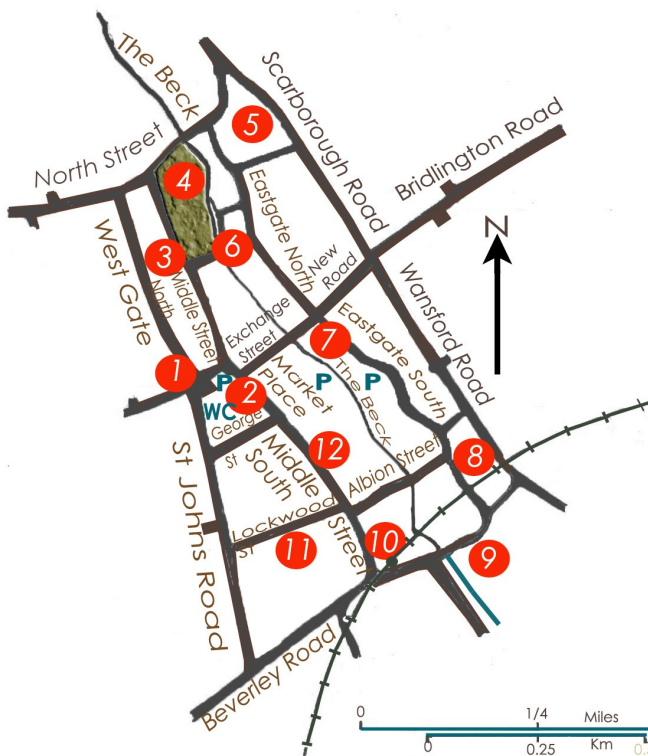
A tranquil setting and major landmark in the town and only metres away from the Blue Bell Inn. Its renowned landlord Thomas Porter was largely responsible for Driffield becoming a significant commercial centre. In the second half of the eighteenth century he coordinated a campaign among local businessmen for the canal network to be extended. This happened in 1770 and River Head became the base for flour and bone meal mills, granaries, warehouses, malt houses, breweries, coal yards and manufacturing industries. The canal remained a working waterway until the 1940s. Today, it is used for leisure boats and sailing, with one of the old mills converted into riverside flats.

10 The Railway

Reaching Driffield in 1846, the railway became the universal carrier that brought goods to and from the town. Other lines were later opened, which made Driffield a significant junction town for over 75 years. It has survived several threats to close it and remains an important stop on the Hull to Scarborough line. Steam trains run through here on rare occasions. In recent years it has been refurbished and won awards for its floral displays.

11 Masonic Hall

Home of the long-gone and much lamented Driffield Museum. One of Driffield's most unusual buildings, it was erected in 1878 by renowned archaeologist John Mortimer. An agricultural merchant trading in corn, seed and manure, Mortimer's first love was archaeology. He built the museum to house his huge collection of around 66,000 items from his many excavations throughout East Yorkshire. He paid farmworkers for flint tools and other objects they found while working the fields. They included finds from the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages. Today, the remnants of the Mortimer Collection are housed in museums in Hull.



3 All Saints Church

Of 12th century origins, it was briefly the focus of national attention in 2000 when several parishioners reported seeing an image of Christ's face on interior plasterwork. Architect Gilbert Scott Jnr., son of the nationally famous architect Sir Gilbert Scott, carried out restoration work between 1878-80. It is thought the present tower was built on the burnt foundations of an Anglo Saxon church, when charred remains were found during 19th cent restoration work. It houses six bells, some of which date back over 400 years.

4 North End Park

Reputedly the site of an Anglo Saxon Palace, Deira Castle, from which the name Driffield is derived. The castle belonged to King Aldfrith of Northumbria, who is buried in nearby Little Driffield. (see park information board for more details). Modern-day warriors are commemorated in the nearby Garden of Remembrance. It includes a

5 Moot Hill

Excavations in 1975 showed this to be the location of a medieval motte castle. It is believed by some historians to have been an Anglo-Saxon/Medieval meeting place for dispensing justice and discussing important local issues.

6 Laundry Lane and Bridge House

Once the site of a sluice gate for a water mill (later a brewery) it was the base of Driffield Laundry and public baths. The laundry only closed in the last 40 years. Nearby Bridge House is one of the oldest surviving houses from the mid-18th century.



7 The Cattle Market

The 2001 foot-and-mouth outbreak was the death knell for one of the major cattle markets in East Yorkshire. It awaits redevelopment. Nearby -on the corner of Exchange Street and Eastgate South -stands the Spread Eagle Inn. It was built over 200 years ago by Susannah Goor, who was a renowned fortune teller and an alleged witch. She lived there until her death in 1826 at the age of 98.

8 Fawcett Gardens

Named after a well known man of the printing industry, Benjamin Fawcett (1808-1893). He set up the East Lodge Printworks here in 1850 (later the site of East Yorkshire Printers, publishers of the Driffield Times). A pioneer of colour printing and engraving in this country, Fawcett was described as a "born genius" by one contemporary. His most famous work was "A History of British Birds." (see information board for more details).

