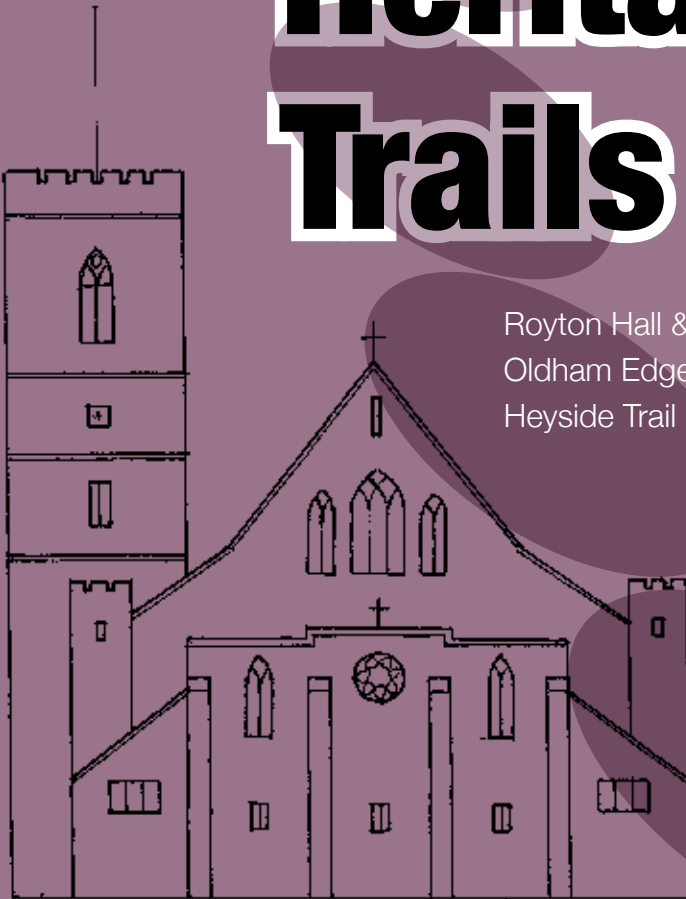




Royton Heritage Trails

Royton Hall & Dryclough Trail
Oldham Edge Trail
Heyside Trail



Each of the three trails can be walked independently or combined to form an extended walk. The Heyside trail is wheelchair friendly, but care should still be taken as there are two areas where there are no dropped curbs. Wear sensible shoes and clothing and take refreshments. There are no public toilets on the routes.

Royton Hall and Dryclough Trail

Distance: 1.5 miles (2.36 km)

The trail starts at the **Royton Hall information board** **1** on Hall Street. Now demolished, the hall was owned chiefly by the Byron, Standish, Percival, Pickford and Radcliffe families over a period of 800 years. Archaeological excavations carried out during 2004 - 2007 led us to believe that the early hall started as a small building in the north east corner of the site and was gradually extended clockwise into a rectangular shape enclosing a courtyard. From 1795 it was leased to several tenants by the Radcliffe family and was subsequently used as a school, farm, and sub-tenanted lodgings for families. As the town grew many future mill managers and owners originally rented rooms here as did various clergymen and other middle ranking citizens. Poorer families, employed in the local mills, rented accommodation at the rear of the hall and in the cellars. In the 20th century the hall was used both as a



1. Royton Hall

doctor's surgery and as apartments. In the 1930s it became unsanitary and unsafe and, under the orders of Royton Urban District Council, was demolished in 1939.

Walk south on Hall Street and turn right into Brook Street. Cross the bottom of Roman Road and continue along Brook Street.

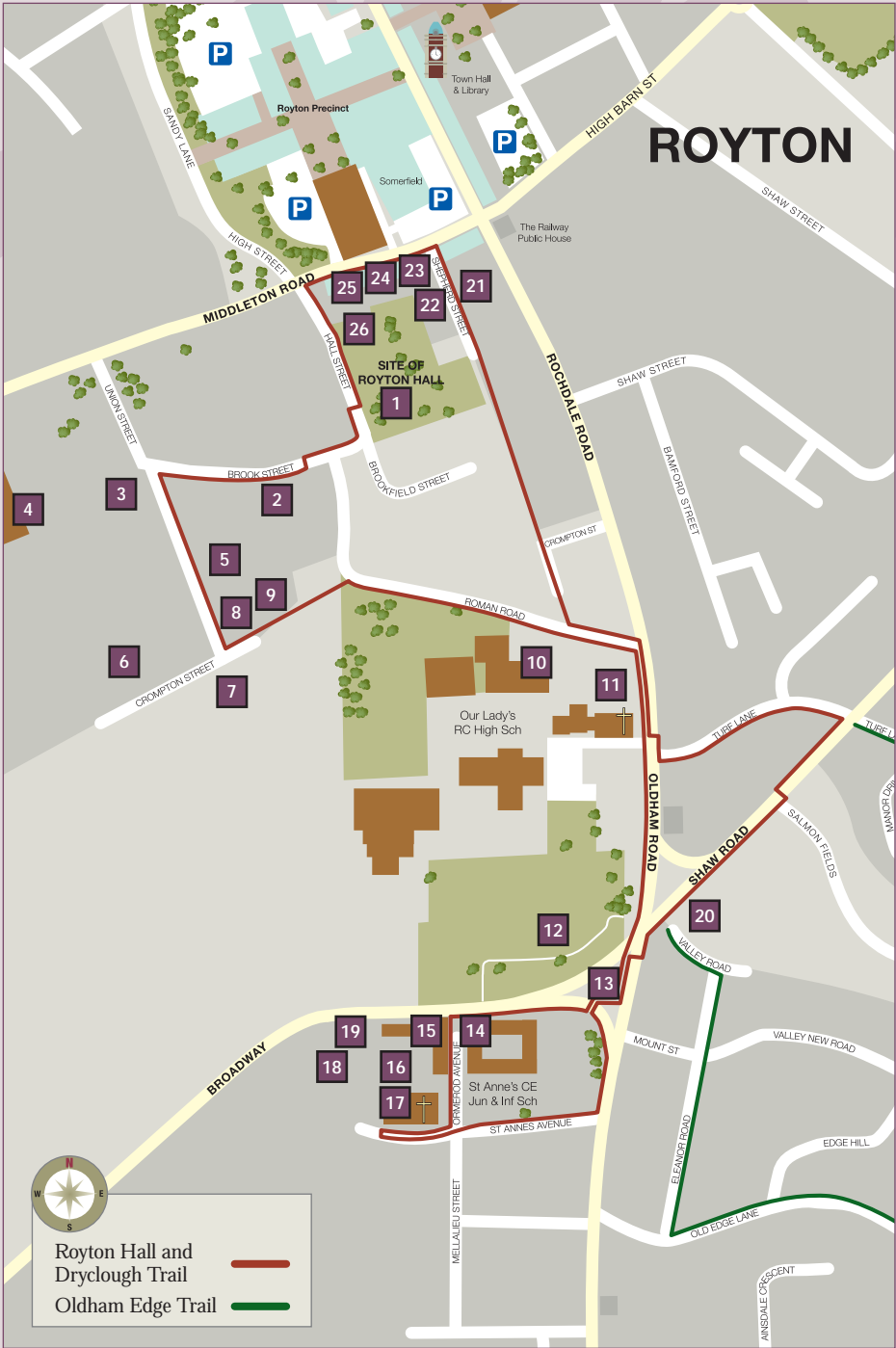
On the left, after the flats and row of houses, you arrive at an open section

of the so-called **River Roy** **2**. A lintel stone, from the former Springhill Iron Works erected here, is set into the lower retaining wall. George Cass, of Cass and Company millwrights (iron and brass founders) at the works, lived at the Hall in the 1840s and 50s. The whole site was owned by Peter Seville of Elm House, Church Street, who incorporated the works into his Spring Hill Mills complex (present day Roy and Spring Hill Streets), which flourished from the 1840s into the early 20th century. The mills eventually contained 40,000 spindles and 400 looms. The reservoir for the mills and ironworks lay behind the adjacent row of houses abutting the open section of the brook.



2. Spring Hill Iron Works

ROYTON



Royton Hall and Drycough Trail —

Oldham Edge Trail —

Continue along Brook Street to Union Street. Directly facing are the remaining buildings of the old **Union Mill** 3 owned by the Seville and Milne families of Union House and Elm House (Seville and Milne Co). Built in the 1820s, it contained 24,000 spindles, 400 looms and employed 400 hands. It closed in 1896. Mostly demolished, the remaining buildings were used for a packaging and skip works. The red brick mill seen behind the site on Middleton Road, is the **Vine Mill** 4, built in 1897. The premises became part of Gartside's Shiloh Spinning Group. Its daughter mill, aptly named Grape, was built in 1905 by the same basic shareholders, and was the first mill in Royton to contain 100,000 spindles. It spun its first cop of weft on April 21, 1906. The River Roy runs underground across Union Street and along the north wall of the Vine. Sluice gates here once created other reservoirs for the mills.

Turn left up Union Street along the retaining wall of the **old gas-works** 5 built in the 1840s. This was a subsidiary of Oldham Gas Light and Waterworks Company, later sited at Higginshaw. On site was a keeper's house and installations for lighting the streets of Royton. Now the site comprises industrial and commercial premises. Continue to the top of Union Street. To the right is the **Grape Mill** 6 (see above). Facing you is the **Delta Mill** 7. Delta was built in 1901 by shareholders of Parkside Mill to spin Egyptian yarn shipped from the Nile Delta.



7. Delta Mill

It originally held 80,000 spindles. Built to try to beat Crompton's Dawn Mill to completion, the shares were fully subscribed within 5 days of flotation. It became Cotton and Rayon Spinners Ltd around 1950 and ceased production in 1979. The mill was purchased by Coin Controls, manufacturers of coin hoppers and components for transaction automation, who renovated the building and removed the top three floors. The company has since been renamed Money Controls.

Turn left and walk along Crompton Street. On the left is the southern boundary 8 of the gas-works and, at right angles to it, part of the Spring Hill Mill reservoir boundary wall. 9 The reservoir is now filled in and occupied by small commercial premises.

At the end of Crompton Street turn right onto Roman Road. Originally known as Plane Nook, or Old Road, it formed part of the original road to Oldham.



SS Aidan & Oswald Church and School c.1910

Go up Roman Road by the side of SS Aidan and Oswald School and Church. A Roman Catholic Mission in Royton was started in 1874 by a Belgian priest to serve mainly Irish immigrants. The Rev Baetings started the mission in a disused cotton mill near the bottom of the present Crompton Street and later in rooms above a joiners shop near the Railway public house in Oldham Road. In 1880, Sir Percival Radcliffe, whose family converted to Roman Catholicism in the 19th century and owned



12. Edge Lane Open Space

Royton Hall, gave the land and £2,000 towards the building costs of a church and school at the present site. A new **church** **11** and **school** **10** were built in 1966 and 1970 respectively. In 1987 the Junior School burnt down and was replaced by the present building which opened in July 1990.

Turn right into Oldham Road. Walk past the church and cross Vaughan Street. Walk to the junction with Broadway.

On your right is **Edge Lane Open Space** **12** given by Cllr Smethurst after the completion of Broadway. This little park, along with Broadway, lies on the site of the old hamlet of Edge Lane Hollow, demolished in 1912 to make way for the new St Anne's School. Many of the inhabitants of the older cottages were employed at the Edge Lane and Dryclough Collieries across the road.



12. Edge Lane Hollow

Cross Broadway at the traffic lights.

This new arterial road was opened on the 28 February 1925 by Lt. Col. the Right Hon WW Ashley MP, Minister of Transport. It proved valuable in providing useful work

for thousands of local unemployed people. The new road provided a speedy link between Royton, Chadderton and Manchester.

Pause on the central island as you cross.

This was the site of a **Wayside Cross** **13** erected by the parishioners of St Anne's to commemorate the names of over 100 men of the parish killed in the Great War. The Cross was unveiled by Mrs Ormerod, wife of



13. Wayside Cross

the former vicar on 12 November 1921 at its original site at the junction of St Anne's Avenue (then called Windmill Street) and Oldham Road. It was re-sited on the island when Broadway was completed. Unfortunately, in January 1938, a lorry demolished the Cross, and the base now lies in St Anne's churchyard **16**.

*After crossing, turn right along Broadway past the school and yard. The **school***

14 was built in 1910 after the day school managers at St Anne's School on Old Edge Lane were notified that better accommodation was required for the school. The foundation stone was laid on 31 October 1914 by Miss Catherine Ormerod and the school was opened on 2 November 1916.

Turn left under the canopy between the schools into Ormerod Avenue.

On the right is the **Infants School** **15** built in 1933. This was necessary as in 1929 St Anne's had become a Central School for senior children and a new school was needed to house the infants. It opened the following year. In 1944 St Anne's became a Secondary Modern School which was amalgamated with High Barn and Newbarn Central schools in 1967 to form Royton and Crompton Comprehensive School at Luzley Brook.

The former secondary school was then modernised, a cloister-type quadrangle built and once again re-opened as a Primary School. *Continue up Ormerod Avenue.* On the right is the entrance to the **churchyard** **16**. The gate is marked 'private' but is open to the public as long as due respect is shown for the surroundings. At the rear of the churchyard are the remains of the wayside cross **13**.

Retrace your steps to Ormerod Avenue, turn right, and right again into St Anne's Avenue. On your right is **St Anne's Church** **17**. Miss C M Cocker of New Bank, Shaw, laid the foundation stone on 27 June 1908. The church, designed by Mr W Temple Moore of London in 14th century English Gothic style, was consecrated on 27 January 1910 by the Bishop of Manchester, Dr E A Knox. The upper portion of the tower was not constructed until 1927.

Walk past the church to the end of the paved road. Behind the vicarage was the site of Royton's **windmill** **18**. It was unique as all local mills were water or horse-powered. The land on which the building stood was leased in July 1794 during a period of corn



17. *St Anne's Church*

shortages and high prices. On 4 August 1795 a mob marched from Saddleworth through Oldham to 'Edge Lane corn mill', Royton, to threaten the operators. However, they were persuaded to desist, and instead returned up Old Edge Lane to terrorise the shopkeepers of Oldham into lowering the price of their provisions. In the 1860s and 1870s the windmill was used by Dancy Crossley, wadding manufacturer, for the washing of waste rags and for bleaching. By the early 20th century it had been taken over by Whittaker Baron. Royton Council, who acquired the old windmill in 1920, demolished it in 1951. The **Windmill Garage** **19** on Broadway preserves the name.



19. *Garage and derelict windmill*

Retrace your steps along St. Anne's Avenue to Oldham Road. Turn left and cross Oldham Road via the traffic lights. Turn left and then right up Shaw Road.

On the right is **Dryclough Manor** ²⁰. This much-extended house was formerly Dryclough House, built by the Evans family, proprietors of the Edge Lane and Dryclough collieries. The colliery was owned by Evans, Barker and Company in 1850s and later by the Oldham, Middleton and Rochdale Coal Company. In 1901 Dryclough House was the only property owned by them, the coal mine having closed some time earlier. Another worthy resident in the 1870s was Lt. Col. John George Blackburne, a noted civil engineer, surveyor and commander of the 31st Oldham Rifle Volunteers. In the late 1980s Dryclough House was converted into an old people's residential home and extended. The old Dryclough brook, now culverted, flowed in front of the house.

Those wishing to walk the Oldham Edge Trail may join it here.

Continue along Shaw Road (part of the turnpike road from Hollinwood to Littleborough constructed around 1805) to the traffic lights at the bottom of Salmonfields. Cross Shaw Road and turn right. Turn first left to walk down Turf Lane. Cross Oldham Road at the lights and turn right. Cross Roman Road and turn left. Go up Roman Road past the bungalow on the corner and turn right into the path leading into Shepherd Street.

Go down the unadopted end of Shepherd Street to where the paved section starts. To the left are the bungalows of Brookfield Street, built on the site of an old reservoir for Hall Street Mills. The old brook, now culverted, flowed in front of the bungalows to join the open section still visible in Brook Street. Continue along to the paved section of Shepherd Street. This street was originally

*known as Water Street. To the right is the old **Shepherd brothers' fustian cutting mill** ²¹ built in the 1860s. This mill, which now houses several enterprises, and the adjacent houses were built on the site of the old Royton Hall orchard. To the left is the **old smithy** ²² built by William Ireland, farrier and blacksmith, a resident at the Hall in the 1860s and 70s. It nestles behind the old cottages*



23. Percival and Gregge coat of arms

Gregge coat of arms ²³ until it was stolen in 1989. This plaque originally adorned Royton Hall park wall.

*At the top of Shepherd Street turn left into Middleton Road. Immediately to the left are the **old cottages** ²⁴ showing the original alignment of old Hall buildings before Middleton Road was extended from Hall Street. Next to the cottages are the **Pickford Buildings** ²⁵ bearing the date stone: 1878. This stretch of road was originally called Pickford Street after the family which owned the Hall in the late 18th century. After leaving Royton they changed their name to Radcliffe. After the Pickford Buildings notice a gap which formed part of the old carriage entrance to the back of the hall. Two gateposts once stood here but were removed when the adjacent building was erected in the 1980s. One only survived and was placed at the edge of the Hall site in Hall Street ²⁶. Turn left into Hall Street. You have reached the end of the Royton Hall and Dryclough Trail.*

Oldham Edge Trail

Distance: 2.4 miles (4.2 km)



27. Dryclough House c. 1910



The Trail starts on Shaw Road at **Dryclough Manor** 27. Turn up Valley Road and then Eleanor Road.

This street runs along the course of the old **Edge Lane Colliery** 28. A public house called the Old Engine (pit engine) also stood on this site. Turn left onto Old Edge Lane. This is the old road from Oldham to Rochdale. Go up the lane, pass to the left of the boulders, onto the dirt and rock track. The former farmhouses have disappeared and parts of the Edge are now planted with trees. In the mid 20th century it was used by the military for tank training.

Continue straight along the track, joining the concrete tank road leading to the



29. White House pub

communications mast until you reach the **White House pub** 29 (note the information board). You are at Top o' th Edge, the highest point in Royton at some 800 feet. In the early 17th century this area was the site of a boundary dispute between Sir John Byron of Royton Hall and the landlord of Horsedge. Sir John was accused of digging coalmines here and extending the manor of Royton too far inside the boundary crosses of Oldham. Grimbies Cross, and the farm named after it, once stood near here some distance behind the pub. The White House stands on the site of beer establishments originally kept by Ralph Collier and James Booth in the late 18th century. The exterior was whitewashed in the 1840s giving it its present name. The pub was rebuilt in 1925 with its front abutting the present Oldham boundary.

Go directly to the left, go through the gap or first gate-style and down the path and steps to Higginshaw Road. Cross and turn left towards Higginshaw Lane, passing the former St Chad's Mission and Sunday School associated with St Mark's, Heyside. It was built in 1910 to replace the previous 'tin tabernacle' erected in 1894. Note the three foundation stones above the ground floor.



30. Flowerpot Inn in the 1890s



*Cross over again behind the appropriately named Boundary Pub on the corner of Higginshaw Lane. Go left along Higginshaw Lane past the site of the former gas-works. Across the road is the **Flowerpot Inn** ³⁰, which gets its name from the many flower shows held in the mid 19th century.*

*Continue across the old railway line. This railway line was constructed in 1863 to connect the Oldham main line with Royton, it is now a public foot and cycle path. It was once jokingly rumoured that the **Hare and Hounds pub** ³¹ opposite was forced to move three times during the construction of the railway.*

*Continue past Manor Street and Rudding Street. These commemorate the manor of Royton and its absent squires, the Radcliffes, who resided at Rudding Park near Harrogate in the 19th century. Continue, walking past the former Lancashire Hotel, now a travel agents, until you reach the new road called **Salmonfields** ³². This was the name of the old farm and its pastures on which the present industrial estate was built in the 1980s. Opposite is Moss Lane leading onto the former marshy turf lands of Royton Moss.*

*Continue along to Turf Lane. Cross over Turf Lane. Those wishing to join the Heyside Trail can do so here. Turn left and down Turf Lane. Note ⁴⁵ and ⁴⁶ from the Heyside Trail which are on your right as you pass. Go down past the garden centres and over the old railway line. On the left is **Dr Kershaw's Hospice** ³³. Initially built as a cottage hospital in 1931 with money left in the will of Dr John Kershaw, once chief medical officer of Royton. In 1977 it became famous as the place where the world's first test-tube baby, Louise Brown was conceived on the 10 November, the result of the work of Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards. It has been a hospice since 1988.*



33. *Dr Kershaw's Hospice c1935*

*Continue down Turf Lane to the old farm on right, **Dryclough Farm** ³⁴. Some of the outbuildings have gone but the farmyard walls and house remain. It is a surprising example of a 'modern' Victorian farm, rebuilt as a replacement for the old Mellor family's stone walled Sunfield farm in the Dryclough valley below.*



34. *Dryclough Farm*

*Continue to the end of Turf Lane. **Tynwald Mount** ³⁵ is set back on the right, fronting Shaw Road. It was the home of Norris Bradbury, Royton Councillor, JP, mill manager, director and the donor of Tandle Hill to the people of Royton. The name commemorates popular holidays to the Isle of Man.*

*You have reached the end of the Oldham Edge Trail. Those wishing to join the end of Royton Hall and Dryclough Trail may do so here and note the commentary for **Dryclough House** ²⁰ in that trail.*

Heyside Trail

Distance: 0.8 miles (1.3 km)

Please note: This trail is suitable for wheelchair users but care should still be taken as there are two areas where there are no dropped curbs.



37. Congregational School and Church c1910

The trail starts from the car park off Sutcliffe Street at the side of the parade of shops.

*Cross Sutcliffe Street and turn right along Heyside. At Clarence Street note the **fine terrace of 8 brick houses** [36](#) dressed with stone. Continue to Hebron Street.*

*On the corner is **Heyside Congregational School** [37](#), built in 1900. Robert Constantine, the expelled, non-conformist minister from Oldham Church, preached in Heyside in the late 1600s. The Congregationalists, who favoured a simpler relationship between minister and flock than that found in the Episcopal Anglican form of worship, first met*

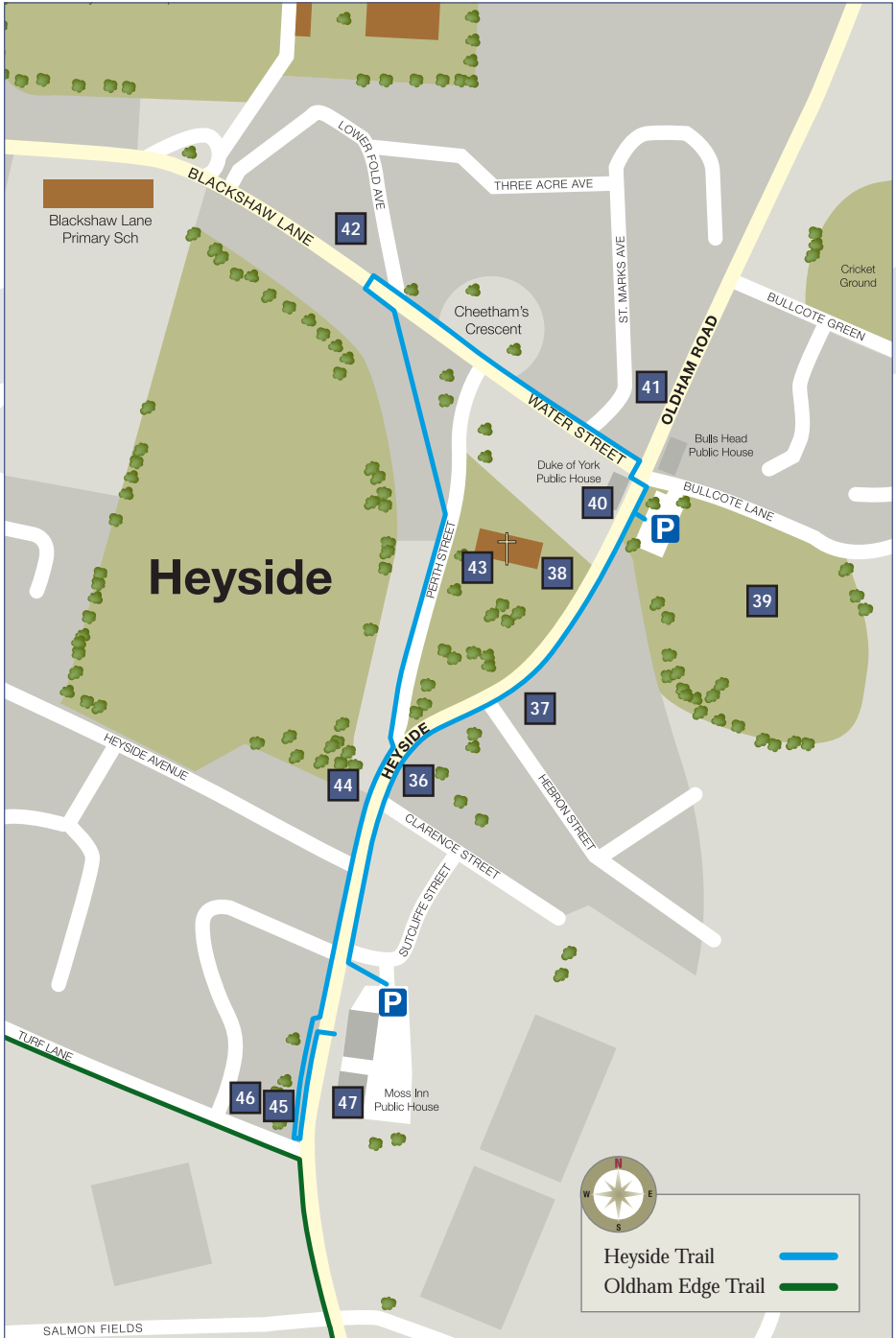


36. Fine brick houses on Clarence Street



Wyld's Barn

in Wyld's barn situated in Water Street. By 1842 a former Wesleyan lay preacher named Wild, who had become disillusioned with Methodism after the latter body fell behind with their rent, became an undenominational preacher and set up meetings in his own rooms. Heyside was then deemed to be 'notorious for wickedness of the vilest description'. Eventually the growing number of Congregationalists rented cottages nearby prior to building their own school in 1851. This was also used for worship until a chapel was erected in 1880.



The congregation joined the newly formed United Reformed Church in 1972. The chapel was demolished in the 1970s but worship continues in the school.

Continue along Heyside. On the left is the **Sunday School** 38 belonging to St Mark's Church. This was formally the Ede Institute, opened in 1868 as a day and Sunday School. In 1903 it became a Sunday School and parochial centre, the day school having been transferred to Blackshaw Lane Board School. Note St Mark's Church to the rear (see 43).



38. Ede Institute detail

Turn right into the car park opposite the Duke of York. This gives access to **Bullcote Recreational Ground** 39, the site of a former hill known as Brownlow. This hill was quarried away for building sand during the 19th century by Oliver Sutcliffe of Lower Fold Farm. Brownlow was once part of the Cheetham family estate. The Cheethams leased lands from the Byrons of Royton Hall and were once the greatest yeoman family in Heyside. Bullcote Lane leads over the old Royton Moss to the water of the Beal.



40. The Duke of York



41. Buckley's Loom House

Cross over to the Duke of York, turn right and cross Water Street. Turn left down Water Street.

The Duke of York 40 was

modernised in the late 1970s. The landlord in the 1820s was Jonathan Buckley. He took in orphans from the Duke Of York school in London to work as apprentices ('chitties'), in his **loom house** 41 which stood almost opposite the Bulls Head on Shaw Road. He served two years in prison for mistreating them.

Continue along Water Street. Cheetham's Crescent commemorates the landowning Cheetham family, who purchased the former monastic lands of the Knights of St John at Heyside and Cowlshaw. This area was once known as Cheetham's Cross after a boundary marker sited here.



42. Heyside House

At Lower Fold Avenue, note Heyside House 42. Once a former mill owners house and later a residential home, it is currently occupied by an architect's practice. This stands on the approximate site of Lower Fold House, home and farm of the aforementioned Oliver Sutcliffe.

The coach house stands at the top of Lower Fold Ave. An old track from Oldham to Shaw ran past here across the Broadbent fields (now occupied by Royton and Crompton School).

*Cross Blackshaw Lane via the next traffic calming measure. Turn left and then bear right to Perth Street. This is part of the old track described previously. On the left is **St Mark's Church** ⁴³, formed from the parishes of Royton and Lower Moor, Oldham in 1879. It is built in Early English style. The foundation stone was laid on Good Friday, 30 March 1877 and the church was consecrated the following year. Through the church gates you can see the stone cross erected as a war memorial in 1925. Next to the church is the vicarage, now a residential home, built in 1909. Note Heyside Park on the right.*



43. *St Mark's Church*

*Continue along Perth Street to Heyside and head towards Turf Lane. The white house on the right is **Hey Cottage** ⁴⁴, home of Deborah Travis, well known vocalist of her day. She came from a very entrepreneurial and musical family. Her grandfather played the organ in Shaw Chapel and her aunts were noted singers. Her father played the bassoon in Shaw and Todmorden chapels. Deborah began*



45. *Quaker Meeting House*

her singing career as one of the Shaw Singers, and was in great demand as a soloist at musical evenings then held in local churches. Eventually she gained an apprenticeship with the Antient Concerts Society, articulated to the Duke of Cambridge. She married William Knyvett, professor of music, sometime organist at Gloucester Cathedral and member of the Chapels Royal.



44. Hey Cottage

As Mrs Knyvett, she was in great demand to sing at cathedrals, London concert halls and the royal court. One critic described her as 'giving pious orgies' from Handel's Judas Maccabeus, whilst singing 'with great accuracy and purity of style'. She purchased the cottage in Heyside from a 'Quaker Clogger' for the benefit of her family while she was touring, and was living here when she died in 1876 in her 80th year. It was said that while she was away on concert tours she never forgot her aunt's 'ironed clogs' beating time for her as she practiced her singing.

Continue to the top of Turf Lane.

On the right is the old **Quaker Burial Ground** [45](#) and the site of the meeting house. The Society of Friends, as the Quakers are more properly known, began to meet in cottages in Heyside from the mid 1600s. They were a new movement outside the

Anglican Communion embracing inner peace and wisdom coupled with liberty of thought. This led to discrimination and financial hardship for its followers. Eventually John Lees and Isaac Wilde purchased the 'Further New Fields' from James Sykes, whose farm lay at the top of Turf Lane, for use as a burial ground. By 1739 the Society had built their first meeting house on the site. This meeting house fell into disuse when a new one was built in Greaves Street, Oldham, but was nevertheless replaced in 1884. However the meeting house was not well used except for burials and likewise fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1939. In 1980 Oldham Council acquired the site and it was turned into a small commemorative garden with help from the Manpower Services Commission.

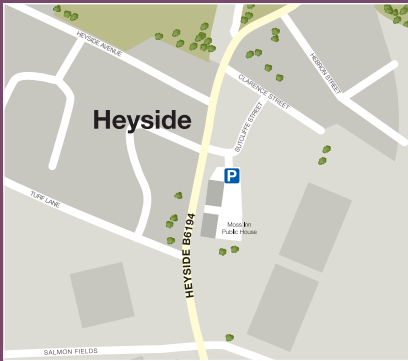
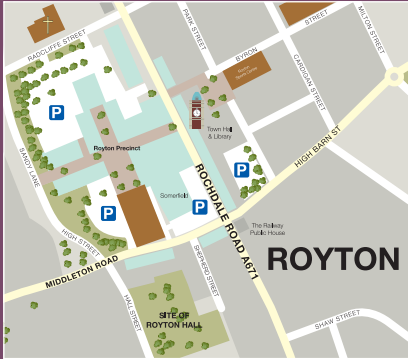
Go round the corner into Turf Lane.

Immediately to the right is the old **caretaker's cottage** [46](#) and the site of John Lees's workhouse, which lay between it and the burial ground wall. It was here, in the late 18th century, that this Quaker weaver invented an improvement in the cotton carding process. His son Benjamin built one of the first waterwheel powered cotton spinning mills in Royton at Elly Clough in the 1790s.

*Return to the main road (Heyside) and look across to the **Moss Inn** [47](#), so named after the old turf lands of Royton Moss.*

Now retrace your route back to the pelican crossing. Cross Heyside and return to the car park and the end of the trail.

Those wishing to return to Royton Hall may do so via the final part of the Oldham Edge Trail which goes down Turf Lane. At the bottom of Turf Lane pick up the Royton Hall and Dryclough trail at [20](#).



We hope that you will use this booklet to learn more about Royton's fascinating history.

A large print version of this booklet is available. Please ask at Royton Library.

For further information why not visit Royton Library, Rochdale Road, Royton. Tel: **0161 770 3087**

Alternatively you can visit Oldham Local Studies and Archives, Union Street, Oldham. Tel: **0161 770 4654**

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The Heyside Trail is suitable for wheelchairs but care should still be taken as there are two areas where there are no dropped curbs.

*This guide has been published by the **Royton Lives Through The Ages Project**, a community project to encourage, help and enable local people to discover Royton's heritage.*

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How to find us:

By car: **Royton** is situated on the A671, 2 miles north of Oldham. It is easily accessible from the M62 & A627(M). There are car parks off High Barn Street, Middleton Road and Radcliffe Street.

Heyside is situated on the B6194 2 miles North East of Oldham. There is a car park off Heyside adjacent to the shops.

By Bus: The following GMPTE buses stop in **Royton** town centre: 20, 24, 181, 182, 402, 408, 409, 412, 428

The following GMPTE buses stop in **Heyside:** From Royton or Shaw: 181
 From Oldham or Shaw: 58, 59

