

Medieval Foundations

Alnwick's Christian heritage is believed to go back as far as Saxon times – over 1,000 years – whilst recorded evidence covers more than 860 years. Earliest places of Christian heritage interest in and around Alnwick include:

Alnwick Abbey was an abbey of Premonstratensian Canons, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. James, founded in the year 1147. Only the defensive gateway tower remains.

The picturesque ruins of **Hulne Priory** are situated in Hulne Park, to the north-west of Alnwick. This was the parent house of the Carmelite Order in England, founded in 1240.

Some paths through the magnificent Hulne Park are open to walkers, but not dogs (*check restrictions at the gate*).

The remains of **St Leonard's Hospital Chapel** stand in a field to the north of Alnwick, a short way up the hill from the Lion Bridge. This was founded between 1193-1216 in memory of King Malcolm III of Scotland, mortally wounded nearby in the Battle of Alnwick in 1093.

St Mary's Chantry House in Walkergate dates from at least 1460. It provided accommodation for chantry chaplains attached to St Michael's Church, and served as a school until the early 17th century when a new school was built on Pottergate. This ruin is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Space in this leaflet is short – but you can find more details of these stories in our trail website: <https://sites.google.com/site/inspiredalnwick/> If you have a smartphone with a QR code reader you can point and click at the codes against each of the main sites in this leaflet and go directly to the more detailed story



Other Christian sites in Alnwick

No building to look at, but Quakers have a history in Alnwick. Earliest record of Quaker meetings here is from 1728, at which time they met in a house near Alnwick Abbey. In the early days, Quakers were persecuted, so met in private homes. Today Quakers meet on Sundays in the lounge of Anchor Housing in Church Lane, Bailiffgate.

A simple building on Hotspur Street bears witness to the continuing work of the Salvation Army, with its emphasis on social action and fellowship. Percy Street Hall, near St Paul's Church, is used for community activities such as family fun 'Messy Church' activities and a playgroup.

Dissent and diversity

Also worth noting are the sites of former Dissenter's or non-conformist chapels (i.e., not part of the established church of England). These were built away from the main streets in the only available land amongst the maze of medieval back lanes off Market Street: the Sion Meeting House of 1810 in St Michael's Lane is now in business use, and the grand Clayport Presbyterian Church of 1846 with its eye-catching twin towers is now a single house.

We hope you have enjoyed this leaflet and a walk around historic Alnwick. If you have access to the internet you can discover more about these stories and churches on the website:

sites.google.com/site/inspiredalnwick



If you would like to do more exploring there is a Town Trail leaflet available from the Tourist Information Centre, in the Market Place.

This trail is a joint project of Alnwick Civic Society and Christians Together in Alnwick. © ACS/CTIA 2012.

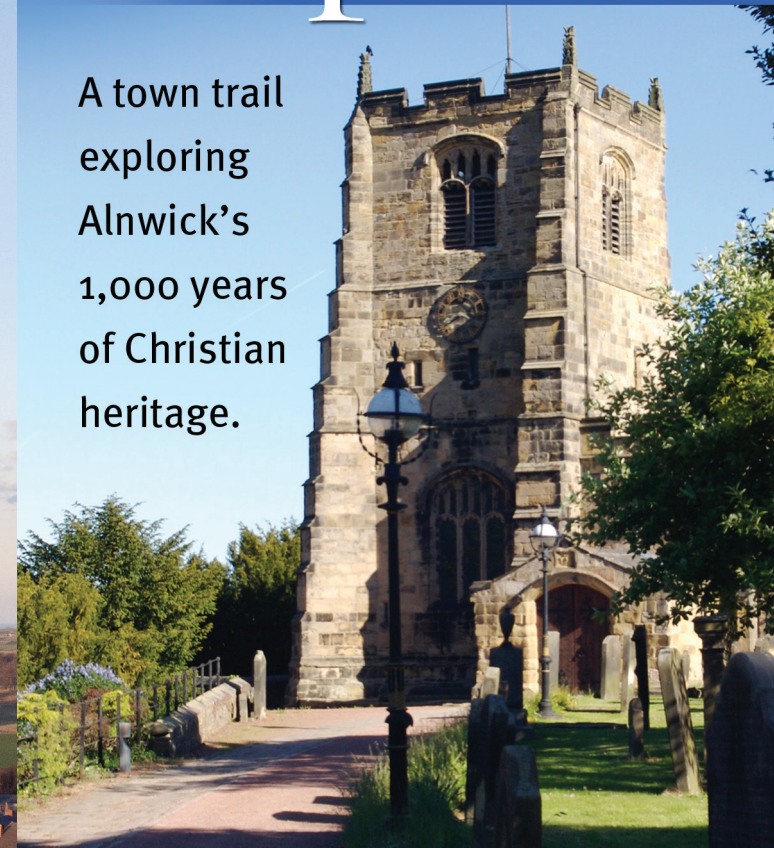
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ALNWICK'S Inspired HERITAGE

A town trail
exploring
Alnwick's
1,000 years
of Christian
heritage.



Alnwick is justly famous as a visitor destination, with its Castle and Garden, Bailiffgate Museum and other attractions.

But what about the 'inspired heritage' of Alnwick's historic churches and places of worship? Are these worth a closer look too? We think so! Some are prominent buildings with towers or steeples, whilst others are hidden away in Alnwick's ancient lanes.

This trail has been put together to introduce you to these places and offer some glimpses of their hidden histories.

1 Parish Church of St Michael

1,000 years of heritage, historic church of the Dukes of Northumberland.

One of England's thousand best churches, according to historian Simon Jenkins, it has stood on the promontory above old Canongate since Norman times. It is a story that spans the history of Alnwick and the Dukes of Northumberland. Rebuilt in the mid-15th century in the Perpendicular style, points of interest include the ancient carved stone capital that commemorates Harry Hotspur, also medieval

grave slabs, memorials, a remarkable collection of stained glass windows, and a 21st century font carved in Kilkenny blue limestone.

Open to visitors outside of service times on afternoons Monday - Saturday from May to October.



2 Bailiffgate Museum

Formerly St Mary's Church – now Alnwick's town museum.

Standing on the site of earlier Catholic chapels, this was the Roman Catholic Church of St Mary until 1982. The museum is well worth a visit – and is an interesting example of adaptation, with the mezzanine floor suspended from supporting columns and barely touching the side walls. Original features include the oak roof with its gargoyles and inset stained glass

windows, and memorial windows on the front facade. The organ has been restored and used for recitals.

Open most days, entry charge, check for details - Telephone: 01665 605847.

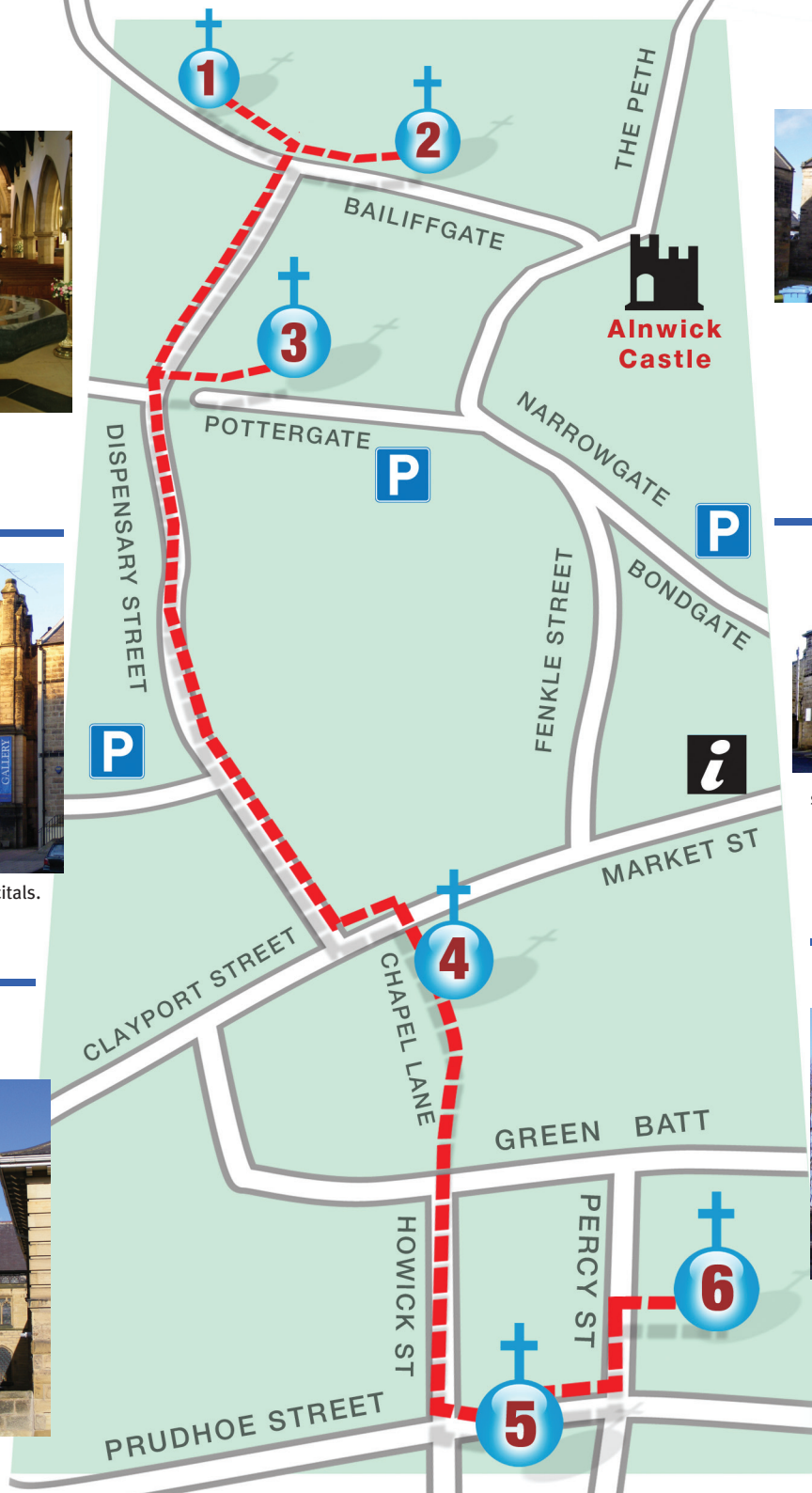


3 St James' Church Centre

The home of Alnwick's United Reformed Church.

Built in 1894 as a Presbyterian church by well known church architects Hicks and Charlewood in the revived Free Perpendicular style of the time. As part of a recent re-ordering of the interior of the church, the building has been split into two levels: the worship space is now located on the upper floor, and the ground floor now has a modern meeting hall, meeting room, kitchen and other facilities.

George Reavell, a well-known local architect, added an early Arts and Crafts church hall in 1904 which was recently converted into an award winning housing scheme.



4 Alnwick Methodist Church

John Wesley's pulpit and over 260 years of Methodist heritage.

In 1786 John Wesley laid the foundation stone of this chapel – still in use today – in what is now, surprisingly, called Chapel Lane! The gallery was floored over by 1822, leaving the Chapel upstairs. Remodelled

for its centenary in 1886 by F.R Wilson, a well-regarded and prolific Northumberland architect, the original 1786 pulpit is still preserved in the corner of the upstairs Chapel - John Wesley preached from this for the last time on May 10th 1790, a few months before he died.

There have been other Methodist sites in Alnwick: Bethel Chapel in St Michael's Lane and a chapel in Bondgate Without where Robert Adam Court now stands.



5 Alnwick Baptist Church

Unassuming but vital home of worship for about 180 years.

The Baptist Church occupies a corner site at the junction of two terraces, Lisburn Street and Upper Howick Street. This is a very neat and commendable bit of uniform townscape where church and houses are the same height, the

same scale and the same materials. Built in the 1830s as a Presbyterian chapel, it is an exemplar of modesty and good townscape taste.

The glazed entrance at one side gives a clue that this building has been sensitively adapted to meet the needs of a modern church.



6 St Paul's Roman Catholic Church

A fine Victorian church in the Decorated Gothic style

At the heart of Green Batt, Alnwick's splendid late Georgian/early Victorian suburb, St Paul's stands surrounded by fine mature trees.

Designed by the renowned architect Anthony Salvin, it opened for worship in 1846. The East Window is one of only three of its kind in Europe, designed and created in Munich in 1856, it depicts St Paul and St Barnabas preaching at Antioch. Originally an Anglican parish church, St Paul's has served as Alnwick's Roman Catholic Church since 1982.

Points of interest include the Lady Altar and statue, the screen behind the altar depicting Northern saints, and the Stations of the Cross transferred from the former St Mary's Church, now Bailiffgate Museum.

