



Buxton Time Travellers Trail



Transport



Distance

2.5km
1.5m

Allow

1.5hr

Difficulty



Trail Summary

Easy around town; moderate difficulty if taking in Solomon's Temple.

Start and finish:

The Crescent in the centre of town. OS White Peak Explorer Map, OL 24. SK 058 735.

Access:

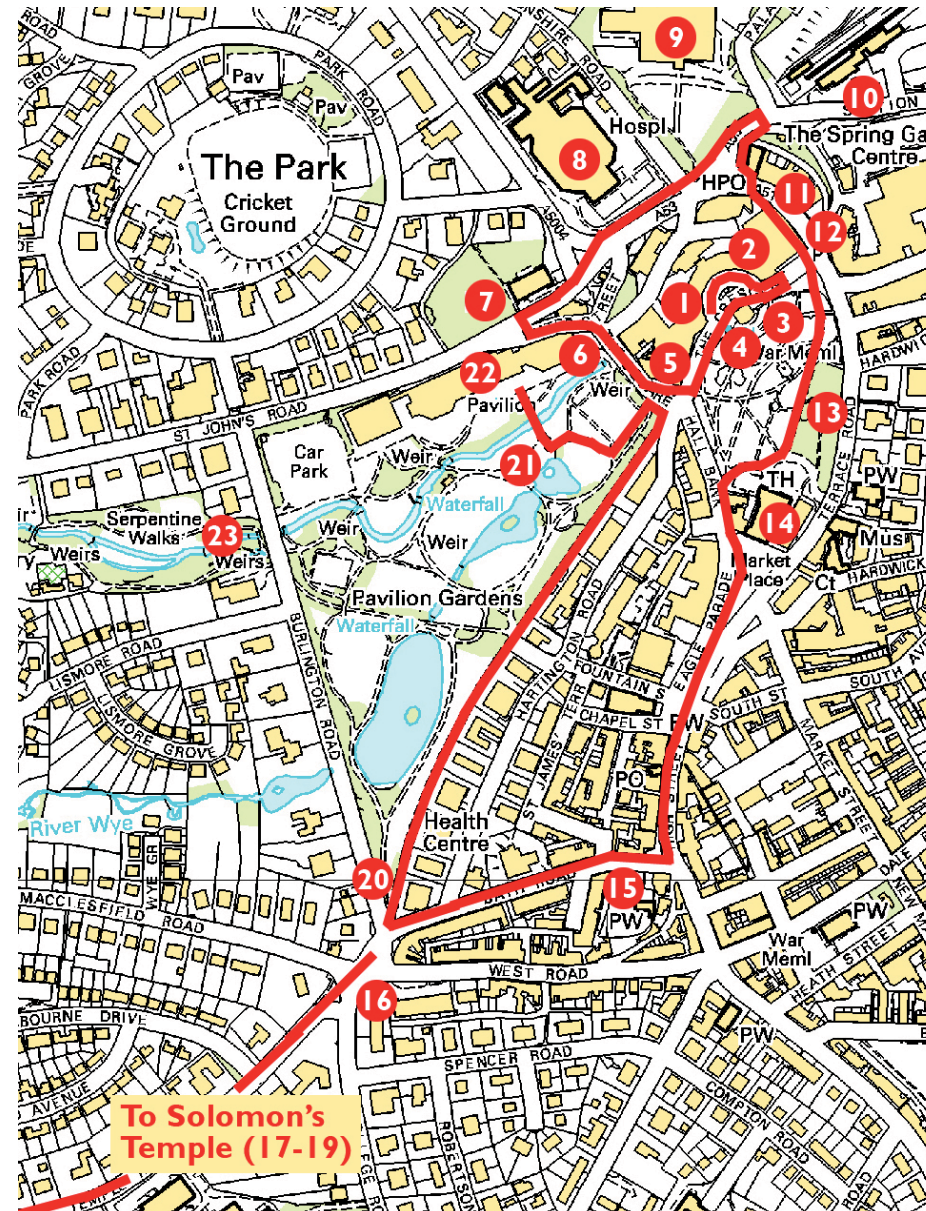
By public transport: train and bus services to Buxton from many regional cities and towns and local villages. Phone Traveline for more information: 0871 200 2233. Buses arrive at the marketplace, where there are public toilets. **By car:** The A6, A53 and A515 all lead to Buxton. Plenty of pay and display parking is available in town.

Explore historic Buxton and discover more about the town you see today. Meet some of Buxton's famous visitors. Meander through the Pavillion Gardens. And if you're feeling fit, why not climb the woodland hill to Solomon's Temple for a gorgeous view back over the town. This adds another hour to the walk.



Part-funded by the European Union European Regional Development Fund

From healing waters to Solomon's Temple.



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Buxton waters



Buxton has been famous for its healing waters for at least 2,000 years. The Romans called it *Aquae Arnemetiae*, 'the sacred spring of the Goddess Arnemetia', and built the first natural spring water baths here.

The springs were sacred among local people before the Roman invaders arrived. When the Empire declined, locals still visited the springs for healing. In medieval times they were associated with St Ann, 'patron saint of cripples'. In the

Georgian and Victorian times, fashionable invalids arrived to take the waters and cure all sorts of ailments, including gout and rheumatism.

What's in a name?

The name Buxton comes from medieval times, when the town was part of the Royal Forest and the king's deer, roe and bucks, came to drink the warm waters in winter. The town coat of arms shows buck deer along with 8 circles representing the 8 warm springs, and the ancient symbol of healing – a snake coiled around a staff.

Still and always a great day out



Today Buxton remains a restorative place for a short break. The refurbished Opera House has a full and varied programme all year. The Pavilion Gardens Glass Houses host over a hundred specialist fairs each year, from craft and design to local foods, from antiques to jewellery to books.

There are many restaurants, cafés, a museum and specialist shops to browse.

Today, you can still fill a bottle with 'living waters' at St Ann's Well.

The Walk

If you've arrived by bus, go down past the King's Head and down the Slopes to reach the Crescent. If you came by train or car, just ask for directions to the Crescent.



1. The Crescent

Imagine the Crescent ringing with horses' hooves and society gossip, thronged with carriages, fashionable Georgian tourists – and the honest and not-so-honest hoping to benefit from them!

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The 5th Duke of Devonshire built Buxton's glorious Crescent in 1784 to provide worthy accommodation for the spa's visitors. As well as 'taking the waters', guests could enjoy shops, coffee and card houses, and events in the assembly rooms. The Crescent's wide doors were designed to fit the most fashionable broad-skirted dresses of the day. The Rive Wye flows under the Crescent and emerges in the Pavilion Gardens.

2. Natural Mineral Baths

The Natural Baths were built on the site of the Old Roman Baths by Henry Currey between 1851 and 1854. Here visitors could enjoy a healing 28°C bath in the naturally warm spring waters.

3. Pump Room

Currey then built the Pump Room in 1894. It was open to spa visitors until 1981.

4. St Ann's Well

St Ann's Well faces the Crescent. In medieval times it was adorned with the crutches of once-lame visitors, healed by the waters. You are welcome to fill your bottles with healthy Buxton mineral water here.

the front of the hotel towards the Opera House.



5. Old Hall Hotel

Mary Queen of Scots stayed here several times between 1573 and 1584. She scratched her name on a window. Mary's gaoler, the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury George Talbot built the Hall around 1550 and traces of the original remain in the building you see today. In Talbot's day, guests paid according to their means and status.

6. Opera House

The splendid Edwardian Opera House hosts everything from comedy to puppetry to touring theatre and opera. Check to see what's on during your visit – Buxton's annual festival in July attracts many famous names. It was built in 1903 by Frank Matcham, who also made the London Palladium

and Coliseum.



Cross the square to take a look at the hexagonal Victorian post box.



From the post box, make your way up round the side of the Old Clubhouse pub to St John's Church.

7. St John's Church

St John's Church is in the Italianate Tuscan style and dates from 1811. As Buxton grew, more churches were needed. The ramp is original, designed to allow access for people in Bath chairs, as the first wheelchairs were called. If you visit the museum and art gallery, you can see the

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From St Ann's Well, you can see the side of the Old Hall Hotel. Walk along to the corner. Over the road, you'll see the Broad Walk pedestrian way running alongside the Pavilion Gardens. Go right, along



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official armbands of licensed Bath Chair Drawers. Guests could hire these men to push (draw) a bath chair. St John's designer, John White and Son, also built the 6 colonnaded houses opposite the Opera House.

Turn your back to St John's and walk along the busy main road. The old hospital is to your left.

8. University of Derby at Buxton/Devonshire Royal Hospital



The impressive dome was once the largest in Europe! It was built in 1880 and spans 154 feet (around 50 metres). Now just 2 domes in the USA surpass it.

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This building started life in the 1780s as stables for the horses, carriages and servants of guests to the Crescent. Between 1850 and 1882 more and more of the building was used as a hospital, clock tower, wards, a dining hall,

baths and lodge were all added – and of course the slate dome. In 1931, it was renamed the Devonshire Royal Hospital and was a centre of excellence for hydrotherapy (water therapy) right up until its closure in 2000. Nowadays it's abuzz with university students.

Continue along the main road.

9. The Palace Hotel

This grand hotel was designed by Henry Currey and built in 1868 to serve Buxton's spa guests.



From outside the hotel, you get an excellent view of the fan window.

10. Fan Window of Railway Station

Joseph Paxton designed the impressive fan window in the 1860s, when 2 new railway lines arrived at Buxton and boosted the town's tourist trade.

Cross the road at the traffic lights before you reach the fan window and turn back on yourself,

following the road down round the bend into the shopping area.

11. Cavendish Arcade

Note the wrought iron and glass colonnades built to keep visitors dry. Henry Currey designed this too! It began as a thermal bath in 1854 and you can still see the original plunge bath, Minton tiling and stained glass inside.



Full of boutiques and specialist shops, the Cavendish Arcade boasts a beautiful stained glass roof and the largest stained glass window in Britain.

Go into the arcade and explore the shops, cafes, restaurants and boutiques, then leave by the exit opposite the Slopes.

12. Samuel Turner Memorial

Find out about well-loved Samuel Turner by reading the memorial. Be careful – this water is NOT for drinking!



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Make your way up through the grassy hills of the Slopes towards the King's Head and Market Place.

13. The Slopes

Sir James Wyatville designed the Slopes for gentle strolling in the early 1800s. Joseph Paxton added his own touches in the 1840s. These days, you'll also find the War Memorial obelisk and a weather station. The Town Hall is at the top.

14. Market Place

The Market Place in High Buxton predates the Crescent. It's officially the highest market place in England! Visit Tuesday or Saturday to catch the market in full swing. Look out for High Buxton Well.

The Market Cross in front of the Town Hall moved to this place in 1813, to mark the granting of charter to Buxton Market. Before that the cross was at Palace Fields and was possibly a way-marker. was at Palace Fields and was possibly a way-marker.

The Town Hall clock is dedicated to the memory of Lord Cavendish, Gladstone's Chief Secretary for Ireland (and nephew), who died in Dublin's Phoenix Park Murders of 1882.



The Eagle Hotel was a coaching inn on the stage coach routes serving Manchester, London,

Nottingham, Sheffield and Derby. Here passengers could rest, wash and eat, horses were fed or exchanged, and weary coach drivers and staff enjoyed a little time off. The London to Manchester fare was 3 guineas inside, or half that if you rode on the roof! Other coaching inns include the Rising Sun and Cheshire Cheese.

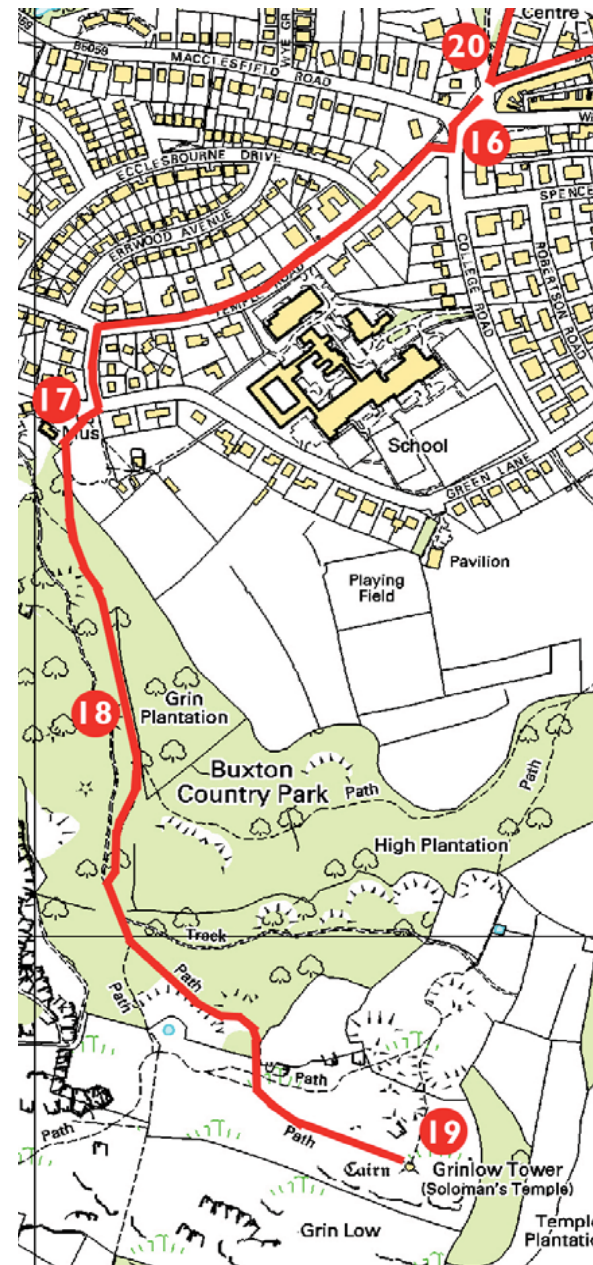
With your back to the Town Hall you can see Solomon's Temple high on the green hill on the horizon. Walk along the High Street towards Solomon's Temple. Turn right at the Swan pub and immediately opposite you, to the right of the pub, is St Anne's.

15. St Anne's church

This little chapel-like church dates back to at least 1625, but could be older. The single-room structure has served as a church, schoolroom, mortuary and barn in its time.

Turn left from St Anne's and go down Bath Road. At the corner you have a choice. For a longer walk with outstanding views over Buxton and the wilder White Peak countryside, with woodlands and grass hills to play on, and an opportunity to visit spectacular historic Poole's Cavern, go to point 16. To finish on the flat with tea and cake, lunch or an ice cream, go to point 20, Broad Walk.

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16. Loop to country park, Poole's Cavern, Go Ape! Solomon's Temple

From the corner, look left and note the brown signs to Poole's Cavern. Cross the roads, then go up Temple Road passing directly between the hotel and the medical centre. Temple Road takes a right-angle turn to the left along to the Poole's Cavern car park.

17. Poole's Cavern car park

Poole's Cavern visitor centre has toilets, a small café, a shop, information leaflets and engaging, informative, child-friendly displays. Buy your tickets in the centre if you wish to visit the cavern. Go Ape! offers you an aerial adventure among the trees.

From the back of the car park, take the steps up into Grin Low Woods. At the top of the stairs, turn left and follow the path uphill through the woods.

18. Grin Low Woods

Grin Low is an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) due to its superb wildlife. Have a look at the notice boards in the woods – there are historic charcoal burning works and limestone quarries in the woods.

Go through the stile at the top of the woods and make your way over the grassy hills to Solomon's Temple.

19. Solomon's Temple



Solomon's Temple is one of the first known job creation schemes, created by landowner Solomon Mycock in the 1890s to provide employment for Buxton's jobless. The tower sits at 439 metres (1441 feet) and for an even higher viewpoint you can climb up inside it.

The limestone grasslands you can see all around you are designated SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation). They are home to many rare flowers, including orchids. Most of these fields elsewhere in Derbyshire have been chemically sprayed and have lost their wild flowers. Grin Low is a rare survival of a once-common habitat

As you re-enter the woods, be sure to use the same stile you came through – there are several along the boundary. Retrace your steps back down into the town. Cross Burlington Road and take the Broad Walk, the wide pedestrian boulevard to the right side of the Pavilion Gardens.

20. Broad Walk

The fashionable Broad Walk was designed by Joseph Paxton in the 1850s as genteel villa housing. It was first called Cavendish Terrace, after the Cavendish family, the Dukes of Devonshire, who paid for the terraced houses.

You could go straight into the Gardens at this corner. But why not enter into the spirit of history and promenade along the Broad Walk, then enter the Gardens by the Glass Houses at the other end?

21. Pavilion Gardens

Joseph Paxton's student Edward Milner designed the gardens for the 6th Duke of Devonshire in 1871. You can still visit the glass houses, enjoy the acres of landscaped gardens, take tea or an ice cream, and relax to the sound of a band in the Victorian bandstand. There are playgrounds and a miniature railway for children.



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22. Glass Houses

The restaurant is open all day for refreshments and is ideal for a pre-theatre meal before moving on to the Opera House next door. The Octagon often hosts specialist fairs, such as Antiques and Collectors, Farmers Markets, Art and Design Fairs, Books, Records, CDs, Fine Foods and Health events. The plant houses host a range of colourful, warm-weather species.

23. Serpentine Walks

The 23 acres of landscaped Pavilion Gardens include Victorian Serpentine Walks, snaking their way among the gardens. So if you still fancy more of a walk, why not explore these?

We hope you enjoyed your walk! Please tell your friends.

You can use this short walk as the basis of a whole day's sightseeing, relaxing, shopping and tearoom visits. Spectacular Poole's Cavern with its newly refurbished visitor centre is on the way to Solomon's Temple.

Buxton Museum and Art Gallery holds regular exhibitions of paintings, ceramics and photography. Alongside the temporary exhibitions and the permanent displays you can explore the 'Wonders of the Peak' through many time zones, discovering the geology and

archaeology of the area.

Why not make Buxton your base for a short-break? There are many historic houses, gardens and archaeological sites only a short distance from the town. Buxton is also well-placed to explore the Peak District.

Visit www.visitpeakdistrict.com or pop into Buxton Tourist Information Centre in the Pavillion Gardens for lots of information and ideas on what to do in Buxton and the Peak District.

Buxton is well-connected for public transport with a railway station and several local and regional bus services. It is easy to travel to Buxton by bus from Manchester, Stockport, Sheffield, Derby and Nottingham.

For details of bus and train times contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit <http://www.traveline.org.uk>.

There are more **Peak Experience** self-guided trails for you to download at www.visitpeakdistrict.com

Inspired by Buxton? Send us photos or stories from your walk to share with others on www.MyPeakExperience.org.uk

Credits

Text: Adapted by Georgia Litherland from High Peak Borough Council Buxton town trails.

Photos: Bill Bevan, Georgia Litherland.

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