



SUTTON COLDFIELD TOWN CENTRE TRAIL



Sutton Coldfield's town centre contains a wealth of interesting buildings but sometimes you have to look above and beyond the modern additions to appreciate them. Sutton Coldfield Civic Society hopes this **Town Trail** leaflet will help you to see them in a new light. The trail will lead you through the historic High Street, which was for centuries the heart of the town and is now a conservation area, down into the retail area which developed in the late 19th century and on to Maney where medieval meets Art Deco. If you would like any further information please contact us at www.suttoncoldfieldcivicsociety.com and look out for our blue plaques at Holy Trinity RC church, Meat House, the Three Tuns and Vesey House.

SUTTON PARK

Sutton Park is over 2,000 acres of wild country with heathland, woods, pools, and wetlands giving a variety of habitats warranting its designation as a National Nature Reserve.

It was created as a deer park by King Henry 1 in the 12th century; in the sixteenth century Bishop Vesey fenced

in the woodlands so that the rest of the park could be grazed by the townsmen's cattle; in the eighteenth century additional pools were made to provide reservoirs for water mills, and local industries, and from Victorian times the Park has been a great attraction for visitors from the surrounding conurbation. Visitors can access the Park which is less than a quarter of a mile from the Parade in the town centre.

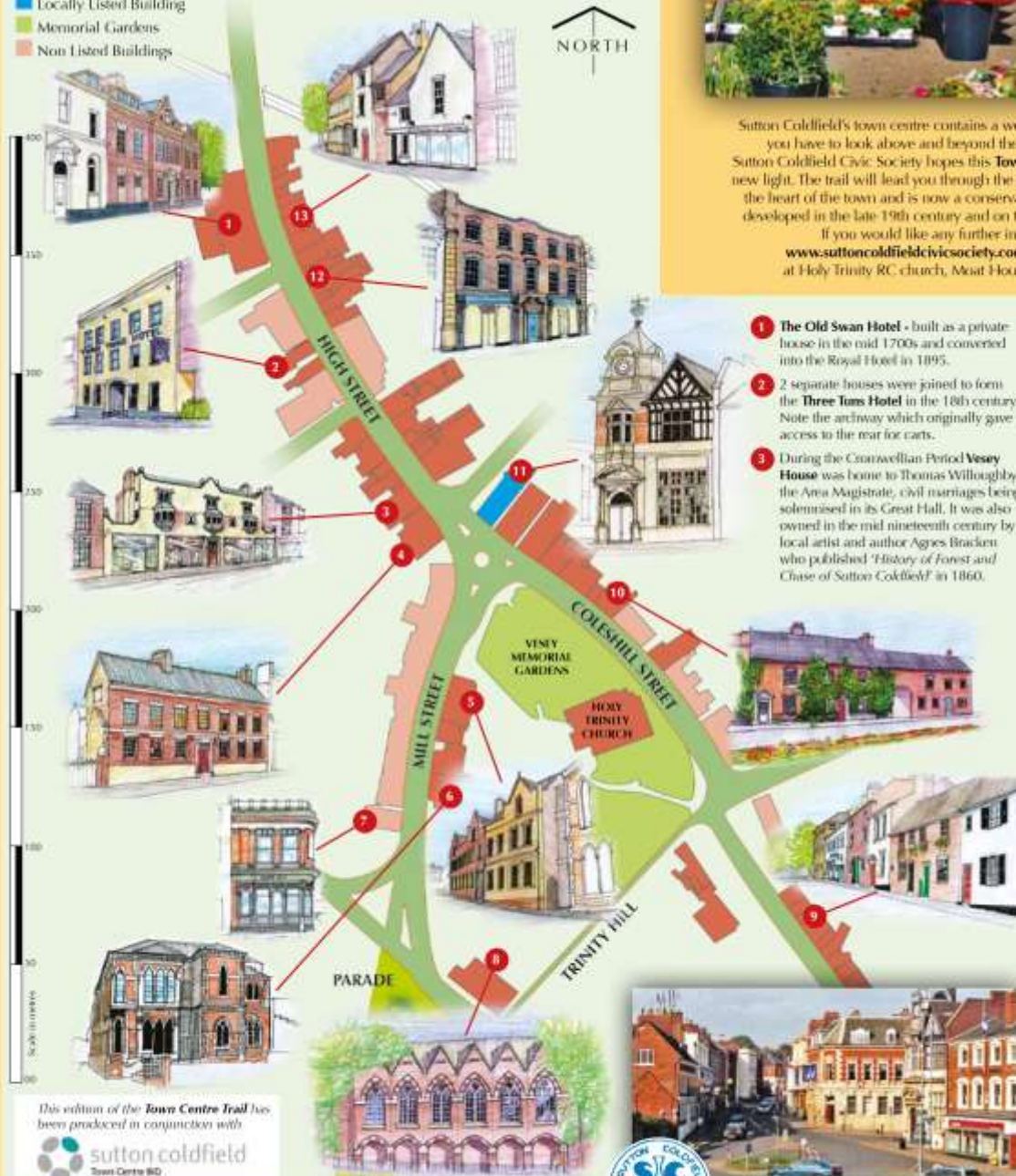


- Key
- Roman Road
- Railway
- Access to park
- Open space
- Woodland

HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA

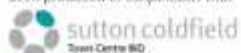
For centuries this was the nucleus of the small market town, lined with houses of the gentry. In the eighteenth century the frontage of many of the old houses were rebuilt in the Georgian style, and in the nineteenth century most properties were converted for use as commercial and business premises - for example, a branch of Lloyds Bank opened at No.24 High Street.

- Key
- Statutorily Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Building
- Memorial Gardens
- Non Listed Buildings



- 1 The Old Swan Hotel** - built as a private house in the mid 1700s and converted into the Royal Hotel in 1895.
- 2 Separate houses were joined to form the **Three Tuns Hotel** in the 18th century. Note the archway which originally gave access to the rear for carts.
- 3 During the Cromwellian Period **Vesey House** was home to Thomas Willoughby, the Area Magistrate, civil marriages being solemnised in its Great Hall. It was also owned in the mid nineteenth century by local artist and author Agnes Brackett who published 'History of Forest and Chase of Sutton Coldfield' in 1860.
- 4 **Number 1 High Street** was a stone building dating from 1624. The Georgian style brick facade was added c.1700.
- 5 **The Old Workhouse**, built in 1739 to comply with the Poor Laws, was converted to commercial use in 1840.
- 6 The original **Town Hall** built in 1856 later became the **Masonic Hall** in 1904, when the town Hall was re-sited.
- 7 **The Gate public house** - positioned to be an entrance to Park Road which was the main route to Sutton Park from Mill Street before major road works took place.
- 8 The **Sutton Town School** was built on this site in 1826. In 1860 the school was expanded and the frontage added. In 1980 the building was bought by the **Baptist Church** which carried out further changes but retained the frontage.
- 9 On the east side of **Colehill Street** there is an interesting and attractive collection of 9 cottages and one three storey stone building, all of which are grade 2 listed.
- 10 **Numbers 1, 3 and 5 Colehill Street** make up the **Old Rectory**, now housing commercial uses. There are grooves in the stone walls of the archway which is where arrows were sharpened during the middle ages.
- 11 This locally listed building from c.1900, and its neighbour (also c.1900) on the other side of Midland Drive, create a focal point and act as a gateway to the High Street.
- 12 A typical example of a gentrified frontage applied to an older building. Compare this with 13 below.
- 13 **Number 4B High Street** gives us an impression of the way the Street would have looked before the fronts of the buildings were remodelled by their wealthy owners.

This edition of the **Town Centre Trail** has been produced in conjunction with



This edition of the **Town Centre Trail** has been produced in conjunction with





The Town Hall

A large hotel was built in 1865 to take advantage of the expected boom in tourism to Sutton and its park on the advent of the railway. It was not a success and after a short period as a sanatorium it was taken over by the Borough Council in 1904, when the Town Hall was added. The clock tower served to hang the hosepipes of the fire service – and an extension of the building was the town's fire station for many years.



Bishop Vesey's School

The earliest (northern) part of the building dates from 1728 when the school transferred to this site from Church Hill, where the school was originally founded by Bishop Vesey in the 1540s.

Holy Trinity tower

This imposing tower marks the presence of the Catholic Holy Trinity church, leaving the other tower to the Protestant Holy Trinity church on Coleshill Street.



The Art School

A winning architectural design for the firm of Crouch and Butler led to the construction of a new Technical School for the Borough in 1904 for 200 students. Since then it has been an Art School, a part of the present Sutton Coldfield College.



Guildhall

The first Catholic church in Sutton opened in Lichfield Road in 1834. When the church became too small in the 1930s, a new church was built on Lichfield Road, and the vacant church became the 'Guildhall' and is currently used for offices.



SUTTON PARK



Sutton railway station

The first branch line of the London & North Western Railway from Birmingham arrived in Sutton in 1862. This helped the town to expand, to the extent that a new through station was built in 1884 enabling passage to Lichfield and connection to the national lines.



The Moat House

Built in 1690 by William Wilson (a contemporary of Sir Christopher Wren) as a show house in the Palladian style for himself and his bride. Later, the style became popular and other houses were built in the same style in the Midlands.

0.25 miles

0.5 miles

0.75 miles

1 mile

1.25 miles



The United Reformed Church

Built in 1879 by the Congregational Church this building is the lone survivor from the Victorian commercial area.



The Holy Trinity church

The church sits on a commanding hill top site. The first nave and altar were built in the thirteenth century, and a bell tower added by Bishop Vesey in the sixteenth century was part of considerable changes internally.

The 'Cup'
The former Cup public house was rebuilt in 1902 on the site of a single storey building set back from the road. It is claimed to be the oldest inn in Sutton, there being a reference to the 'Golden Cup' in 1769. The name is thought to have its origins in local horse racing. Still a public house it is now part of the Brewhouse And Kitchen chain.



Cinema

Sutton's only cinema, the 'Empire' is situated on the Birmingham Road and is an imposing building in the Art Deco style, which forms a positive visual 'entrance' to the centre of the town.



Vesey Manor

A former farmhouse, the Vesey Manor underwent many alterations and additions and is now an antiques gallery.



Maney cottages

This illustration shows how cottages from the late Elizabethan period at Maney Corner would have looked in c.1892, the year in which early photographs were taken.



Smithy

This is one of the oldest buildings in Sutton, dating from the fifteenth century. It possesses massive cruck timbers and is partly stone built, partly brick. It has been a workshop and a farmhouse, and is now used as an art gallery.

The Horse and Jockey

There have been various public houses on the site of the Horse and Jockey for over 250 years. The growth of traffic between Sutton, Birmingham and Dudley encouraged trade. The present name, together with Jockey Road, is thought to be derived from a nearby racecourse.

