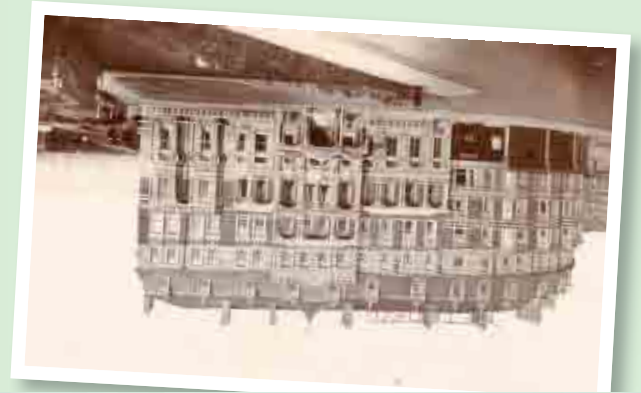


Start your walk in Devonshire Square in the town centre.

**[1] DEVONSHIRE SQUARE.** In 1891, on the north side of the Square, approximately where the public toilets are located, was built the town's second railway station by the former London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. The adjacent gates in the white picket-fence gave access to the platform for the transportation of livestock. This station was closed in 1902 when the present-day station opened. The nearby footbridge over the railway was also opened in 1902 replacing an underpass. The town's first telephone exchange was housed in this square from 1898. The green decorative lamp standards were erected in 2003 and show the former Bexhill District Council (1894-1902) motif. Similar lamps can be seen in Sackville and Devonshire Roads.

## DEVONSHIRE SQUARE (Green trail)

*Bexhill-on-Sea has a rich and varied history which continues to interest both its visitors and residents alike. To help you explore the town's interesting past, Bexhill Museum has devised four heritage trails which provide a fascinating glimpse of our town's history. This trail is about 2 miles long and will take about 2 hours to walk around but you may wish to allow more time by visiting any of the buildings open to the public. The trail is largely wheelchair friendly with no stairs or steep slopes. Several busy roads will need to be crossed so care should be taken at all times and pedestrian crossings used, if available.*



**[5] BEXHILL INDOOR MARKET.** This site was formerly the Cinema de Luxe which opened in 1913 and closed in 1921. It then became the Carter and Lidstone garage. Further additional building eastwards in 1923 created the Western Road Garage. A manhole cover by the entrance to the market displays the legend National Benzole Co Ltd No 4 (a brand of petrol in the UK between 1919 and the 1960s). The adjacent building on the left-hand side is the

**[4] WESTERN ROAD.** Originally most of these buildings were private terraced houses before being adapted to shops. The remains of their small front garden fences can still be seen about half-way down the road on the right-hand side outside nos 37A-39 and 41-43. On the opposite side of the road can be seen the

**[3] THE DEVONSHIRE.** John Webb (see location 16) was the first licensee when the former Devonshire Hotel first opened here in 1886. For many years it was considered to possess the best dance floor in Bexhill. It was closed as a hotel in 1957 and has since been both a restaurant and public house. Note the adjacent building in the square has a 1929 date set in stone which was when the former hotel was extended. Leave the square and turn right down

**[2] POST OFFICE.** Bexhill's head Post Office was opened in 1931 replacing a small row of shops on the eastern side of the Square. Note the carved symbol of Mercury, messenger of the gods, above the main entrance. The town's first fire station also stood partly on this site before being moved to behind the Town Hall in 1896. On the south side of the square is

**[8] SACKVILLE ROAD RAILWAY BRIDGE.** When the railway first arrived at Bexhill in 1846 it was necessary to construct cattle arches to allow mainly livestock movement from one side of the track to the other. As Sackville Road grew in importance the arch proved too narrow for traffic so in 1892 the arch was demolished and replaced by a cast-iron bridge. This was made by the Pimlico foundry in London, owned by Henry Young who lived in Bexhill. The present bridge dates from 1978. Before the construction of adequate sea defences, in rough weather the sea could reach to about this point on Sackville Road. Turn around and notice the Victorian pillar box on the far side in Wickham Avenue. This is one of only four Victorian pillar boxes remaining in the town. With the railway bridge behind you proceed along -

**[7] BEXHILL LIBRARY.** This building opened in 1893 as St Barnabas' girls and infants school and a stone date plaque can be seen near the roof on the Sackville Road side of the building. The public library was established here in 1951 and then extended and modernised in 1966. At the crossroads of Western Road and Sackville Road look to your right to see



trains at the start of each new term serving the 180 or so independent schools that flourished in the town between 1900 and 1940, this is not the case and the long platforms were just a fortunate outcome of the two stations being built close together. On leaving the station turn right and immediately on your left can be seen at No 18 the Kent-Lacey Studios established in 1927 by William Kent and Seymour Lacey, photographers and fine art dealers, although the building has been there since the mid-1890s. Walk along Endwell Road, crossing over Wilton Road, until you reach No 11

**[16] BROCKLEY HOUSE.** John Webb (1840-1922) was a surveyor and builder from Brockley, a district of south London located in the Borough of Lewisham. He lived in this house between about 1894 and 1900. It was the 7th Earl De La Warr who decided to transform the small rural village of Bexhill into an exclusive seaside resort. He contracted Webb to construct the first sea wall and to lay out De La Warr Parade. In part payment for his work, he was given all the land extending from Sea Road to the Polegrove, south of the railway line. Webb was instructed to build the shops on his land as Earl De La Warr did not want his visitors mixing with 'trade'. In addition to building much of the town centre as it remains today, he also laid out the first part of Egerton Park. Continue along Endwell Road back into Devonshire Square.

*You are now back at your starting point and we hope you have enjoyed this heritage trail. There are a number of other heritage trails around the town details of which may be obtained at Bexhill Museum.*





# BEXHILL MUSEUM

Encouraging Discovery







## SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!




**Bexhill Museums Limited**


A charitable company limited by guarantee owing collections of costume, textiles, cultures of other lands, archaeology, natural history and the diverse heritage of Bexhill and district. It administers Bexhill Museum in Egerton Road which is an accredited museum. Liability of all members is legally limited to £1.

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LOGOS




# Bexhill on Sea HERITAGE TRAILS

## 3. DEVONSHIRE SQUARE

### Green trail

Devonshire Square, Western Road,  
 Sackville Road, Marina, Devonshire Road,  
 St Leonards Road, Sea Road, Endwell Road



# BEXHILL MUSEUM

Encouraging Discovery





**Bexhill on Sea HERITAGE TRAILS**

# DEVONSHIRE SQUARE TRAIL



**[9] SACKVILLE ROAD**, another of the town's main shopping streets, until you reach on your left

**[10] SACKVILLE ROAD METHODIST CHURCH.** The Methodist Hall around the corner in Parkhurst Road was opened in 1892 and the adjoining church in Sackville Road was added in July 1896. Look for the 12 memorial stones set into the church walls as well as the 1896 AD stone date plaque above and to the left of the main entrance door. Because the memorial stones in Parkhurst Road had become severely effaced, plastic replicas were placed over them in 2012. On the opposite side of Sackville Road is No 30 - C Wells and Sons, a long established firm of shoe retailers, which has a large tiled pavement advertisement for K Shoe Agency; there are some lovely stained glass windows at the back of this shop. Continue in the same direction towards the sea viewing the shops and properties especially above the modern shop fronts. Proceed to the end of the road and turn to your left at the roundabout to walk along Marina. On the far side of the roundabout, on the grassed areas adjacent to the De La Warr Pavilion once stood the Metropole Hotel. It opened in 1900 but was left derelict after a serious fire in 1940, bomb damage in 1941, and was finally demolished in 1955. A tram service from St Leonards to Bexhill began in 1906 and the trams terminated at this roundabout until, later in the year, the line was extended to Cooden Beach on the western side of town. Also from here the De La Warr Pavilion can be clearly seen. This important Grade I listed building is well worth visiting if you have the time. At the roundabout you will also pass Di Paolo's Café which displays a date of 1895 in the plasterwork near the roof. Continue along Marina passing across Linden Road, Albany Road and Albert Road. From here to your right can be seen the Moghul style architecture, with domes, of a row of houses and other buildings built around 1905. Now turn left into



**[11] DEVONSHIRE ROAD.** As you walk along this road enjoy the late Victorian architecture above the modern shop fronts. You will see a number of large green flower-boxes along this road which commemorate Bexhill-on-Sea's Centenary, 1902- 2002, of being granted its charter of incorporation. On your right, adjacent to the large white apartment block, look above No 69 for an 1890 terracotta date plaque and decoration as well as three stone mullion windows. On your left look above the shop-front of No 46 to see a stone plaque with the entwined initials "A & Sons"; originally this was a shoe and bootmaker shop owned by A Jones & Sons. Above No 43 on the opposite side can be seen an 1896 date and more decorative plasterwork. Also on the right-hand side as you walk up Devonshire Road you will notice two large gaps in the upper row of buildings between Nos 53-57 and 25-31. These are both the result of demolition following German bomb damage in May 1942 and December 1940 respectively. Four banks can be seen towards the top of the road; Barclays (built 1899 and opened as a bank 1921); Lloyds/TSB (built and opened 1892); NatWest (built 1889, opened 1927 with new extension 1967) and HSBC (built 1888, opened 1921). Also near these banks on the corner of Parkhurst Road and Devonshire Road is a branch of Boots restyled as a modernist building during 1930. Now turn right along

**[12] ST LEONARDS ROAD** and look immediately, on the left-hand side, at Sackville House and its ornate plasterwork (built c1897). Many other buildings along this road are worth examining above their modern shop fronts. Continue along the road, crossing over Eversley Road. On your right is No 30 (Marsh Pharmacy) built about 1912; try and look at the lovely art nouveau style windows at the back of the store. On your left is Burford Terrace (built c1899) followed by a building (Job Centre Plus) with an 1898 stone date plaque near the roof on the Wilton Road side. Cross over Wilton Road and note No 44 on your right has an 1894 stone date plaque and Nos 48-50 (built 1899) also has some interesting plaster work. Finally, at the end of the road, look at another of



only four Victorian pillar boxes remaining in the town as well as the corner building on the south-side, with an 1893 stone date plaque. Cross over Sea Road to look at

**[13] ST BARNABAS' CHURCH.** Built in 1890 and consecrated the following year, this is a fine example of the use of flint cobbles as a building material. It is now a Grade C listed Anglican church. If open, then inside may be seen a blue heritage plaque dedicated to Canon Basil Davies, vicar of St Barnabas from 1926-1940. In his spare time, and using the nom-de-plume Ixion, he was a keen motorcycling enthusiast and journalist writing for The Motor Cycle from 1903 until his death in 1961. On the opposite side of Cantelupe Road can be seen

**[14] SYDENHAM COURT.** Sydenham House, a popular café, opened on this site in 1927. During World War Two it became the WRVS "Forces Corner" and probably its most famous customer was the comedian, Spike Milligan, who was stationed in Bexhill as part of D Battery 56th Regiment Royal Artillery, from June 1940 until February 1941. He describes his war-time experiences in Bexhill in his book Adolf Hitler: My Part In His Downfall (1971). The building was eventually demolished in 1974 and replaced by this residential block of flats. Before the construction of the present-day sea wall, in rough weather, the sea could reach to about this point on Sea Road. Continue walking up Sea Road, away from the sea, crossing over Jameson Road, then use the pedestrian crossing to reach

**[15] BEXHILL RAILWAY STATION.** This is the third railway station to have been built and was opened in 1902. A major restoration project was completed in 2008 and it is now a Grade II listed building. In the booking hall the central lantern of the roof space is worth admiring. Walk through the concourse for an elevated view of the station. The long platforms were created when the old station in Devonshire Square closed and the existing platforms joined up to those of the present station. Although it is believed by some that the platforms were made deliberately long to accommodate the