

What can Barrow's buildings tell us about the story of our town?

A Local Heritage Trail

An introduction for walk leaders.

This trail is part of the learning resource "[What can Barrow's buildings tell us about the story of our town?](#)" It is most suitable for KS2 but could be adapted for other age groups.

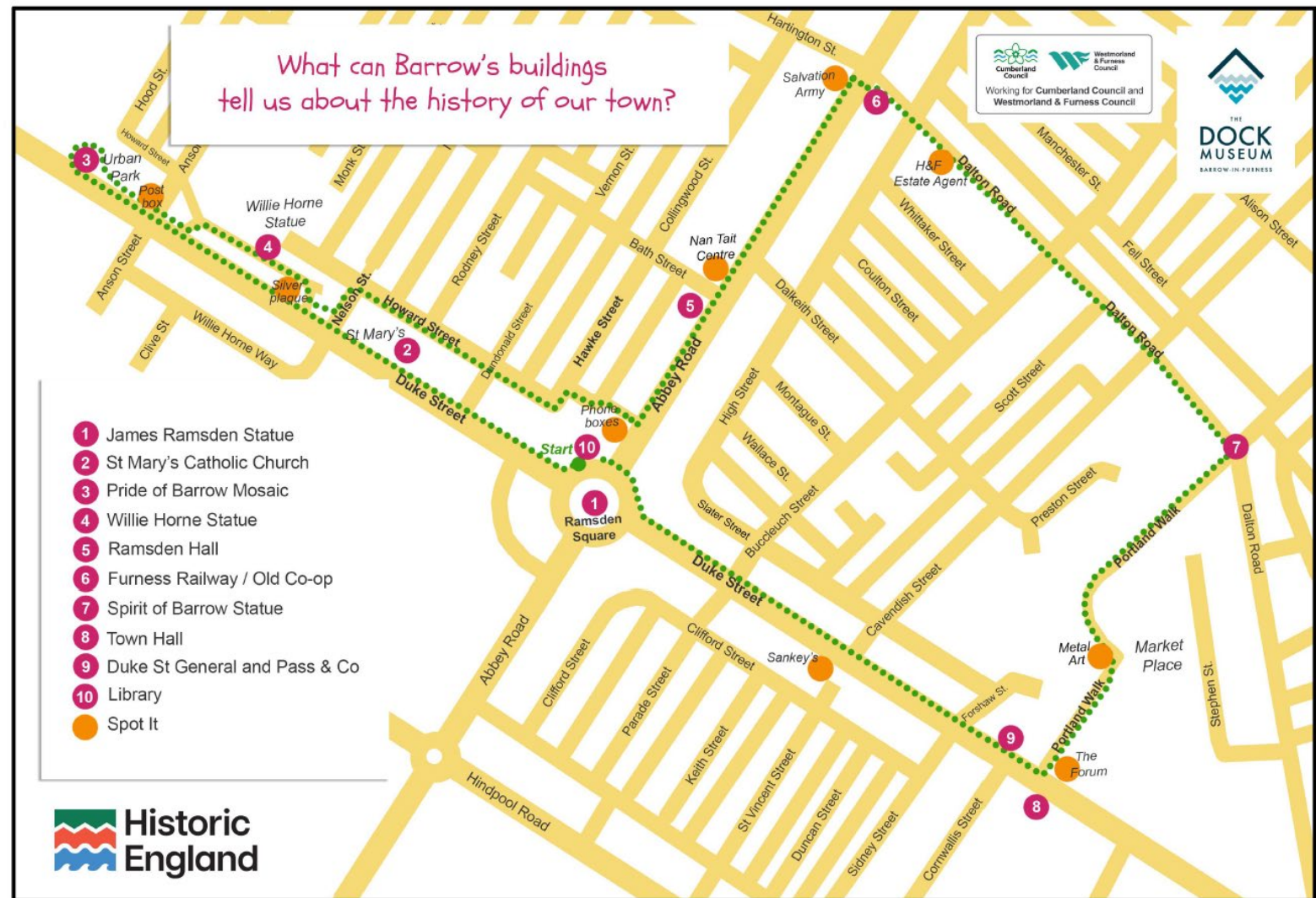
Before taking pupils on this trail, we encourage teachers to read the "Resource Overview and Contents" slides on the [introductory PPT](#) and to use the [Introductory PPT](#) in class. This will introduce pupils to the sites on the trail and will encourage them to explore their knowledge of, and feelings towards, Barrow. After the trail, teachers can use the post trail [Recap and Reflect PPT](#) and / or the [Additional Activities PPT](#) to further explore the themes, people, and events on the trail.

The trail starts and finishes at Barrow Central Library. We have provided a route map and directions from one site to the next. We envisage that the trail will take about 90 minutes, however, this will vary depending on the age, ability and enthusiasm of the class! Teachers are advised to walk the trail first, to ensure an appropriate and safe route. Your school is responsible for the safety of all pupils and adults on the trail. Teachers are advised to complete appropriate risk assessments.

Please download and take this document with you, as well as copies of the [Trail Worksheet](#) for your pupils. There is also an online [StoryMap](#) which can be used if you are unable to walk the trail, or to recap the information about the sites after your walk.



**What can
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Trail Route**



Start:

Meet Outside Barrow Library and Archive, looking towards the statue in the middle of the roundabout

1. James Ramsden Statue

This is a statue of James Ramsden.

Can you think of any reasons why we might put up statues of certain people in our town?

James Ramsden is a very important person in Barrow's history. He lived in Barrow almost 200 years ago, during the reign of Queen Victoria. Thanks to his efforts—alongside those of several other key people that we'll explore on this trail—Barrow became a world leading iron and steel producer and a major ship building town.

We think that James Ramsden was born in Bolton, Greater Manchester. He moved to Barrow in 1846 to become Superintendent of the newly built Furness Railway. When James arrived in Barrow it was a fishing village with a small dock made up of a number of piers. Iron ore, mined from local mines, was shipped from the dock to other parts of the country and the world. The railway had been built to make it easier to transport the iron ore from mines in places like Lindal and Furness, to the Barrow port.

James Ramsden realised that Barrow had the potential to become bigger and better and that he could make his fortune by getting involved! He saw that, rather than just transporting the iron ore from Barrow, he could make lots of money by smelting it and turning it into iron and steel himself. In 1866 James opened an iron and steel works. By the 1870s it was one of the largest iron and steel companies in the world!

James was involved in many other developments in Barrow which we will find out more about on this trail:

- He helped pay for new docks to be built, so that iron and steel could be easily transported
- He formed Barrow Iron Ship Building company in 1871, which is now BAE!
- He designed a town plan and paid for lots of the public buildings we will see on this trail

In recognition of his work James Ramsden was made Mayor of Barrow in 1867.

Look at the statue:

What do you think is around James Ramsden's neck and what does this represent?

This statue was erected by the people of Barrow to say thank you for his hard work. In the same year that it was put here, James was even knighted by Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle.

Look at the plaque. What year was that?

It is said that the statue is pretty life like except for one thing - in real life, James Ramsden is thought to have always worn a hat to cover his bald spot!

With your back to the library, walk down Duke Street to your right, heading towards the spire of St Mary's Catholic Church. If you can, go through the gate into the garden in front of the church. If not, stand on the pavement so that you can see the front of the church.

SPOT IT: A circular window in the side of the church, with a four leafed shape in the middle. This shape is a quatrefoil.

2. St Mary's Catholic Church

This is St Mary's Church. It was built in 1867 for Barrow's quickly growing population.

In 1850 large deposits of a type of iron ore called haematite was found in Furness. This iron ore could be more easily mined and was better quality. This discovery, as well as the increased demand for iron ore created by James Ramsden's iron and steel works and his ship building company, meant more and more people moved to Barrow for work.

In 1850 the population of Barrow was around 650 people. By 1871 it had grown to nearly 18,000 people and only 10 years after that there were nearly 50,000 people living in Barrow! People came from places like Cornwall, Staffordshire and Scotland. On the Dock Museum website, it says that Barrow was "a melting pot" of different cultures and religions.

What do you think this means?

Many of the people moving to Barrow were Irish Catholics. By 1863 there were said to be at least 500 Catholics in Barrow. St Marys Church was built in 1867 so that they had somewhere to worship and pray. It was the first Catholic Church in the Borough of Furness. The steeple was added in 1888, but the top of the steeple fell off in a storm in the late 1980s.

The church was designed by an architect called Edward Pugin whose father Augustus designed the houses of parliament! By the time that he died, Edward had designed more than 100 Catholic churches around the country. This church, like many others at the time, was built in a style we call Gothic Revival. The style is inspired by Medieval buildings and often includes features such as:

- Triangular shaped pitched roofs
- Tall spires
- Pointed arch windows
- Crosses and quatrefoils
- Decorated stonework

How many of these features can you spot on St Mary's Church?

Carry on down Duke Street, cross over two side streets – Nelson St and Anson Street - then keep walking until you come to the second (and main) entrance to Urban Park on Duke Street

On the ground in front of you, you will see a pebble mosaic called the Pride of Barrow mosaic.

SPOT IT: Silver plaques on the side of the metal fence on your right. They are a clue to another of our stops!

3. Pride of Barrow Pebble Mosaic, Hindpool Urban Park

This mosaic gives us lots of clues about Barrow in the past and how and why it grew. See how many of these things you can spot. Can you work out why they have been included?

Three ears of wheat: These tell us about a time, before, the iron and steel works and shipyards, when Barrow was a tiny village surrounded by farmland. Most of the land was owned by the Duke of Devonshire and Duke of Buccleuch. Farmers rented the land to grow crops.

Red, iron ore-coloured pebbles: These pebbles represent the importance of iron ore in the growth of Barrow. Iron had been mined from nearby villages like Lindal and Marton for many years. In 1850 even bigger and better deposits of *haematite* iron ore were discovered. This meant larger quantities of iron ore were mined and sold. It was the discovery of these deposits that inspired James Ramsden to open his iron and steel works. Some of the pebbles in the mosaic come from all over the world including places such as South America, China & Japan.

Why do you think these have been included?
(They represent Barrow's links with other parts of the world.)

Some of the pebbles come from the local Roose quarry.

Why do you think these have been included?
(They remind us of the importance of local resources.)

Railway wheels and railway lines: One of the first developments in Barrow, even before haematite iron ore deposits were discovered, or James Ramsden opened his iron and steel works, was the building of the Furness Railway. Henry Schneider was a businessman who had made his fortune buying and selling iron across England and the world. He heard about the mines around Barrow and realised that he could make even more money by buying them for himself. One problem Schneider found, however, was that it was difficult to transport the iron ore from the mines to the small port that had developed in Barrow village. Schneider convinced the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Buccleuch, who also owned mines around Barrow, to help him pay for the building of a railway line. The Furness Railway opened in 1846. The railway allowed the local mining industry to grow because iron could be more easily transported to and then out from the port at Barrow

A ship: This represents Barrow's importance as a ship building town. Having opened the Haematite Iron and Steel company in 1866, James Ramsden realised that he could make even more money by using the iron and steel he had made at his works to build iron and steel ships. From the 1870s Barrow was one of the leading ship building towns in the world!

Ropes: As Barrow started to grow and develop, many other businesses were opened in the town. One of the major employers of women and girls was Barrow Flax and Jute company opened in 1874 by James Ramsden. Jute and Flax are natural materials extracted from tropical plants. The materials were imported from Calcutta on which were built by Barrow Shipbuilding Company. The materials were used to make products such as rope but also telegraph cables and even artificial hair!

Come back out of the park and cross back over Anson Street. Take the path immediately on your left and follow it round until you reach the statue in front of College House

SPOT IT: A post box! What are the two letters in squiggly writing on the bottom? (They are the initials of the person who was king at the time the postbox was put there!)

4. Willie Horne Statue

This statue was unveiled in 2004 to remember Willie Horne who is a local significant individual and hero for many Barrow people! Willie captained Barrow's rugby league team in the 1940s and 50s, as well as leading Lancashire and England to many victories. He is known as one of the greatest rugby league players of all time.

Willie was born in Barrow in 1922. He signed for Barrow in 1943 and played as a stand-off at Craven Park stadium, just 2 minutes' walk from this statue. He captained England in 1952, when they achieved a victory against Australia in the Ashes, and in 1955, he played an important role in Barrow winning the Challenge Cup Final at Wembley.

In 1995 Barrow Borough Council voted unanimously to make Willie Horne a Freeman of the Borough. He was the first sportsman to receive such an honour.

Read the plaques on the Willie Horne statue. How is he described by the person who wrote the plaque? What sort of man do you think Willie was?

Continue following the path and exit back on to Duke Street. Cross back over Nelson Street and then turn left into Nelson Street. Take the first right into Howard Street and follow it all the way to the end. Turn left on to Hawke Street then immediately right and go down the alley at the side of Barrow Library. Come out onto the corner of Abbey Road. Turn left and walk until you find the building with the black plaque on it, by the front door.

SPOT IT: Look down some of the side streets to your left. See simple, terraced houses built for the workers who came to work in Barrow

SPOT IT: Old telephone boxes as you leave the alley onto Abbey Road

5. Ramsden Hall

In 1867 Barrow became a municipal borough. It got its first mayor, James Ramsden, and for the first time there was a borough council to help look after the town.

As Barrow continued to grow, the council realised that the thousands of workers, who had come to Barrow to live and work, needed facilities like schools, a hospital, churches and a park for getting fresh air and exercise.

This building is Ramsden Hall. It was built in 1872 and paid for by James Ramsden, as a gift to the people of Barrow.

Why might he have given them a gift? (What had they done in 1872?).

Can you spot the inscription above the doorway of the baths and the ram's head in the stonework of the building, from the Ramsden family's coat of arms.

Ramsden Hall was a public bath house. This is somewhere where people could go to wash themselves and their clothes if they didn't have running water or a bathroom in their homes. Note that the side street next to it is called Bath Street.

The public baths were only in use for about 5 years and then a suite of Turkish baths were opened further up Abbey Road and these were more popular.

Cross over Bath Street and continue on Abbey Street passing the Nan Tait Centre building and the Salvation Army building on your left. Cross to the other side of Abbey Road, using the pedestrian crossing. Stand outside the Furness Railway pub on the corner of Abbey Road and Dalton Road.

SPOT IT: The grand looking Nan Tait Centre, once Barrow Technical School, and the Salvation Army Building. Any clues about when they were built?

6. Old Coop Department Store / Furness Railway Hotel

*Look up at the outside of the building.
Are there any clues about when this building was built and what it used to be?*

This building was built in 1889 as a Coop (Cooperative) Department store. You might have Co-Op shops near your home or school. Today they mainly sell food but, in the past, they sold all sorts of items, including clothes and furniture, often all in one big shop called a department store. This Coop store was Barrow's largest such shop up until it closed in 1996.

The Cooperative movement started in Rochdale in 1844. At this time, food was often too expensive for ordinary, working people and shop keepers sometimes cheated their customers – watering down milk for example or adding saw dust to flour! A group of Rochdale men, who became known as the Rochdale Pioneers, decided to work together (cooperate), and with other members of their community, to set up and run their own shop. Their shop sold good quality food at fair prices.

People in other parts of the country heard about the Rochdale Cooperative and decided to set up their own shops too. In 1863 the individual co-op societies joined together and formed The Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS). The CWS sourced and made products which were sold in hundreds of Co-op stores. A Cooperative movement spread all over Britain and the world!

What is this building now? Why do you think it might be named after the Furness Railway?

This building is now a hotel and pub named after the Furness Railway. One reason for this is that the coop building in which it is based was originally bought from the Furness Railway Company. The Furness Railway company was owned by lots of the rich and influential people of Barrow that we have been learning about, including James Ramsden. They opened many of the businesses in the town in the 1800s and they paid for several of the important buildings.

Another reason is that, as we have learnt, the coming of the railway to Barrow was really important in the development of the town as it meant that iron ore, iron and steel and other products made in Barrow, as well as people, could be more easily transported from one place to another. The Furness Railway company was owned by lots of rich and influential people in Barrow, including James Ramsden. They opened many of the businesses in Barrow in the 1800s and they paid for several of the important buildings.

Leaving Abbey Road, walk down Dalton Road so that the Furness Railway pub is on your right. Keep walking until you reach a statue of four people.

SPOT IT: A pretty bay window (one that sticks out) above H and F Estate Agent and Coffee Shop. What does the pattern remind you of?

7. Spirit of Barrow Statue

Look carefully at the statue. What job do you think the people have?

This sculpture was unveiled in 2005. It shows four shipyard builders through different time periods.

Which workers do you think are more modern and which do you think are from an older time period?

Ship building has played a very important role in the growth and development of Barrow. The first ship building company, Barrow Iron Ship Building Company, was opened in 1871 by James Ramsden. The company used steel produced at Ramsden's iron and steel business, to make warships, trade and passenger ships. The company was very successful and in their first 10 years, the yard produced more than 100 ships!

When James Ramsden died, the steel manufacturing company Vickers & Sons bought the Company. Vickers became a world-renowned producer of impressive ships and naval vessels and Barrow became famous for naval building, producing ships and submarines which were used in World War 1 and 2.

Today the shipyard is part of a company called BAE Systems which still produces submarines for the Royal Navy. The base of this sculpture was donated by the company and they are the major employer in this town.

*Read the sentences on the base of the statue. What do you think they mean?
Why have those words been chosen?*

Stand in front of the words “those shipyard men and ships” written on the floor around the statue”. Now walk forwards on to Portland Walk.

Follow Portland Walk until you see the words “Market Square” written on the floor in front of you. Take a right down the alleyway here and come out on to Duke Street, in front of the Town Hall

SPOT IT: A large metal piece of street art. Follow the arrow to your next stop!

8. Barrow Town Hall

When James Ramsden became mayor of the new Municipal Borough of Barrow, he and other important people in the town, decided they wanted to build an impressive town hall that would be a symbol of Barrow’s industrial growth, wealth and prosperity

A competition was held for its design and the winner was the architect William Henry Lynn.

The town hall was built between 1882 – 6, using local sandstone from Hawcoat Quarry.

It was officially opened on 14 July 1887, to mark Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee. The opening ceremony was a grand occasion. Thousands of people cheered as the Marquis of Hartington opened the Town Hall with a golden key.

Do any of the features remind you of another building on this trail?

Barrow town hall is another building designed in the gothic revival style! Look up at the impressive clock tower that was a very important part of the design. It is 50m tall and can be seen for miles around, but it was originally meant to be even taller! During building, in 1885, cracks appeared at the base of the tower so it had to be dismantled. It was rebuilt but nearly 4m shorter than originally designed. This delayed the completion of the town hall so it wasn’t finished until 1886. You might be able to see that the year on the clock tower says 1885. The date stone had already been built in, so to save costs, this was left!

With your back to the town hall, go left down Duke Street. No need to cross over the road. Stop close to the pedestrian crossing by the car park.

SPOT IT: The building called The Forum. What is the venue used for?

9. Duke Street and Passes Department Store

We are standing at one end of Duke Street but the road stretches all the way up past Urban Park where the pebble mosaic, one of the earlier stops in our trail, is situated. This street was named in honour of the 7th Duke of Devonshire whose family owned a lot of land in and around Barrow. The Duke of Devonshire later invested in the building of the railway, the docks and many businesses, as well as giving land and money to build key buildings in the town.

Before Barrow's development Duke Street was an unmade road linking the villages of Barrow and Hindpool. By the 1870s there were some shops and a hotel on the street but the road was described as *"a dust bowl in summer and a quagmire in winter"*. Another description read: *"The street as yet is not a great success. The carriageway is very far from good and the broad sidewalks oft present a mess in which a lady does not care to trail her dress"*

What do these two descriptions tell you about Duke Street before its development?

Over time, the condition of the road and pavements improved and more and more shops, banks and businesses set up here. By the late 1800s Duke Street was Barrow's main shopping street.

Turn around to face the car park. Compare what you can see with the drawing on your worksheet.

What do you notice about this site?

The car park next to where we are standing was once the site of Barrow's first Department Store, Pass and Co. Its motto was that it sold "anything from a pin to a piano". One of the most popular areas of the shop was its record department. The store sold 78 records. If you wanted to listen to a song, you asked the person behind the counter to put it on a record player. You then went into a little booth and listened to it through headphones. If the store didn't have the record you wanted, you could place an order and collect it a few days later.

Carefully cross over Forshaw St towards the Jefferson Hotel. Continue down Duke Street. Use the pedestrian crossing to cross Cavendish Street and take care crossing Buccleuch Street.

Head to the roundabout where you will see the statue of James Ramsden again. Use the Zebra crossing to cross over Abbey Road and return to stand outside Barrow Library

SPOT IT: A white and black building on the other side of Duke Steet. This was once Sankey's photography shop. The Sankey's took 100s of photos of Barrow in the early 1900s

10. Barrow Library and Archive

The first Barrow library was opened by Barrow Borough Council in 1882 after a petition by local people. It was in a temporary building on Schneider Square. There were separate reading rooms for men and women!

In 1887 the library moved to Barrow Town Hall . Then in 1913 the council received a grant of £12000 from an organisation called the Carnegie Corporation of New York towards the building of a new purpose-built library.

The site on Ramsden Square was identified in 1913 and building started shortly afterwards. The council planned that the library would be ready by 1915 but it took longer than expected and in 1916 the British government said that the building work must stop to enable all materials to be used for the world war. The library was not officially opened until 1922.

Can you read any of the letters on the stone above the door?

The first letters read ANNO DNI. This stands for Anno Domini which is Latin and means "the year of our Lord". We sometimes say AD. The letters MCMXV are Roman numerals which represent 1915.

Why do you think the date 1915 is on there?

Around 27,000 books were moved from the library in the Town Hall to the new library and, when it was first opened, it included a children's library, a reading room and a lecture theatre on the top floor. In the 1930s the lecture theatre became a museum with objects, artefacts and information linking to the history of Barrow. The museum moved out of the library when the Dock Museum opened in the 1990s

Today the library has a local studies and archive centre in which you can find out lots more about the history of Barrow.