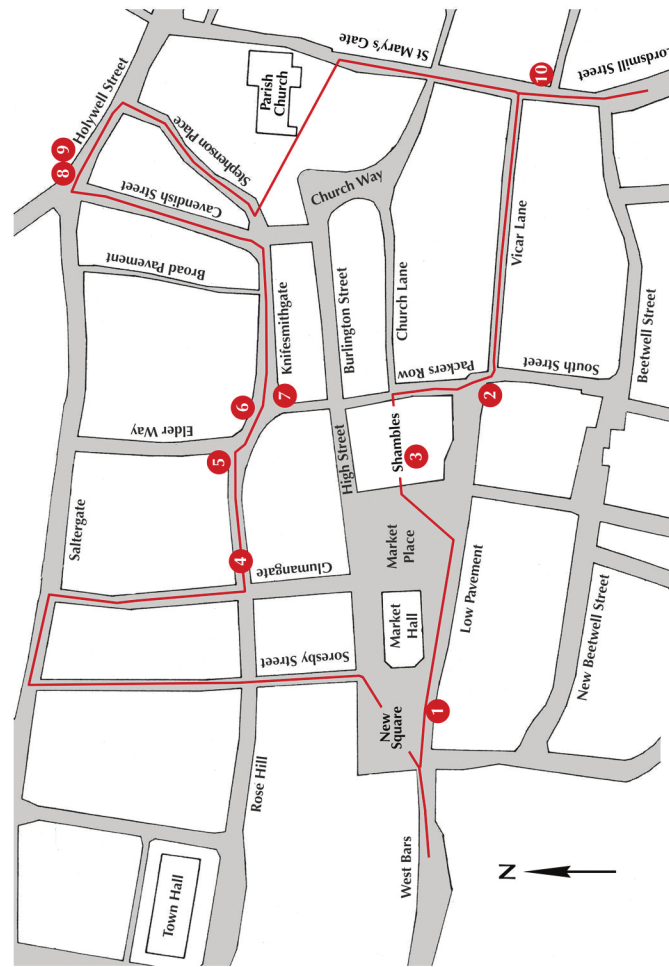


Chesterfield's Black & White Buildings



There are nearly 50 black and white buildings in Chesterfield town centre.

Why not follow the trail and look at them.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 - Peacock | 6 - Victoria |
| 2 - Barnsley Building Society | 7 - Swallows |
| 3 - Royal Oak | 8 - Vibe Nightclub |
| 4 - Knifesmithgate | 9 - Ashoka |
| 5 - Former Co-op | 10 - Chandlers Bar |



Most of the black and white buildings are to be found on Lordsmill Street, St Mary's Gate, Knifesmithgate and Holywell Street. However, the three timber framed buildings are elsewhere; Peacocks is on the Low Pavement side of New Square; Barnsley Building Society is at the junction of Low Pavement and South Street and the Royal Oak is in the Shambles.



The Anchor (now Chandlers Bar) is at the junction of Hollis Lane and Lordsmill Street. It is typical of the half-timbered buildings in the town erected during the 1920s.



This section of Knivesmithgate was opened in the 1920s. The buildings had colonnades so that shoppers would not get wet when it rained.



The Victoria is fondly remembered in the town. The billiard hall was where Joe Davis, world billiard and snooker champion, began his career. Many couples did their courting in the ballroom or cinema. There was also a restaurant.



By the 1930s, building styles had changed and the black and white decoration was on the surface only or partial.



When this building was erected on Holywell Street, brick was once more being used as a building material.



Sadly some have been demolished. Swallows stood on the corner opposite the Victoria and, until it was demolished, there were black and white buildings on each of the four corners there.

Why are there so many black and white buildings in Chesterfield?

In 1913 the Council sought permission from Parliament to carry out an ambitious Improvement Plan; included in the plan was a programme of street improvements, including widening roads, removal of dangerous corners and building new roads. Permission was granted in 1914, but the outbreak of war brought the work almost to a halt until the war was over. The programme involved much demolition and new building.

The Tudor Revival style of Chesterfield's black and white buildings had its origins in the Arts and Crafts movement. At the time the architectural adviser to the Council was Percy Houfton, who was supporter of the movement. Other local architects also employed the same style: most notably Jackson and Fryer, architects of the Victoria and the adjoining shops, and Wilcockson and Cutts.

At the same time the licensing laws were being strengthened. Public houses could be closed if they were not fit for the purpose, if they were being badly run or if the Council paid compensation to the breweries. Therefore it was advantageous for the breweries to co-operate with the Council over rebuilding and it explains why so many of the buildings are / were public houses.

The rebuilding due to street improvements, tighter licensing laws and the prevailing fashion of the Tudor Revival style all contributed to the collection of the black and white buildings in the town.