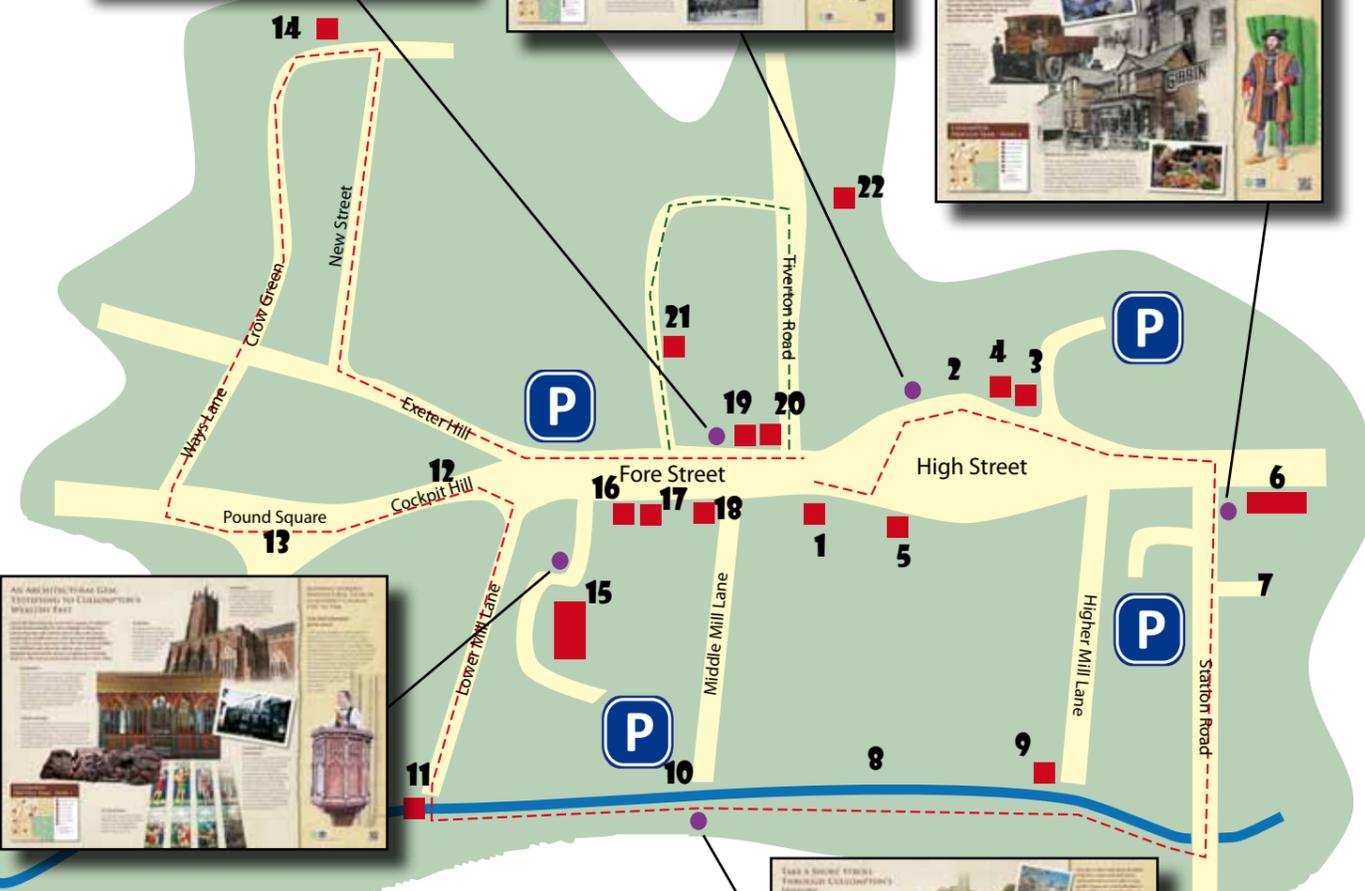




A walk through Historic Cullompton



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The Town Hall

As you walk around the town trail, see the heritage trail boards as shown on the map overleaf for further information on Cullompton's rich history.

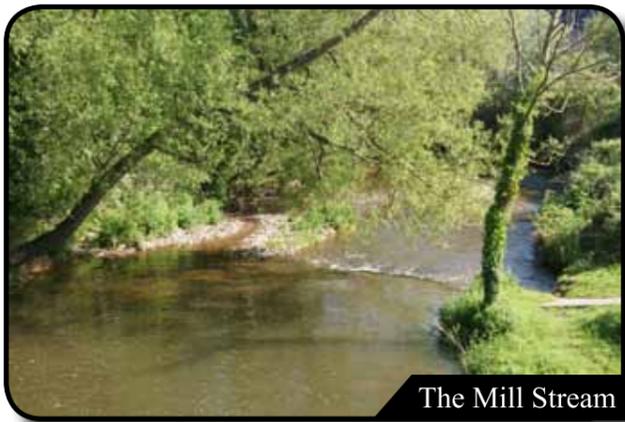
The Town Trail starts at the Town Hall (1). This part of the town is known as the Higher Bullring because of the cattle market that

took place here until 1918. The clock on the Town Hall was placed there to commemorate the centenary of Cullompton Town Council in 1995. The hall was used as a First Aid Post during the last war as the sign on the front of the building indicates. Cross the road, with care, to the War Memorial (2) and note the line of blue paving stones along the pavement which mark the old watercourse.

Buildings to note are, to the right, the fine old Georgian town house on the corner (3) and the adjacent house, Golds Place (4) which is also Georgian but has an added modern facade. Opposite this is the old Police Station (5) - the clock face indicates the previous use of the building. Nearby is the Baptist Church, the Baptists having been established in the town since about 1700.

Proceed towards the traffic lights at the Station Road Junction. On the opposite corner are the almshouses given by John Trott in 1522 (6) now used as 6 residences for the elderly under the management of Cullompton United Charities.

Cross the road and walk down Station Road, the railway station was closed in 1964 and note College Road (7). It is thought that this may have been the site of the building where the monks of Buckland Abbey came to collect the rents. If you walk along Station Road you will



The Mill Stream

pass the site of the Old Gas Works on the right and on your left there are some curiously shaped cottages which the locals call Skew Cottages. There was a sawmill in the area powered by the Mill Leat. The Railway Station was situated where the M5 Services now are. Cross the road with care and retrace your steps and turn into the public footpath along the Mill Leat (8).

This is the man-made tributary of the River Culm diverted to power several mills. The first mill you will see is Higher Mill (9) now converted into a private dwelling but the remains of the mill sluice can be seen. Continuing along the leat, you will see the site of Middle Mill (10) now totally demolished except for a wall and the remains of the sluice. All the mills were corn mills originally but Middle Mill was put to various uses and became part of the Bilbies' Bell Foundry. Many famous bells were cast by Thomas Bilbie including eight of the ten in St Andrew's Tower. This mill then became an axle works. Continue further along the leat to Lower Mill (11) noting

on the way the fine view of the church and the old vicarage, now a nursing home, and the fine red brick Victorian house next to the church. Lower Mill was the last mill on the leat to have been working and, although now converted into a dwelling, the old sluice can be seen and some of the machinery has recently been restored to working order.

For a longer walk, continue over the fields belonging to the Cullompton Community Association and join Duke Street, turning right to walk back into the town. To follow this trail, turn right by the mill and follow the lane to Queen Square and on to the top of Cockpit Hill, the site of the old Cock Pit (12). Walk down the hill into Pound Square (13) where animals were impounded on Market Days. On your right is the Unitarian Church dating from 1662 when Richard Compton was ejected from the living of the Parish Church. The present building replaces a cob chapel which collapsed in 1911. Turn right and proceed through Ways Lane; to the left is the site of the former tannery (now a supermarket complex) which was burned down in 1958 causing great distress in the town as it was one of the principal employers. Cross the main road into Crow Green and bear right; on your left you will see

St Boniface Roman Catholic Church (14). This was built in 1929 by the De la Casas family - note the Spanish style of the building. Turn right and walk up past the church and then turn right again into New Street where the disastrous fire of 1839 started and almost destroyed the whole town. Proceed back into Fore Street and turn right, crossing the road into Church Street, which is dominated by the fine tower of St Andrew's Church (15) some 120 feet in height. A visit to this beautiful church is a must and visitors will find a leaflet inside introducing them to what has been described as one of the most magnificent parish churches in Devon. The church contains a very rare wooden Golgotha of Mediaeval origin. This is a gruesomely carved tree trunk which has sockets for the statues of Mary and John on either side. All the figures have long since gone and the Golgotha nearly went, having been heaved out into the churchyard. Mercifully, it was recovered, its two halves put back together and now on display at the back of the church.

After leaving the church, noting the cobbled pavements of Pye Corner, take a look at the houses opposite in Gravel Walk. Returning to Fore Street, turning right, you pass Community House (16) which was, at one time, the Rising Sun Inn. A few doors along is a shop which was once



The Medieval Golgotha

the Court House (17) and then the Market House for The Shambles where meat was sold. Further along is

the White Hart (18) that was once a coaching inn. Opposite is a barber shop, once Foster's Chemist and, before that, the Old Fountain Inn which possess some very interesting cellars. The Merchant's House, which was once thatched, and The Walronds (19), a fine stone Elizabethan house which was enlarged by Sir John Petre in 1603 and completed in 1605.



The Manor House Hotel

Adjacent to these are Veryards and the Manor House (20) which have now combined to form a hotel. The Manor House dates from 1603 and this date and the initials TT can be seen in the top right hand corner of the building. These initials are of Thomas Trock, the builder. There was some reconstruction in 1718 when the porch was added and some later additions to the building which can best be seen from Tiverton Road. You may conclude the Cullompton Town Trail by continuing along Fore Street to the War Memorial in Higher Bullring.

To look at an example of the many small courts off the street which, at one time, were a huddle of small houses, retrace your steps on the same side of Fore Street and cross the road at the Methodist Church sign into the New Cut. Here can be clearly seen the old water course channel where the stream came from its source at Coombe Farm into the town. It ran north and south from



St Andrew's Church



The Walronds

this point according to the slight gradient of the street. In the New Cut will be found the old Methodist Church (21) dating from 1785. John Wesley preached first in the town in 1748. Walk along the path beside the church, passing the former Workhouse which, until recently, housed the Royal British Legion Club. Part of the Bilbie Bell Foundry was also in this area.

Continue into Shortland's Lane, turning right and pass the Fire Station on your left. Turn right onto Tiverton Road and, at the junction of Shortland's Lane, you can see the Upcott Field. This was given to the town for recreation by the Upcott family who were woollen merchants and at one time resided at The Manor House. Next to the Upcott Field is the Victoria Hall (22), now a day nursery. This was originally an independent chapel, built in 1830. It then became an Assembly Room and was named in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Walk along Tiverton Road to take you back to your starting place, the Town Hall.