



SELF-GUIDED TRAIL INSTRUCTIONS

This trail starts outside the main entrance to Stirchley Baths (stop point #1). Walk in the direction of the arrows on the map. There are 16 stop points. Overleaf you will find some information about each.

On route you will also pass two **heritage interpretation panels** which offer further historical information about the area. Look out for these between stop points #1 and #2 and by #7.



There are no steps on this trail, but the route will take you along some busy roads with narrow footpaths. There is a fairly steep gradient at stop point #4 (optional). This is a self-guided trail which you do at your own risk. Please take care always and use crossings where you can.



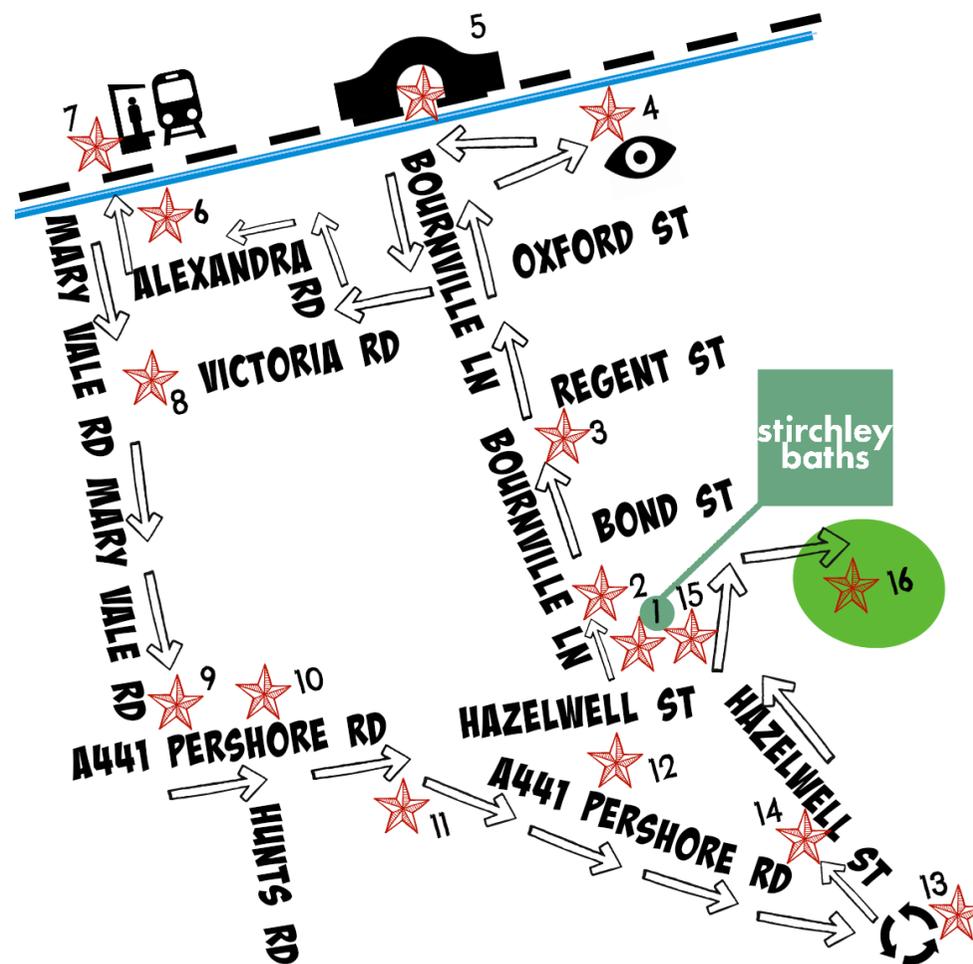
DETAIL DETECTIVES!

We've included an image of a small detail to look for at each stop point. You might need to look up! Can you spot them all?

TRAIL MAP

This is a circular walk, which finishes at Stirchley Park at the rear of Stirchley Baths. Both the Baths and the park have plenty of seating if you need to rest at the end.

The café at the Baths is open Tuesday to Friday from 10am until 4pm, and offers drinks, cakes and lots of other delicious healthy vegetarian and vegan food.



*Taken from FORWARD. Stirchley Prospects, Place Prospectors

“I’VE ALWAYS LIKED STIRCHLEY”.

CHARMING, LOVED, REAL.

“STIRCHLEY?”

PEOPLE TALK ABOUT IT; IT’S GOT A PAST.

“ST. IRCHLEY I CALL IT”. THE OPPOSITE OF OBVIOUS.

YOU HAVE TO IMAGINE.*

1. STIRCHLEY BATHS



The land on which this former swimming pool and public washhouse was built was given by the Cadbury Brothers in 1903. Opened in 1911, Stirchley Baths was a well-used local facility until its closure in 1988 when parts of the building were deemed unsafe. Standing unused for twenty-five years the site became derelict. The Baths reopened as a community hub in 2016 thanks to the sale of nearby land to Tesco and a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. For more on the Baths' history, please explore the building and pick up a free leaflet from the café or reception.

Please make your way up Bournville Lane. There are three more stops before the bridge.

2. STIRCHLEY LIBRARY



The Free Library opened in 1907. Again, it was the Cadbury Brothers who donated the land. According to the Foundation Stone from 1905, the architect was John P. Osborne. He went on to design Stirchley Baths next door in 1909. The project was funded by the Carnegie Trust. It has remained as a library for over 100 years. If the library is open, pop in and have a look at the internal decorative features.

3. BOURNVILLE MARKET



The houses on Oxford, Regent and Bond streets were built by the Grant Estate in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Like many other builders at this time they often named individual houses or terraces, and reflected the dates of construction on the buildings. **What house names can you find?** The substantial buildings on Bournville Lane, after you have crossed Bond Street, are part of a terrace embellished by large plaques saying 'Bournville Market'. The 1911 census tells us that the shops in this row included a hairdresser, a house furnisher, a fish dealer and a refreshment house.

How many plaques can you see between Bond Street and Oxford Street?

*Just before the bridge there is a wide path to your right. This leads up to the canal. While there is no access to the towpath from here, there are some fantastic views of the Cadbury factory and across Stirchley's rooftops. **Can you see the Baths' chimney?***

4. VIEWS OF CADBURY'S FACTORY AND STIRCHLEY'S ROOF TOPS



In 1879 the Cadbury Brothers moved their cocoa factory and its 300 employees from Bridge Street, Birmingham to the site at Bournville. The move contributed to the rapid expansion in employment and population in Stirchley and Bournville over the following decades, along with new buildings and facilities which helped raise standards of living and education for ordinary people.

Please continue walking down to the bottom of Mary Vale Road.

9. MARY VALE ROAD HAND PAINTED SIGN



Until recently, the shop on the corner of Mary Vale and Pershore roads was a popular and busy second-hand furniture store, and it had been for decades. The property is now empty, but if you look carefully you can see an old hand painted sign which has been exposed over the shop window on Mary Vale Road: D. Jones and Sons (visible at time of printing.) Back in 1962 this family were drapers (cloth retailers or haberdashers).

Please cross the Pershore Road using the crossing and make your way to the corner of Hunts Road. Look back across the Pershore Road. At the end of Hunts Road there is a very nice walk and cycle route along the River Rea.

10. 1393-5 PERSHORE ROAD



Today it is a pet shop, but in the 1960s photos show us that this shop was named 'Ten Acres & Stirchley Co-Operative Society Ltd.' Clearly a part of the mighty local TASCOS empire, this building was in fact a bakery and confectionery shop. **Can you see evidence of its past use on the building?**

11. THE BRITISH OAK



The pub we see here today replaced an older one which stood on the front car park. It was re-built in 1926. Brick built in a Tudor style it is considered to be a significant example of its type with many wonderful and original features surviving intact. These include fireplaces, stained glass, wood panelling and the impressive Oak Tree relief plaque above the entrance. It is a Grade II listed building.

12. STIRCHLEY COMMUNITY CHURCH



This large and significant building was originally called the Stirchley Institute. It was built in 1892 by George and Richard Cadbury as a place of

recreation for the expanding population of Stirchley, many of whom were employed by the Cadbury factory just up the road. It was also available for Quaker meetings. The poster (right) shows us that during World War I it hosted social evenings for female munition workers. Since then it has housed an Elim Pentecostal congregation and more recently the Stirchley Community Church.



5. THE BRIDGE



Over 20 bombs are recorded as falling in the Stirchley area during World War II. A bomb scored a direct hit on this very bridge! Reportedly the target was the railway line but it actually hit the canal instead, sending water rushing down and flooding several local streets. Just walk under the bridge a metre or so and look up. **Can you see where a large concrete 'patch' repaired this damage?** The blast also blew out the middle panes in the front windows all down Bournville Lane.

Turn around and cross to the other side of the road when it is safe to do so. Take Victoria Road on your right. Half way up the road, take a right into Alexandra Road.

BOURNVILLE SUBSTATION



In the 1920s, when Bournville Substation was built, electricity was rare, unreliable and expensive. Coal and gas ruled, and only 6 per cent of households nationally had access to any electricity at all. There are only a few remaining substations from this time in the city. Stirchley has one of them! They represent the early days of electricity generation before the National Grid appeared in 1935.

Stop before you get to the bridge. You will not need to cross over.

6. CANAL AND RAILWAY



The Worcester and Birmingham Canal, which runs through Stirchley, was built between 1791 and 1815 as part of a radial network connecting Birmingham to major rivers and on to sea ports. The canal offered an opportunity for industry to expand. Construction of the Birmingham West Suburban Railway started in 1872 and required draining part of the canal. Unfortunately when it was 're-watered' there was a great surge of water, causing a 'tidal wave' effect. Water spilled out into Charlotte Road causing a state of emergency. A single platform station called 'Stirchley Street' was opened here in 1876. With the arrival of the nearby Cadbury Brothers factory, it was re-named the 'Stirchley Street and Bournville' station in 1880. It was not until 1904 that the station was finally re-christened 'Bournville' as we know it today.

Head back down the hill and stop on the corner of Victoria Road. Look to your left.

8. VICTORIA ROAD (FORMER) POLICE STATION



This white building was built as a Police Station at the end of the 19th century. The 1901 census lists four officers living "above the shop"; Sergeant William Cooper and Constables Lysons, Hayes and Spragg. All except the last had families; it must have been an interesting environment for children to grow up in. The force had expanded further by 1911; there were now two sergeants, Calloway and Gray, and 7 constables. The police station continued in operation until at least the Second World War.

Please cross the Pershore Road when it is safe to do so, before the roundabout. We'll be heading around the corner back up Hazelwell Street.

13. THE THREE HORSE SHOES



The Three Horse Shoes public house on the corner of the Pershore and Umberslade roads existed as far back as 1836, although it too was rebuilt in the 1920s. A Victorian beerhouse, it is believed to have taken its name from the adjacent village 'smithy' owned by a John Hall. The public house was a regular meeting place to auction local plots of land.

14. 15 & 17 HAZELWELL STREET



The two small red brick houses, known as 'Stirchley Terrace', are located opposite the large Co-op store. They were built in 1838 and are grade II listed. They originally stood alone as cottages and are two of the oldest residential properties in the area. In the mid-19th century the census returns describe mainly agricultural labourers living around here with some local men working with horses as stable hands.

15. FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE



This small, attractive Friends' Meeting House was built in 1913 to serve the local community of Quakers. It seated 250 people. The Friends' meeting for which it was opened originated in 1882 as the Bournville factory meeting. In 1892, while continuing to be known as the 'Bournville' meeting, this congregation moved into Stirchley Institute, recently completed by the Cadbury's (stop point #12) which provided sittings for 500. At the time of printing it is awaiting redevelopment into residential housing.

Please cross Hazelwell Street when it is safe to do so. You can get to Stirchley Park using the road just before the Friends' Meeting House. Be careful of moving vehicles.

16. STIRCHLEY PARK



Welcome to our final stop! If you have just crossed through the car park you would have once been walking across a bowling green and past an impressive pavilion! This was home to the Stirchley Social and Working Mens Club's bowling team for over eighty years. Stirchley Park is a lovely hidden 'pocket' park, often described as the 'secret park'. The land was also given to the Stirchley community by the Cadbury family in the early 1900s. A portrait of William Cadbury is prominent in the wall murals painted by local artist Title. They feature more of Stirchley's fascinating social, architectural and industrial heritage.

WHAT HIDDEN HERITAGE CAN YOU SEE?

EXPLORE HIDDEN STIRCHLEY

Over the past few years the redevelopment of Stirchley Baths and the park have gone hand in hand with a fresh appreciation of Stirchley's heritage.

Stirchley History Group was set up in 2015 and is committed to discovering and celebrating the local heritage which exists all around us. History is often hidden, but if you look closely you'll find evidence of the past on buildings and signs, and along our waterways, railways and roads. That heritage belongs to us all.

We hope you enjoy using this trail as you stroll around Stirchley; exploring, discovering and, if part of a group or family, sharing some quality time out and about together.

ABOUT THIS TRAIL

AROUND 45 MINS' STROLL
APPROX 1.8KM (1.2 MILES) IN LENGTH
16 STOP POINTS WITH HISTORIC INFORMATION
16 ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS TO SPOT
AROUND 3,500 ADULT STEPS!



If you are interested in the history of Stirchley and the surrounding area, why not become a member of the Stirchley History Group! Everyone (16+) is welcome to join. Contact stirchleyhistory@gmail.com for more details.

Follow us on  StirchleyHistory and  @StirchleyHist

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**stirchley
baths**

Stirchley
History
Group



LOTTERY FUNDED



EXPLORE HIDDEN STIRCHLEY

Take a short stroll around
Stirchley and discover some
of its heritage secrets

