



Wirksworth is within easy reach of Matlock (4 miles), Bakewell (12 miles) and Ashbourne (10 miles). Derby is its closest city, just 12 miles away. The town is nestled at the head of the Ecclesbourne Valley surrounded by beautiful open countryside with delightful walks and stunning views.



T'OWD MAN

The name 'T'Owd Man' or 'The Old Man' refers to the earliest known representation of a miner, possibly dating from Saxon times. In folklore, T'Owd Man is a spirit inhabiting mines

and caves, and lead miners often referred to hard rock as T'Owd stone, an unlucky occurrence.

Although his carved image can now be seen in Wirksworth's St Mary's Church and he has been 'adopted' by the town, his true origins are to be found in nearby Bonsall. In the course of restoring St James' Church, Bonsall in 1863, the carving was one of several pieces of interesting medieval stonework discovered in the masonry which found their way into the garden of Mr Coates, the Churchwarden. T'Owd Man was somehow 'kidnapped' and taken to Wirksworth where it was later inserted into a wall in St Mary's Church for safekeeping.

Produced by Jim Oribine and Wirksworth Heritage Centre with support from NOW and Wirksworth Town Council.

Design by Mill Design & Advertising www.themilldesign.co.uk

Cover image courtesy of Iain Mackay

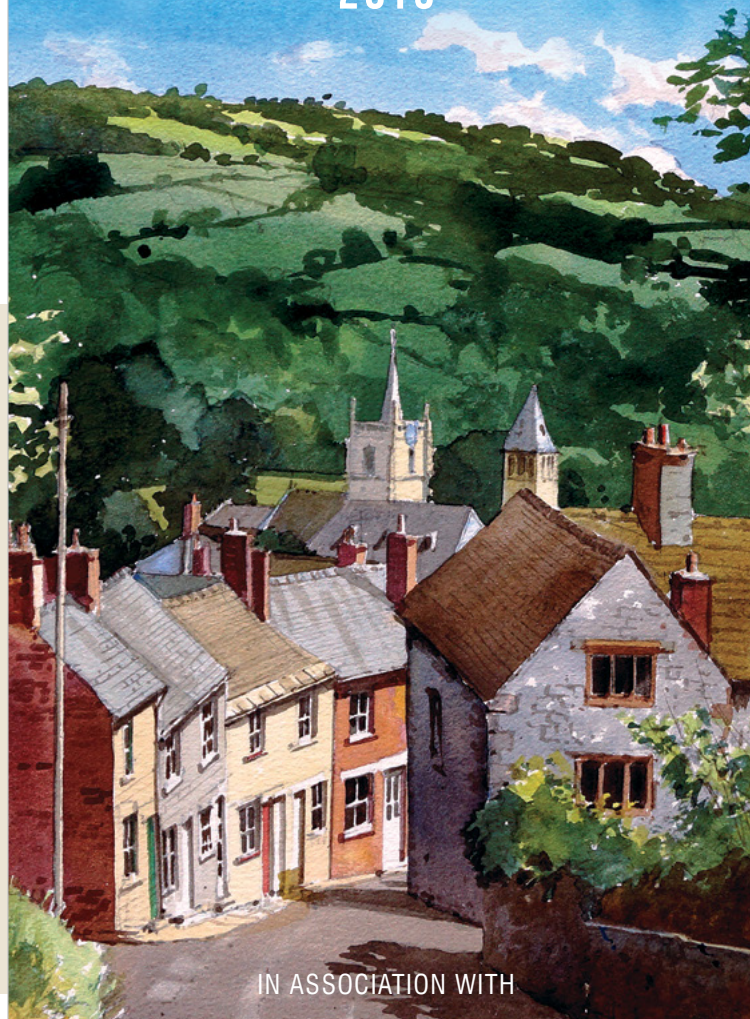
Town map courtesy of Paul Carr

Photography courtesy of Phil Richards, Wirksworth Festival and partners

WIRKSWORTH

MINI GUIDE

2019



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Wirksworth
Heritage
Centre

A SHORT HISTORY

Quirky. Different. Special. Words often used to describe this fascinating Derbyshire town on the southern edge of the Peak District, where the geology and landscape have shaped its character and its people for generations.

Lead was being mined here in Roman times, and by the 12th century it was one of the most important centres for the ore in England. Many of the town's impressive houses were built during the prosperous times the industry brought, and a stone carving in Wirksworth's imposing 13th century church depicts 't'owd man', a miner with his pick and "kibble" or basket, who has become Wirksworth's unofficial symbol. By the 19th century the lead was all but exhausted and limestone quarrying provided new work for the town's inhabitants. The railway came too, and so did the dust - dry throats led to the creation of over 60 pubs in the town, most now gone but still remembered as Wirksworth's famous 'lost pubs'.



AN INDUSTRIOUS PEOPLE

Arkwright built Haarlem Mill, the first cotton mill in the world to use a steam engine, and Wirksworth became the biggest producer of red tape for Whitehall, its weekly output equalling the circumference of the earth. George Elliot, in her novel Adam Bede, based her fictional town Snowfield on Wirksworth, and the character Dinah Morris on her aunt who lived in the town.



D.H. Lawrence lived with his wife Frieda on the outskirts of Wirksworth, and whilst staying here in the bitter winter of 1918–19 wrote the short story 'A Wintry Peacock'.

A TOWN TRANSFORMED

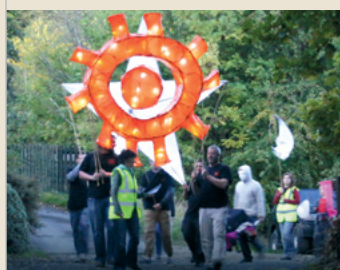
Over the centuries, quarrying changed the landscape of the town dramatically, and mechanisation brought dust, dirt, and noise. People moved away and took their trade with them, leaving buildings empty and falling down. But the 1970s Wirksworth Project - a remarkable and European award winning regeneration programme



- changed all that, transforming the crumbling buildings and recreating a thriving community once again. Today, the railway is still running, ancient customs of well dressings and 'clypping the church' are alive and well, and the quarries have a new lease of life as natural woodland spaces. Wirksworth is now known for its independent shops and cafes, annual arts festival, bustling music scene and for the dozens of artists and creative people who live and work in the town.

WELCOME

Whether you are here for a few hours or perhaps a little longer, we welcome you to enjoy Wirksworth. But beware - you may not want to leave!



10 THINGS TO SEE AND DO

ST MARY'S CHURCH

St Mary's Church is one of Derbyshire's finest, standing in the centre of Wirksworth in a quiet churchyard. There has been a church here since C9th but the present imposing building dates from C13th and was restored extensively in C19th and early C20th. Its size reflects Wirksworth's important history. Built into the inside walls are earlier stone fragments, notably a carved Saxon coffin lid, and the famous 'towd man' early medieval carving of a Derbyshire lead miner. St Mary's is open every day.



www.wirksworthteamministry.co.uk

ECCLESBOURNE VALLEY RAILWAY



The Ecclesbourne Valley is one of Derbyshire's most lovely and unspoilt valleys, stretching from Wirksworth to the northern outskirts of Derby at Duffield. The railway operates passenger services between Wirksworth and Duffield mainly using heritage diesel railcars, and on selected days steam hauled services on the short

branch between Wirksworth and Ravenstor. Special events run throughout the year, including a Classic Transport weekend, Classic Bus Rally, Teddy Bears weekend and an annual model railway exhibition.

Tel: 01629 823076 www.e-v-r.com

THE STARDISC

The StarDisc is a spectacular 21st century stone circle created by renowned visual artist Aidan Shingler. From its setting high above the town, it commands stunning views over Wirksworth and the Ecclesbourne Valley. A star chart, carved into black granite and inscribed with the constellations, is surrounded by 12 silver granite seats representing the months of the year. After dark, the star chart, which spans 12m, is illuminated by low level lighting, powered by our own star the Sun.

www.stardisc.org



WIRKSWORTH FESTIVAL

For over 20 years, Wirksworth Festival has become one of the most vibrant showcases for contemporary art in rural England, including the trailblazing Art & Architecture Trail (8-9th Sept) when the entire town

becomes a gallery with over 130 artists and designer makers exhibiting and selling in more than 70 venues. For the rest of the fortnight there's a heady mixture of performance, music, dance, drama, film



and family shows from world-class performers to the very best homegrown talent. 7-23rd September 2018.

Tel: 01629 824003 www.wirksworthfestival.co.uk

STEEPLE GRANGE LIGHT RAILWAY



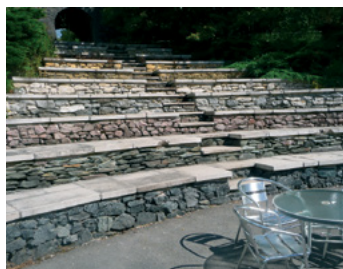
An 18-inch gauge line near Wirksworth, built on the trackbed of a branch of the old Cromford and High Peak Railway, now the High Peak Trail. Enjoy a unique twenty minute train ride through dramatic limestone scenery in an old National

Coal Board manrider powered by small ex-industrial locomotives. Their most famous engine, ZM32, British Rail's smallest diesel, is over 60 years old.

Tel: 01629 55123 www.steeplegrange.co.uk

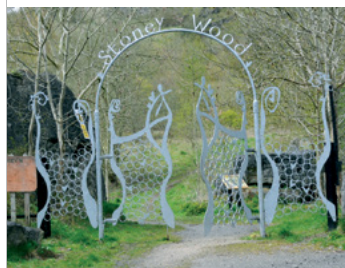
NATIONAL STONE CENTRE

Set within former limestone quarries on the edge of Wirksworth, the NSC is a 40 acre Site of Special Scientific Interest, offering fossil trails, geo walks, an exhibition, cafe and shop. The NSC also offers dry stone walling and stone carving courses and activities for school visits.



Tel: 01629 824833 www.nationalstonecentre.org.uk

STONEY WOOD



Stoney Wood is Wirksworth's Millennium woodland, planted in the area recovered from Stonecroft Quarry on land donated by Tarmac Ltd. Planting by local people has been inspired by the Forêt Giono woodland near Die in France. An ideal spot for walking and picnics, and a regular location for large community events.

WIRKSWORTH CARNIVAL AND WELL DRESSING



Wirksworth inhabitants are proud of their heritage, and celebrate a number of ancient traditions including well dressing - a unique Peak District custom where wells are decorated with natural materials to create intricate designs.

Every year Wirksworth comes alive for a weekend of carnival entertainment in support of the event.

www.wirksworthcarnival.org

THE SHEILA KIRKLAND POOL, WIRKSWORTH SWIMMING POOL

A small 10m by 5m pool just 1.1m depth with a temperature around 32 degrees. They offer swimming lessons for babies through to 1-2-1 adult lessons, aqua fit, open swims and pool hire.



www.wirksworthswimmingpool.co.uk

GREENHILL AND THE DALE

From the town's central market place, the cottages and narrow alleys of Greenhill and the Dale wind up the hillside like those of a traditional coastal fishing village. The maze of jitties and clusters of tiny courtyards between the cottages is known affectionately by locals as the Puzzle Gardens.



A TASTE OF 2019 WIRKSWORTH EVENTS

For more information on what's-on visit www.gowirksworth.com or [@DestinationWirksworth](https://www.facebook.com/DestinationWirksworth) on Facebook

THURSDAY NIGHTS at Wirksworth Heritage Centre - Open mic poetry, adult crafts and book club.

FRIDAY NIGHTS at Wirksworth Heritage Centre - Storytelling, acoustic sessions, quizzes and talks.

SATURDAY DAYTIME at Wirksworth Heritage Centre - Craft sessions. Visit wirksworthheritage.co.uk for details

Date	Event
First Saturday of every month	Wirksworth Farmers' Market
Saturday 23 February	Ghosts in the Valley Evening (<i>Ecclesbourne Valley Railway</i>)
Thursday-Saturday 28-30 March	'WUSSA' – a new play by Graham Sellors
Thursday-Sunday 4-7 April	The fourth Wirksworth Book Festival
Friday-Monday 19-22 April	Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Easter Weekend
Saturday 25 May	Jazz & Real Ale on Rails (<i>Ecclesbourne Valley Railway</i>)
Saturday-Monday 25-27 May	Wirksworth Carnival and Well Dressings
Saturday-Sunday 15-16 June	Steam in the Valley Weekend (<i>Ecclesbourne Valley Railway</i>)
Sunday 30 June	Annual Classic Bus & Coach Rally (<i>Ecclesbourne Valley Railway</i>)
Saturday-Sunday 10-11 August	Summer Diesel Gala (<i>Ecclesbourne Valley Railway</i>)
Friday-Sunday 6-22 September	Wirksworth Festival
Sunday 8 September	Clypping the church
Saturday-Sunday 19-20 October	Wirksworth Model Railway Exhibition Weekend (<i>Ecclesbourne Valley Railway</i>)
Saturday 26 October	Wirksworth Wizarding Day

Information correct at time of going to print – please check details and dates at www.gowirksworth.com

WIRKSWORTH



Wirksworth Heritage Centre

31 St John's Street, Wirksworth DE4 4DS

OPEN
DAILY
9am to
5pm

MUSEUM
OPEN
1st APRIL 2019

Visit www.wirksworthheritage.co.uk or call 01629 707000 for opening date

Recently relocated, and over thirty years on from its original launch in the 1980's, the new centre has recently undergone a £1.6m redevelopment supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Three floors of museum exhibitions and artefacts are bringing to life the stories of this fascinating town and its people, illustrating Wirksworth's long history, the town's quirky, creative and nonconformist qualities, its long-established rural community and traditional celebrations. The centre tells the story of Wirksworth folk - how their lives have been influenced through the changing industries of lead mining, quarrying and textiles; of famous characters, and of the more recent regeneration of the town as a centre for culture and the arts.

OPEN NOW for events, café and shop.

A varied programme of events at the Heritage Centre throughout the year includes:

- craft workshops
- heritage tours and talks
- exhibitions
- music, storytelling and poetry

The Heritage Centre is the ideal place to find information on things to see and do around the area, and guided walks around the town also start and finish here.



If you're on the look-out for a souvenir of your visit to Wirksworth, the Heritage Centre shop is the place to come. It has a great range of cards, books and gifts, including T'Owd Man and Wirksworth-branded items to suit all tastes and pockets. Open daily until 5pm.

Visit www.wirksworthheritage.co.uk or call 01629 707000 for further details of opening dates and times, the 2019 events programme and museum admission prices.



Webster's Café

Inside Wirksworth Heritage Centre

OPEN
DAILY
9am to
4.30pm
FREE WI-FI

OPEN
SUNDAYS
9am to
4.30pm



Named after the family that owned the building for over 150 years, Webster's Café at the Heritage Centre is open daily (including Sunday) from 9am until 4.30pm, offering hot and cold drinks, a selection of cakes, snacks and delicious home-made meals, including vegetarian options. The menu changes regularly to reflect the seasons. Muddy boots and cyclists welcome (dogs too, in our outdoor courtyard!)



Wirksworth Heritage Centre

www.wirksworthheritage.co.uk

E-mail: info@wirksworthheritagecentre.org

[@wirks_heritage](https://twitter.com/wirks_heritage)

[@WirksworthHeritageCentre](https://www.facebook.com/WirksworthHeritageCentre)

[wirksworth.heritage](https://www.instagram.com/wirksworth.heritage)



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www.glenorchycentre.org.uk

WIRKSWORTH WALKS



Monthly guided walks
exploring the fascinating
sites and heritage of
the town.

For details of dates and
times, visit
www.wirksworthwalks.com

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