

**Ninety four****BUXTON – AQUAE ARNEMETIAE**

An elegant spa town in a lovely setting, and it is almost on our doorstep. With its fine buildings and lovely parks Buxton is a worthy rival to Harrogate or Bath.

Take the train to Manchester Victoria and from there a tram to Manchester Piccadilly Station. From here catch a Buxton train. *Option: - turn right as you get off the tram and on Fairfield Street use the lift on the left to the link bridge lounge.*

Alight at Buxton Station. *The elegance of Buxton used to start here. This LNWR station once had a fully glazed roof like a garden pavilion. Across a courtyard at the front was a mirror image 'pavilion' for the Midland Railway.*

Leave the station and walk to the right then turn left once outside the fence. *Across the road you can see the remaining corner of the Midland Railway Station.*

Turn left with the fence and walk past the Aldi supermarket down towards a railway viaduct. Cross Bridge Street and bear right in front of The Railway *(Cask Marque real ales and food).*

Bear left under the viaduct and onto Ashfield Road. *Sandbags ready for flood protection here!*

Cross Ashfield Road towards The Wye Bridge House - *J.D. Wetherspoon house selling real ales and food.*

Enter Ashfield Park. *It is a linear park along the River Wye with much shade and attractive range of trees. Morrison's is at the far end!*

Cross the little bridge over the Wye and leave the park.

Cross Bakewell Road, go under the viaduct and go straight ahead along Spring Gardens. *This is the main shopping street with many good cafes and a modern shopping mall on the right. Attractive buildings are spoilt by poor alterations to the ground floor frontages. Why has the name 'Winster Place' and a coat of arms been chiselled off the building on the right? There is a good view of The Crescent and the Baths ahead.*

Turn left up Terrace Road. On the left is The Buxton Museum & Art Gallery. *It is very good -with original paintings and displays of geology, palaeontology, and archaeology. There is an imaginative time tunnel including Roman artefacts and Bronze Age burials. The Ashford black marble collection is impressive. Open Tuesday to Saturday (Also on Sundays and bank holidays from Easter to end of September). Admission is free. Tel: 01298 24658 Website: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.***

Next on left there is an old fashioned delicatessen and then you come onto the Market Place. *On your right is the impressive town hall building. There are three real ale/food pubs here: The New Inn (Robinsons), The Eagle (Hydes & guest beers) and The King's Head (Marstons and guest beers). Market days are Tuesday and Saturday*

However now continue ahead out of the Market Place and on the left is The Old Sun Inn *an impressive old establishment with an interior of tiny rooms. There is a range of good beers and food on sale.*

Further ahead is The Swan. *This also sells a range of real ales.*

Go to the right hand side of The Swan and take a look in the little St Anne's Church. *Reputed to be the oldest building in Buxton (despite the date carved outside), this is Anglican high church. It has the Stations of the Cross and an elaborate altar set. The font is Anglo-Saxon.*

Return along the Market Place on the other side by Eagle Terrace *with its real ale and food pub.*

Go to the left side of The Kings Head (*yawn...real ale and food again!*) and down Hall Bank. *What a view! Where are the tower blocks and the multi storey car park?*

Part way down Hall Bank, turn right onto The Slopes. Head straight across on the level to the Cenotaph. *From here there is a good view of the Georgian Crescent, with the Pump Room at its focus.*

Descend towards the Baths and go left in front of the Pump Rooms. *The lovely pump room with its cool marble interior has been closed for far too long!*

Just beyond it is the St Anne's fountain *from which you can sample the warm mineral water from deep underground. The Romans established baths here using the spring water and called the town Aquae Arnemetiae.*

Go back to the Baths building. *It was once for bathing in St Anne's spring water - thought to cure various ailments. Now it is the attractive Cavendish Arcade with craft shops and cafes etc.*

Beyond the Baths turn left and curve along under the glass and iron canopy of The Quadrant (*solid Victorian letters on a similar building on other side!*) *Notice the old chemist shop window on your left.*

Just beyond the chemist shop cross right and go up Devonshire Road. Turn left into the University of Derby grounds and enter the domed building. *Wow – vast with a Foucault pendulum at the centre and an amazing echo effect too! It was the Duke of Devonshire's stables!!!! The architecture of the whole town was influenced by successive Dukes of Devonshire whose family name is Cavendish.* Return down Devonshire Road.

Cross the main road again and then go right. *The classical St John's Church is ahead.*

Turn left down Water Street to The Buxton Opera House *-with a splendid interior and entertainments all year. [Tel:0845 127 2190](tel:08451272190) Website:*

*[www.buxtonoperahouse.org.uk](http://www.buxtonoperahouse.org.uk)*

Enter the Pavilion Gardens on the left of it and walk through the palms.

At the cafe turn left to go outside. *You face the bandstand in Pavilion Gardens – a most lovely park with river and lakes & miniature railway. There was a really good brass band concert during my visit.*

Generally amble through the gardens towards the right and between the river and the lakes. *Finally you see the mansions and hotels on The Broadwalk across the last lake.*

Continue up to the end of the Pavilion Gardens to join The Broadwalk and go left along it on the other side of the lake.

At the end of the Broadwalk go left between the gardens and the Old Hall Hotel and back up to the main road.

Cross it once again towards Devonshire Road but this time go to the right and up the drive to The Palace Hotel. *A great big, grand Victorian hotel - I went in for coffee and afterwards browsed around the Morgan Sports Car rally. There were literally hundreds of these hand-built machines around town & on this car park. They must be getting a little common!*

Turn right at the front of the hotel and down towards the railway station *with its semicircular window in the end wall.*

Cross the road and go back in to catch a train to Manchester Piccadilly

CLASSIFICATION: MEDIUM EASY

PARKS, RIVERS, LAKES, GARDENS,  
ARCHITECTURE, MUSEUM & GALLERY,  
VIEWS, SHOPS, CAFES, PUBS,  
SUPERMARKETS, SPA.

RAIL FARE: category three

MAPS: OS 1:50 000 sheet 119 Philip's Street Atlas Derbyshire.

*\*This is a very good trip indeed but the connection times with the current (2010) timetable can be more than ample – I suggest a shop or a coffee in Manchester. If it doesn't suit you, consider buying a Peak Wayfarer to let you use the tram to Piccadilly. It will be a little dearer but more flexible.*