

Cath Muldowney

111 Places
in Bradford
That You
Shouldn't Miss

111

emons:

Foreword

Bradford was once one of the world's most important textile producers, with the 19th century ushering in a period of great prosperity for the area. Mills dominated the skyline, and magnificent architectural structures including The Wool Exchange, the Town Hall and The Midland Hotel were built to reflect the city's success. But fortunes change, and by the mid-20th century, like many northern cities, Bradford was struggling to establish a new identity in a post-industrial world.

But the city is now regenerating, and with a population that is one of the youngest in the UK, it is emerging from its industrial past and developing into a powerhouse of artistic creativity and unique attractions. Many of its landmark buildings have been cleverly transformed to serve the 21st century, with the development at Manningham Mills winning a plethora of awards. It has modern sculptures and street art alongside its historical statues. It hosts the annual Literature Festival, and is home to The National Science and Media Museum and The Peace Museum. The popular University includes the pioneering Plastic Surgery and Burns Research Unit, begun in the aftermath of the Bradford City Fire Disaster.

The stunning Yorkshire countryside is right on its doorstep, and the urban environment has Green Flag parks, formal gardens, family-friendly water features and the 'Tree for every child' project. Undercliffe Cemetery is a Victorian gem, and the city's museums hold art and treasures from far and wide, telling stories from Bradford's fascinating history.

Building on its history of welcoming people from around the world to live and work here, Bradford is now designated an official City of Sanctuary, which is reflected in the diverse array of restaurants, shops, bars, businesses and attractions found here. So come and meet my fellow Bradfordians, they're friendly and welcoming and one of the city's greatest assets.



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39 — Ghosts of St Ives Estate

Spooky spectral sights and sounds

On the outskirts of Bingley, this beautiful country park allows the public to access most of its 500 acres. For centuries until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1540, the area was owned by the monks of Rievaulx and Drax, although there is evidence of occupation dating back to the Bronze Age. Perhaps, then, it's unsurprising that stories abound of ghostly apparitions, some featuring the monks themselves. 200 soldiers killed in civil war skirmishes are reputedly buried here, and there are reported sightings of ethereal Royalists, often by people who have no knowledge of the civil war connection. Benjamin Ferrand, the then owner of the estate, died in 1803, but was allegedly seen on many occasions, post mortem, riding his grey horse through the woods.

Spooky sightings recently unnerved a group of normally fearless teenagers, who, in a first, rang their parents begging to be taken home! Normally placid dogs have taken umbrage at unseen presences, and even plain-speaking, down-to-earth Yorkshire folk have reported strange apparitions that defy attempts at explanation. So, basically, unless you're an avid ghost buster, go in the daytime, and chuckle at the very idea of such nonsense. There are numerous paths through woodland and countryside, and the Coppice Pond is populated by swans, ducks, geese and the occasional seagull. You can spot historical landmarks, including the marble obelisk commemorating local MP William Busfield Ferrand – and the large boulder named after his wife, Lady Blantyre!

The Druids Altar, a collection of gritstone rocks, affords long-distance views towards the Yorkshire Dales – though the name may be fanciful, as there's little evidence of it being either an altar or visited by druids. There's a large play area, public toilets and an ice cream van at peak times that does amazing cones with soft ice cream, sprinkles and juice.



Address St Ives Estate, Bingley, BD16 1AT | **Getting there** Bus 616 and 619 from Bradford Interchange; by car, off the B 6429 Harden Road | **Hours** Always open | **Tip** The Ivy Kitchen, close to the golf club, serves drinks, sandwiches, cakes – and stocks duck food!

44 Grandad's Clock and Chair

Are you sitting comfortably?

The ornate buildings in Bradford's Little Germany district were built in the second half of the 19th century by European textile merchants to house and sell their wares. These grand warehouses were built tall, and in close proximity to each other, creating imposing structures on the narrow, sloping streets. With 55 of the 85 buildings here having listed status, the conversions to business premises and apartments have been sympathetic, and the area retains much of its original look and feel. As such, it is much in demand with film and television companies for period productions such as *Peaky Blinders*, *Downton Abbey* and *Gentleman Jack*; if you're lucky, you might just catch a glimpse of a famous face on your visit.

You'll need your sensible shoes, though, as the streets are quite steep and some still have their beautiful – if sometimes slippery – cobbles. Head up Chapel Street and visit 'Grandad's clock and chair' as it is known locally, although its official title is Victorian Presence. A life-size sandstone sculpture of an easy chair, long case clock and wall mirror, it may be a playful nod to an imaginary mill owner's office, or a reminder of the Victorian families who helped shape Bradford. The original yellow hues of the sandstone have weathered beautifully over the years, so much so that it now blends almost seamlessly with its Victorian surroundings. Created in 1992 by award-winning sculptor Timothy Shutter, it's a hands-on piece, so you can take a selfie in your best 'where there's muck, there's brass' pose.

The Little Germany area has lots of other interesting original street art, all free to visit and easy to find, including the 16x12ft 'Hockney, a portrait in nails' (Marcus Levine 2017). This adorns a gable wall opposite, and uses 250,000 nails to celebrate the 80th birthday of one of Bradford's most beloved artists, David Hockney.



Address Chapel Street, BD1 5DL | **Getting there** Bus 72 or a 10-minute walk from Bradford Interchange | **Hours** Always open | **Tip** Look for the street murals, including Mr Bean, Samson holding up the walls, the stairway to heaven and a colourful mosaic on the wall near the Old Quaker School building.

75 Ponden Kirk & Fairy Cave

Dare you squeeze through the fairy cave?

Ponden Kirk is a rocky outcrop on the moors above Haworth, and was the inspiration for Penistone Crag, where Heathcliff and Cathy would roam in Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights*. In the book, Emily talks about the fairy cave under the crag – a natural hole at the base of the rock that's just big enough for a person to wriggle through. This does exist at Ponden Kirk, although access is tricky, and should only be attempted with care.

Emily was undoubtedly familiar with this place, and it has long been the stuff of legend, with folklore declaring that anyone who crawls through the cave will be married within the year. The marriage theme continues with speculation that the word 'kirk', often taken to mean church, may in this case refer to a pagan ceremonial site, where weddings took place with the rock as witness and no minister necessary, as this clearly is not, and never was, a church.

The kirk can be approached by walking north over Delf Hill, but perhaps the easier route is via Stanbury, with limited parking alongside Ponden Reservoir. The route passes Ponden Hall, a contender for the inspiration for the *Wuthering Heights* house in said novel, though some believe it is more likely to be Thuscross Grange. Follow the signposts across the moor to Ponden Kirk, a distance of around 1.5 miles. You'll need stout shoes and suitable clothing whatever the time of year, but the scenery is wild and rugged, and the far-reaching views are well worth the climb.

The original *Wuthering Heights* film from 1939 had Thousand Oaks, California as the location for Penistone Crag, with 1,000 genuine heather plants brought in for filming the close-ups. Whilst logistics and ease of access were undoubtedly deciding factors in the decision to film in the USA, no amount of imported heather and cinematic jiggery pokery could compare to the majesty of the original setting.

Address Haworth Moor, BD22 0HR (postcode for Ponden Reservoir) | **Getting there** Accessible only by car, followed by a 1.5-mile walk | **Hours** Always accessible | **Tip** Ponden Reservoir is home to one site of the High Adventure Outdoor Education Centre, offering adventures for school groups.

