

Experience
ASHBOURNE
HISTORY

Victorian Ashbourne tour



Ashbourne is often described as a fine Georgian Town, and many of its buildings date from this period (1720 to 1810), but you can see evidence of later changes in the town from the Victorian Period (1840 to 1900). On this walk, see if you can spot the evidence of the Victorians in Ashbourne and answer the 20 questions.

The walk starts in the Market Place (location 1 on the map), and returns to Victoria Square (location 10 in the lower Market Place) after about a 30 minute walk. There are 2 questions for each location; one for younger children; the second for older children or adults. There are no prizes – it is just for fun. Enjoy, but do watch out for traffic and uneven surfaces.

Location 1: The Market Place.

Question 1: Market places traditionally had a market cross. However, Ashbourne has a monument to a local benefactor. **Can you see who this was?**

Answer 1:

Question 2: This man was a benefactor to the Town but he disapproved of frivolity and stopped the Town's Fairs. He was known locally as the "President of the Stick Your Nose into Other People's Business Society". **What street event that still takes in the Town did he try to stop but failed?**

Answer 2:

Location 2: The Town Hall

Question 3: Opposite you is Ashbourne's Town Hall, built during the Victorian period. **Looking at the front of the building, can you see the date when it was built?**

Answer 3:

Question 4: When it was built, its main purpose was a market hall and meeting place. **Why would a town like Ashbourne need a public meeting place in Victorian times?**

Answer 4:

Location 3: King Street

Question 5: Now walk up Buxton Hill to the corner of King Street (opposite “The Laundry Room”). In Victorian times, this road was known as Mutton Lane. **On market days, what would have been sold in this part of the Market?**

Answer 5:

Question 6: Why do you think the name was changed from Mutton Lane to King Street?

Answer 6:

Location 4: Town Pump on Union Street

Question 7: Retrace your steps a little way, and turn right to walk up Union Street to the junction with BelleVue Road. On the right there is a water pump. This is the only one left in Town. **Why would there be a large number of these pumps in the Town in the Victorian period?**

Answer 7:

Question 8: What did the 1875 Public Health Act require Towns to provide?

Answer 8:

Location 5: The Old Jail

Question 9: Walk along BelleVue Road until you reach a large detached house on the left with railings in front. **What was this building used for when it was built?**

Answer 9:

Question 10: In what decade was a regular paid police force introduced?

Answer 10:

Location 6: The Methodist Church

Question 11: Walk down the narrow alleyway and through the arch to the left of the Old Gaol House and descend into Smith's Yard. This yard was once the site of a Victorian clock maker. Leave the Yard through the lower tunnel entrance and look at the Methodist church on the opposite side of Church Street. **When was the Methodist Chapel built?**

Answer 11:

Question 12: The Chapel is built in a highly ornamental style, very different from earlier non-conformist chapels. **Why would it be built in this style?**

Answer 12:

Location 7: Station Road

Question 13: Next to the Cornerstone Café is the first new road to be built in the centre of Ashbourne since medieval times. **What would this road have led to?**

Answer 13:

Question 14: If you look at Church Street here and the houses next to Station Road, you can see that the level of the road was raised when the railway was built under the road. **Why was the road raised rather than the railway line lowered?**

Answer 14:

Location 8: St Oswald's School

Question 15: Walk along Church Street towards St Oswald's Church (the Church with the spire). Opposite the Church is St Oswald's Church of England School. Walk along to the second school building. **Can you see what this school was called when it first opened?**

Answer 15:

Question 16: St Oswald's School was founded by the National Society for promoting Religious Education, which gave free education to poor children. **Before this school was opened, what education would poor children have received in the Town?**

Answer 16:

Location 9: Green Man

Question 17: Return back along Church Street past the traffic lights to reach the bottom of the Market Place (Victoria Square). Note the Gallows Inn sign across the road for the Green Man and Blacks Head Royal Hotel. The owner added "Royal" to the name after a visit by a princess in the 1830s. She later went onto become a Queen. **Which Queen was she? (hint: the Square is named after her)**

Answer 17:

Question 18: The princess's Mother insisted on her daughter travelling around Britain to see the country as preparation to be Queen, if King William IV were to die without children. **What was the princess's relationship to the King?**

Answer 18:

Location 10: Victoria Square

Question 19: This was originally known as Butcher's Row after all the butchers' shops in the area. In the middle of the square is a lamp. **What is the date on the lamp post?**

Answer 19:

Question 20: It is now an electric lamp, but it was originally a gas light. **Where in town was the gas produced?**

Answer 20:

We hope you have enjoyed your walk around the town. Well done if you got 10 or more right. If you got 20 correct, you must be an expert on Victorian Ashbourne.

Our thanks to the staff and students of QEGS whose quiz provided the basis for this walking tour.