

For more information about the Barton Hill History Group go to [www.bhhg.co.uk](http://www.bhhg.co.uk) and [www.voicesofthepast.org.uk](http://www.voicesofthepast.org.uk)

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The following people helped develop this project: Garry Atherton, Dave Cheesley, Jen Grove, Jackie Naysmith, Tim Northover and Alexander Smith.

If you have any memories to share, please get in touch via our Facebook group, [bartonhillhistorygroup](https://www.facebook.com/bartonhillhistorygroup) or email [garry@voicesofthepast.org.uk](mailto:garry@voicesofthepast.org.uk)

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**Barton Hill  
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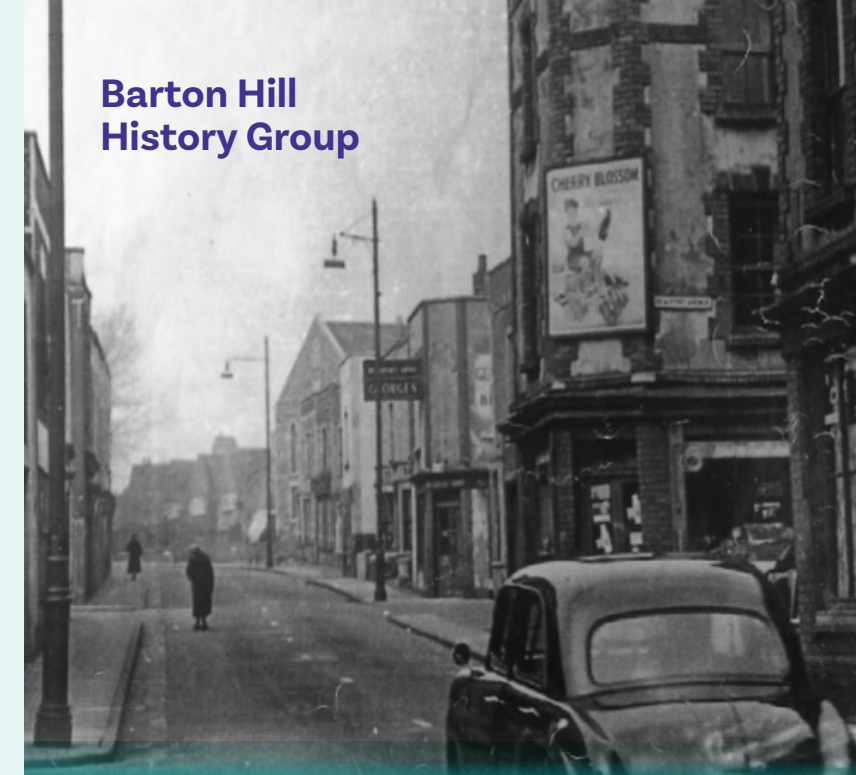


Barton Hill has a unique heritage that was once dominated by the Great Western Cotton Works that employed 2,000 people. The growth of the cotton factory led to the development of rows upon rows of terraced houses. During the 1950's and 1960's the built environment and community was ripped apart by so called Slum Clearance. Houses, pubs and churches were knocked down and replaced with high rise flats and the community of Barton Hill was split up and spread across the city.

Just a fragment of the old Barton Hill heritage is left. In 2021 the last pub closed and the old Infant School and community centre have been left to rot. The Barton Hill Heritage Community are now more vocal about the diminishing heritage assets. The Barton Hill History Group has been instrumental in getting the community to identify what buildings are of heritage value. A list of over 30 key heritage assets have been created.

During 2021 and 2022 a small group of volunteers, with the support of Bridging Histories, planned and produced four high quality very informative Heritage Trails. A broad range of ages, backgrounds and skills enabled the heritage trail team to share and develop their connected histories of knowledge and develop research, writing and presentation skills. During the Summer months of 2022 we walked the heritage trails with members of the public. By working together we created an important community heritage project that we are very proud of. We also aimed to make sure that heritage of Barton Hill is better looked after, managed, understood and shared. The Heritage Trails will help people make sense and improve their experience of local heritage.

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# BARTON HILL HERITAGE TRAIL



## Work, Rest and Pray Trail

This circular walk should take about an hour and includes three of the most iconic buildings remaining in Barton Hill. These are the University Settlement, St Luke's Church and the old Cotton Works.

### 1 Begin the walk at the Wellspring Settlement at the top of Ducie Road.



The Settlement buildings at the top of Ducie Road were once farmhouse buildings called Prospect Terrace. The University of Bristol took over these buildings and

the cottages in Bright Street in 1911, and they consequently became known as the University Settlement. The Settlement was not only defined by the buildings, but also by the people who worked there. Hilda Cashmore was the first warden and she worked tirelessly to make life better for the less well off. Hilda Jennings was another warden who gave huge support to many Barton Hill families during the slum clearance of the 1950s and 1960s.

### 2 Walk along Barton Hill Road keeping Beaufort House to your left. Opposite is Barton Green.



Ray Jones remembers this area some 50 years ago: "As I grew up much time was spent wandering around the ever-increasing acres of dereliction as

street after street was demolished. Sometimes we would go into the empty houses and have a look round and see what we could find or make dens in old air-raid shelters."

### 3 Walk along Barton Hill Road and turn left into Church Street. Harwood House is on your right. In the distance is St Luke's Church.



Before demolition in the 1960s this was Beaufort Road. It was full of shops that sold everything that the people of Barton Hill needed.

### 4 Once you arrive at St Luke's Church follow the pavement along the right side of the church.

St. Luke's Church and its railings is the only building in Barton Hill that has Historic England grade 2 listing. The foundation stone was laid by the Mayor of Bristol, P.W.S. Miles, on the 24th of May 1842. The building was intended "For the moral, educational and spiritual well-being of the work people and others living in the neighbourhood of the factory."



The church memorial garden contains the Barton Hill School War Memorial, which lists the names of 108 Barton Hill boys who lost their lives during the Great War.

### 5 From Church Street, look across to Maze Street. The building in the middle, with the archway, was once the coach depot for Charlie Russett.

Russett's Depot was used for goods vehicles and coaches. Coaches would transport parties of people from Barton Hill to Bath Races, Clevedon, Weston-Super-Mare and many other places. Maze Street was once a thriving, busy street before it was demolished. Julie Collins reflects "I remember on the day of moving, the van taking our things. Dad went to work on his pushbike, he came home to a new house, and Mum and I got the bus to Whitehall with the goldfish and budgie. I really remember all the quiet crying of the mums and "Aunties" in our close community and leaving all my friends behind."



To your left is Barton Hill Academy School. On this site once stood Barton Hill Baths. Barton Hill School teacher Billy Harris founded the Barton Hill Swimming and Water Polo Clubs and the Barton Hill Rugby Club. He realised that Barton Hill was short of activities for boys and young men, so he did a fantastic job of providing sporting opportunities for them.

### 6 Cross Avonvale Road and head down into the lower part of Maze Street keeping to the left-hand side.

To your left is Phoenix House named after the large mill building of the Cotton Works. You will also notice a GR marked post box

A Loxton sketch circa 1910 with Factory Street Mission to the left, the Cotton Works in the background and St. Luke's School to the right. For many years the mission was run by Edgar and Minnie Allen. William Sanigar wrote in 1954 that "they were not only missionaries but friends, advisers and confidants-at-large to any in the Parish from Sunday morning to Saturday night."

### 7 Walk on down, crossing Aiken Street towards the Barton Hill Trading Estate and the gate entrance.



This was the entrance to the Great Western Cotton Works. William Sanigar wrote of these gates in 1954 "One day in 1838 that great bulk stood, complete and its wooden jaws gaped wide."

### 8 Beware of traffic when walking into the site. Walk to the Wards' building and look at the Cotton Works Plaque.

The Cotton Works Plaque was produced by the late local historian and artist Mike Baker. This site is on the Bristol City Council Local Heritage list, because of its significant historical value

### 9 Come back out of the site, keep to the left-hand side of the road and head towards the Lord Nelson pub.



The Lord Nelson was once a classic Barton Hill pub but is now in a state of semi-dereliction and is soon to be converted into flats.

### 10 Walk past the Lord Nelson and up an alleyway with Eccleston House until you reach Avonvale Road.

Here is the semi-derelict Tenants Association building. This was originally St Luke's Mission Hall and became the Tenants Association building in 1964.



### 11 Cross Avonvale Road, keeping St. Luke's Church to your left. On your right is Gregory Street.

Here is the Reg Gregory Plaque. Reg dedicated his life to serving his community. Reg was Chairman of the Healthy Places, Happy People project which developed the Wellspring Health Centre.



### 12 Continue back up Church Street and return to the Wellspring Settlement to complete the walk.