

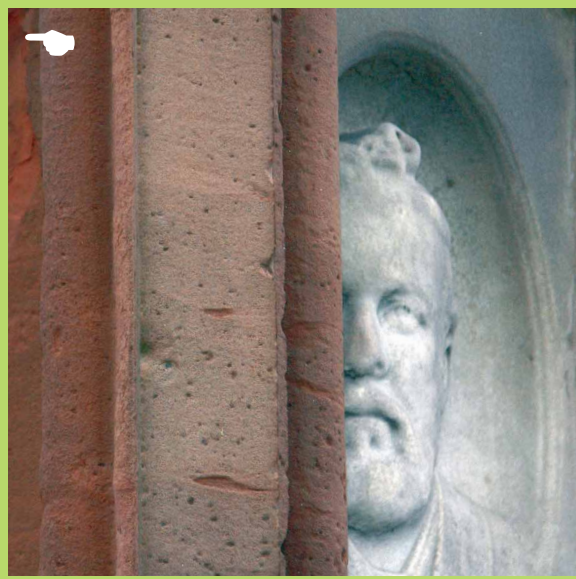
Trotter Memorial Fountain
James Trotter, a Scottish doctor who used to holiday in Bedlington, eventually moved here in 1864, living at the White House. He became a councillor and well-loved character, spending his life battling to improve the town's living conditions - sanitation and water supply were revolutionised largely down to him. He was a respected speaker and writer, and had a wry sense of humour, earning him great affection locally. After his death, public subscription allowed the erection of a grand drinking-fountain in his honour, a fitting memorial to a key figure in Bedlington's past.



Salvation Army
Land west of Hartford Road belonged to John Dowson, a well-known landowner and trader in Victorian Bedlington. He built a small group of stone houses here in 1850, followed in 1858 by 10 more. Next door, and forming a small square, was a timber theatre which was extended in 1875 with a refreshment room. Only four years later, the theatre closed and the Salvation Army took the site. They went on to develop it further, and Dowson's buildings, as they were known, provided first-start housing for young local families for over 100 years.



Primitive Methodist Church
As in many pit towns, Methodists were big in Bedlington. They began at the bottom of the town in 1823 but, as congregations grew, they sought a more central church. The one built sits forward of other buildings on this side of the street and is said to be built on part of the village green - and only after a battle for the land. Squire Burdon of Hartford Hall claimed the land as his and fenced it off. But, over many years, the Methodists (and the anti-capitalist Co-op movement) tore down every fence he put up. Burdon eventually gave in and the new church was opened in 1893.



The Laird's House
This prominent Georgian building group bears the date 1777 and the initials of George Marshall who farmed much of the land to the north. His son, George, was good friends with Sir Daniel Gooch, the world-renowned engineer. In the 1870s, the house was leased for John Weekes the agent of the Bedlington Coal Co and, by 1934, managers from the town's Doctor Pit lived there. In 1954, local entrepreneur Jimmy Milne bought the property and it is now owned by the Top Club. The site includes a former harness room, maids' rooms, kitchen, and cottages for coachman and gardener.



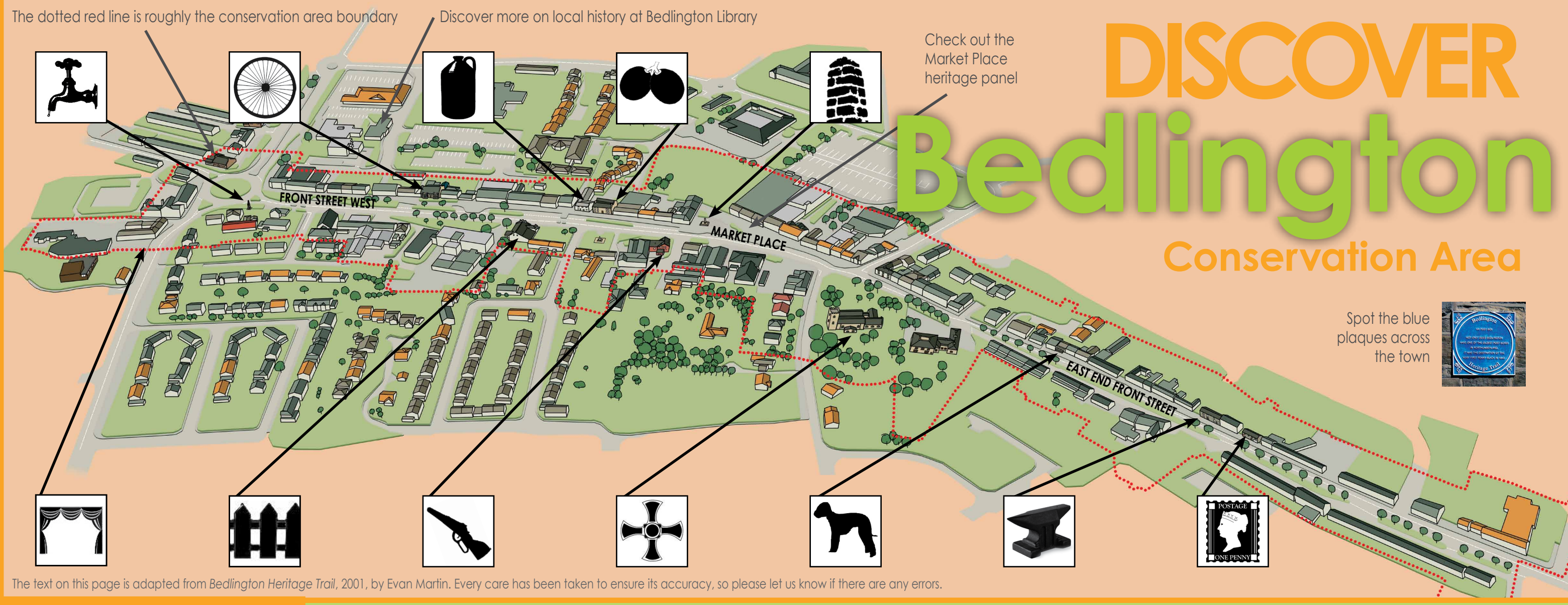
The White House
Once a brewery with records going back to 1767, this small but prominent house was home to Dr Trotter in the later 19th century. He was followed by several other doctors, including Dr John Brown, who is said to have painted the house white inside and out, giving it the name by which it is best known today. Dr Brown lived here until his death in 1996. The brewery buildings to the rear, now demolished, were once the headquarters for local athletics club, the Bedlington Harriers.



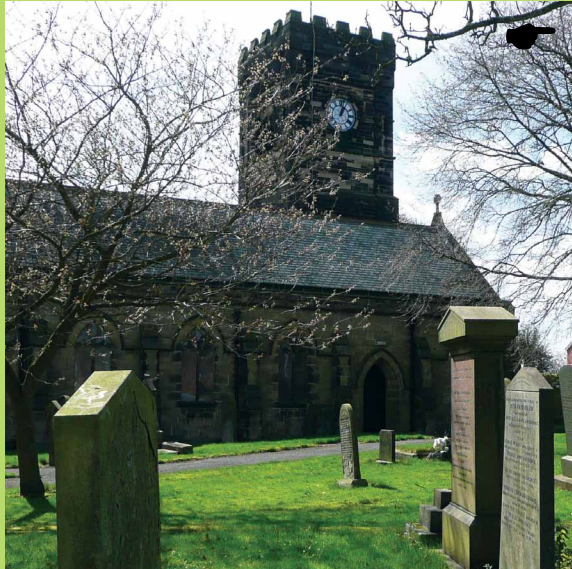
The Grapes PH
This smart Georgian house was the boyhood home of Sir Daniel Gooch, famed engineer and the only man Queen Victoria trusted to drive her train. He was born across the road, educated at Market Place and Craw Hall, and went on to become one of the most accomplished engineers of his time. He spoke fondly of the town in his diaries and often returned, the last recorded visit in 1870. His house became a pub and although it had several names, including The King's Arms, it was commonly known as The Grapes due to the big brewery sign which hung outside until recent years.



Market Cross
The Swanns are one of the town's oldest families, and Jim Swann's early 18th century diaries suggest the Market Cross was built in 1782. In Victorian times it was a gathering place for public speakers including Dr Trotter and Thomas Burt MP. Protesters also made their mark - in the 1830s, radical working-class Chartists rallied support at the Cross against the so-called 'despot' of the ironworks, Michael Longridge. He had to call on the army for help. The Cross was nearly demolished in the 1970s, but was saved to keep its distinctive contribution to the town centre. It was restored in 2010.



Take a stroll around the town to discover the scenes of some of Bedlington's interesting past tales...



St Cuthbert's Church
St Cuthbert's has some of the town's oldest built fabric - a Saxon window and a carving of two small angels. There was probably a church here by AD900. In 1069, terrified of the advance of William the Conqueror, Durham's monks brought St Cuthbert's body north to Bedlington on 12 December, setting in place one of the town's most famed associations. The church saw much change in the 12th century, but was largely left untouched until big changes in the 18th. The tower was rebuilt in 1868, and there were works in 2000s. The churchyard is a lovely place for a wander.



Gibson's, Front Street East
Due to their links with the Iron & Engine Works, the Gibsons were well known in the town. They were nail makers and, at their peak in the late 18th century, up to 12 men sat astride anvils, cutting split iron from the works to make nails. One of the women of the family would carry a sack of nails 5 miles to market in Morpeth. The Market Cross is often referred to as the nail, both due to its shape and in recognition of the importance of this trade to the town. Later, the Gibson's dealt in hardware and even banking. Parts of the smart shopfronts survive here in these sandstone buildings.

VR Postbox
This is one of the county's oldest post boxes, and Bedlington is key to British postal history. The first adhesive stamp, the Penny Black, and official stationery, the Mulready wrapper, came into service on 6 May 1840, but had been issued on 1 May. On 2 May, a letter was sent to an AW Blenkinsop at the Ironworks using a Mulready wrapper, making it the earliest known use of a pre-paid adhesive stamp in Britain. Ironically, Mr Blenkinsop had died 9 years earlier so the letter was forwarded with a 4 May postmark to his family in Carlisle. The item was worth up to £500,000 in the 1990s.



The Sun Inn
This attractive pub will be forever remembered as the infamous scene of a triple murder. On 15 April 1913, the publican, Jocker Amos, was not best pleased at being asked to move out, and barricaded himself in with a Winchester rifle. Tension grew all day and, by sundown, he had shot dead Sgt Barton and PC Mussell of the local constabulary, and Mrs Grice the wife of the publican due to replace him. Amos escaped to fields behind the pub, until he was caught the next day. Despite popular support (including a 60,000-strong petition), he was hanged in July that year.



Bedlington Terrier
Bedlington is known the world over for the breed of terrier with its name. They were first bred here by, among others, the sons of Rev Cotes in the early 1800s, and were popular for sport. By the mid 20th century, the terriers were the sixth most popular dog in the USA. The Gardener's Arms on Front St East, now Robson & Prescott Vets, was owned by Ned Metcalf, famed Bedlington Terrier breeder. He would tell many a tale of the dogs, and was popular with visiting Americans. When the vet's took over the closed pub in 1968, stained glass was moved to the vet's Morpeth property.

