



**7**  
**Queen's Gardens**

Throughout the war people used communal air raid shelters across the city to try and find safety from the bombs that were dropped by the German Luftwaffe. Some of these air raid shelters were situated here, in the newly created Queens Gardens.

However, some families didn't have access to communal shelters and instead took refuge within their own homes, in cupboards under the stairs or beneath kitchen tables. Across the city, close to the train station, dairy-worker Harriet and her young son Kenneth lived in a small terrace on Wawne Street, each night hoping that their house wouldn't be hit. After enduring months of the blitz, they were eventually forced to move out to the north of Hull when the blast from a bomb dropped nearby caused parts of their house to collapse. The mother and son, home at the time, were saved by their sturdy kitchen table.



**8**  
**Guildhall**

Many of the shelters and buildings in Queens Gardens housed the Civil Defence Service Headquarters, which managed the thousands of volunteers working across the city. This included the casualty and fire services we have already seen, as well as those volunteering as messengers, clerks, drivers and storekeepers, as well as citizens from other organisations such as the Women's Voluntary Service.

Other operations were ran from here at the Guildhall too, including the management of information and propaganda. Today the site is often used in TV and film as the perfect set for a Second World War period drama.

**AS YOU WALK** through the Old Town, one of the most historic and beautiful areas of the city, look out for The Museum Quarter and perhaps pop in to learn more about Hull's history.



**9**  
**Old Town Docks**

'Ships and warehouses were ablaze', remembered Harry, a serviceman living in Hull during the Blitz. 'The city centre had fires of all shapes and sizes'. \* He was talking about the docks which once covered the sides of the banks where we are now standing, and the land east of the River Hull.

The docks were one of the major reasons that the Luftwaffe had targeted Hull, housing a vibrant industry linked to much of home-front Britain. Warehouses stacked with timber burned fiercely while flour poured out the side of Ranks Mills and into the river below. Try to imagine the sights, sounds and smells as you stand here on the Scale Lane Bridge.

**DID YOU KNOW?** The first daylight raid of the war also happened here in Hull- just to the east of the city at Saltend.

\*Henry Baker, WW2 People's War



**10**  
**Hull Holy Trinity Church**

June 1940 wasn't the first time that the city had been bombed from the air. During the First World War 8 zeppelin raids also brought terror and tragedy to Hull, including here, at the Holy Trinity Church.

On two occasions, first in June 1915 and then in March 1916, German bombs narrowly missed the church and caused extensive damage to the surrounding streets. Many of the church's windows were shattered in the second raid though. Some of the shards that fell were collected and now form a mosaic window in the church, which commemorates the bombing of Hull during the First World War. **Can you spot it?**

During the Second World War the Holy Trinity Church survived again, due to the courageous efforts of fire wardens who monitored the skies above from the roof. The church was also used as an air raid shelter, although only briefly.



**11**  
**Whitefriargate and The Hull People's Memorial**

Throughout the blitz Hull was subjected to 'blackout'- after sunset all lights had to be dimmed and windows covered with heavy curtains or shutters to prevent any light escaping and helping the enemy to see. Many shops, such as these here on Whitefriargate, were fitted with 'double-doors', so that customers could enter without any light escaping.

**Can you spot any as you walk?**

You can find **The Hull People's Memorial** here on Whitefriargate too. The Hull People's Memorial is a museum and research hub operated entirely by volunteers. Step inside to find out more about Hull's stories of the First and Second World Wars, handle real wartime artefacts, visit their WWI trench and much more.



**12**  
**Queen Victoria Square**

On 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 victory was declared in Europe and four days later, in Hull, a victory parade was held here in the city centre. Crowds gathered to watch as 5000 men and women who had 'done their duty on the home front' passed by. The surrounding days saw bonfires, street parties, dancing and public holidays, as well as memorials.

With more than 1000 lives lost and 95% of homes damaged or destroyed, the devastation inflicted on Hull by the German Luftwaffe was second only to that experienced in London, reducing much of the city to rubble. Hull's story is crucial to understanding the impact of the Second World War on Britain, and the legacy of the blitz lives on in Hull through its people and places, some of which you have explored today.

Thank you for using this trail to explore the stories of Hull's wartime past. We hope that you have enjoyed it.



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For any more information you can get in touch with us

When navigating the city. your own risk, so we urge you to please take care of the information. Completing the trail is done so at omissions, nor any consequences arising from the use accuracy of information contained in this guide, the creators can accept no responsibility for any errors or Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the process of creating this trail.

photographs and invaluable research advice during the Hull People's Memorial for providing resources, project, and also to the Hull History Centre and The to the Leeds for Life Foundation for kindly funding this historian of the Second World War in Britain. Thanks

This guide has been created by Charlotte Tomlinson, a **PAST WITH THE HULL BLITZ TRAIL** **WALK THE STORIES OF HULL'S WARTIME**

Time: 1.5- 2 hours

Distance: 2.5 miles

**THE**  
**HULL BLITZ**  
**TRAIL**

WALK THE STORIES OF HULL'S WARTIME PAST







## 1 Queen Victoria Square

On the morning of Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1940, the people of Hull woke up after the first bombing raid on the city of Hull during the Second World War. It would not be the last, or most devastating attack. In fact, it was only one of 86 raids on Hull by the German Luftwaffe (air force) between June 1940 and March 1945.

On this trail you will discover the story of the Hull Blitz, through the people, and places, that experienced it.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Technically, 'the blitz' was only the period of continual heavy bombing in Britain that happened from late 1940 to mid 1941. However, when we use the term 'the blitz' today, we are usually referring to the entire experience of living under aerial (air) bombardment during the Second World War.

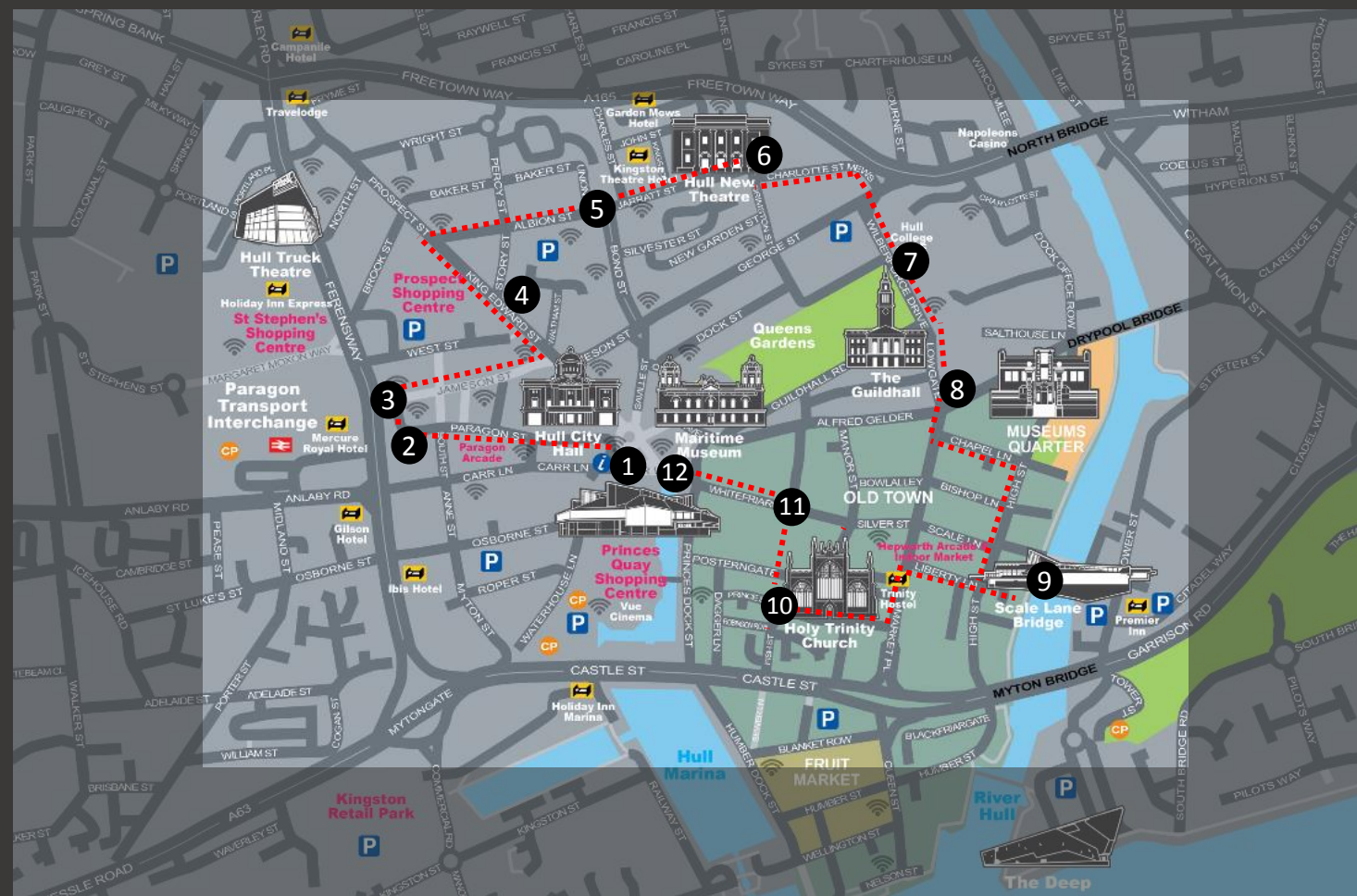


## 2 Hull Paragon Station

Our second stop, Hull Paragon Station, is central to understanding the story of the Hull Blitz. At the outbreak of war Hull was still a major British port town, with a bustling industry that relied heavily on the railway. The train station was therefore a major target for the German Luftwaffe and their bombs.

But the train station wasn't only a target- it was also the gateway for thousands of people escaping the city in search of safety. More than 50,000 children were evacuated from Hull in the early years of the war, mostly to the surrounding countryside and villages in North Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

**AS YOU WALK** Look out for the cenotaph behind you- since 1924 it has commemorated 'the men of Kingston upon Hull who laid down their lives' in conflicts including the Second World War.



## 3 Hammonds Department Store

It wasn't just strategic targets like the station that were caught up in the blitz. On the night of 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1941, Luftwaffe bombs set light to the Hammonds department store (and the popular dance hall which occupied the top floor). A further 800 fires were also caused by bombing across the city. According to reports, 'the whole of Ferensway was on fire'. This night, and the one that followed, were to become two of the most devastating of the war for Hull, with more than 700 casualties.

Since that night and to today, rumours of the ghost of a fallen German bomber have continued to haunt the old Hammonds store.

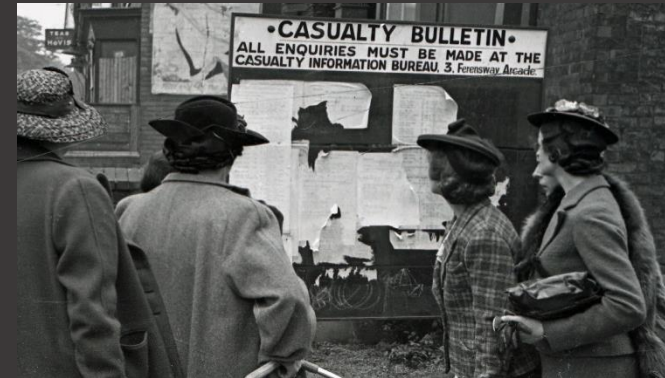
**DID YOU KNOW?** Throughout the war, Hull was referred to in the press as simply 'A North-East Coast Town'. This was to hide the extent of the damage from people living in other cities across Britain, and from the enemy.



## 4 Hull Royal Infirmary

In addition to the city's existing medical staff, thousands of men and women volunteered in the Civil Defence Service as first aid assistants and ambulance drivers during the Second World War, while others formed rescue parties. Their work was critical to saving the lives of those caught up in bombing raids, and around 4000 people were treated by the casualty services between 1939 and 1945. Sadly, many lives could not be saved.

The casualty services themselves were not immune to tragedy either. 11 members of the service were killed while on duty during raids, and the Hull Royal Infirmary was also hit by multiple bombs in March 1941. Just two months later, after many more raids, it closed due to the extensive damage sustained. After the war, reconstruction planners designed a new retail district on the former hospital site, where the shopping centre now stands.



## 6 The Fire Station and The Hull History Centre

Due to the large amount of incendiary (fire) bombs dropped on Hull during the war, the work of the fire service was crucial in saving lives. Over 6000 men and women became firemen, fire wardens and fire watchers between 1939 and 1945. One of these was Albert, a 35 year-old timber worker who had lost his eyesight in one eye in an industrial accident before the war. Unable to serve in the military, he instead became a firefighter. His records, and those of thousands more war volunteers, are held here on Worship Street at the Hull History Centre.

The Hull History Centre holds a wealth records on the Second World War in Hull, from records of air raid damage to diaries and photographs, as well as many fascinating books in the local studies library section. They are open to the public and free to use. Why not use the Hull History Centre to trace your own stories of the Hull Blitz?



## 5 Albion Street Museum

A grand and beautiful building, the Hull Municipal Museum once stood here on Albion Street, housing rare and precious items from across the world. But on the night of 24<sup>th</sup> June 1943, the museum took a direct hit. Firefighters were unable to save the building from the blaze that followed and the museum collapsed, thousands of its collections lost to the fire.

When a carpark was erected on the site in the 1980s workmen made a delightful discovery- many of the museum's artefacts buried deep beneath the ground. While some were ancient, others were more modern. Cyril Nichols finally recovered his lost motorbike, that had been left in the museum's basement 40 years earlier!

**DID YOU KNOW?** The word 'blitz' comes from the German term 'blitzkrieg', which means 'lightning war'.