

Dr Nick Evans walks the Wilberforce Trail

Nick is Senior Lecturer in diaspora history at the School of Humanities. He is also an academic in the Queen's Anniversary Prize-winning Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation at the University of Hull.

Allow: 90 minutes to 2 hours, factor in extra time if you'd like to visit any of the museums.

Accessibility:

Mainly paved with some cobbles. Toilets are available at several sites including stop 2 at Trinity Market, stop 3 at Hull Minster and stop 7 in Queen Victoria Square – subject to opening times.

Trail hack #1:

If you've been inspired and you'd like to find out more, you can stop for a walk around the Hands On History Museum or you can always extend your walk by visiting the Hull History Centre on Worship Street.

Trail hack #2:

Rather than going straight down Bishop Lane off High Street, head towards the Scale Lane Bridge and explore some more of the cobbled Old Town.

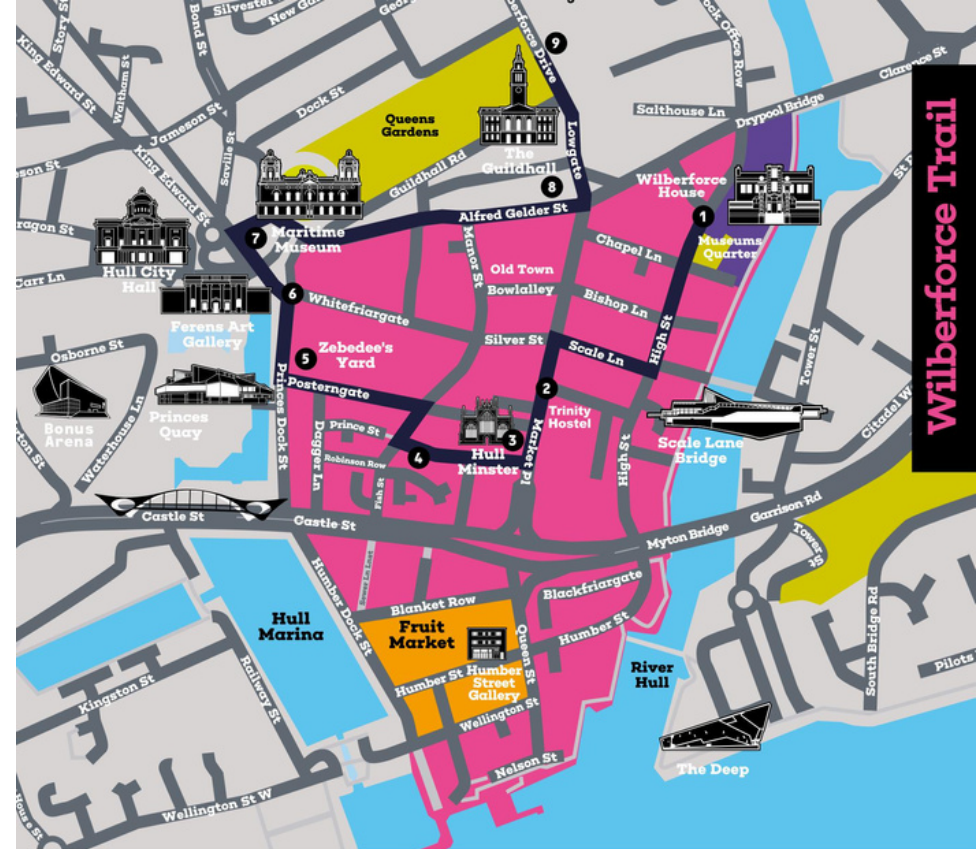
William Wilberforce is without doubt the most widely known person to have lived in Hull during the city's seven hundred year history. Born in 1759 in a magnificent merchant's house that is now home to the world's oldest slavery museum, he was baptised, educated and later MP for the town as this trail explores.

Wilberforce used his privileged position as the son of a Baltic merchant, to improve the lives of countless men, women and children through numerous humanitarian causes he championed as MP for Hull (1780-1784) and later MP for Yorkshire (1784-1808). This trail guides you around sights familiar to him as well as some of places his memory is celebrated.

Beginning at Wilberforce was born – Wilberforce House, a Jacobean merchant's house and since 1906 home to the Wilberforce House Museum (1). Despite leading the political campaign to eradicate the British slave trade in 1807, slavery remains unfinished business as his birthplace details. Next to the museum is the Wilberforce Institute (part of the University of Hull) which researches slavery in the past and the present. Behind the institute is the 'Names On The Wall' memorial that profiles some of the men and women who have campaigned for freedom around the world, including Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parkes.

A short walk from High Street is the Market Place (2). This was the beating heart of Wilberforce's Hull. Here you will find a memorial to fellow slavery abolitionist Olaudah Equiano whose writings about the horrors of both the slave trade and slavery were used to mobilise the British campaign against the slave trade. A short distance away is the Minster (formerly the Holy Trinity Church) where Wilberforce was baptised in a font that is almost as old as the port (3).

Across from the minster is the Hands on History Museum, previously the Hull Grammar School, where Wilberforce was both educated and met the enlightened headmaster Isaac Milner (4). A short distance away is the Zebedee's Yard, part of the Hull Trinity House that played a key role in maintaining the Wilberforce fortunes and those of the expanding port of Hull (5). If you cut through one of the many passages to Whitefriargate, you will see, at Parliament Street, a memorial to abolitionist and author Mary Prince (6).



KEY:

- 1 Wilberforce House and the Humanitarian Wall
- 2 The Market Place
- 3 Hull Minster
- 4 Hands on History Museum
- 5 Trinity House Zebedee's Yard
- 6 Whitefriargate
- 7 Maritime Museum Queens Gardens
- 8 Guildhall Alfred Gelder St
- 9 Wilberforce Monument

Wilberforce died in 1833, just days after the British Parliament had voted to end slavery in British colonies overseas. The final part of the tour, beginning with the Hull Maritime Museum (former home to the Hull Dock Company), then the Guildhall (political home to Hull's civic life today), and then the Wilberforce Statue erected to memorialise Wilberforce's lifetime of work in 1838 (7). All celebrate the great statesman's ties to Hull's commercial and political life, and most importantly his work advancing the city's reputation for fighting for freedom.

For more information about the ongoing fight to end slavery today visit: <https://www.hull.ac.uk/research/institutes/wilberforce>.



Wilberforce Trail