



A Remarkable Town

Dorking lies at the heart of the Surrey Hills, a nationally important landscape.

To the north, visible down many of the town centre streets, are the chalk hills of the North Downs. To the south the Greensand Hills provided prestigious location for the Victorian and Edwardian expansion of Dorking.

This picturesque setting and the varied architecture, streets and public spaces, reflecting the history of Dorking from Roman times to present day, provide the raw material for the Dorking Heritage Trail.

A walk around Dorking is an opportunity to step back in time and explore the eventful past of this historic market town.

visitdorking.com

Dorking's official website, packed with information on Dorking and its surrounding villages and countryside.

visitleatherhead.com

The official website for Dorking's sister town to the north, connected by the Mole Gap Trail.

surreyhills.org

The official website for the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way

This web site contains information about one of the iconic national trails that runs from Farnham to Dover, through Dorking.

visitsurrey.com

The official website for Surrey Tourism. It contains information on the whole of Surrey and has accredited accommodation listings.

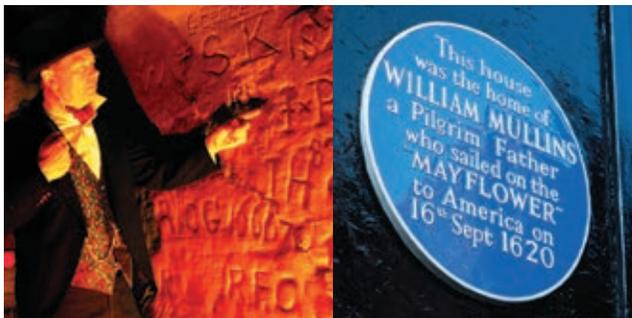
Getting online in Dorking.

You can access all of the websites at the library in St Martins Walk or there is Wifi access at the Café in Dorking Halls.

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Two easy to walk trails around the historic market town of Dorking.



Those taking the trails today are following in the footsteps of generations of earlier visitors attracted to the qualities of Dorking.



Dorking's reputation for fine scenery, an attractive town and good local food has been a winning combination for many generations. First as a staging post between London and the South coast and then as a resort town, visitors have sung its praises with enthusiasm.

For some it is the landscape setting;

'Most beautifully surrounded with wooded heights and picturesque commons.'

For others it is the *'air fresh and breezy'*.

Yet others enjoyed the *'unmatched number and variety of pleasant rambles it offers by any other town within the same distance of London'*.

Yet some others came because of its reputation for food, most famously *'The Dorking'*, a breed of fowl that took its name from the town.

In this special corner of England the reasons that brought poets, musicians, writers, philosophers, or just regular visitors to Dorking over the centuries, are still relevant today.

A Market Town

A glance at the map of Dorking shows the principal streets of High Street, South Street and West Street forming the backbone of the town and of this Heritage Trail. For generations these streets have been the centre of trade and commerce.

As you walk along them it is possible to imagine street markets with cattle tied to the railings that still line the High Street today and traders clinching deals in the public houses.

Imagine also past events that now seem at odds with the veneer of a quiet English town: the farm labourer riots that took place in High Street in 1830 when crowds fought with police and cavalry, or the fair day when horses were raced up and down the street.

A tradition dating from the early 19th century, until it was suppressed in 1902, was the Shrove Tuesday football matches. These games were played in the streets of the town disrupting them to such an extent that the shops had to be boarded up.

Passing along the South Street, picture in your mind the coaching days of the 18th century when travellers between the south coast and London broke their journey and dined in the Bulls Head. Tucked behind these main streets were the breweries, a tanner's yard and a foundry.

The Town Today

Dorking today is still the focus of local business and commerce. As well as many High Street names the town has a large number of independent retailers offering an individual selection of goods and services. Hospitality is still as important to the town's economy as it was in times gone by.

With over a dozen town centre public houses and a fine selection of restaurants and cafés, both local people and visitors enjoy a wide range of food and drink. Although no longer in the High street, the town holds a bustling Friday market. The sales cries of the modern traders hark back to the sounds heard over 700 years ago when the town's market was granted a Royal Charter.

The Heritage Trail provides an opportunity to see how Dorking has evolved from a mediaeval village to the busy and vibrant town it is today. For further information on the history of the town there is the Dorking Museum and Heritage Centre located in West Street.

The museum is open from Thursday to Saturday 10.00 -16.00.

