

# TOWN TRAIL No. 1

## A stroll along Harpenden High Street



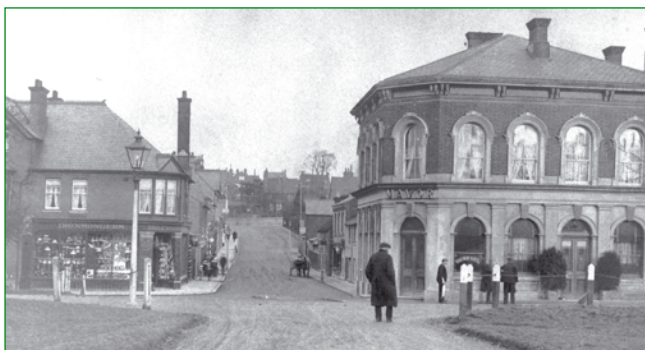
**11 Brewery House** – built in 1871 as his home by James Mardall, who owned the Peacock Brewery (on the site of the Methodist Church), one of two breweries then in the High Street. In 1951 the house was sold and converted to shops (currently

Harpenden Interiors and WH Smiths).

**12 Vaughan Road** was cut through in the 1890s, following the demolition of cottages in Lower High Street, with Pellants (clock makers/repairers) at the corner. Willmott's grocery was replaced by the County & Westminster Bank (now NatWest).



**13 Home Farm and Chestnut Cottage** were pulled down in 1894 to build Ridley's ironmongers' shop at the Corner of Station Road (formerly Staker's Lane) - now HSBC.



**14 Harpenden Arms Hotel** - built as the Railway Hotel in 1870 by James Mardall (owner of the Peacock Brewery). The landlord in 1890 was Richard Longland, a wine and spirit dealer, corn and hay merchant, and proprietor of the Livery Stables behind the hotel further up Station Road.



The Society was founded in 1973 as an independent offshoot of the Harpenden Society, with the aim of researching and recording the town's history and heritage, and stimulating further interest in the town's fascinating past. It now has a thriving membership of over 200. As well as having the opportunity to attend the Society's regular meetings and exhibitions, members also receive a thrice-yearly newsletter containing articles of interest on local history topics beyond those covered by Society events.

### How to join:

Visit our website or contact our

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Larger versions of the illustrations in this Trail and more information about them can be found on our website: [www.harpenden-history.org.uk](http://www.harpenden-history.org.uk)

Published by

Harpenden and District Local History Society,

Registered Charity No 277169.

March 2013.

Typeset and printed by MediaPrint Ltd,

The Print Cabin, 381 Luton Road Harpenden, Herts

01582 764730



The Sensory Garden, surrounded by hedges, marks the site of the Old Cock Pond, which was drained in the late 1920s



**STARTING FROM  
THE GEORGE AND RETURNING  
TO THE HARPENDEN ARMS**



**1 The George** is first mentioned in 1507, but maybe not on this site. It was rebuilt in C19 and is seen here in the 1930s. The site of the garage to the south (now Pizza Express) was a tea garden in Victorian times, when parties drove in by wagonette for 'Beanfeasts' and dancing on the lawn.

**2 Kingston House**, No. 6 High Street was built in 1912 as Edgar Salisbury's hardware shop on the site of Dr Kingston's house. Later occupants were Halford's, C&A stores and M&Co. Note the shields above the windows marking Industry, Strength, Goodwill and Service; also the Harpenden and Hertfordshire coats of arms.

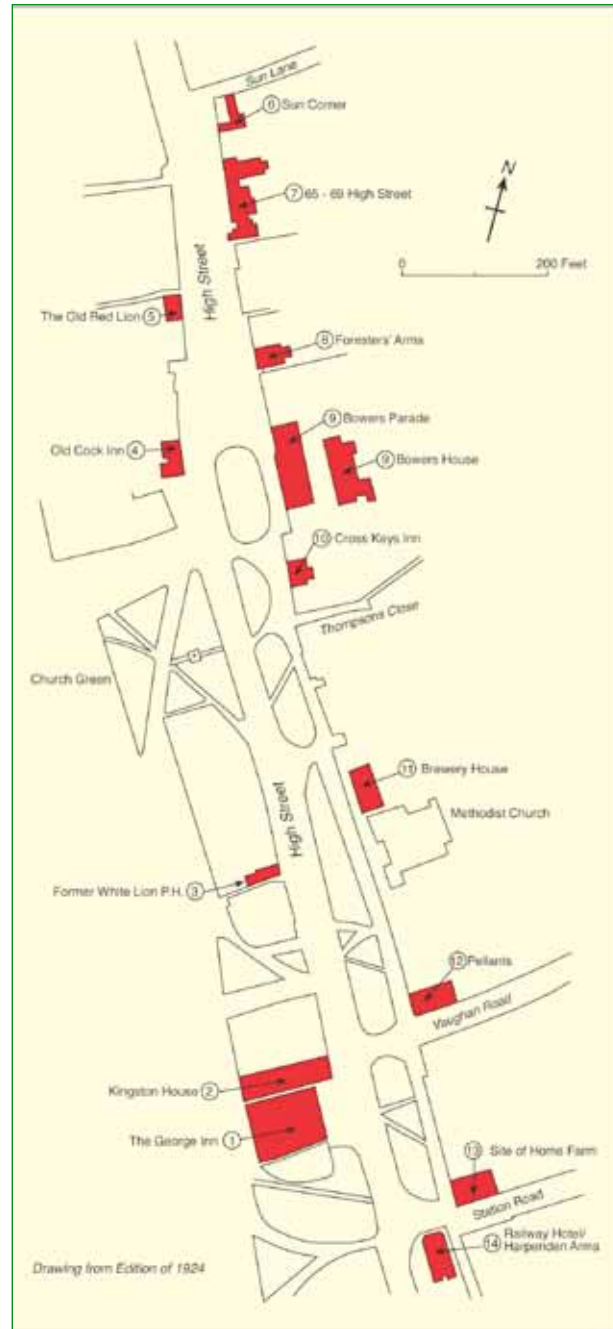


**3 The White Lion** at No. 28 High Street was a small Victorian pub, with decorative moulded bricks. The Perfect Pizza sign hangs from a bracket which once supported a model of a white lion, see left.



**4 The Old Cock Inn** has traces of a C17 timber-framed building and is more than likely the site of still earlier hostleries.

**5 72 High St** – Another much altered C17 timber-frame structure lies behind the brick façade. It is believed to have formed part of an even earlier and larger group of hostelry buildings. It was the **Old Red Lion** in the early 1900s, and Rolts cycle and pram shop in the 1960s, until it was refurbished as shops in 1976.



Illustrations from the Local History Society archives. We have a large collection of photos of Harpenden and the surrounding area.



**6 73–75 High Street**, at the corner of Sun Lane. A late C17 timber-framed structure, the end of which was demolished to widen Sun Lane in 1931. The remaining section was converted into shops in July 1955. The Sun pub was here from about 1637 until 1800 (or maybe 1877). It was owned by the Hawkins family in the 1780s.



**7 65-69 High Street**. The C17 timber-framed cottages at 67 (The Limes) and 65, had early C18 wallpaintings imitating paneling, which were destroyed when the building was refurbished in the 1970s. In the 1850s No. 65 was Harpenden's first post office. No. 69 (Tollgate Cottage/Hotel) was added in the 1870s. 'Tollgate' refers to the barrier controlling traffic from Luton, just south of Sun Lane, when the Turnpike Trust was formed in 1743.



**8 The Foresters Arms**, a pub which has given its name to the 2012 housing development behind, became an off-licence, before conversion into an estate agency. The Foresters were a self-help charity founded in the early C19.



**9 Bowers Parade** was built in 1936 in the gardens of Bowers House, which still stands behind. Though a handsome parade, the fact that it concealed

Bowers House was highly controversial at the time, which helped give birth to the Harpenden Society.



**10 Cross Keys** pub - formerly the White Hart. A much altered early C18 building. The innkeeper in 1850 was Henry Oldaker who moved to The Bull (The Old House, Leyton Road) and helped start regular horse racing on the Common in 1848.