

L A R K I N

THE

THE

TRAIL

LARKIN TRAIL

DISCOVER A POET'S LANDSCAPE ~ WWW.THELARKINTRAIL.CO.UK

1922

No.
25/25

1985

INTRODUCTION

'... a place cannot produce poems: it can only not prevent them, and Hull is good at that. It neither impresses nor insists.'

Welcome to the Larkin Trail. This guide can be downloaded and printed to provide a detailed and illuminating companion to your discovery of A Poet's Landscape. You can also download a shorter guide to the trail from the Larkin Trail website, or pick one up from any Tourist Information Centre in Hull or East Yorkshire.

Philip Larkin is widely considered to be England's favourite post-war poet. Born in Coventry in 1922, he lived the greater part of his working life in Hull, having moved here in his early 30s to take up the post of University Librarian. Larkin's second collection, *The Less Deceived*, published by the Hull-based Marvell Press run by Jean and George Hartley, brought him fame in 1955, followed by *The Whitsun Weddings* in 1964 and *High Windows* ten years later. (Reference is made to poems from these collections and to other pieces of his work throughout the Trail.)

Larkin was also a distinguished jazz critic, literary critic and a compulsive writer of letters, many of which have now been published. Many more, held by the Larkin Archive in the Hull History Centre (point 11 on the Trail), await publication.

Hull has long had a tradition of being home to celebrated writers and poets, so much so that the Australian writer Peter Porter has described it as 'the most poetic city in England.' Andrew Marvell, the 17th century metaphysical poet and parliamentarian, grew up here and was

educated in the city. Much later residents have included Douglas Dunn, Sean O'Brien, Alan Plater and the former Poet Laureate, Sir Andrew Motion, who was also one of Larkin's close colleagues and went on to become one of his biographers.

Recurring themes in Larkin's poetry are often of an abstract nature: isolation, silence, youth, love, death, light and shadow, clouds and sun haunt the poems and letters he wrote whilst living in this city that stands '*with its back half-turned towards Europe.*'

His affinity with 'elsewhere' meant that Hull suited him. He was here, yet insisted that place was unimportant. For Larkin, Hull was '*... a city that is in the world yet sufficiently on the edge of it to have a different resonance.*'

To follow in Larkin's tracks is to take not only a literary journey, but also journeys through diverse landscape and rich architecture and, seeing the city through a poet's eyes, to gain a philosophical view of the place where Larkin lived and worked for three decades.

This diverse Trail takes you on a journey through Larkin's Hull, which today remains very much '*a working city, yet one neither clenched in the blackened grip of the industrial revolution nor hiding behind a cathedral to pretend it is York or Canterbury.*'

LARKIN'S HERIE CITY CENTRE

The city in which Larkin found himself has origins dating back to the 1100s, when it was known as Wyke, situated on the '*shining gull-marked mud*' of the rivers Hull and Humber. In 1293 it was bought by King Edward I and renamed Kingston upon Hull. Over time, it developed as a major European port. It has a long and proud history, with a strong independent streak and a noticeable sense of community, which Larkin so closely observed: '*residents from raw estates ... dwelling where only salesmen and relations come ...*' Today, Hull is visited by over three million day visitors a year.

This particular part of the journey leads you to places frequented by Larkin, both when he was alone and when in the company of others. It guides you to pubs where he enjoyed a pint (or something a little stronger on-the-rocks), pauses at places where he indulged his passion for jazz and takes you to the point from which he could look back at this '*isolate city spread alongside water*' as he took the ferry over to Lincolnshire and back.

As with any city centre, some parts have changed radically over the years. Other streets look almost the same as they did decades ago. Hull's fascinating Old Town, with its cobbles, porticos and intriguing staiths, is one such area. Tracing his footsteps across the city, you feel that wherever he was, Larkin was simply 'here.'

No.
01/25

Royal Hotel

Welcome to the Larkin Trail



Leading directly onto the station concourse, this Italian Renaissance style building was completed in 1849. It began life as the Station Hotel and was allowed to change its name to the Royal Station Hotel following Queen Victoria's stay here five years later. Larkin enjoyed many a visit and would often lunch in its subterranean restaurant, The Brigantine (no longer here), or call in for drinks after he had attended a city centre function.

Until Larkin passed his driving test (at the first attempt) in 1963, he spent much of his time travelling by train from Paragon Station. He captured one of his more memorable departures – from Hull to London with a trainful of newly-weds – in his celebrated 1958 poem, *The Whitsun Weddings*, which also became the eponymous title for his third collection:

*'We ran behind the backs of houses, crossed a street
Of blinding windscreens, smelt the fish-dock; thence
The river's level drifting breadth began,
Where sky and Lincolnshire meet.'*

The Whitsun Weddings is commemorated on the nearby statue of Larkin, designed by Martin Jennings, who also created the statue of John Betjeman in St Pancras Station. The Larkin statue was commissioned by the Philip Larkin Society and unveiled on 2 December 2010, exactly 25 years on from his death. It also marked the end of Larkin25, a very rich and varied programme of events commemorating his life and work.



The first in a series of images by young photographer Joe Johnson. Joe took photographs of every location of the Larkin Trail - a Larkin25 commission.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 3UF**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude	Longitude
Indoors	Indoors

OS Co-ordinates

Easting	Northing
Indoors	Indoors



The sign can be found in the Hotel lounge.



No.
02/25

Royal Hotel



Larkin liked the hotel's spacious lounge and often used to meet people here for drinks.

His 1967 poem *Friday Night in the Royal Station Hotel* shows the building's quieter times, with 'silence laid like carpet' and 'all the salesmen ... gone back to Leeds.' First published in the *Sheffield Morning Telegraph*, the poem was later included in Larkin's 1974 collection *High Windows*.

At the far end of the bar, just near the lifts, you can see a photograph of Larkin and Betjeman together, which shows the pair at Hull City Hall, where Betjeman received his honorary degree. Between the lifts themselves is a plaque commemorating the royal visit of 1854.

The hotel as Larkin knew it suffered a major fire five years after his death and was re-opened after extensive refurbishment in September 1993. When large areas of Hull succumbed to the floods of 2007, many of the city's residents were temporarily accommodated at the Royal Hotel.



The view from the Royal as Larkin would have known it, heading into town.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 3UF**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
N 53° 44.6415 W 0° 20.7006

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
509245 428785



The sign can be found at the front entrance of the hotel.





Arriving in Hull from the Midlands for the first time in 1955, Larkin's train, 'swerving east from rich industrial shadows and traffic all night north' eventually brought him here, to this large cool station concourse. 'When your train comes to rest in Paragon Station against a row of docile buffers,' he observed, 'you alight with an end-of-the-line sense of freedom.'

Although the Royal Hotel has changed its outward appearance little since Larkin used to enjoy lunch and drinks there, Paragon Station is very different indeed. Today the station forms part of the new transport Interchange, which was officially opened by HM The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh in March 2009. Until then, small frosted windows, thick brown paint and a 'Brief Encounter' style buffet were very much in evidence. Today, you can still see some of the terrazzo tiled flooring and original ticket office within TravelExtra in Community Junction near the main entrance. Before the extensive re-development, the site of the current ticket office was a side exit, giving onto an open-air, very draughty bus station.

When the Hartleys recorded Larkin reading *The Whitsun Weddings* volume in 1964, a photo of him leaning out of a train window at Paragon Station was the perfect choice for the record sleeve.

Larkin's 1961 poem *Here encapsulates* his memory of his first train journey from the Midlands to Hull and the subsequent impression that the city, its residents and the Holderness Plain made on him. Train travel continued to fuel his poetry, be he 'waking at the fumes and furnace-glares of Sheffield' where he changed and 'ate an awful pie' or returning to Coventry where his 'childhood was unspent.'

When Philip Larkin first left this station concourse, he was greeted by a very different city from the one you see today. Like Coventry, much of Hull's city centre had been massively bombed during World War II and when Larkin arrived, Hull was undergoing a major rebuilding programme. The fish docks in the west and the cargo docks to the east were booming, all supported by a huge rail network carrying endless goods wagons. Larkin made reference to the Hull air on many occasions, commenting that the city was '... a little chilly and smells of fish.'

The outer concourse, albeit then less expansive, was still the place where taxis queued up, waiting for the next train to end

its long journey north from King's Cross. Immediately to the left of the taxi rank was the ABC Cinema/Theatre, where The Beatles and The Rolling Stones played in the early 1960s. Diagonally across the road, where TJ Hughes currently stands, was the popular C&A fashion store.

Leaving the station and crossing busy Ferensway, Larkin's 'large town' begins to open up. Dashing for a train, he would no doubt have checked the time on the huge Guinness Clock that rose above the small parade of shops to the right of Paragon Square. This area was not pedestrianised in the 1960s and 70s and traffic still flowed along Paragon Street as well as busy Jameson Street, to the right of House of Fraser. This much-respected department store, formerly called Hammonds and later Binns, was entirely rebuilt in the 1950s, following its destruction during the bombing raids of World War II. Larkin would have driven past the store many times in his Singer Gazelle, the car he bought on the day that *The Whitsun Weddings* was published.

Standing in Paragon Square with the war memorial behind you gives an excellent view of the front façade of the Royal Hotel. Along to the right, and in stark contrast to the Royal Hotel's Victorian architecture, rises the Holiday Inn Express, part of the St Stephen's Shopping Centre, which occupies a site now radically different from Larkin's time here. In the 1960s and '70s the parade of shops beyond the ABC was dominated by the Yorkshire Electricity Board.

Towards the far end of St Stephens Shopping Centre you can see Hull Truck Theatre, which opened its new home in 2009. Until then, it lived in much smaller premises, tucked away on nearby Spring Street, close by the former city mortuary. Known for its low ceilings, compact auditorium and intimate atmosphere, 'Spring Street Theatre' (as it had been colloquially called since 1981) was not a particular favourite of Larkin's. He did, however, go along when there was a performance that especially interested him. The playwright Alan Plater, who was brought up in Hull and lived in the city for many years, was instrumental in establishing the original theatre, Hull Arts Centre, in 1970, Plater and Larkin were to become friends, brought together by their love of jazz music. Larkin was in the audience for Plater's jazz opera 'Prez' about Lester Young, the American jazz saxophonist. In 1990, Larkin was to 'appear' as a ghostly character in *Sweet Sorrow*, which Plater wrote about a group of friends holding an annual get-together in Larkin's honour.

No.
03/25

Paragon Interchange



Turning away from Ferensway and heading down Paragon Street, you will see a mix of architectural styles, ranging from the 19th and 20th centuries. These include, on your right, the Venetian Gothic front of Paragon Arcade, designed by William Alfred Gelder in 1892. Its central pointed archway, flanked by oriel windows, leads into a short arcade of shops protected by a cast iron, glazed roof.

At the far end of Paragon Street you enter Queen Victoria Square, bordered by several fine pieces of Grade II listed architecture, including the Maritime Museum, Ferens Gallery and, closest to you, with shops at ground floor level, the City Hall. These days the Square is criss-crossed by pedestrians coming and going in all directions, whereas in the 1960s and '70s, the stepped area supporting Queen Victoria's statue was an island, surrounded by busy traffic flowing between all these arterial streets. Until 1964, this traffic included the *'flat-faced trolleys'* that were phased out to make way for buses.

Although, as Hull's port activity edged further out of town, you will see very few cranes in evidence today, the city centre still has many of the domes, statues and spires

that made such an impression on Larkin (plus some contemporary additions, such as the dome on the Combined Courts building you can later see in Lowgate).

The Maritime Museum, designed by Christopher Wray, is easily identified by its three domes. Built as the Dock Offices in the late 1860s, its Venetian Renaissance style embraces the maritime theme, including harpoon and trident heads on its cast iron railings. To its left stands the former Yorkshire Penny Bank, built in 1900 (currently Caffe Nero) and the short gap between them affords a brief glimpse of Queens Gardens, of which more later.

Across the road from the City Hall stands the 1920s Ferens Art Gallery, home of many important pieces, including works by Hals, Canaletto and Hockney, as well as temporary exhibitions, a live art space and terraced café. To the right of the Gallery stands The Punch Hotel, an 1896 extravaganza of Jacobean and Gothic detail that contrasts vividly with its neighbouring shopping centre.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 3UF**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
N 53° 44.6209 W 0° 20.7510

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
509195 428755



The sign can be found at the end of the station concourse beyond the Larkin statue.





The City Hall, a purpose built concert hall from the early 1900s, held very varied memories for Larkin. Here, under its green copper dome, he could indulge his passion for jazz, as the venue played host to many of the greats, including Count Basie, Chris Barber and Acker Bilk. It was also fruitful for his poetry, evoking once more that feeling of isolation, as in *Broadcast* he listens on his radio to a classical concert from the City Hall, which opened with a piece by Elgar. Sitting alone in his attic flat, looking out at the *'still and withering leaves on half-emptied trees'*, he imagines his loved one in the audience; *'your hands, tiny in all that air, applauding.'*

Some of Larkin's own work was performed here, as he was commissioned to write the words of a cantata composed by Anthony Hedges to celebrate the opening of the Humber Bridge. The result was *Bridge for the Living*, first performed here at the City Hall on 11 April 1981, and then enjoyed once more in 2010 at the University of Hull as part of the Larkin25 commemorations.

Larkin's visits to the City Hall were not all based around music: he occasionally attended boxing bouts here too. He was fond of the sport, often joining Maeve Brennan and her parents to watch a match on their television (he bought his own first TV in the early 1970s). The City Hall was home territory for local heroes such as Ricky Beaumont. On one occasion, Larkin was heard to mumble 'only connect.'

Traditionally, the City Hall hosts the University of Hull's degree ceremonies, and when John Betjeman was awarded an Honorary Degree in 1973 it was Philip Larkin who gave the citation. Betjeman and Larkin were close friends, Betjeman having interviewed his fellow-poet for *Monitor*, the 1964 BBC documentary filmed in Hull.

Today the City Hall continues to be a popular venue for a wide range of events, including concerts of every musical genre, and every November hundreds of people pack the Square to watch the Christmas lights switched on from its impressive balcony.

(If you look at the pavement to the left of its main entrance, you will notice a small shoal of fish. These mark the beginning of the Fish Trail and if you would like to follow that on another visit, leaflets are available from the Tourist Information Centre along to your right.)

Leaving the City Hall behind and exiting Queen Victoria Square by the further pelican crossing, you will quickly 'cross' Monument Bridge, which leads into Whitefriargate. During Larkin's time in Hull, this waterfront looked considerably different, as it was formerly the Prince's Dock (Junction Dock), opened in 1829 and disused by the late 1960s. Monument Bridge itself, so called because of the colossal Wilberforce Monument that once dominated the Square, crossed the lock that joined Prince's Dock and Queen's Dock and was removed in 1932. You can see a plaque in the pavement next to the pelican crossing, showing the original site of the Wilberforce Monument. (Today, the monument is Grade II listed and you gain a magnificent view of it just before reaching the final location on this section of the Trail.)



Your hands, tiny in all that air, applauding.



Traditionally, the City Hall hosts the University of Hull's degree ceremonies, and when John Betjeman was awarded an Honorary Degree in 1973 it was Philip Larkin who gave the citation.



The Princes Quay Shopping Centre, rising from the water on stilts, did not open until 1991. Its three decks of retail outlets maintain the area's maritime theme, with an exposed structure of posts and cables echoing the masts and riggings of sailing ships. Although the estates are no longer 'raw' and 'grim head-scarfed wives' are almost impossible to find, you can still see a steady stream of shoppers flowing in and out.

Running along Prince's Dockside, where once there were railway lines for cargo, are several café bars and restaurants. Quietly sitting amid them is the entrance to Trinity House, on a site that has been at the core of Hull's maritime history for centuries. Although founded as a religious guild in 1369, by the 16th century Trinity House had developed into a powerful and influential authority in charge of the River Humber's navigation and pilotage. The present building dates from 1753 and stretches behind the length of Whitefriargate's shops as far as Trinity Square. Its nautical school opened in 1786 and still thrives today.

Immediately before entering Whitefriargate, within a small amphitheatre, you will pass the Beverley Gate excavations.

Most Hull residents now walk by with barely a second glance, yet when it was in its entirety this mediaeval structure did in fact play an extremely important role in the city's – and indeed England's – history. It formed part of the defensive walls that once surrounded the Old Town and it was here in 1642 that Hull's Governor denied King Charles I entrance to the city: this was a contributory factor in the start of the English Civil War.

By entering Whitefriargate, you are stepping into the area immediately inside those ancient city walls. This popular thoroughfare links the new with the old and takes its name from the Carmelite monks, or White Friars, who lived close by until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s.

Whitefriargate was once home to several pubs, three of which occupied prime sites just inside the original city walls. At no.37 stood the one that gradually evolved into the Monument Tavern, a 'wood and sawdust' establishment with a green and cream façade, which Larkin may well have visited, as it remained a pub until around 1968.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 3RQ**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
N 53° 44.6209 W 0° 20.3784

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
509600 428755



The sign can be found at the front entrance of the City Hall.



No.
05/25

Whitefriargate Mark & Spencer



Just a little further on your left, you reach Marks & Spencer - Larkin's *Large Cool Store*. Its Greek Revival stone façade, by Jones and Rigby, dates from 1931. Although the exterior has changed little since those days, when Larkin wrote about this store in 1961, Marks & Spencer was less upmarket than the familiar 'M&S' we know today.

Most of Larkin's staff were female and, intrigued by the carrier bags with which they returned to work after lunchtime trips to town, he decided to pay the store a visit. There he encountered the *'cheap clothes set out in simple sizes plainly'* and wandered past the *'heaps of shirts and trousers'*, pondering on the vaguely exotic *'Modes for Night.'* You can find a copy of the resulting poem – *'finished in a terrific hurry'* - inside the shop, just by the lift on the ground floor.

Continuing along Whitefriargate you will pass another familiar institution, Boots, this time on your right. The building once housed a further Whitefriargate pub, the Neptune Inn, and, if you take a look above Boots you will see the inn's decorative façade. Many of the properties

along this side of the street are owned by Trinity House and this is just one of several superb examples of their decorative architecture.



Photograph of women shoppers taken by Larkin

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 2HW**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 44.5974 0° 20.2296

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
509765 428715



The sign can be found in store by the ground floor lift.



In the 1960s and 70s, comparatively few people ventured beyond the far end of Whitefriargate, unless it was to shop at the open-air market in Trinity Square. Nowadays, as you can see, it is one of the city centre's most popular areas. These narrow, cobbled streets have shed their slightly 'there be dragons' cloak, allowing the Old Town to reveal a much more affable character.

Several of their names, however, remain as mysterious as ever. 'Land of Green Ginger' is one of the most unusual street names in the country and 'Bowlalley Lane' is equally intriguing. Whilst there are several theories about their origin – could 'Land of Green Ginger' perhaps relate to the spice trade? – none have truly been confirmed, although Bowlalley Lane is believed to relate to the former manor house on this site, which had a green for playing bowls. In the days when ships still came into Queen's Dock, the owners paid their mooring fees at 8a Bowlalley Lane (currently Green Ginger café), which still has the huge original safe embedded in the wall.

For writers, the Old Town names are a gift; both Winifred Holtby and Alan Plater used 'Land of Green Ginger' as titles

(Holtby for her novel and Plater for his 1973 'Play for Today').

By day these streets on the fringe of Hull's cultural quarter are busy with shoppers, visitors and – as the Combined Courts and the Guildhall are both close by – solicitors and office workers. At night, the Old Town is 'the place to be,' as the many pubs, café bars and restaurants really come alive. However, in the days when Larkin frequented this area, it was a very different story. Most pubs closed at 10.30 pm and streetlights in some parts of the city centre were then switched off: by 10.45 pm Whitefriargate could be in complete darkness.

At the bottom of Whitefriargate (where once stood a busy Woolworths store) the pedestrianised area gives way to the traffic of Silver Street, with its fine arcade. Before turning the corner to enter Trinity Square, you might like to take a closer look at The George pub in Land of Green Ginger – have you seen England's smallest window? In the days when the pub was a coaching inn this used to be a look-out window for the stable hand who sat in a small room behind it.

Map & Geocodes	
Postcode: HU1 2ED	
Geocodes:	
GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates	
Latitude	Longitude
53° 44.5937	0° 20.0601
OS Co-ordinates	
Easting	Northing
509950	428713



The sign can be found on the frontage of Shackle Chambers, 7 Land of Green Ginger.



Passing the entrance to the covered market, you quickly arrive in this small but imposing Square, bordered on three sides by some magnificent buildings. Between them, they reflect centuries of the city's rich history, which is told on the contemporary artwork on the corner.

In the middle of the Square you will notice the statue of Andrew Marvell. He was born in nearby Winestead-in-Holderness and moved with his family to Hull at the age of three. Marvell was educated at the old Hull Grammar School (now the Hands On History Museum), which you can see just behind his statue, and went on to become MP for Hull from 1658 to 1678 as well as one of the best-known metaphysical poets.

The presence of Marvell's statue is symbolic of the city's rich literary heritage. Hull is the birthplace of Steve Smith, was the adoptive home of Alan Plater and the University home of many poets, including Andrew Motion, Douglas Dunn and Roger McGough. Carol Rumens was also once a resident of Hull and co-edited the anthology *Old City, New Rumours*, the 2010 sequel to the influential 1982 collection *A Rumoured City*, for which Larkin wrote the foreword.

Marvell's statue has not always been in this spot. After numerous moves over the years, it was finally placed in Trinity Square in 1999 and unveiled by Andrew Motion. If

you take a look at the plinth, you will find it contains a verse from one of Marvell's most famous poems, *To His Coy Mistress*.

His father, the Rev. Andrew Marvell, was a lecturer at Holy Trinity, the magnificent 14th century Anglican parish church to your left, where William Wilberforce was baptised. Wilberforce had been passionate about the abolition of slavery in the British Colonies and, as MP for Hull, fought strongly for the cause in Parliament.

Directly opposite Holy Trinity Church, next to the Merchants Warehouse (now smart apartments) you will notice a small archway. Through this archway, curving its narrow way out of the Square, is Prince Street, the city's elegant arc of Georgian houses. As you would imagine, this street, which led towards the site of the old town walls, has seen countless residents come and go over the past couple of centuries. The Masonic Lodge on the corner was once a chapel.

Prince Street sweeps round to give you a superb vista from the wonderfully named Dagger Lane across Castle Street to the masts and flags of the Marina. Once home to a synagogue and to numerous Christian denominations, Dagger Lane earned itself the nickname 'Nine Faith Lane.' Its proper name is simply derived from the fact that daggers were once made here.



Trinity Square and its environs as Larkin would have known it.



Castle Street, the final section of the A63, is the main route for the busy docks to the east of the city. This stretch of road and, rising to your left, Myton Bridge were not developed until the late twentieth century. Until then, the nearest point to cross the River Hull was Drypool Bridge, but this is an area that Larkin was very familiar with, as he regularly travelled across the Humber from the nearby pier.

Crossing Castle Street's busy flow of traffic to walk along Humber Dock Street you enter the much more peaceful world of the waterfront. The Marina, developed from the former Humber and Railway Docks, was opened in 1983 and leads into Hull's emerging cultural quarter.

As you walk along the quayside, you will notice that some of the paving is picked out in red brick. These red lines mark the ruins of Hull's medieval city walls, which were buried as part of the marina development work. Further along, close to Humber Street, the red brick contains a large circle. This denotes the original bank of the estuary: in the days before the docks were developed, the River Humber flowed past this point. Beyond is reclaimed land.

Until 2010, Humber Street itself was home to the city's vibrant Fruit Market. Here men heaved hundreds of boxes, crates and sacks of fresh produce onto waiting lorries each day well before dawn. As with the docks, this activity has now moved away from the city centre.

Continuing along Humber Dock Street, keeping Humber Street to your left and the Marina on your right, you pass the more contemporary architecture of Henry Vernone Court. As you can see, the streets here are wider, as they are no longer medieval, and have been given heroic names. Rounding the corner, past the Minerva pub, you will find yourself at the Humber waterfront. Often the river is brown and ruffled, at times it can be a rippling silver-blue, but the view remains constantly as wide and wonderful as it was in Larkin's day.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 1RR**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude: 53° 44.4961 Longitude: 0° 20.1105

OS Co-ordinates

Easting: 509900 Northing: 428530



The sign can be found on the front of the Woollen Warehouse where KallKwik is located.





Making your way along Nelson Street you find what remains of Hull Corporation Pier. This was the departure and arrival point of the various ferries that carried people across the estuary for seven centuries. Today the old waiting room serves as a small café.

Records show Larkin's trips would have been on the PS Lincoln Castle or her elder sister ships, the PS Tattershall Castle and the PS Lingfield Castle. These three paddle steamers went back and forth to New Holland in Lincolnshire from the 1930s and '40s until the opening of the Humber Bridge in 1981.

For residents of 1960s and '70s Hull, a trip on one of the noisy 'Castles' was generally seen as a treat, and taking the train onward from New Holland to the seaside resort of Cleethorpes – rather than just doing the round trip – was considered particularly special. Former passengers recall the ferries' oily smell, the terrific noise coming up from their engines and how, with a strong wind blowing, the river could become very 'choppy.'

From what remains of the pier top you can still enjoy spectacular views across to Lincolnshire. To your left, Hull's striking sub-marium The Deep (designed by Sir Terry Farrell) juts over the river and is accessible via the adjacent footbridge. Beyond, following the sweep of the estuary as the city's "*working skyline wanders to the sea*" it is often possible to spot the vast white P&O North Sea ferries berthed at King George Dock, preparing to make their overnight sailings to Holland and Belgium.

Looking to the west, suspended high above the estuary, is the Humber Bridge, "*a giant step for ever to include all our dear landscape in a new design*". Today the bridge carries more than 100,000 vehicles each week, linking the two counties in a journey that takes a matter of minutes. For most of Larkin's time here, however, the pace was much more leisurely, as the ferry journey took at least 20 minutes each way. But what a journey it was. Weather and tides inevitably played their part – and occasionally the ferry became lodged on a sandbank.



Assistant Director Anne James took this image during the filming of the 1964 Monitor documentary. Larkin wrote to the film's director, Patrick Garland: 'The feeling of ships coming in and going out is exciting; of the door being open...'

No.
08/25

The Pier & Booking Office



Larkin often used the ferry purely for the pleasure of this round trip, without bothering to take the onward train from New Holland. In 1964 he enjoyed a windy crossing in the company of John Betjeman, captured by the BBC as part of the memorable and celebrated 'Monitor' film. Almost two decades later, Larkin was to write the words for Anthony Hedges' cantata *Bridge for the Living*, first performed at Hull City Hall.

Further along Nelson Street stands the statue of Sir William de la Pole, first mayor of Hull, 1332-7. He made his fortune as a merchant and is looking towards the River Hull, home of the original port. Close by his statue is a contemporary artwork commemorating the city's trading links with Iceland.

Turning left into Queen Street, on the corner you will see the elegant old Pilot Office, now converted into apartments. The building was once the home of the Humber Pilots, whose role was to assist ships along the estuary out to sea, because of the shifting sandbanks and strong currents. Today the Humber Pilots are based at the tip of Spurn Point (no.25 on the Trail).

Whilst many of the buildings around these streets await regeneration or have changed their usage as part of the emerging cultural quarter, much of the area remains the same as Larkin's time here.

At the crossroads with Humber Street, turn right at the Ruscador pub, to see the mighty Tidal Surge Barrier towering beside the road. This vitally important construction opened towards the end of Larkin's life, in 1980, at the point where the two rivers meet. The barrier is lowered to prevent the spring tides entering the rest of the city.

Until the building of the docks in the 18th and 19th centuries the "barge-crowded water" of the River Hull served as the old Harbour. Vessels heading for the estuary in the 1960s and '70s still sailed slowly past busy yet humble quaysides, unaware of the seething Myton Bridge that would one day cross the river at this point, let alone such wondrous constructions as The Deep and the Tidal Surge Barrier.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 1XE**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 44.2791 0° 20.0505

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
509975 428130



The sign can be found on the sea defence wall approaching Victoria Pier adjacent to the former ferry waiting room (now cafe).





By turning right just before the Myton Bridge flyover, Rotenhering Staith takes you on a very brief diversion close to the River Hull's edge. You will notice two or three more staiths as you explore the Old Town. Technically defined as landing stages, they were short narrow streets, just wide enough to accommodate a cart or a sledge. Rotenhering Staith was originally built in the 15th century by local merchant John Rotenhering.

This stretch of river is where the Port of Hull was situated, right from the 1100s to the 1800s. The iconic Scale Lane footbridge a little way along here (due to be opened in 2011) takes you across to Hull's most popular attraction, The Deep. Before the new arterial route was built, the buildings along this quayside offered those unable to dodge *'the toad work'* a pleasant, unimpeded view of the Humber.

Turning left, away from the river's edge again, brings you to the cobbles of High Street, the oldest and historically most important in Hull. It once served as base for the merchant families who traded with Europe, such as Maister, Pease and Wilberforce, whose ships imported iron ore from Sweden and flax, grain and timber from the Baltic. Their fine houses, still here today, faced onto the front of the street to display their wealth, and were connected to the large riverside warehouses by a network of narrow staithes and alleyways. Pease Warehouse, here on High Street, was one of the first warehouses in the city to open as apartments in 1991.

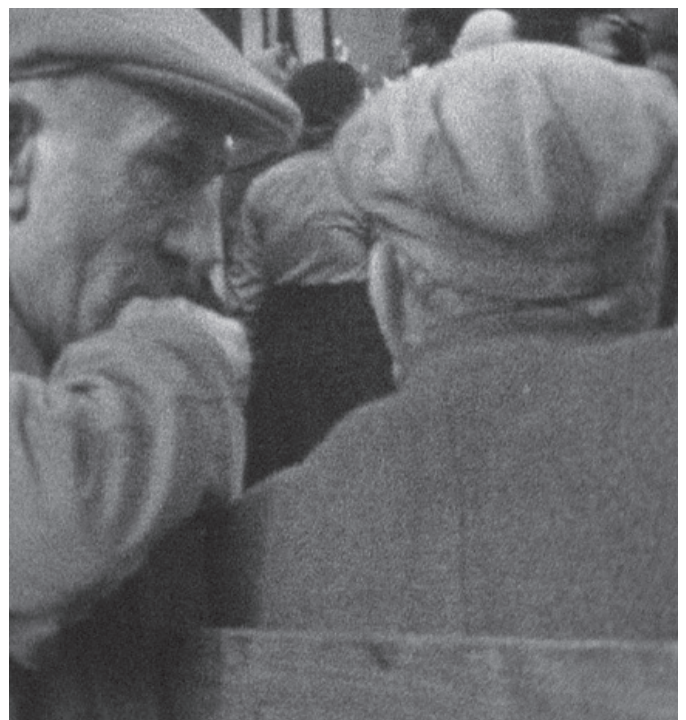
Larkin was a regular visitor to the Old Town and on your left, not far from High Street's junction with Scale Lane, sits Ye Olde Black Boy, one of his favourite pubs. It was here in 1977 that he gave a talk on clarinettist Pee Wee Russell and played a selection of his records to the Hull Jazz Record Society.

Jazz was one of Larkin's great passions. Indeed he claimed on Desert Island Discs in 1976 (when three of his eight choices were jazz) that he "couldn't live without it." He bought a Pye Black Box hi-fi more than ten years before he bought his first TV and had over a thousand records in his record collection. His extensive knowledge of jazz was shown by the quality of his reviews, which included monthly features for the Daily Telegraph.

A little further along from Ye Olde Black Boy you will pass Maister House. Built in 1743, the house is now a National Trust property and its exquisite staircase is accessible during their office hours.

Continuing along High Street, you will shortly reach the Museums Quarter. This cluster of fascinating museums set around peaceful gardens offers free entry to an entertaining and stimulating insight into Hull's history. The Hull and East Riding Museum shows you the area's rich archaeological background, while at the adjacent Streetlife Museum you can steal an imaginary ride on a *'flat-faced trolley'*, peer in a replica Co-operative store where the *'unspeakable wives ... skinny as whippets'* might later have bought their tinned sardines, and watch archive footage of Hull's docks in constant action: these were the days when the port was thriving and the air was a heady mix of wet fish and cocoa beans.

Permanently moored alongside the rear of the Streetlife Museum, the Arctic Corsair, long since retired from service as Hull's last side-winder trawler, serves as a tribute to the years when Hull's mighty fleet carried its trawlermen far off *'on a sea that tilts and sighs.'* Next door, Wilberforce House, *'the slave museum'*, gives a sobering link back to Ye Olde Black Boy pub.



Drinkers in a traditional Hull bar

No.
09/25

High Street & Ye Olde Black Boy



Ye Olde Black Boy, High Street

Larkin and friend, listening to music.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 1PS**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

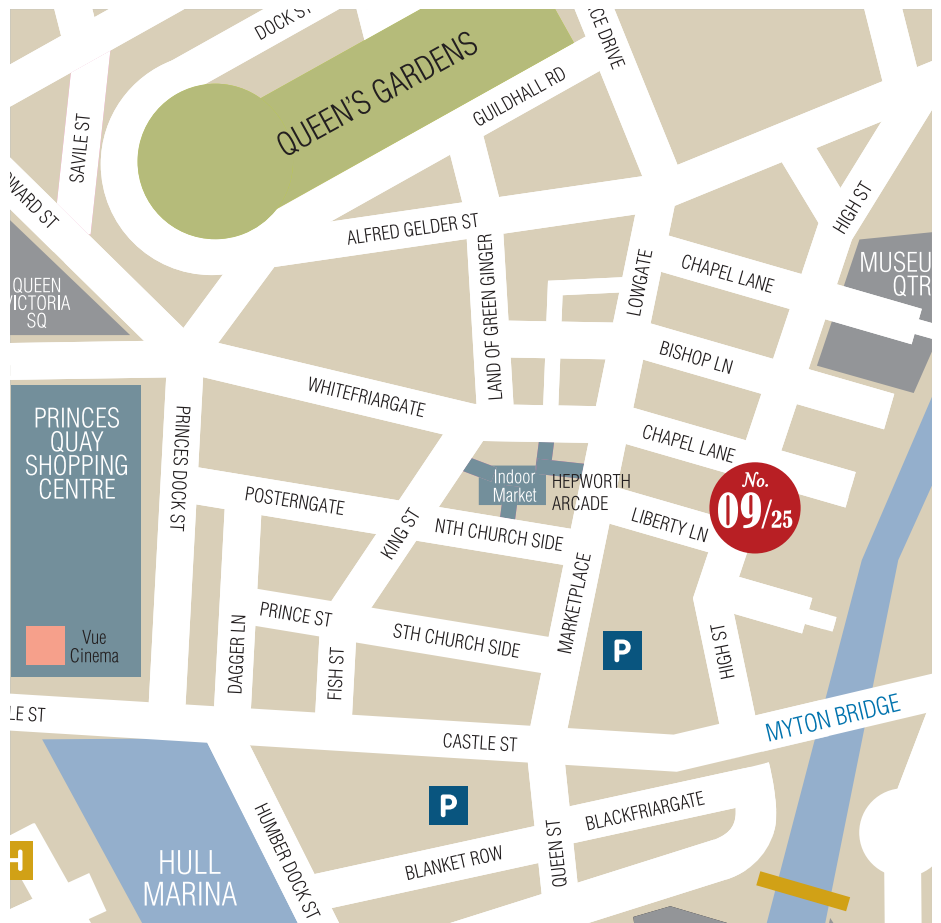
Latitude: **53° 44.5681**
Longitude: **0° 19.8689**

OS Co-ordinates

Easting: **510162**
Northing: **428670**



The sign can be found on the gable end wall of the pub.





Crossing from Wilberforce House, the short walk along Ghandi Way brings you onto Alfred Gelder Street. Looking to your right you can see Drypool Bridge, which until Myton Bridge in the late twentieth century was the last point at which to cross the River Hull before it met the Humber.

Over the road is The White Hart, another of the Old Town pubs favoured by Larkin. Built in 1904, it has a listed interior, including its curved Royal Doulton bar. Its upstairs restaurant is a relatively recent addition.

The Hull Jazz Record Society met regularly at The White Hart – Larkin was a keen supporter of the society, and gave an informative and amusing talk to the Jazz Record Society entitled ‘My Life and Death as a Record Reviewer.’

Heading away from the direction of Drypool Bridge and towards the traffic lights, you will reach the statue of Charles Henry Wilson (1833-1907), shipowner and local benefactor. Beyond the statue stands The Guildhall, designed in the early 20th century by Edwin Cooper, where Larkin attended civic functions. During Larkin’s years in Hull the large building on the opposite corner, now apartments above a pub, was the city’s General Post Office, built in 1908-09.

From this junction, you can take in the architectural splendour of the 14th century Church of St Mary the Virgin and also muse on what Larkin might have made of the shining dome above the adjacent Combined Courts building.

With St Mary’s Church behind you and The Guildhall to your left, continue along Lowgate into Wilberforce Drive. The mighty Wilberforce Monument soon rises into view. All 102ft of its millstone grit were re-located here from Queen Victoria Square in 1934 and Wilberforce now gazes towards the Maritime Museum along the length of the delightful Queen’s Gardens, a popular spot for students from the adjacent colleges and the venue for the city’s annual Freedom Festival.

It might seem hard to believe that these Gardens occupy the site of Hull’s first dock, which was opened in 1778. Queen Victoria’s vessel sailed through this dock for the royal visit in 1854, after which it was renamed Queen’s Dock . When Larkin arrived in the city, the ‘ships up streets’ were long gone, as the dock was filled in during the 1930s.

Keeping Queen’s Gardens to your left and the college on your right, continue along Wilberforce Drive to reach its junction with George Street. The balconied building on the corner, currently a popular nightclub, was the Queens Hotel for most of Larkin’s years in the city. Beyond this, North Bridge offers another key route for crossing the River Hull.

Here it is possible to make a short diversion to your left, along George Street, to Brown Books, who were the main booksellers when Larkin came to live in Hull. A little further along, in Jameson Street opposite Starbucks, is a small Thai restaurant, which has changed hands many times over the years. In the early 1960s it was a Chinese restaurant called The Hoi Sun, where Larkin often dined with friends and enjoyed Saturday lunch with Maeve after work.

(If you have chosen to take this diversion, return to the junction of Wilberforce Drive and George Street.)

Hull has further literary connections around George Street, as Charles Lutwidge Dodgson’s (Lewis Carroll’s) grandfather, once Collector of Customs in Hull, lived in this area of the city.



This image was produced by Joe Johnson, as part of his Larkin25 commission.



Larkin's Jazz

“It was one of Larkin’s gifts to perceive and reveal humour in unlikely situations - at the same time, leaving one in no doubt as to his real feelings. Persuaded to address the Hull Jazz Record Society on “My Life and Death as a Record Reviewer”, he played a characteristically jagged and angular piano solo by Thelonious Monk. He then suggested mischievously that listening to Monk was like walking down a street, passing an open window, and hearing someone’s sister practicing scales”

Jazzing with Larkin, John White

Larkin’s Jazz sleeve notes, Larkin’s Jazz, Proper Records

For Sidney Bechet

That note you hold, narrowing and rising, shakes
Like New Orleans reflected on the water,
And in all ears appropriate falsehood wakes,

Building for some a legendary Quarter
Of balconies, flower-baskets and quadrilles,
Everyone making love and going shares -

Oh, play that thing! Mute glorious Storyvilles
Others may license, grouping around their chairs
Sporting-house girls like circus tigers (priced

Far above rubies) to pretend their fads,
While scholars manqués nod around unnoticed
Wrapped up in personnels like old plaids.

On me your voice falls as they say love should,
Like an enormous yes. My Crescent City
Is where your speech alone is understood,

And greeted as the natural noise of good,
Scattering long-haired grief and scored pity.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU1 1EP**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude: **53° 44.6976** Longitude: **0° 19.8345**

OS Co-ordinates

Easting: **510195** Northing: **428911**

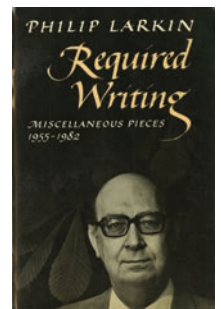


The sign can be found on the side wall of the pub.



Immediately before the traffic lights (that would take you towards North Bridge) turn left into the cobbled Charlotte Street Mews. Here you will see the striking Hull History Centre, which opened in 2010. As well as containing the city archives dating back to 1299, the Centre also houses archives from the University of Hull. Within these sits an extensive personal collection relating to Larkin, including everything from his poetry workbooks and photographs to his enormous library of books and records.

Hull History Centre is open Monday to Saturday, including two evening openings, and marks the end of the City Centre section of the Larkin Trail.



The Larkinalia exhibition at the Georgian Houses Museum showcased items from the Philip Larkin Society, and the Larkin archive at Hull History Centre enabled people to find out more about Larkin's life in Hull, and how it informed his poetry.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU2 8BG**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude: 53° 44.8614 Longitude: 0° 20.1333

OS Co-ordinates

Easting: 509859 Northing: 429207



The sign can be found on the public open space in front of the History Centre.



LARKIN'S HERIE BEYOND THE CITY CENTRE

This section of the Trail visits places that were at the heart of Larkin's life in Hull. From the *'lucent comb'* of Hull Royal Infirmary, where he stayed as an inpatient, the Trail guides you on up to the old General Cemetery of which he was so fond, then to Pearson Park, where Larkin lived in an attic flat for 18 years. Entering the long, leafy boulevards of 'The Avenues', the Trail pauses for reflection at the place where he died.

The journey continues along the busy thoroughfare where Larkin liked to shop, past the large house and garden he reluctantly bought, and guides you across to the University of Hull, where Larkin worked in its 'lifted study-storehouse' as the University Librarian for 30 years. The Trail then takes a suburban direction and visitors can drive, cycle or take a bus from the University to Cottingham, the large village (two and a half miles away) where Philip Larkin is buried.

No.
12/25

Hull Royal Infirmary



This 14-storey hospital, *'higher than the handsomest hotel'*, was built in 1967 and is the site of one of Larkin's longer poems, 'The Building'. From the top floor of the University's Brynmor Jones Library, it was – and still is – possible to see the infirmary, since, as Larkin observed, *'The lucent comb shows up for miles.'*

'The Building' was written five years after the hospital's construction, long before Larkin became so well-acquainted with its wards and corridors. He was an inpatient on several occasions and spent some time here shortly before his death in 1985.

Since then, Hull Royal Infirmary has constructed several new buildings on its expanding site and the tower block with which Larkin was so familiar no longer stands in isolation.

The Grade II listed statue on the main walkway is one of three local monuments commemorating John Alderson MD, an eminent 18th century physician who acquired a large Hull practice and filled many prominent public positions.



The Building as Larkin would have known it.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU3 2JZ**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 44.6280 0° 21.5508

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
508310 428738



The sign can be found on the boundary wall of the hospital by the pedestrian crossing on Argyle Street.





Until the 1960s there was an intermediate stop on the NER's Victoria Dock branch line on the site of the current Old Zoological pub. From this railway junction, it was possible to catch a train to Hornsea, still a popular seaside resort today.

The Hull General Cemetery, established in 1847, begins almost as soon as you turn left at Spring Bank corner. Originally protected by a perimeter wall, over the years it slipped into decline and by the 1960s it was very neglected and overgrown. Its wildness appealed to Larkin, who described it to his friend John Betjeman as *'the most beautiful spot in Hull.'* When the local Council planned to give it a municipal clearing-up, Larkin joined others who complained and he leaped to its defence, believing it to be:

'... a natural cathedral, an inimitable blended growth of nature and humanity over a century; something that no other town could create whatever its resources.'

When the Hartleys asked him where he would like to be photographed for the sleeve of their LP record of him reading *The Less Deceived*, this was the place Larkin chose. Despite the impassioned pleas, the Council partially cleared the cemetery, removing many of the damaged headstones, cutting back the vegetation and creating more visible tracks.

Today, the cemetery is a popular place for local residents to walk their dogs along its meandering footpaths. In Spring – where once were old walls edged with high, tangled weeds – snowdrops and daffodils brighten the verges.

Spring Bank cemetery borders an area much loved by Larkin, whatever the season: 'The Avenues.'

Turning left, back to the T-junction, continue round the curving terrace of buildings to enter Princes Avenue, a road once packed with busy groceries, bakers and butchers, and now predominantly a cosmopolitan mix of thriving café bars and restaurants.

The Westbourne Estate – to give The Avenues the correct name – was developed in the late 1800s, when this area was known as 'Mucky Peg Lane' in reference to its former low-lying marshland. Tree-lined boulevards – the four long avenues named Marlborough, Westbourne, Park

and Victoria – were laid out, complete with six cast-iron fountains on a maritime theme, and provided spacious houses, ideal for the more affluent families emerging in Hull.

Many of the shops and restaurants along Princes Avenue still have ornate entrance lobbies and arched lintels in carved stone or brick. This rich and varied architecture, together with the mature London plane trees, all lends to the townscape's unique character.

Walking down towards the long boulevards you will notice that the streets on your left are named after the great ducal estates in Nottinghamshire – Welbeck, Thoresby, Clumber, Belvoir and Blenheim. For this reason, some local residents refer to this particular grid of streets as The Dukeries.

Passing the ends of these streets and then Marlborough Avenue, you will reach the 27 acres of Pearson Park, whose thickly tree-lined border comes into view on your right. Enter by the small pedestrian entrance directly opposite Westbourne Avenue – *'not a bad place to be.'* There was once one of The Avenues' six ornamental fountains here, Sadly, only one now remains, which can be seen at trail location no.14.

(Those arriving by car need to enter the park before this, by taking Park Grove on your right, just past the advertising hoardings, then turning left at the next crossroads.)



Larkin chose the cemetery at Spring Bank West as the site where he would like to be photographed for the sleeve of the LP recording of his collection *The Less Deceived*.

No.
13/25

The General Cemetery Spring Bank West



Larkin was a keen photographer and the cemetery at Spring Bank features regularly in his collection of images.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU5 3TG**

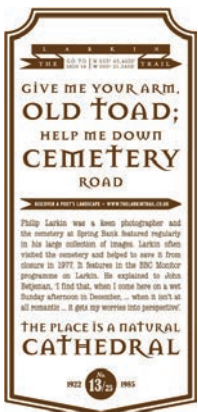
Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 45.0959 0° 22.3902

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
507369 429585



The sign can be found on the Spring Bank West Gateway to the General Cemetery.





It was to this park that Larkin moved in 1956. Following a succession of short stays in four different places in Cottingham during his first year as University Librarian, he eventually moved into an attic flat at no.32 ... and there he lived for the next 18 years.

Number 32, then owned by the University, was divided into three storeys of flats, intended as temporary accommodation for staff who were new to the city, until such time as they had settled in, grown familiar with the area and become owner-occupiers elsewhere. Larkin, however, at ease behind the 'sun-comprehending glass', felt no such pull, explaining in his later years: *'It was the top flat of a house that was reputedly the American Consulate during the war, and though it might not have suited everybody, it suited me.'*

The park itself was the first free park in the city and opened in 1860 on land donated by the Mayor, Zachariah Charles Pearson. Like the rest of The Avenues area, these substantial houses were designed with affluent families in mind and soon became very fashionable.

Most of these houses survive today, although they are mainly flats or residential homes. Pearson Park itself, however, is much the same and continues to draw people

of all ages, who come to enjoy its lake, the humid Victorian conservatory, its floral displays, statues, the ever-popular playground, wide expanses of grass for sun-bathing and playing ball-games, or simply to sit for a while on the blue metal bench dedicated to Larkin, tucked away near the conservatory.

*Walking around in the park
Should feel better than work:
The lake, the sunshine,
The grass to lie on.*

Writing to his mother two years after he had moved into no.32, Larkin said: *'Pearson Park exercises a fascination over me and I always enjoy an hour in it.'* Much of the footage for the BBC's Monitor programme, in which John Betjeman interviewed Larkin, was filmed in the 'temporary' flat.

Maeve Brennan recalled how Larkin used to make mulled wine for Halloween and they would watch the fireworks across the park from his high windows.

When the University decided to sell the entire house in 1974, Larkin was obliged to find somewhere else to live and reluctantly became an owner-occupier in Newland Park (trail location 17).



Images by Larkin, showing aspects of Pearson Park, overlooked by his attic flat.

No.
14/25

Pearson Park



Toads Revisited

Walking around in the park
Should feel better than work:
The lake, the sunshine,
The grass to lie on,

Blurred playground noises
Beyond black-stockinged nurses –
Not a bad place to be.
Yet it doesn't suit me.

Being one of the men
You meet of an afternoon:
Palsied old step-takers,
Hare-eyed clerks with the jitters,

Waxed-fleshed out-patients
Still vague from accidents,
And characters in long coats
Deep in the litter-baskets -

All dodging the toad work
By being stupid or weak.
Think of being them!
Hearing the hours chime,

Watching the bread delivered,
The sun by clouds covered,
The children going home;
Think of being them,

Turning over their failures
By some bed of lobelias,
Nowhere to go but indoors,
No friends but empty chairs -

No, give me my in-tray,
My loaf-haired secretary,
My shall-I-keep-the-call-in-Sir:
What else can I answer,

When the lights come on at four
At the end of another year?
Give me your arm, old toad;
Help me down Cemetery Road.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU5 2TQ**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 45.4620 0° 21.3408

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
508505 430290



The sign can be found on the conservatory outbuilding near to the memorial bench.





Leaving Pearson Park by the way you entered, cross the road into Westbourne Avenue. To your right, by the mini-roundabout at the end of Princes Avenue, you can see The Queen's, a pub visited by Larkin, and along from there was another of his favourites, St John's.

As these boulevards were laid out over many years, you will notice as you head further into this peaceful area that the houses are built in a variety of architectural styles. Many of the residents open their back gardens to the public during the first two weeks of July.

Over the years, The Avenues area became – and still is – the place to live for most writers, artists, musicians, sculptors ... indeed anyone immersed in creative activity. The area is within comfortable walking distance of the University and it comes as no surprise to find that many of the city's writers chose to live here.

Roger McGough and Scottish-born poet Douglas Dunn both studied at Hull University and Dunn's 1969 collection *Terry Street* is an outstanding portrayal of working-class life in Hull. Dunn forged close associations with such Hull poets as Sean O'Brien and Peter Didsbury and edited the 1982 Bloodaxe anthology *A Rumoured City*. Alan Plater and Dorothy L Sayers also lived in this area, as did many other well-known former residents of Hull: Anthony Minghella, Ian Carmichael, Amy Johnson and Joseph Rank.

You will notice that some of the mature trees that once lined The Avenues have had to be severely pollarded to reduce subsidence. However, creativity is once more in evidence, as several have been transformed into intricate wood sculptures by local artist Jackie Ward Lomax.

To Andrew Motion - 19 October 1985

“I have an uneasy suspicion that the curtain is about to go up on Act II of the Larkin drama - not well, tiresome symptoms, call in the quacks. So brush up your shovel and headstone: duties of executors.”

Mid-way along Westbourne Avenue you will reach the remaining fountain of the original six, installed around 1875 and restored by the Avenues Residents Association in 1975.

To your left, quietly set back in the curve of the Avenue is the former Nuffield Hospital (currently the Westbourne Dental Centre). During his final illness, Philip Larkin stayed here several times as an inpatient. He had felt at ease in these Avenues for many years and had often enjoyed the change of scene they gave him whilst living just a few minutes away in Pearson Park.

The last person to speak to Larkin was the nurse who held his hand as he died, on 2 December 1985, and to whom he said his final words: *'I am going to the inevitable.'*

Philip Larkin was buried a week later in the Municipal Cemetery in Cottingham (trail location 19).

Leaving the former hospital behind, cross the road and take in the different architecture along Salisbury Street. Passing the fountain (a modern replica) and crossing Park Avenue, you will see some of the earliest and most important houses in the area, although sadly only a few of them survive. They were designed by architect George Gilbert Scott the Younger and built in the distinctive Queen Anne style.

At the end of Salisbury Street, the architecture changes once more and, turning right, walking along Ella Street towards Newland Avenue, not only are the houses smaller, but there are small 'courts' built at regular intervals between them. Once again, you can see creative flair at work, particularly in the small public areas at some of the court entrances.

No.
15/25

Nuffield Hospital



Larkin's life provided the inspiration for a new play created as part of Larkin25, Something Hidden. The play was written by Dr David Pattison, directed by Andy Pearson, and performed by Ensemble 52 at FRUIT in 2010.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU5 3HP**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 45.3807 0° 21.9440

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
507846 430124



The sign can be found at the front of the site by the staff entrance.





Emerging from Ella Street on to Newland Avenue, you find yourself on the busiest shopping thoroughfare in the area. Here, residents who have been in the city for years live alongside their temporary neighbours – students from Hull University – and the Avenue is a constant flow of locals, University staff, students and people simply looking for somewhere to enjoy a coffee and watch the world go by.

As with the city centre, many of the shops you will pass on Newland Avenue have changed hands – some several times – since the 1960s and '70s. Perhaps the most notable change is the gradual appearance of café bars, coffee shops and small supermarkets. Larkin often shopped on Newland Avenue, no doubt finding it *'so busy, yet so lonely.'*

When he bought his first car, in the early '60s, Larkin complained that Newland Avenue was hazardous for motorists. Drive along here on any weekday, especially Fridays, and many would say that little had changed, although the parking is much easier than it was then.

As you turn left to walk up Newland Avenue, you will pass under one of Hull's remaining railway bridges, proudly bearing the Avenue's name. The city used to have many such bridges, with trails of goods wagons bumping their way across, but now they are gradually being removed.

Just past the bridge, to your right, is Larkin's Bar, then on your left you shortly reach Sharp Street. The war memorial here finds resonance in Larkin's poem MCMXIV, where he talks of 'the shut shops, the bleached / Established names on the sunblinds.'

A little further along Newland Avenue, on your right and set back slightly from the road, is the Piper Club. In Larkin's time this was a small cinema, completed in 1914 and aptly named the 'Monica', which he captured on camera. It was considered to be one of the finest and best equipped of its kind in the country, but was closed for business in 1961, reinventing itself four years later as the Piper Club.

At the top end of Newland Avenue, opposite the Methodist chapel with its large dome, stands the site of the former Newland Homes orphanage. For over a century this complex was the base for the Sailors Families Society. Until 2004 its substantial houses, sited around a village-style green, were home for the children of deceased and disabled seafarers from all along the east coast. Today, the Newland Estate offers student accommodation for the nearby University of Hull.

At this point, it is possible to turn right for a brief detour to see two further pubs with which Larkin was familiar: The Gardeners Arms a little way along to your right and The Haworth Arms at the junction with Beverley Road. Larkin regularly stopped off at one of these pubs on his way home from work. Five minutes round the corner from The Haworth arms, at the corner of Beresford Avenue, lived Maeve Brennan and her family. Maeve was Larkin's colleague and friend (and the inspiration for his poem Broadcast) and he was often invited to join her and the family for Sunday supper. Across the road from the Brennan's former house is Inglemire Lane, which borders the rear of the University campus. One of the roads on the small new estate here bears the name Philip Larkin Close.

To Barbara Pym- 20 February 1964 (MCMXIV)

"I'm rather fond of MCMXIV-It's a trick poem, all in one sentence & no main verb"

No.
16/25

Newland Avenue Sharp Street

Info



Above: Image from a monograph of 10 images inspired by the Poem, Here, by Quentin Budworth - a Larkin25 commission.

Left: Image by Larkin - Monica Cinema

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU5 2AQ**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 45.7932 0° 21.5430

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
508270 430899



The sign can be found at the junction of Sharp Street and Newland Avenue.



No.
17/25

105 Newland Park

NEWLAND PARK

Turning left at the top of Newland Avenue (away from the direction of The Gardeners Arms) you pass Auckland Avenue and Cranbrook Avenue on your right (many of their houses are owned by the University) before shortly reaching Newland Park. It was to here that Larkin moved in 1974 when obliged to leave his attic flat. Although this long curving road, with its substantial houses, mature trees and relative seclusion shared some characteristics with The Avenues area, Larkin found it hard to take on the responsibilities of owning no.105. He described it to a friend as *'the ugliest one-roomed house in Hull'* and, although he loved the deep, park-like garden, he struggled with the burden of having to keep it tidy. Reflecting on the fateful day when *'The mower stalled, twice,'* his distress over having accidentally killed the hedgehog he had seen before *'and even fed'* led him to conclude that *'we should be careful of each other, we should be kind, while there is still time.'*

Larkin continued to live in Newland Park until he died. In 1983, two years before his death, Larkin's close friend, Monica Jones, joined him at no.105 and stayed on in the

house until her own death in 2001. Over the years since then, the current owner (who purchased the property when Monica died) has made structural changes to the house, including the removal of the garage door, which has been replaced with a bay window. She adores the garden, including all the upkeep that goes with it, saying she *'bought a garden with a house attached.'*



Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU5 4**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude Longitude
53° 46.1346 0° 21.8971

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
507866 431523



The sign can be found at the second entrance to Newland Park traveling out of town.



No.
18/25

University of Hull



A little further along from Newland Park (or coming back on yourself, if you have walked its full horse-shoe length), it is easy to see the University of Hull. Rising seven storeys from the midst of its elder neighbours is the Brynmor Jones Library, the *'lifted study-storehouse'* that was to be Larkin's place of work for 30 years.

Membership and use of the Library is limited to staff, students and graduates of the University and to others with specific needs. However, visitors are always welcome to look around – simply ask at the Reception Desk on arrival. Visits to the Librarian's office are available to individuals and small groups by prior appointment and with the permission of the Librarian.

Not only was the Brynmor Jones Library his place of work, but Larkin was also largely - and modestly - instrumental in its creation. Almost a quarter of a century after he took up the post of University Librarian, Larkin told *The Observer*: 'Librarianship suits me ... and it has just the right blend of academic interest and administration that seems to suit my particular talents, such as they are'.

Although he denounced 'the toad work' that 'soils with its sickening poison', librarianship did indeed suit Larkin. Most of his lunchtimes were spent in what was formerly The Refectory (latterly Staff House), where he would talk over drinks with friends and colleagues.

Heading back from the Library building towards Cottingham Road, almost at the University entrance, the Cohen Building (formerly the Science Block) can be seen to your left. Its old Assembly Hall was the setting for Larkin's unfinished poem 'The Dance', which was set to music by The Holy Orders in 2010 as part of Larkin25's new music project, *All Night North*. Between you and the Cohen building is The Middleton Hall. Built in 1965-7, this is the University's main arts centre and serves as a venue for guest lectures, concerts and other performance pieces.

After Larkin's death, Donald Roy, Head of the Drama Department, presented a thanksgiving evening, offering friends and colleagues the opportunity to reminisce about the Larkin they knew.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU6 7RX**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude 53° 46.2647 Longitude 0° 22.1149

OS Co-ordinates

Easting 507621 Northing 431759



The sign can be found at the entrance to the Brynmor Jones Library.



No.
19/25

Larkin's Cottingham



The large village of Cottingham is home to thousands of new students each year, as it is the location for the University of Hull's halls of residence. When he first arrived from Belfast in 1955, Larkin moved into one of these halls, Holtby House, once the home of Winifred Holtby's family. He took an instant dislike to the large-scale accommodation and moved on to lodgings at 11 Outlands Road, where he stayed for just three months, finding the landlady's radio prevented him from writing (although he did manage to complete 'Mr Bleaney', begun in Belfast).

Two more brief lodgings followed - at numbers 192a and 200 Hallgate - and, tired of all the 'I'll take it' of viewing and taking rooms in the vicinity, he eventually left the village to settle into his 'green-fringed eyrie' in Hull's Pearson Park.

Nevertheless, he returned to Cottingham regularly, mostly for its many places to eat and drink. He often enjoyed lunch at the West Bulls on Hull Road, or one of the famous sandwiches served at the Duke of Cumberland in the village centre. In later life he found the Memorial Club off

South Street particularly congenial and could often be found there, talking with locals over a few evening pints of Worthington E.

The King George V Playing Fields on Northgate were Larkin's inspiration for 'Afternoons', one of his most moving poems on the passage of time.

Philip Larkin died on 2 December 1985. His funeral was held a week later at St Mary's Church in Hallgate, where he had always attended the University's annual Carol Service. The large congregation, including Kingsley Amis, sang some of the hymns he liked: Abide with Me, Lead Kindly Light and The Day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended.

Larkin is buried in the Municipal Cemetery on Eppleworth Road. Close by are the graves of Monica Jones (1922-2001) and Maeve Brennan (1929-2003). His grave is on the left-hand side as you enter, in the sixth row in from the trees on the far side. His white headstone simply says: 'Philip Larkin 1922-1985, Writer.'

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU16 5QG**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

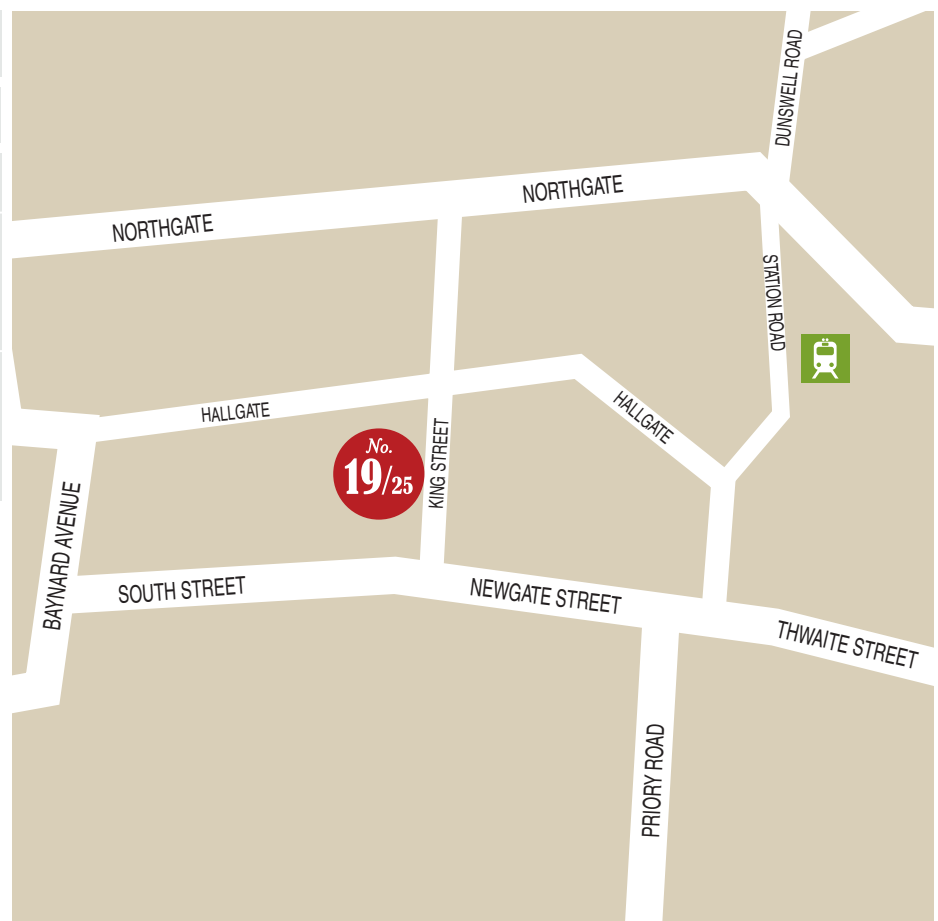
Latitude Longitude
53° 46.8860 0° 24.8359

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
504607 432843



The sign can be found on the front of The Duke Cumberland pub facing up King Street.



LARKIN'S ELSEWHERE WEST TO EAST

This third and final part of the Larkin Trail is no longer linear and visits several significant locations peppered around the East Riding. Six miles from Cottingham lies another suburban village, Hessle, former home of Larkin's first publishers, George and Jean Hartley. A short distance away, Hessle Foreshore stretches along the banks of the broad Humber, dominated by the suspended 'giant step' of the Humber Bridge. Beyond, inland and further to the west, amongst the 'thin and thistled' fields around the Humber estuary, lie the quiet villages where Larkin loved to cycle. From one of these villages, Blacktoft, the trail stops off at the delightful market town of Beverley, as Larkin liked to do when returning home on his bicycle. To the east of Hull the trail heads out across the ever-lonelier Holderness Plain, where 'silence stands / Like heat,' calling at Patrington to admire its exquisite church. Finally, the trail enters the dunes and grasses of Spurn Point, a remote spit of land curving into the North Sea, where 'Ends the land suddenly beyond a beach / Of shapes and shingle.'

No.
20/25

**253 Hull Road
Hessle**



The small terraced house at 253 Hull Road was one of the most significant in Larkin's life, as it was the home of George and Jean Hartley, the publishers of the collection that made his name, *The Less Deceived*.

The Hartleys, barely in their 20s at the time, had included some of Larkin's poems in early issues of their magazine, *Listen*. They then wrote to him in Belfast, asking whether he had enough poems to form a collection, as they were inaugurating a new imprint, the Marvell Press. Larkin sent them what later became *The Less Deceived*, round about the same time that he accepted the post of Librarian at the University of Hull. The rest, as they say, is history.

The Less Deceived, published in 1955, established Larkin's reputation as a poet and the Hartleys as publishers. Larkin's association with them was not only on a professional level: he became a friend and regular visitor. When the Hartleys divorced in 1970 and George moved to London, Larkin maintained his friendship with Jean, which she has documented in her autobiography, *Philip Larkin, The Marvell Press and Me* (Sumach Press).

The small house where it all began, half a mile from the centre of Hessle, still sits quietly in its terrace, although subsequent tenants have altered the Victorian bay window and the front door. Visitors are asked to respect the fact that the house is still a private residence.



Jean Hartley, co-founder of the Marvell Press- her original publication, Philip Larkin's Hull and East Yorkshire, was the inspiration for the Larkin Trail.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU13 9NP**

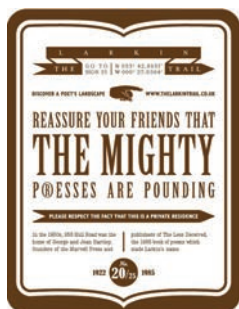
Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

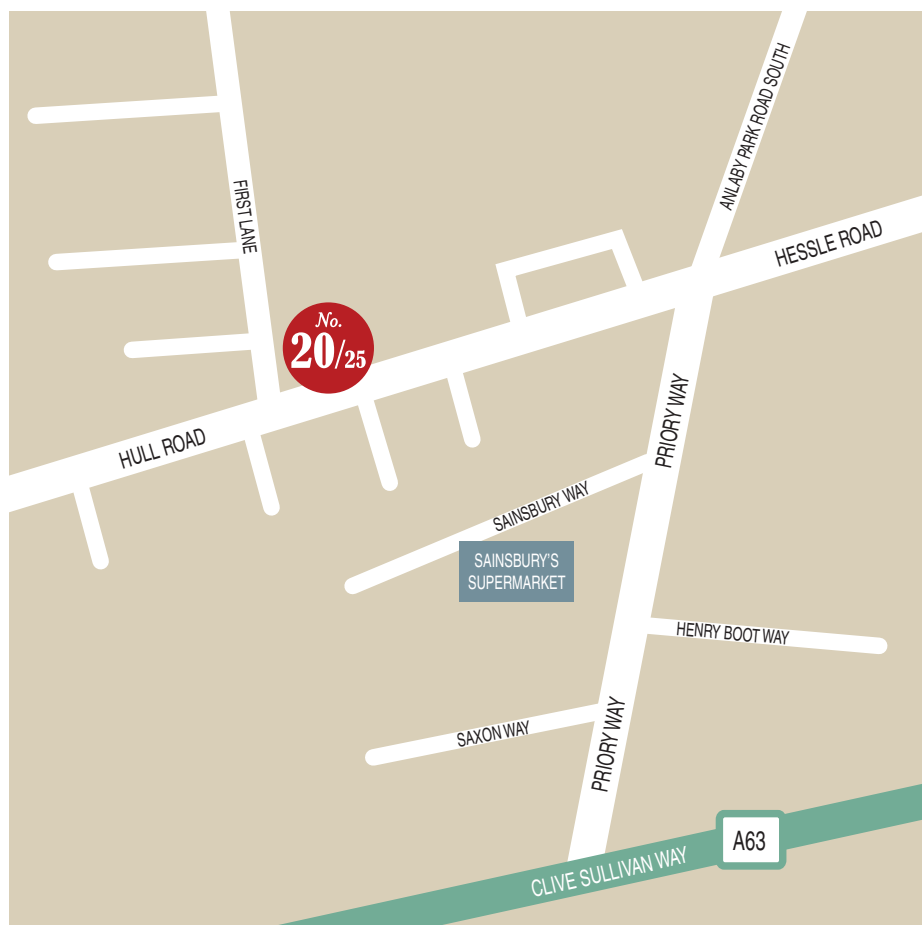
Latitude Longitude
53° 43.4841 0° 25.3104

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
504226 426524



The sign can be found on the garden wall of number 253 Hull Road (please respect that this is a private residence).



No.
21/25

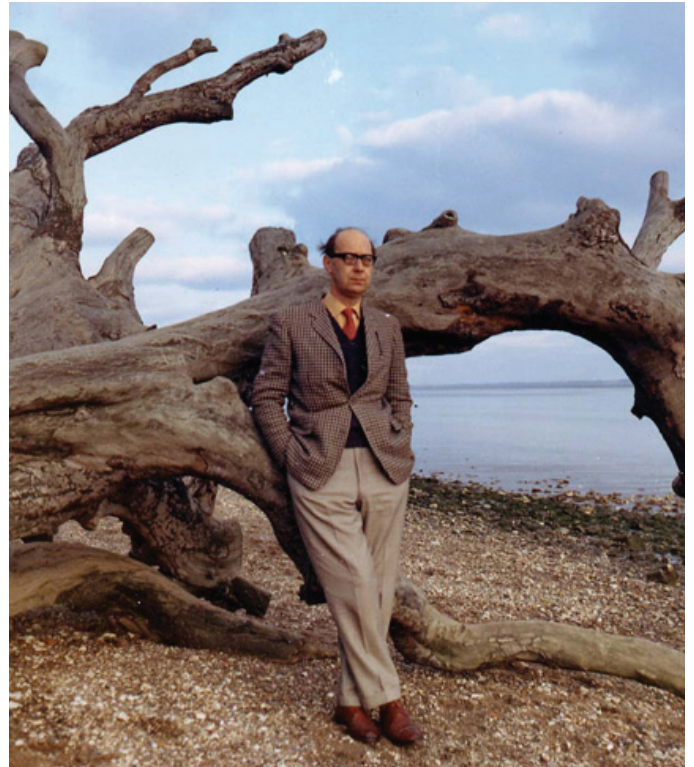
Humber Bridge



During his visits to George and Jean Hartley in Hull Road, Larkin would often accompany them on a walk with their children, down to Hessle Haven and along the shingly foreshore. Here, standing 'where sky and Lincolnshire and water meet', you can see how Larkin captured Hull's comparative isolation.

When Larkin wrote this description, as part of 'The Whitsun Weddings', that sense of 'standing apart' was much stronger, as it was before the advent of the Humber Bridge and its accompanying country parks. This iconic structure negated the need for the ferry trip over the river that Larkin so enjoyed. Nevertheless, he agreed to write the words for Anthony Hedges' cantata, 'Bridge for the Living', to mark the bridge's opening in 1981.

Today, the Humber Bridge links the two counties by car in a matter of minutes. It is also possible to use its walkways to enjoy the breadth of the Humber at a much slower, more contemplative pace.



Larkin at Foreshore

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU13 0HB**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

Latitude
53° 42.8631

Longitude
0° 27.0504

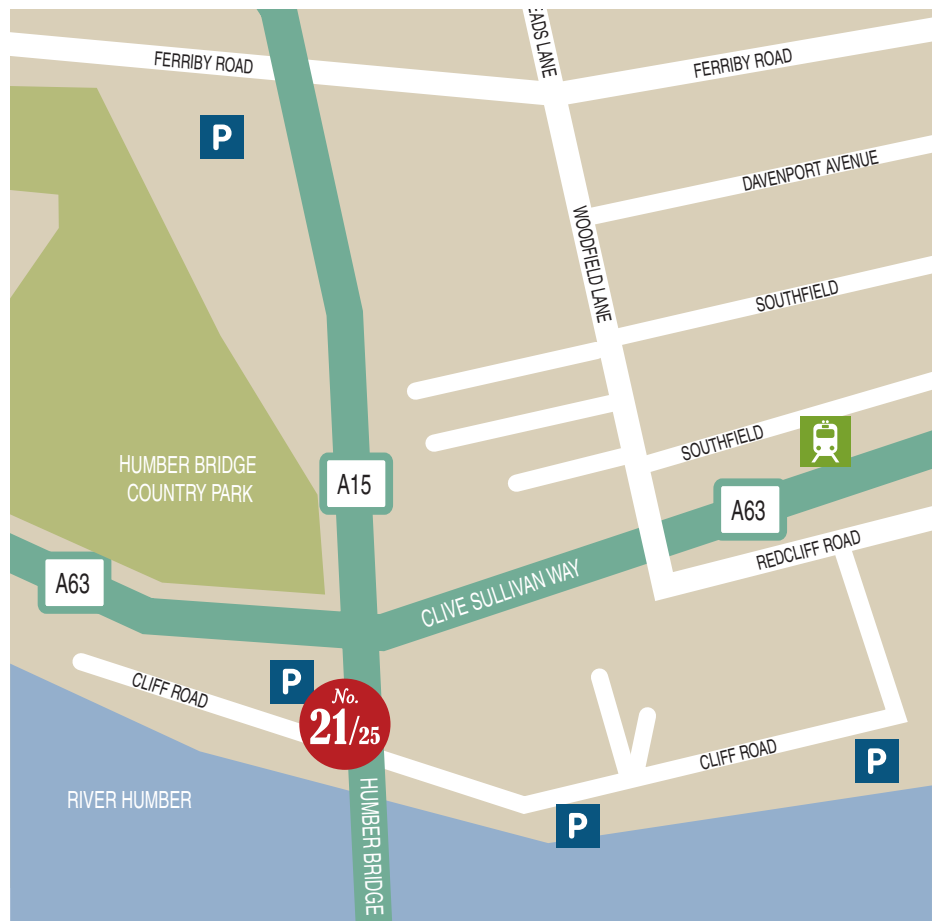
OS Co-ordinates

Easting
502337

Northing
425325



The sign can be found on the north tower of the Humber Bridge at the level of the east path of the pedestrian walkway. Access on foot, by bicycle and wheelchair, is from the Humber Bridge Country Park car park.



No.
22/25

Blacktoft



Blacktoft, situated just beyond the Humber Estuary on the banks of the River Ouse, is half an hour or so west of Hull, and is one of several villages in this area that Larkin used to visit when out on his bike. He would often think nothing of cycling 30 miles or so, leaving the 'mortgaged, half-built edges' of Hull behind to wind his way along the many quiet lanes around Blacktoft, Broomfleet and Crabley Creek.

Here the fields are known as carrs, from the Scandinavian 'kjarr' meaning marsh overgrown with brushwood, and they impressed Larkin with their remoteness, drawn as he always was to 'the fields too thin and thistled to be called meadows'. In a letter to Monica Jones dated 8 June 1969

Larkin describes a magical meandering visit to the area, richly describing the glories of early summer and bitterly regretting that he had left his camera at home.

Although Blacktoft is a remote village, a pier was constructed here, proving invaluable to shipping when the tide has not enough depth for vessels to reach Goole or Hull. Blacktoft Jetty is barely touched by rail or road, yet has a solitary inn called the Hope and Anchor.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council has a dedicated walk for exploring this area as part of its 'Walking the Riding' site.



Larkin's love of photography is evidenced by the wealth of images he took on his regular cycling trips across East Yorkshire. His interest in photographs also informed much of his poetry.

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **DN14 7YW**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

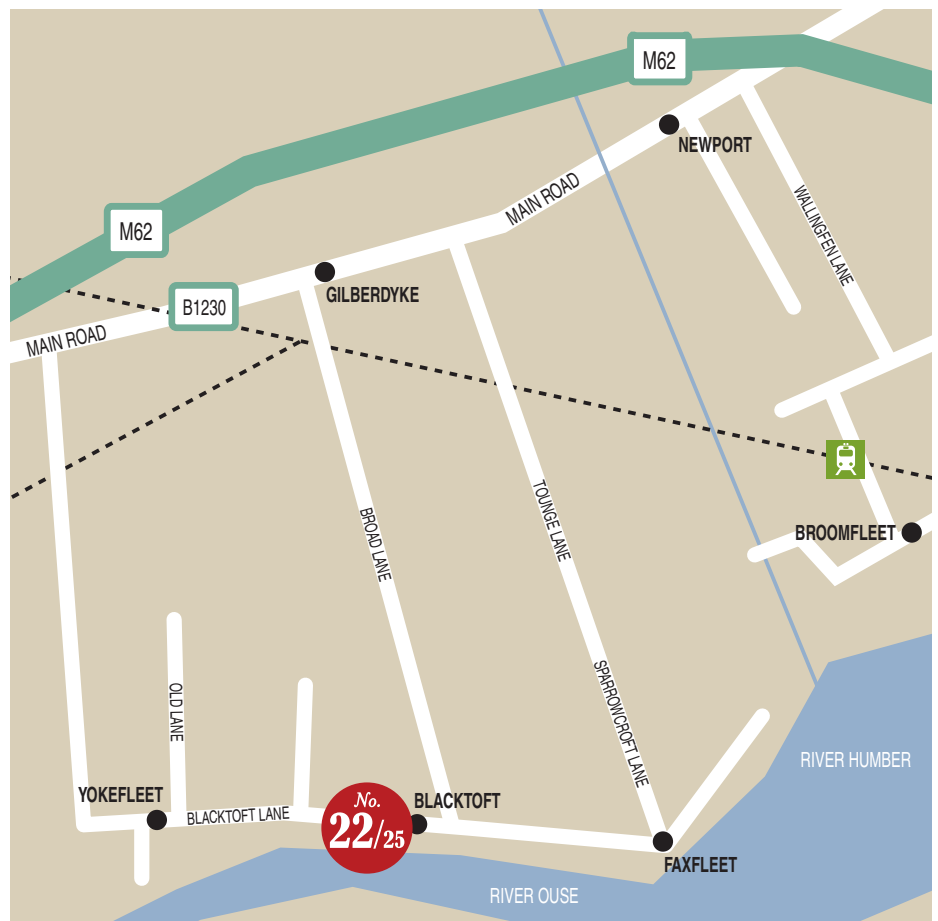
Latitude 53° 42.4842 Longitude 0° 43.6422

OS Co-ordinates

Easting 484101 Northing 424265



The sign can be found on the gable end wall of the Old School House.





Beverley is a busy, ancient market town, dominated by the majestic Minster. It takes its name from 'beaver leah or lac' and in the fourteenth century was the tenth largest town in England.

After his cycling expeditions around East Yorkshire, Larkin would often stop for tea at The Beverley Arms Hotel opposite the beautiful St Mary's Church. The Beverley Arms was formerly the Blue Bell Inn, but was rebuilt in the 1790s (William Middleton) as the town's major coaching inn. The town's coat of arms, a beaver above water, is still visible. According to Maeve Brennan, Larkin's Hull muse, the Beverley Arms was 'our favourite place' where their friendship 'entered a new and headier phase'. It was also the place to which, in 1959, Larkin, in a fit of generosity, invited twelve or so junior library staff to dinner to say thanks for the work they had done in making sure that the newly extended University library was successful.

Close by the Beverley Arms you can see North Bar, part of the town's ancient walls. Beyond the archway, round to your left, lies Beverley Westwood, a large green undulating

common, grazed by free-roaming cattle. The Westwood lies opposite Beverley Racecourse, which is equally popular with locals and visitors alike. The Racecourse is now also home to one of the Larkin Toad artworks, created as part of the Larkin25 arts programme in 2010. Popular Hull band The Neat designed the Toad you can see here.



Beverley Arms images by Joe Johnson - a Larkin25 commission

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU17 8DD**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

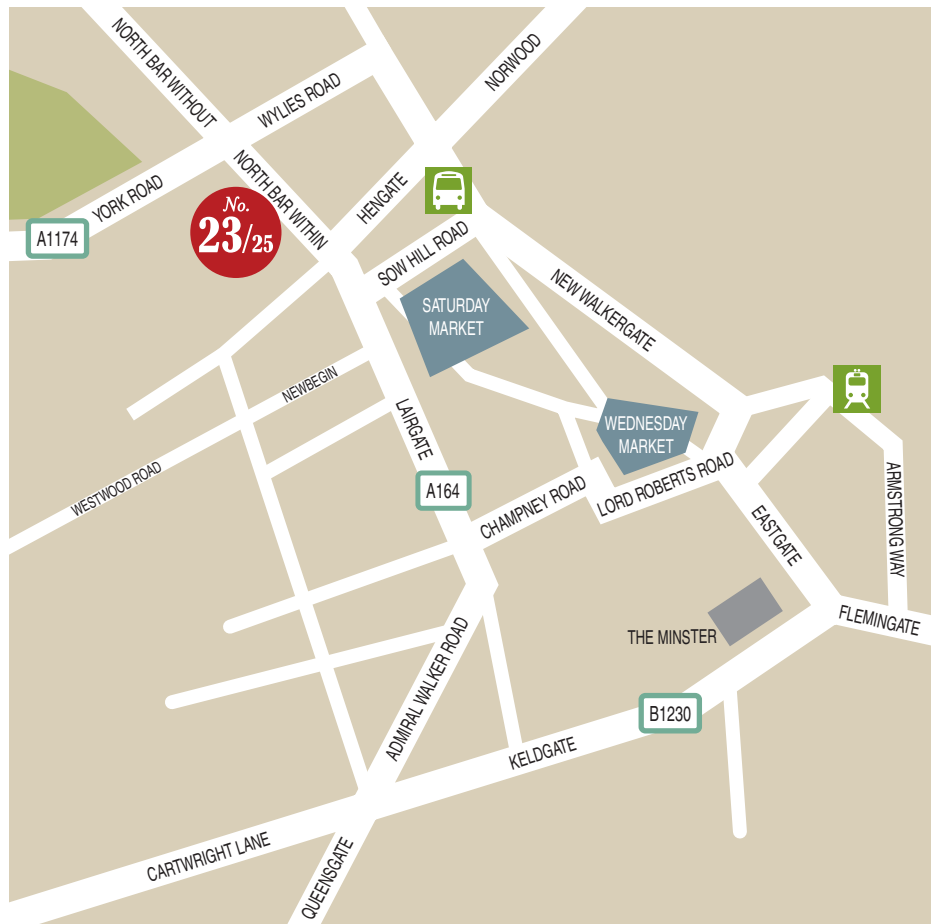
Latitude: 53° 50.6299 Longitude: 0° 26.0543

OS Co-ordinates

Easting: 503115 Northing: 439755



The sign can be found on the front of the hotel to right of entrance.



No.
24/25

Patrington and the Holderness Plains

Info



Heading east out of Hull along the A1033, you gradually enter Holderness Plain, a wide expanse of arable fields, big skies and ever-lonelier roads. In the village of Patrington, about 14 miles east of the city, stands the beautiful church of St Patrick's, often described as the Queen of Holderness (nearby Hedon being her King).

St Patrick's was largely built between 1310-1349 and is regarded as one of the finest parish churches in the country. John Betjeman wrote:

'There is no doubt that, inside and out, the parish church of Patrington is one of the great buildings of England. It sails like a galleon of stone over the wide, flat expanse of Holderness, its symmetry and many pinnacles lead the eye up to its perfectly proportioned spire which crowns the central tower'.

In Patrington, the road forks. To the left is the route to Withernsea, a small seaside resort (where the lighthouse is in the centre of town), while the road to the right leads past acre upon acre of flat farmland to the fascinating peninsula

that is Spurn Point. Andrew Marvell was born two miles from Patrington, at The Old Rectory in nearby Winestead.

Larkin often passed this way when cycling further and further out around Holderness, soaking up Cherry Cob Sands, Stone Creek, Skeffling and Sunk Island, where the *'leaves unnoticed thicken, hidden weeds flower, neglected waters quicken'*.



Patrington - roads leading to Withernsea

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU12 0ND**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

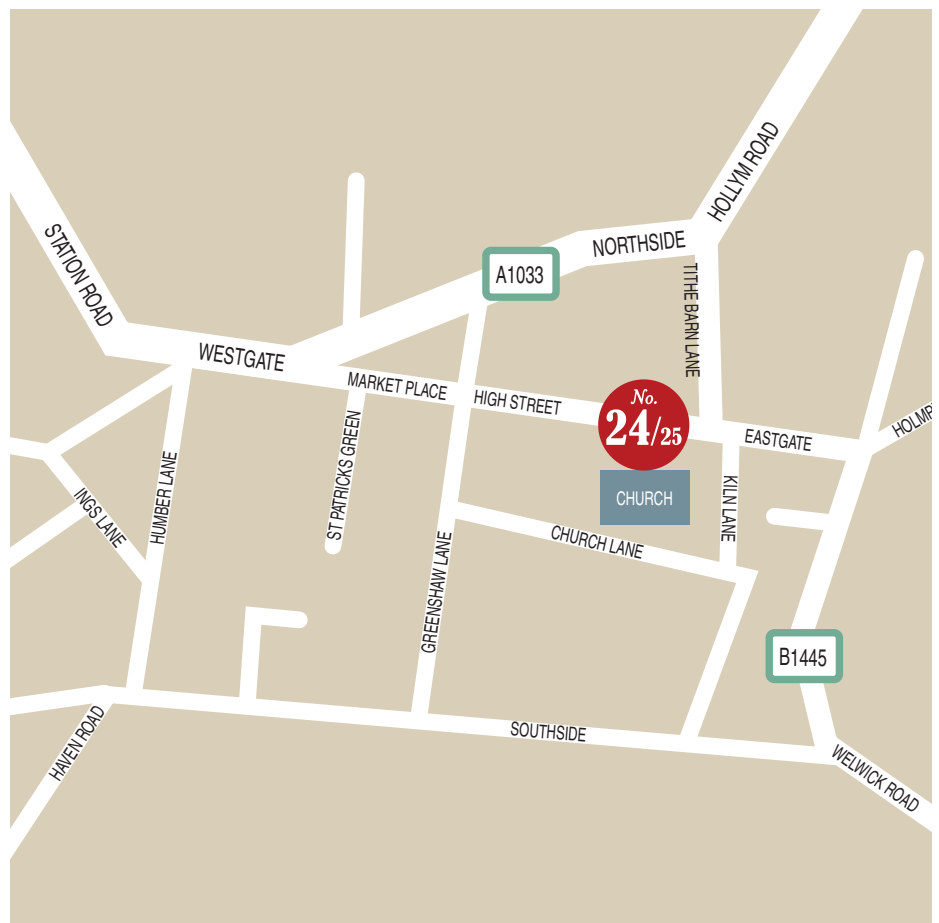
Latitude Longitude
53° 41.0078 0° 00.5876

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
531539 422614

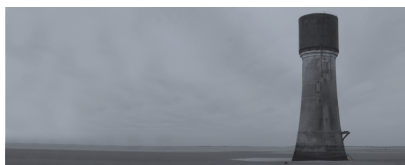


The sign is located on the wall of the car park near to lych gate.



No.
25/25

Spurn Point



Spurn Point (also referred to as Spurn Head) is a remarkable place, formed by longshore drift, with sand and shingle washed southwards down the coast from cliffs battered by the North Sea. Much of this isolated peninsula is covered in dense marram grass and deep dunes, mingling with pathways either side of the single track road.

Larkin's poem 'Here' depicts a sweeping journey from Hull across to Spurn, where

... past the poppies bluish neutral distance/ Ends the land suddenly beyond a beach /Of shapes and shingle.

The lighthouse is no longer in use but remains an impressive structure, pinned to this long sandy spit that stretches over three miles out into the Humber Estuary. Spurn is protected by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the unique coastal reserve draws birdwatchers and other nature-lovers from miles around. Whatever the weather, visitors are drawn to Spurn's shifting dunes, the force of the sea and its ever-changing skies.

It is possible to walk right round the peninsula – the full circuit is around 7 miles long – although there are plenty of short paths onto the top of the dunes to enjoy panoramic views of the changing tides. The difference between low and high water can be as much as seven metres.

Larkin, who found Spurn's remoteness wonderfully magnetic, often cycled out here. He summed it up in his famous foreword to *A Rumoured City*: 'Behind Hull is the plain of Holderness, lonelier and lonelier, and after that the birds and lights of Spurn Head, and then the sea'.



Aerial Spurn image by David Nichols

Map & Geocodes

Postcode: **HU12 0UB**

Geocodes:

GPS (WGS84) Co-ordinates

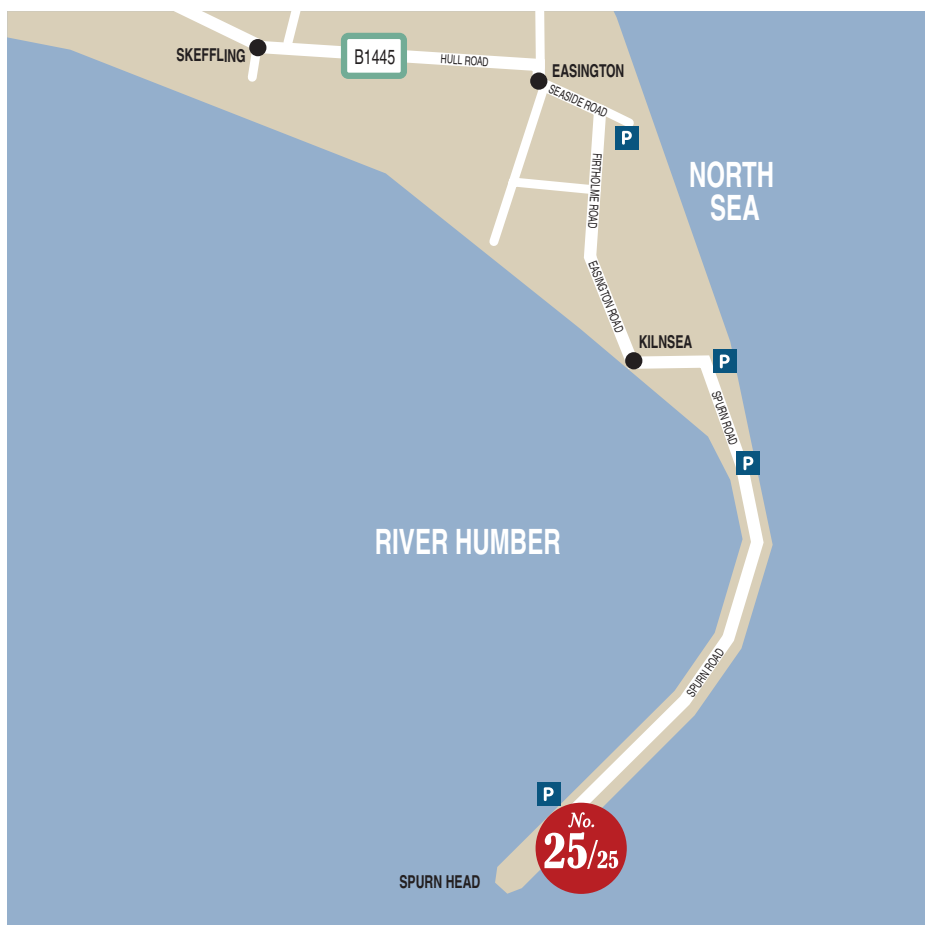
Latitude Longitude
53° 34.6565 0° 06.9105

OS Co-ordinates

Easting Northing
540140 411078



The sign is located on the battery wall by car park at end of the Point.



USEFUL INFORMATION

Planning your trip

To help you to plan your visit to Larkin's Hull and East Yorkshire, and find great places to eat and stay during your trip, visit the official tourism site:

www.visithullandeastyorkshire.com

Hull History Centre

The History Centre holds a vast range of archive material relating to the heritage of Hull and the East Riding. The centre has a vast collection of Larkin material.

Tel: 01482 317500

www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk

Hull Museums and Galleries

The Larkin Trail takes you past many of Hull's great museums and galleries- some of the most visited in the region, from the Ferens Art Gallery to the many treasures in Hull's unique Museums Quarter

Tel: 01482 300 300

www.hullcc.gov.uk/museums

East Riding Museums and Heritage

From Beverley Treasure House and Art Gallery, to Skidby Windmill, there are a range of experiences and opportunities to explore art and the history and archaeology of East Yorkshire.

(01482) 393939

www.eastriding.gov.uk/cs/culture-and-information

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – Spurn Point

Spurn Point is the final point on the Larkin Trail. A unique coastal reserve with a long sandy spit stretching three and half miles into the Humber Estuary

www.ywt.org.uk

Hull Tours

Tour Hull and the surrounding areas with a English Heritage accredited guide.

Tel: 01482 878535

Email: info@tourhull.com

Philip Larkin Society

Promotes awareness of the life and work of Philip Larkin

www.philiplarkin.com

Faber & Faber

Publishers of Larkin's poetry, biographies, audio and rare books by and about the poet

www.faber.co.uk

About the Larkin Trail

The Larkin Trail was created as part of Larkin25, a commemoration of the life and work of Philip Larkin, widely regarded as Britain's greatest post war poet.

The Larkin Trail was created in partnership with Groundwork Hull, United Creatives, Human Design.

Additional support was provided by: Philip Larkin Society, the Larkin Estate, Faber and Faber, Hull History Centre, the University of Hull, Visit Hull and East Yorkshire, Hull Tours, Hull City Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

The Larkin Trail is funded by Welcome to Yorkshire, Visit Hull and East Yorkshire, Hull City Council and Arts Council England, Yorkshire.

The Larkin Trail was inspired by Dr Jean Hartley's original walking guide, Philip Larkin's Hull and East Yorkshire (The Philip Larkin Society). Jean's advice and inspiration was invaluable in developing The Larkin Trail.

The Larkin Trail is online at www.thelarkintrail.co.uk

Visit the mobile site to access the trail on the move
www.thelarkintrail.mobi

[SMALL PRINT INFO]

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www.larkin25.co.uk

www.yorkshire.groundwork.org.uk

www.unitedcreatives.com

Human Design

01482 227 382

www.humandesign.co.uk

Information correct at time of going to press

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