

- a South Bar. Banbury was never walled, but did have arched gateways or bars. Although demolished by 1900, their memory survives in the street names South Bar, North Bar and West Bar.
- b Market Place. Banbury's Thursday market has been flourishing since before 1155. In the 19th Century Parliament granted Banbury a Saturday market which still thrives.
- c 2 and 3 Market Place. Built as a wool market in 1610, later the town gaol and Bluecoat School
- d 11 Market Place (Lincoln Chambers). A grand house built around 1660, also known as the Bishop's Palace. It has a fine timber-framed front with two rows of oriel windows.
- e The Unicorn Inn. A Courtyard Inn built in 1648. Thomas Hunt, a farmer from Cropredy, moved into premises at the Unicorn in 1807 and founded the Hunt Edmunds Brewery along with William Edmunds.
- f 23 and 24 Cornhill. Built in 1866, these flamboyant Victorian gothic buildings were designed by the notable Oxford Architect, William Wilkinson.
- g Site of the High Cross. Site of the High Cross, demolished in 1601 by a mob of puritans. Puritans favoured a simple form of church ceremony and hated religious finery.

There are a number of pieces of public art in the historic heart of Banbury, not least Banbury Cross itself. Constructed in 1859 to commemorate the marriage of Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, it is the 4th cross Banbury can lay claim to. The others were all torn down by the beginning of the 17th century by the towns Puritans, but plaques can be found in the paving near to where they were believed to have stood. The most significant is the High or Market Cross whose presence is marked in Cornhill.

The Fine Lady upon on a White Horse was commissioned from Artcycle and Denise Dutton, at the turn of the 21st century by the townspeople of Banbury to recognise the impact the nursery rhyme has had, giving the town an international reputation.

Opposite the Fine Lady sculpture artist Giles MacDonald has drawn on the origins of the Town and carved many of the Banbury street names into the Hornton stone of the public conveniences. Bana's Town, as the carving is entitled, captures long lost street names alongside many of those still in current use.

In Parsons Street there are a series of paving inlays by Artist Hilary Cartmel, who drew her inspiration from the unique trading tokens the town traders used in the 18th Century, and from the rich trading history of the street.

BANBURY a local history



Banbury has a Saxon origin, and a Medieval town extended from St Mary's Church to a bridge across the River Cherwell. Many streets and passageways can be traced to Medieval times and include Butchers' Row and the tchures off the High Street.

Fairs and Markets have been held since the 12th Century and often spaces such as Horsefair had livestock sales. Banbury Castle also dates from this time and became the focus of 17th Century Civil War hostilities. The Castle is not visible today.

The town has some fine 16th and 17th Century buildings such as the 16th century Reindeer Inn in Parsons Street. Banbury is well known for its Cross of Nursery Rhyme fame and is or has been important for cheese, ale, plush cloth and especially the famous cakes.

Traditionally Puritanism and Banbury have gone hand in hand.

Banbury Museum overlooking the Oxford Canal has some excellent exhibits of Banbury people and products. Within a short distance St Mary's Church and nearby lanes are worth visiting.

Today Banbury is a market and industrial centre close to the M40 with excellent and expanding shopping facilities.

BANBURY
HISTORICAL
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Tourist Information Centres



The two Tourist Information Centres listed below provide a wealth of information, and exciting ideas on what to see and do in the area. The Centres also operate a local accommodation booking scheme, the Book a Bed Ahead service, and stock a broad range of maps, local books and souvenirs.


A warm, friendly welcome awaits you - we look forward to meeting you.

Banbury

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BANBURY



Historic Town Trail



North Oxfordshire

www.visitnorthoxfordshire.com



Banbury Cross. This Victorian Gothic Cross (in the style of an Eleanor Cross) with niches statues and a spire stands 16m high. It was erected in 1859 to commemorate the wedding of Queen Victoria's eldest daughter to the Crown Prince of Prussia. Carvings include Queen Victoria, Edward VII and George V. Banbury once had three medieval crosses; but these were destroyed by 1601.



Fine Lady. This sculpture, inspired by the famous nursery rhyme "Ride a Cock Horse to Banbury Cross", was commissioned by Banbury Town Council in 2003. Who the Lady actually was remains a mystery.



Linden House. A grand Georgian town house built in 1734. One of only a few houses in Banbury that aspire to Georgian grandeur. The owners were entitled to two pews in St Mary's Church.



Marlborough House. Currently housing Banbury Library and various small businesses, Marlborough House was built for the Mechanics' Institute in 1884. Designed by W.E. Mills, and funded by Industrialist and philanthropist Bernhard Samuelson, it housed a lecture room and library. A Blue Plaque commemorates the life of Bernhard Samuelson.



S.H. Jones, Wine Merchants. 27 High Street. Built in 1537, much of the building was altered in the early 20th Century. Formerly occupied by a baker and confectioner, it still contains a large chimney breast from the former bakery.



The White Lion. "the Whit Lyon" was first recorded in the 16th century as an inn. A mail coach operated from here and its contents were handled at the White Lion. The yard gave access to the stables to the rear that today is notable for its fine Wisteria.



Butchers Row. The street where butchers traded. Spandrels and ironwork ornaments across the entrances refer to Banbury's agricultural and market town roots.



Whately Hall Hotel. First recorded in 1677, it was formerly known as the Three Tuns Inn. In the 18th century it played a central part in the town's social life, being used for business meetings, balls and concerts and had a bowling green at the rear. It was here that a meeting was held to raise money for the construction of the Oxford Canal.



St Mary's Church. St Mary's Church was built in 1797 to replace the Medieval Church which had been badly damaged during the Civil War. Designed by S.P. Cockerill in the classical style. It is here where the names of all the British troops from Banbury who died in the two World Wars and other conflicts are recorded. The Horse fair is where the annual January Horse Fair and weekly sheep markets were held.



The Reindeer Inn Remarkable courtyard inn dating from the early 16th century. Names of late 16th century owners, the Knight family, and the date 1570 are carved in the gates. The Globe Room, at the rear of today's Inn, was built in 1637 and contains fine wooden panelling. It may have been here that Roundhead officers met to plan the siege of Banbury Castle.



Castle Shopping Centre Facade, Cornhill. In 1857 this was the entrance to the corn exchange in the market place. The pediment has a carved statue of Ceres, goddess of agriculture.



16 Market Place. A fine 16th century timber-framed house. Where the building faces Butchers Row, the herringbone patterns of timberwork have been covered with pargetting (ornamental plasterwork, a 17th century fashion). For over one hundred years members of the Robins family of ironmongers traded here.



Tooley's Boatyard & Banbury Museum. This boat-building yard on the Oxford Canal opened around 1778. Boats were built here until the 1940s. Boat repairs continue to be carried out here as they have been for over 200 years.



The Mill. In 1066 the Domesday Book tells us that Banbury had three mills. Banbury Mill, now an arts centre, is probably on the site of one of these. Its millstream, first recorded in 1441, can still be seen as a ditch running parallel to the canal below Banbury Lock. It disappears under the road bridge which still preserves some 13th century stonework.



Town Hall. Imposing gothic Town Hall opened in 1854. It was designed for both civic functions and to serve as a magistrates court. Look out for Banbury's heraldic sign, the Sun in splendour. Near by is a fluted Victorian pillar box with a vertical posting hole that is as old as the Town Hall.



85-87 High Street. Built in 1650 for Edward Vivers, leading Quaker and woollen draper, this was later the site of Alfred Betts cake shop. Banbury Cakes are a local speciality and have been made in the town since at least the 1500s.



Lampreys Building. In 1834 John Lamprey bought the corn merchandising business of R. Edmunds and Son. He lived above his shop here and the building became company headquarters.



CAKES! Banbury Cakes are a local speciality and have been made in the town since at least the 1500s. In the 1800s there were 3 cakemakers in Banbury, one of whom was Alfred Betts who set up shop in 85 High Street. Banbury Cakes were also made and sold from Brown's Original Cake Shop in Parsons St. Cakes were made on this site from at least the 1500s until 1967, but in 1968 the old Cake Shop was demolished. However the Brown family maintain the tradition to this very day, baking cakes to the original recipe. Buy some from the Banbury Tourist Information Centre and see The Original Cake Shop mural at the Cornhill entrance to Castle Quay Shopping Centre.