

PLACES TO VISIT



1

STOURBRIDGE



© Dudley Council

If you want to understand the significance of the Stourbridge glassmaking district, a good place to start is a visit to one or more of three historical sites, each conveniently lying within a very short distance of each other.

The Red House Glass Cone was built at the end of the eighteenth century and was used for the manufacture of glass until 1936. It is one of only four such buildings left in the UK. Of particular note are the demonstrations of glassblowing at weekends and half-term. The diversity of glass and the creativity of glassmakers through the ages can be seen at the Broadfield House Glass Museum, home to one of the best glass collections in the world and with displays ranging from the 17th century to the present day. On the site of the former Royal Doulton and Webb Corbett glassworks stands the Ruskin Glass Centre. Here you can see at first-hand the

skills of the glassmakers: glassblowing, respected studio glass artists, engravers, glass decorators, and glass repair specialists.

Red House Glass Cone, High Street, Wordsley DY8 4AZ Phone: + 44 (0) 1384 812750

Broadfield House Glass Museum, Compton Drive, Kingswinford DY6 9NS

Phone: + 44 (0) 1384 812745

Website for both of the above: www.dudley.gov.uk, then follow the link to 'Things to do and see'.

Ruskin Glass Centre, Wollaston Road, Amblecote DY8 4HF Phone: + 44 (0) 1384 399419

Website: www.ruskinglasscentre.co.uk

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GREAT MALVERN PRIORY



© John Willis

Set against a backdrop of the Malvern Hills, Great Malvern Priory is the place to visit if you want to see the largest collection of stained glass of any church in England. Not only that, but there is variety as well. The largest windows are glazed with medieval glass; there is Victorian glass in the North aisle, and modern glass in Thomas Denny's Millennium windows. The collection includes two royal donations: the West window given by Richard of Gloucester in the 1480s and the 'Magnificat' window in

the North transept given in 1501 by Henry VII. The Priory is open from 09.00 until 17.00 daily. Group tours can be booked by calling the telephone number below.

Great Malvern Priory, Malvern WR14 2AY Phone: + 44 (0) 1684 561020

Website: www.greatmalvernpriory.org.uk

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SMETHWICK HERITAGE CENTRE



© Smethwick Heritage Centre

Opened in 2004, the Smethwick Heritage Centre is a volunteer-run museum celebrating the life of people who lived in Smethwick and the work which took place there. Of particular relevance to this issue of the magazine are exhibits relating to the Camm stained glass company - set up by Thomas Camm on Smethwick's High Street in 1865 and later run by his daughter Florence - and Chance Brothers & Company, based at Spon Lane from

1824 until 1981. Chance Brothers glazed the original Crystal Palace which housed the Great Exhibition of 1851, whilst Florence Camm designed the stained glass windows for the English House at the Turin International Exhibition of 1911. In addition to displays of glass produced by both companies, there is an archive of materials and photographs.

Smethwick Heritage Centre, High Street, Smethwick B66 3NJ

Phone: + 44 (0) 121 555 7278 Website: www.smethwickheritage.org.uk

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COVENTRY CATHEDRAL



© Tim Ecclestone

Coventry's 'old' cathedral church of St Michael was destroyed during the Second World War. The 'new' Coventry Cathedral was designed by architect Sir Basil Spence and was consecrated in May 1962. It is a building of concrete and glass. Seen as a radical break with tradition, the nave windows - seventy in all - are angled to catch the southern light, whilst the huge baptistry window, designed by John Piper and described as 'a great sunburst

of colour', is generally accepted as a landmark in British stained-glass design. Note: there is an entry charge to the cathedral.

Coventry Cathedral, Coventry CV1 5FB Phone: +44 (0)24 7652 1210

Website: www.coventrycathedral.org.uk

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WIGHTWICK MANOR, WOLVERHAMPTON



© National Trust/Richard Biffield

Wightwick Manor was built for Wolverhampton paint manufacturer Theodore Mander between 1887 and 1888. Mander firmly believed in the tenets of the Arts and Crafts movement, and made certain that

Wightwick was furnished with the latest, most artistic Arts and Crafts products available. Wallpaper, textiles and furniture were provided by Morris & Co; de Morgan tiles were laid; and intricate stained glass windows, made by the prolific designer and manufacturer Charles Kempe, were fitted in the entrance hall and the drawing room. When the house was extended only a few years after its completion, the new wing included a billiard room - a curious setting for an image of Chaucer on painted glass, designed by Edward Burne-Jones for Morris & Co.

Wightwick Manor, Wightwick Bank, Wolverhampton WV6 8EE

Phone: + 44 (0) 1902 760100

Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wightwick-manor

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BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY



© Birmingham Museums Trust

The work of several influential Birmingham stained-glass designers can be seen at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG). Edward Burne-Jones was born and educated in Birmingham, and BMAG holds the largest public collection of his work, including a selection of stained glass. As a bonus, four large Burne-Jones windows can be seen at nearby St Phillip's Cathedral. An example of Henry

Payne's stained glass work at BMAG is *Peace and Goodwill* (1922), a window made for Cradley Heath's Methodist church. Payne joined the teaching staff of the Birmingham School of Art in 1889, one of his pupils being Smethwick artist Florence Camm. Camm's three-panelled piece *Dante and Beatrice* (1911) is yet another example of Birmingham-produced stained glass that can be seen at BMAG.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham B3 3DH. Phone: +44 (0)121 303 2834 Website: www.bmag.org.uk

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SHROPSHIRE



© The Churches Conservation Trust

If you happen to find yourself in the Shropshire Hills, with a little time on your hands and in search of stained glass, you could head either south to Ludlow on the A49 or north to Shrewsbury along the same road. In the opinion of Sir Simon Jenkins, the stained glass of St Laurence's church in Ludlow ('the cathedral of the Marches') rivals that of

Great Malvern Priory. As for the redundant church of St Mary, in the centre of Shrewsbury, Sir Nikolaus Pevsner considered the church to be 'exceptionally rich in stained glass', whilst Simon Jenkins's view is that it equals both Ludlow and Great Malvern. So, visit both and make your own mind up! Both churches have Tree of Jesse windows originating in the fourteenth century. St Mary's is cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust, the national charity protecting historic churches at risk.

Church of St Mary the Virgin, St Mary's Street, Shrewsbury SY1 1DX

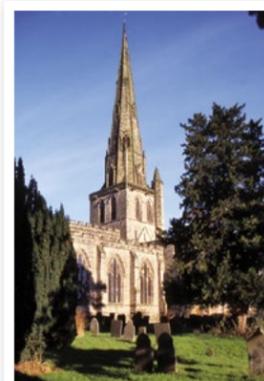
Website: www.visitchurches.org.uk (The Churches Conservation Trust)

Church of St Laurence, College Street, Ludlow SY8 1AN

Phone: + 44 (0) 1584 872073 Website: www.stlaurences.org.uk

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ASHBOURNE, DERBYSHIRE



© Cressbrook Multimedia

If you're looking for something less strenuous to do after a hard walk in Derbyshire's Peak District, a visit to the magnificent parish church of St Oswald in Ashbourne might fit the bill. This church has been described as 'one of the finest works of art in the country', and here is to be found some of the best stained glass in Derbyshire, spanning a period of some 700 years. The more recent glass emanates from a variety of famous studios. The Victorian artist Charles Kempe created the east and west windows (look for his trademark wheat-sheaf signature), the north window was crafted by the Hardman Company of Birmingham, whilst a brilliantly-coloured window, set in the south transept, is the work of the Bromsgrove Guild.

The Church of St Oswald, Belle Vue Road, Ashbourne DE6 1AT

Phone: + 44 (0) 1335 343129 Website: www.ashbournechurch.org