

Salford City Council

Tourism Marketing

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If you consume alcohol during this
walk, please drink responsibly.

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Original material & research by Tony Flynn.
Photographs by Jason Lawton and Nick Harrison.

Eccles Ale Trail

Exploring Eccles' historic pubs
is only half the fun

Eccles Ale Trail is produced as part of
Salford Food & Drink Festival





Meet new people

Savour the moment



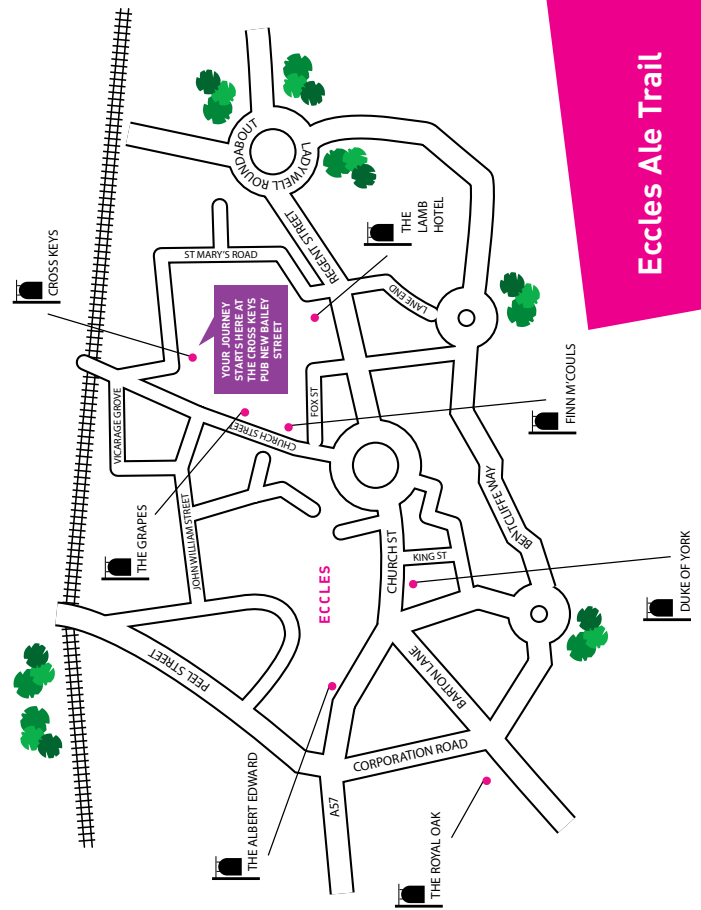
Laugh out loud



Have a ball



After a hard day
Reminisce



Eccles Ale Trail

Parking. Pay and Display at Vicarage Grove, at Eccles train station and at St. Mary's Road, just past the Cross Keys pub.
From Eccles station, follow Church Street down and The Cross Keys is right in front of you.



The Cross Keys

The trail starts at **The Cross Keys**

The Cross Keys, the oldest pub in Eccles, is mentioned on the earliest surviving register of 1629. The name originates from the sign of St Peter, who is portrayed as having the keys of heaven in his hands.

One of the pub's landlords, John Bradburn, was famous for making the coffin in which Liverpool MP William Huskisson's body was transported, having been fatally injured at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, and was also responsible for taking the body back for interment. But tragedy was to strike Bradburn himself in March 1831, when his wife committed suicide by plunging her head into a vat of boiling liquor in the brewhouse of the pub.

The Cross Keys has been the venue for many meetings and one of its most famous was in December 1892 on the occasion of the Mayor of Eccles' Banquet following the granting of the town's charter. But perhaps the most unusual event occurred in September 1911. Appearing at the Lyceum Theatre, Eccles, was a lady billed as "Lady Little, the World's Smallest Woman". She was 18 years of age, 23 inches high and $9\frac{3}{4}$ pounds in weight. A reception was held at The Cross Keys, where the mayor and council officials were invited to meet her!



Turn left out of
The Cross Keys and left
again when you get to
Church Street. The Grapes
is on your left hand side.



The Grapes

One of the most well documented and interesting pubs in Eccles, The Grapes first appears in the 1772 alehouse register, when the landlord was John Phillips.

The present Grapes is said to have been built in 1810 by James Birch, who was famous for making Eccles cakes. The Grapes is also mentioned in the book, 'Old Eccles': the Watch and Ward, forerunners of the police force, had a room at The Grapes and two watchboxes, one on Church Street and the other at Barton Lane. It was the local sport for young roughnecks to upturn these boxes - a local rhyme recalled "Watch and Ward they have no sense, they stand at night for eighteen pence."

Another story tells that Friedrich Engels used to visit The Grapes when visiting his father's mill (Ermen & Engels), and attempted to form a communist cell there.

In 1899 The Grapes became the first Wilson's pub in Eccles. It was nearly their last though, as the new landlord, Mr Jones, almost blew the pub up on his first day. He smelt gas in an upstairs room and foolishly struck a match, which caused considerable damage and put him in hospital.

One other legend of The Grapes concerns a secret tunnel, apparently used by body snatchers and priests from Monks Hall hiding from Cromwell's men. It must have been a magnificent feat of engineering, as Monks Hall is half a mile away!

A few doors down from The Grapes is Finn M'Coul's, formerly The Fox Vaults.





Finn M'Coul's

In 1851 Joshua Jones, a green-grocer, owned the property once known as The Fox Vaults, but now reborn as Finn M'Couls. He left it to his daughter Martha Fielding on his death, and it was mortgaged to Joseph Holt's brewery for several years.

A popular landlord was Joseph Oldfield, an ex-seaman. In December 1900 Lancashire was caught in a poisoned beer scare. Oldfield publicly poured two dozen 36-gallon barrels of beer down the sewer to show that he had no contaminated supplies. He also roasted a full side of beef for local soldiers coming home from the Boer War and was renowned for his generosity shown to troops.

Another patriotic landlord was William Baines who, at the time of the Great War, had six of his seven sons serving in the army at the same time, a local record.

The Fox supposedly got its name from the last fox caught in Eccles, at Fox Hill near Barton Airport. The local hunt was supposed to meet at the neighbouring Hare & Hounds and to have brought the dead fox to the house, hence the name.



From Finn M'Coul's, go down to the bottom of Church Street and turn left along Regent Street. The Lamb is just past the tram station on the left.

The Lamb Hotel

The Lamb Hotel is a large Joseph Holt's house built on the site of a previous Lamb Inn, whose licence dated from at least 1862. One of the earliest mentions of the old Lamb Inn occurred in the Eccles Journal of August 1893, when the landlord was fined the astronomical sum of £100 for permitting gambling on his premises.

In 1895 The Lamb acquired a full licence when the teetotal licensee, John Knight, told the Eccles Brewster Sessions that visitors to the nearby Ladywell Sanatorium often required stronger drinks after visiting friends. Inquests were held at the pub, and the coroners, too, were often fond of a drink. The Knight family was long associated with the Lamb: Mr Knight's daughter, Vera Margison, succeeded her parents and between them they held the licence for 90 years.

The present Lamb Hotel was built in 1906. It is a splendid example of Edwardian taste, with a hugh mahogany bar, ornate acid-etched windows, a traditional vault and lots of art nouveau tiles. One of its best attractions is its full-sized billiard table, the only one in Eccles in a public house.

One interesting little curio is outside on the wall. On the right hand side of the front door is a tile depicting a reclining lamb with the words, 'Ye Lamb Inn, 1890'. Before its rebuilding in 1906, the pub was known as the Lamb Inn, but it dated back to at least 1865; perhaps a builder's practical joke?

Turn right out of The Lamb, back along Regent Street and past the bus station. The Duke of York is over the road on the corner with King Street.





The Duke of York

The Duke of York has existed under this name since 1794, and an interesting find was made here when alterations were being carried out in July 1884: an old newspaper called the Manchester Mercury, dated February 2 1796 was found in the rafters. In the 1840s the pub was used by the mail coaches on the journey from Manchester to Liverpool, and so was then a house of some importance. The old Eccles cock pit, which was on the site of the present town hall, could only be reached by passing through The Duke of York, which must have been good for trade!

In 1896 Adam Oldfield took over The Duke of York and applied for permission to rebuild the house, stating that a new public house would add architecturally to the town and also complement the new town hall (which had been built in 1881). He added that, with an election coming up, the busy town hall officials would be in need of bedrooms. Permission was granted and in 1898 the new, luxurious Duke of York Hotel opened.

In 1981 the pub underwent a major change. Whitbread made the Duke of York a 'real ale' house, selling traditional beers from different breweries and bottle beers from all over the world. It has been a great success and The Duke of York now thrives.

Come out of the Duke of York and cross the road at the junction on the left. Carry on down the road and you'll come to the Albert Edward





The Albert Edward

Licensing records show that The Albert Edward was licensed in March 1854, but it may well date back even earlier. In an interview with the Eccles Journal in 1887, an old Eccles resident, Mr George Davenport, recalled that the pub was known as an "October Shop". This was a derogatory term for a beerhouse which obtained its licence in October 1830 - that is as soon as the Beerhouse Act became law.

Following the sinking of this Lusitania by a German U-boat with the loss of 1,200 lives, anti-German feelings were running high in Eccles. On Tuesday 15 May 1915, violence erupted. A crowd some 2,000 strong had gathered at Lower Cross Square, where the war memorial is now. The landlord of the Albert was then a Mr Oscar Lorenz, a naturalised German. Anticipating trouble he had hurriedly left the town with his family, quite wisely as it turned out. The mob attacked the pub, smashed every window and attempted to wreck the house. The police managed to disperse them but not before some patriotic citizens had stolen bottles of spirits and cigars.

The Albert Edward does seem to have had its share of bad luck, for in August 1880 the landlady, Anne Valentine, was struck and killed by lightning whilst opening the back door of the pub. In the 1940s and 1950s the Albert Edward was known locally as the 'Stinking Stocking', a reference to the ladies of easy virtue who frequented the house with sailors from the nearby Barton Wharf. As one local wag put it, "the pub floor was painted green to make the cows feel more at home!"



Out of the Albert Edward and back across the road. Walk down Barton Lane on the left hand side of the library and The Royal Oak is on the far corner with Corporation Road.





The Royal Oak

The Royal Oak was a beerhouse, licensed in 1863 or before, and the owners in 1894 are shown as being two brothers, Joshua and Samuel Jones. 'Royal Oak' was a popular pub sign in patriotic Victorian times, having its origins in the story of Charles II hiding in the tree. Royal Oak Day, 28 May, used to be celebrated locally.

In 1903 the old Royal Oak, on the site of the present health centre, was demolished under the Timothy Street slum clearance plan. The new Royal Oak was built at a cost of £4,000 and opened in 1904 with a full licence. However, the pub did not meet with everybody's approval. In 1903 a Mr Smith of Irwell Park complained to the Eccles Journal that the ward had fewer than 1,000 voters in it and 18 licensed houses, which he thought was three times as many as needed. If he was still living in 1941, he may have got some slight satisfaction when the Golden Lion next door was bombed flat.

One of the more unusual societies which met here later was the Eccles and Patricroft Roller Canary Show in the 1930s!

The Royal Oak is another typical example of Edwardian architecture, in which Holt's brewery seemed to excel; still to be seen are mahogany bar fittings, sliding acid etched bar windows, tiled walls and a tiny snug. It also has a billiard room, although the table has long since disappeared.

We hope you enjoyed your walk around Eccles' alehouses & pubs. If you consume alcohol during this walk, please drink responsibly. www.drinkawaretrust.org.uk **THINK** don't drink and drive. www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/drinkdrive/drinkdrive.htm



Pub Quiz

1. In which year was William Huskisson killed?

2. How old was 'Lady Little' when she visited The Cross Keys?

3. At The Grapes pub,
how much were the Watch and Ward paid per night?

4. How did The Fox pub now known as Finn M'Couls
get its name?

5. How much was the landlord of The Lamb fined in 1893
for allowing gambling on the premises?

6. What is the date on the tile outside the Lamb Hotel?

7. What year was the present Duke of York pub rebuilt
and why?

8. What was the name of the Austrian landlord
at the Albert Edward pub at time of the Lusitania Riots?

9. How did the Albert Edward's landlady Anne Valentine die?

10. What date is Royal Oak Day, after which the pub is named?

Service with a smile



Socialise



Quick half



Support one another



Last orders



Catch up



Get snug

