

16 1608 High Street – The Bilash¹ occupies a Grade II listed, timber framed, former 17th/18th century cottage.

17 1622-1628 High Street – Accommodating Heavenly Bodies, Hunters and Bella Venezia¹ is a further Grade II listed, timber framed 17th/18th century premises, notable for curved bay windows and casemented gables. The adjacent art school sits in a younger Grade II building, dating from 1886.

18 1632-1634 High Street – On the corner of St John's Close sits another early timber framed building, this time with the later addition of a Georgian façade. In 1889 it became one of the first 15 branches of the Midland Bank and was much extended to the rear. Its banking heritage lives on today in the name of the pub around the corner to the rear of the premises – The Vaults.

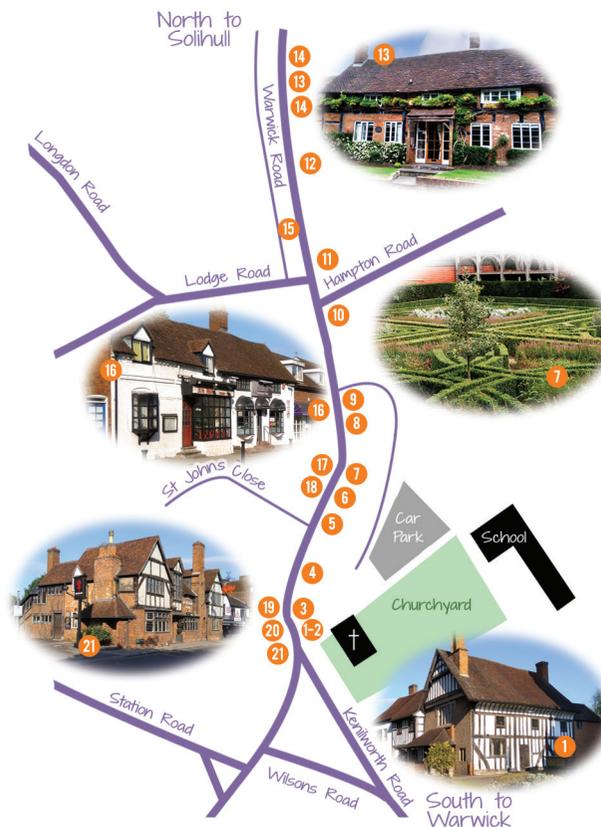
19 1660 High Street – The former NatWest bank replaced the historic White Swan Inn which served the village from the 15th century until its demolition in 1939. The swan, barley, grapes, tankard and wine glass motifs in the stonework recall the earlier building.

20 1666 High Street – Eric Lyons¹ shop has been a butchers' shop since the 19th century. Members of the Lyons family have been local butchers since 1903.

21 The Red Lion – An original fireplace sits in the bar of this early 17th century timbered pub. John Wesley, founder of Methodism, once preached in its yard.



THE ROUTE



DIRECTIONS

Begin the walk at the Guild House, the timbered building adjacent to the Parish Church. Turn towards Solihull and walk along the High Street on the right hand side. Cross roads as you come to them until you reach the Northend Cottages (1575-85 Warwick Road). (En route, take a diversion at the Library along the side passage to visit the Knot Garden.)

Turn back and use the pedestrian crossing after Hampton Road to walk back up the High Street on the opposite side.

¹Shop names in this leaflet accurate as of September 2020



KNOWLE HERITAGE WALK No 1 THE HIGH STREET



*A three-quarter mile stroll
through local history.*

*Among the shops and just beyond -
a host of heritage buildings.*



Guild House as Shop and Post Office - 1891

PLACES OF INTEREST

1 The Guild House – The Guild House, Grade II listed and dating from the early 15th century, is now part of the Church premises. Formed under licence from the King, the Guild of St Anne was a religious fraternity providing support to those in need in the community. Members included some of the Shakespeare family, before William's time. The House provided a 'College', a communal life for incumbent priests. The Guild was dissolved in the 1547 Reformation. However, depictions of the Seals of the Guild and the College remain, beside the upstairs window.

2 1709-1713 High Street – The black and white timbered St Anne's Cottage, with the adjacent Monastery House and chemist's shop, were originally part of the Guild building and share Grade II listing. Outside these is the Millennium sign, commissioned from sculptor Graham Jones to mark the dawning of the third Millennium.

3 1707 High Street – Built in the 19th century, this became the village Police Station, just before the First World War, and had a cell in the cellar. From the mid 1930s until 2001 it was the village newsagent.

4 The Bakery – Grade II listed nos 1699/1701 High Street were built very early in the 18th century. The Curtis family were the local bakers from about 1906 until it was sold to the present owner in 2004.

5 Kingscote – The 17th century, Grade II listed, timber framed building, is now occupied by Phaze 2, 1683 Chocolate Place and Journey the World¹. However, before division into three properties, it was a bakery and subsequently the Post Office, which transferred there from the Guild House.

6 1671 High Street - Now Bond's¹, formerly a bank and before that a high end grocer, Band & Meeks, this Grade II timber framed building dates from the 17th century.

7 Chester House - The oldest building on the High Street, and with a Grade II* listing, this was originally two homes. The southern wing dates from the early 1400s, the northern end from the early 1500s. They were joined by what is now the central frontage in the early 1600s.



Rear of Chester House in the late 1960s

The name Chester House first appeared in 1881 but its origin is a mystery. It has, over time, been a farm, a carrier business and an antiques shop. It fell into disrepair in the 1960s but was then restored, with strong encouragement from The Knowle Society, for use as a library in 1975.

Whilst at Chester House, stroll down the side passageway to enjoy the award winning reproduction of a traditional Knot Garden, which was opened in 1989.

8 1659-1661 High Street - The Oxfam bookshop and Ellora restaurant¹ occupy a pair of cottages believed to date from the 16th or 17th century.

9 Greswolde Arms - This hotel was a coaching inn, opened on the Birmingham to Warwick turnpike, in the 1700s, a place where horses were changed. Knowle Lido was open behind the hotel from the 1930s to the 1960s.

10 1637 High Street - Belying its age with its appearance, this former doctor's home and village surgery, until 1975, is thought to have been built around 1830.

11 Wilson Arms - Inside an exterior remodelled in the 1970s and extended in the 1990s is a Grade II listed oak framed building dating from around 1600. Originally The Rising Sun, it was renamed in 1839, after the local squire, whose coat of arms sits above the front door.

12 The Black and White Cottage - Converted to offices in 1988, this Grade II listed cottage also dates from around 1600. It is thought to have earlier foundations.

13 Artillery Cottage - Originally three homes, now a single Grade II listed residence, the longer, higher roofed, part of this building dates from about 1600. It was extended in the early 19th century and refurbished in 1971.

14 Hillside/Northend Cottages - Bookending Artillery Cottage at the former northern edge of the village are these two rows of terraced cottages, built about 1890.

15 The Spinney - This attractive bank at the roadside is a garden remnant of Knowle Lodge, a former parsonage which stood where the Surgery is now on Lodge Road.



Coach outside Wilson Arms - 1894