

Blanket Hall Historical Walk

Witney Blanket Hall was built in 1721, and for 150 years has been the home of the Company of Witney Blanket Weavers and the principal public hall in the town. The woollen history in Witney is extraordinary, this fantastic walk will help carry you back through time on the blanket making journey!



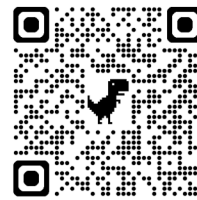
Parking is available at the Woodford Way car park, Witney, OX28 6GS



Wheelchair friendly



Distance: 1.5 miles approx



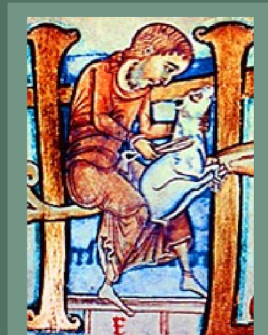
www.heritagesearch.oxfordshire.gov.uk



www.westoxon.gov.uk



www.heritageopendays.org.uk



Thank you for completing the walk, we hope you enjoyed it.
Opening times of attractions may vary.





1 Woodford Way car park is named after Woodford Mill, later named Witney Mills, and was built on the site of a Medieval fulling mill, one of the oldest of the many blanket factories in Witney, the Early family being the largest manufacturer. Fulling is part of the cloth finishing process, squeezing wet, woven woollen cloth in order to make the cloth more fibrous. One of Early's grandest buildings, Woodford Mill was tragically destroyed by a fire in 1905. It has since been rebuilt but with only two stories. Head up Woodford Way to see the old Mill.

2 Green Gates The green gates at the top of Woodford Way were an old access point to the Early's factory. The Cotswold stone wall to the right was an old outbuilding where a Monitor would have sat, checking in horse and cart deliveries, many of which would have been carrying locally produced wool. For scale, the Mill and outbuildings would have been approximately 193000 square feet.

3 The River Windrush Continue down Mill Street, past the old chimney, and take a left at the crossing, here you will be able to see where the River Windrush passed under the Woodford Mill. The old mill would have been completely water-powered and combined Spinning, Weaving and Finishing under one roof. The River Windrush played an important part at Woodford Mill providing the energy needed to drive the giant water wheels and for washing the cloth.

4 Blanket Hall From the river head down Mill Street and onto High Street to the Blanket Hall. This very grand building was constructed in 1721 by the Company of Blanket Makers at a cost of £430. For over 120 years, every blanket woven in Witney came to this very hall to be sized and weighed, before they could be sold. Throughout its history the Hall served various purposes including a fire pump house, a brewery and even a lemonade factory. Today the hall serves as a fantastic piece of Witney's history, with a free museum upstairs, a cafe and a beautiful garden to the rear. Don't forget to try one of their famous pies!

5 Witney Museum From the Blanket Hall proceed up High Street, cross the road at the traffic lights, and go through the passageway to the Witney Museum. The charming Museum, built in traditional Cotswold Limestone, is set over two floors and was the residence of Malachi Bartlett who moved to Witney from Devon in 1836. Malachi was a prominent builder in the area and would have made his own bricks and lime. The Bartlett brothers reputedly installed the first steam-driven sawmill and machine shop in the district and would have carried out construction works on many of the blanket factories in the local area.

