

Welcome to historic Bishop Auckland. Throughout the town there are a number of information boards, linked by walks, bringing to life our cultural and natural heritage, from the Romans to Stan Laurel. We hope that this series of leaflets describing the walks and points of interest will help you enjoy discovering County Durham's "best kept secret".

Bishop Auckland Town Trails



Merchants & Bishops

A Stroll Through Bishop Auckland Town Centre

Durham Chare leads onto Newgate Street, the main shopping area in Bishop Auckland. The earliest mention of Newgate Street was in 1470. It closely follows the route of Dere Street, the Roman Road; note how long and straight it is.

The Water Trough.

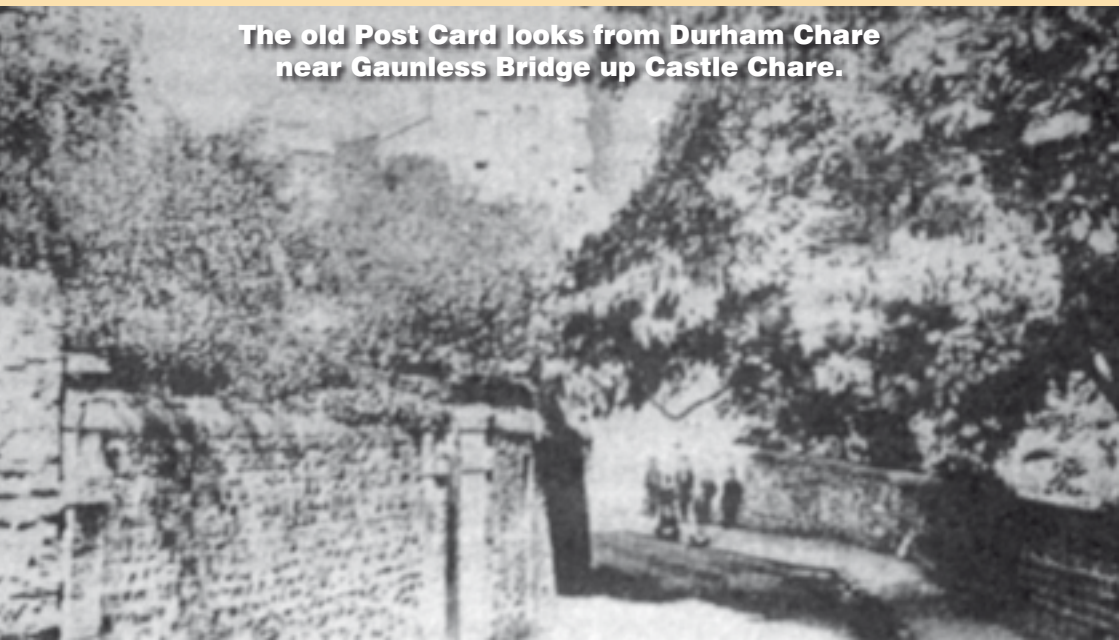


Durham Chare

The word Chare means a steep narrow street or lane. It is derived from the Saxon word 'cyrran' which means 'to turn'; a chare being a turning from a superior street. Durham Chare runs off the main road, Newgate Street.

Towards the bottom of Durham Chare you find Castle Chare. During the 1800's a toll road ran down Durham Chare and up Durham Road. Castle Chare was the only way up to the Market Place and was both steep and narrow. Near the Gaunless Bridge was a paved ramp leading down to the river allowing cattle to drink and water carts to get water. A water trough was located at the bottom of Durham Chare by the Temperance Society so that horses could drink before pulling loads up the steep road.

The old Post Card looks from Durham Chare near Gaunless Bridge up Castle Chare.



Look around you:

As you walk from Durham Chare into Newgate Street, note the other streets leading off the main road.

1. Victoria Street (now Avenue) is a classic Victorian terrace.
2. Staying on Victoria Avenue look at the Masonic Hall. If you look up, notice the plaques that reads 'Truth conquers all'.
3. Moving down Newgate Street, take a look towards Tenters Street, where the weavers lived.
4. Take a look up at the Bank at the Newgate Shopping Centre entrance and you can see four lions holding shields. Here the architect has used Scottish baronial turrets!
5. Look next door at the building of red encaustic tiles. Look out for the very ornate doorway which has a cherub above.
6. Further down Newgate Street this building has so much ornate stone work, it is worth spending some time looking up.

