



HEPTONSTALL

C O N S E R V A T I O N A R E A

CONSERVATION AREAS

Conservation Areas are places that Councils recognise to be of special architectural or historic interest. Designating a Conservation Area is a statement of intent by the Council to protect and, if possible, improve upon its special qualities.

A Conservation Area does not mean that there will be no new developments or alterations to existing buildings. We live in a changing world, and the places where we live must be able to adapt to the demands of present-day life. However, the Council has a duty to make sure that all changes increase the attractiveness of the area and do not harm its special character.

This is important, as once unsympathetic changes to buildings and spaces have started to take place, the character of these historic areas can very quickly disappear. If we don't decide now which areas are important to retain and protect because of their historic significance and character, it could well be too late in years to come.

There are a number of special controls and requirements that apply to Conservation Areas in order to protect their character. For example, consent is required to demolish buildings and other structures, and as a

general rule, this will be resisted. New development must normally be built of natural stone, and all new buildings, along with alterations to existing buildings, must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. If you want to fell or prune a tree, the Council must be notified in advance.

If you are thinking about making any alteration to a property, or undertaking other work, in a Conservation Area, it is advisable to contact the Town Planning Department (tel; Halifax (0422) 357257) to find out if any consents are needed. Practical advice about restoration or alterations and the possible availability of grant-aid can also be obtained from the Department.

The Council hopes that being in a Conservation Area will encourage owners to maintain and restore their buildings in keeping with the area's character. Such action will make an important contribution towards retaining the special character and quality of towns and villages in Calderdale.

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CALDERDALE
COUNCIL
TOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT

HEPTONSTALL

LOCATION

The ancient village of Heptonstall lies along the ridge of a steeply sloping spur of land, overlooking the Calder Valley and the town of Hebden Bridge.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

Heptonstall was in existence in Saxon times and became a separate parish in the 12th century. The village grew with the early development of the textile industry. Sheep were grazed on the surrounding moorland and farmhouses and cottages were used for the weaving of woollen cloth. The cloth pieces were taken either to the master's taking-in shops or to the Cloth Hall at Heptonstall. Later the cloth was marketed through Halifax and London.

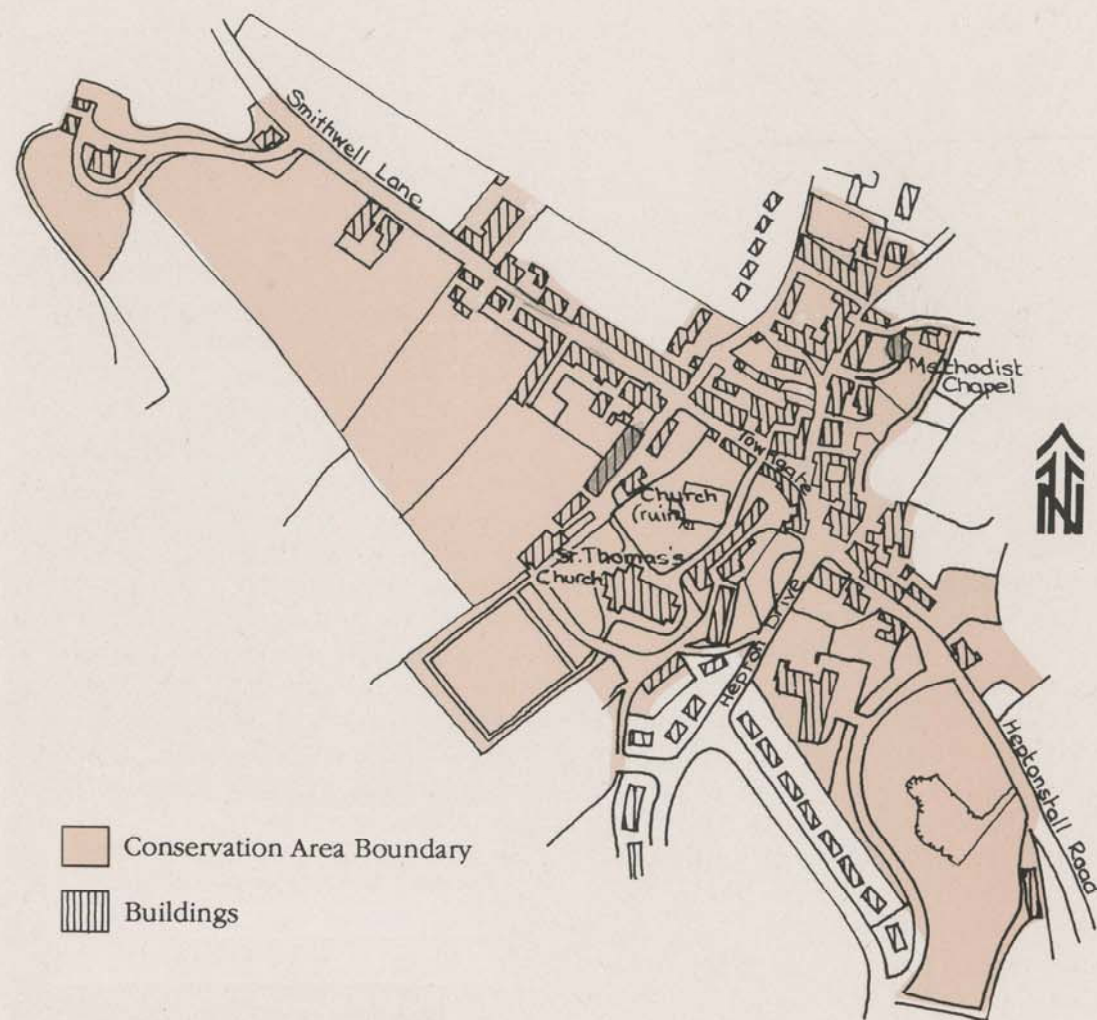
Packhorse trails formed the links between places and for ease and safety they generally kept to higher land. Several of these old routes can be found today, for example the Long Causeway from Heptonstall to Burnley. With the development of mills using water power, the hill-top village of Heptonstall became less important, as Hebden Bridge provided a site for industrial growth. Unlike many industrial areas there was no mass exodus of population from the South Pennines uplands to the valley bottom settlements like Hebden Bridge. As a result, many of the workers had a long distance to walk to work and numerous footpaths remain. Within the village, amongst the

weavers cottages, there is an unusual feature - two churches within a single churchyard. The older church, now abandoned, has some parts which date from the 13th century. The newer church, built in Gothic style in the 1850s, has a tall tower which is a landmark for miles around. Non-Conformism was also an important influence in the area, and the Methodist church was built to the octagonal design favoured by John Wesley, who visited the village on a number of occasions.

CHARACTER

Heptonstall has remained largely unspoilt by 20th century building works. The core of the village, based round the through route of Towngate, still has the feel of an 18th century working village. The small cottages, originally of timber, had walls of coursed rubble stone from the 16th century onwards whilst the larger more important ones normally had coursed squared facing stones. The traditional roof had a fairly low pitch with heavy stone flags. These buildings were of two storeys and the top floor had rectangular stone mullioned windows, often arranged in long rows, which allowed a maximum amount of light to reach the handlooms. These rows of windows, which are a characteristic feature of the area, are still seen in many houses today.

The Heptonstall Conservation Area was designated on the 7th of January 1971.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Great care should be taken in preserving or improving Conservation Areas. New development must be designed in sympathy with the character of the area. Many alterations could harm the character of buildings in Heptonstall and work should be carefully considered before proceeding. The drawing opposite shows some of the characteristics of the Conservation Area that it is important to keep so that it will remain at its most attractive.

Remember that the simplest form of conservation is regular maintenance, as this will retain the original building fabric and reduce the cost of subsequent repairs and renewals. Roofs are particularly important and should be inspected each autumn. Chimneys should also be inspected, checking the condition of the masonry, pointing and pots. Flues should be swept to prevent fire hazards.

Any cast-iron gutters, downpipes and railings should be inspected annually for corrosion and repainted every 5 years. All gutters should be kept clear of leaves and vegetation. Windows and doors should be repaired at the first sign of ill fit or decay, and any renewal should be in a matching style. Ideally, external paintwork should be renewed every 5 years.

Natural materials and traditional methods should be used for all repairs and restoration work.

