

2. Urban Halifax: King and Queens

Duration: 1 Hour

This stroll through west Halifax reveals a fascinating hotch-potch of social and sporting history. It enables you to discover multicultural Halifax in all its richness, and to learn about two famous cricket clubs: one very old and one very new.

Start, and park, at the **Halfway House** hotel on Pellon New Road – the main road that links Halifax town centre with Mount Tabor and Wainstalls. Walk up Sutcliffe Street – to the left as you look at the pub from the main road. Look out for the New Street Hotel on your right – a Websters pub which dates from 1838 – and another sign saying ‘Albert Place 1863’. Clearly, this is an old part of Halifax.



Turn left on to Stretchgate Lane – look out for the alluring fish and chip shop on your left and the allotments on your right. On your left you will also encounter Highgate Wesley Centre (licensed for ‘music and dancing’); and on your right the local **reservoir**. Turn right down the aptly named Reservoir Road and keep walking.

You eventually come to a significant crossroads. Turn left into Hanson Lane. The ASDA superstore you are confronted with has been built only recently on the site of **Thrum Hall** – a famous old cricket ground that once staged Yorkshire county cricket fixtures (in the late nineteenth century) and was also home to Halifax CC before it became defunct.

Keep walking for a while down Hanson Lane, and look out for the words saying ‘Queens Terrace 1866’ on a terraced house on your right. You will soon hit a major junction, at which you should turn right on to one of Halifax’s most famous thoroughfares, **Queens Road**. Now you will encounter kebab shops, laundrettes and Asian jewellery shops.

Walsh Street – a little road you come to you on your left – is very famous in cricketing circles. It was the road on which a group of young Asian children played cricket morning till night in the early 1970s. By 1974 they had formed their own cricket club, which eventually came to be known as **Queens Road Muslims** – the team that would dominate the Halifax Cricket Association during the 1990s and up to the league's demise in 2005.



The all-conquering Queens Road Muslims side

Keep on walking down Queens Road, past the local surgery and tailors, and a pub called The Tavern. On your left you will see Raven Street, noted for its community centre run by Najabat Hussain, one of the men who helped to found Queens Road Muslims CC.

Gibbet Street crosses Queens Road quite soon. The name of the road is a reminder that Halifax once boasted a rather unpleasant contraption that was used for dealing with serial criminals. Look out for more indicators of the town's past on the walls of buildings: 'J.T. 1893' and 'Queens Road Mill 1866' (which is now Halifax Antiques Centre).

On your right look out for a very ornate and grandiose church – Holy Protection Ukrainian Catholic Church. Note the plaque which makes reference to genocide. There is a significant **Ukrainian community** resident in Halifax – emphasised by the fact that a Ukrainian Social Club is also located close by (you should pass it on your right).

Turn right up Hopwood Lane – noting the HQ of the British Muslim Association, a Muslim college on your right, and a mosque on your left. This is a really diverse and fascinating part of the town, which highlights Halifax's multi-ethnic character, at least in this urban zone.

Keep alert – for on your left, just as you get to Wallace Street, you see a famous local landmark in the mid-distance: **Wainhouse Tower**. Meantime, on your right, you encounter one of the most famous of all Halifax cricket clubs, **King Cross**, and their headquarters, The Ramsdens.



King Cross CC in 1938

Take a right on to Gibraltar Road, just after the cricket ground. Pass the church on your right (St Hildas), and then walk down Spring Hall Lane (straightish on) when you come to the big junction. Follow this road until you reach Asda again, this time on your right.

You can then re-trace your steps back past the reservoir to where you started the walk.