

## Walking Beth's Poetry Trail route

The whole walk takes about two and a half hours. You can print out a map from the web-site to help you follow the route.

### Shorter walk option:

If you want something less arduous, after the library and railway poems, turn left out of *Albert Street* onto *Green Lane*. *Short Row* is on the right. Then follow the instructions from there. This eliminates any more steep hills and takes about one hour.

If you are disabled, everything is accessible in a wheelchair, but it would be wise to go in the car to the *Parks Nature Reserve* and approach it from *Mill Lane*. You may also wish to avoid *Long Row*, which is very uneven.

### The full walk:

Our walks start at the bandstand in **Belper River Gardens**:

Firstly walk along the 'promenade' by the river to see the **Ducks** sculpture in the grassy area next to the children's play area. You can walk up to it and stroke the ducks.

Then leave through the play area and follow the grassy area along, with the water cut's edge to your left and the bandstand area and river to your right. You will find the picture poem in glass '**Three swallows in the River Meadows**' facing some small willow trees.

From here turn and walk up past the bandstand towards the entrance. On the right, about halfway down the path, you will see some clay tiles set into a grassy bank. This is the poetical quote from the Greek philosopher **Heraclitus**.

Continue down this path and past the boatshed. Bearing right, cross the unsurfaced car park, and you will come to a narrow path across the sluice gates. This takes you down the side of a former play centre. One of the windows here has an interpretation of '**Rain**' by Spike Milligan.

Carry on down the side of the building, and you are in the *Strutt's North Mill* car park. Almost immediately on your right, there are some tree stumps, and a bench with some words from Joyce Kilmer's '**Trees**'.

Leave the car park and turn right – cross over the bridge and enter the little park area with a picnic bench – look to the right hand end of the railings to find '**Vital Valley**'.

Follow your route back over the river, then walk under the 'Gangway' to cross the road by the traffic lights, thus turning right along the A6, keeping to the right hand side. This is a narrow footpath with a raised kerb, and the A6 is busy, so please be careful here. Carry on until you reach Derwent Street on your right (opposite the Lion Hotel) where Belper's new *library* is sited. At the side doors on Derwent Street, there is a plaque with a poem by **Philip Larkin**.

Turn left out of the library entrance and walk back in the direction of the Mills then cross the A6 at the traffic lights. Walk back a little way and turn right up *Field Lane*. Keep going until you reach *St Laurence's convent* where just before the big gates there is the mosaic poem '**Love warms the cold morning**' on the wall.

Turn back down the hill for a hundred yards approximately and turn left just after the road crosses the railway, into the jitty which runs down the side of it. On the first platform, there is a **railway poster holder** with a poem. This is the only poetry site where the poem is changed from time to time.

Walk up the slope towards the supermarket. Turn left and cross the bridge to the other platform; there is a blue plaque on the wall, with '**From a Railway Carriage**' by RL Stevenson.

As you go back up the path, there is a turning on the left. Take this and it will take you along the railway to *Albert Street*. Walk up *Albert Street* and turn right onto *Green Lane*. At the end of *Green Lane* cross the road and enter the *Memorial Gardens* directly opposite. A few yards along the wall on the left is the Magee poem '**High Flight**'.

Come back out of the *Memorial Gardens* and turn right up *King Street* and at the top, use the pedestrian lights to cross over to the *Market Place*. Bear to the right and cross the market place to get to the former Salvation Army premises, now 'No. 28'. On the wall there is a plaque with '**Flowers**' by Wendy Cope.

Enter and walk across the big *Coppice* car park. From here you can see the *Parks Nature Reserve*. Make for this, going down the steps, and, once over the little steel bridge, bear left following the marked path. Just before the exit there is another path which forks sharply to the right. After a few yards, opposite a convenient bench, is the large stone with the extract from Robert Frost's '**The Road not Taken**'.

Carry on the path in the same direction until you come to some steps on the left. Here are some lines picked out on the steps from '**He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven**' by WB Yeats.

Retrace your steps to the sharp fork, but carry straight on here to the exit on *Mill Lane*. Turn left and follow the road round into *Park Side*. From here the road climbs sharply. At the end of *Park Side* turn right on to *Nottingham Road*. Cross the road and the green to *St John's churchyard*. Once through the lych-gate, turn left between some gravestones. On the wall in front of you is a slate plaque with a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins - '**Heaven-Haven**'.

Walk up through the churchyard along the path. Turn left on to *St John's Road*. At the end, cross over *High Street* into *Penn Street*. Carry on until you get to *Chesterfield Road*. Cross over and the next plaque is on the *Queens Head pub* – part of a poem by **Emily Dickinson**. Continue up the hill and onto

the left hand fork of the road, which is *Crich Lane*. After 100 yards enter the *Festival Gardens* on the left and find '**Prayer in a Garden**' by Bert Hinckley mounted on a large stone.

Walk back down the road but a few yards after re-passing the *Queens Head* pub, take the jitty on the right down onto *Swinney Lane*. Immediately opposite you is *Mill Street*. Go down here and turn left at the bottom into *Green Lane*. Turn immediately left into *Short Row*. Towards the end of this row, on the left on a garden wall, is an extract from Beth Fender's '**From My Bedroom Window on a May Morning**'. (Please only visit this plaque briefly and no more than two people at a time. This is to respect the privacy of local residents.)

Turn left back into *Green Lane* and then take the 2<sup>nd</sup> left into *Field Row* and go the short distance up to the *Unitarian chapel* where you will find the Coleridge poem '**To Nature**' on the railings.

Carry on again a very short distance along *Green Lane* and turn right down *Joseph Street*. At the bottom there is a high wall in front of you, where you will find '**Words on a Wall**' by Jean Sealey, the only commissioned poem on the trail.

Turn right along the *Clusters* until you come to cobbled *Long Row*. Turn left and rejoin the A6 which will take you back to the *Mill*.

We hope you enjoyed your walk. If you did, please tell friends about it, and put some feedback on the website.... if you had problems, tell us!

<http://bethspetrytrail.co.uk/contact/>

#### *Disclaimer*

*Please take care – especially if taking children on the trail – as the route takes you by the River Derwent and across a busy trunk road. Beth's Poetry Trail can take no responsibility for your safety whilst following the above route.*

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