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## Barnsley Town



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**Barnsley** (/ˈbɑːnzli/, locally [ˈbɑːnzlɛ]) is a town in South Yorkshire, England. Historically in the West Riding of Yorkshire, it lies on the River Dearne. Barnsley is surrounded by several smaller settlements which together form the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley, of which Barnsley is the largest and its administrative centre. The metropolitan borough had a population of 231,900 at the 2011 UK Census; *Barnsley urban Area* had a population of 71,599 (2001 census). Barnsley had a population of 85,905 in 2011

Barnsley is notable as a former industrial town centred on coal mining and glassmaking although in the town few factories remain, notably the glassworks. Although the industries declined in the 20th century, Barnsley's culture is rooted in its industrial heritage; Barnsley has a tradition of brass bands, originally created as social clubs for its mining communities. It is also home of the Barnsley chop.

The town is accessed from junctions 36, 37 and 38 of the M1 motorway and has a railway station on the Hallam and Penistone Lines. Barnsley F.C. is the local football club.

## History

The first reference to Barnsley occurs in 1086 in the *Domesday Book*, in which it is called 'Berneslai' and has a population of around 200. The origin of the name Barnsley is subject to debate, but Barnsley Council claims that its origins lie in the Saxon word "Berne", for barn or storehouse, and "Lay", for field.

The town was in the parish of Silkstone and developed little until in the 1150s when it was given to the Pontefract Priory. The monks built a town where three roads met: the Sheffield to Wakefield, Rotherham to Huddersfield and Cheshire to Doncaster routes. The Domesday village became known as "Old Barnsley", and a town grew up on the new site.

The monks erected a chapel of ease dedicated to Saint Mary, which survived until 1820, and established a market. In 1249, a Royal charter was granted to Barnsley permitting it to hold a weekly market on Wednesdays and annual four-day fair at Michaelmas. By the 1290s, three annual fairs were held. The town was the centre of the Staincross wapentake, but in the mid-16th century had only 600 inhabitants.

From the 17th century, Barnsley developed into a stop-off point on the route between Leeds, Wakefield, Sheffield and London. The traffic generated as a result of its location fuelled trade, with hostelryes and related services prospering. A principal centre for linen weaving during the 18th and 19th century, Barnsley grew into an important manufacturing town.

Barnsley became a municipal borough in 1869, and a county borough in 1913. The town's boundaries were extended to absorb Ardsley and Monk Bretton in 1921 and Carlton in 1938.

Barnsley has a long tradition of glass-making, but is most famous for its coal mines. George Orwell mentioned the town in *The Road to Wigan Pier*. He spent a number of days in the town living in the houses of the working class miners while researching for the book. He wrote very critically of the council's expenditure on the construction of Barnsley Town Hall and claimed that the money should have been spent on improving the housing and living conditions of the local miners.

## Town centre

A large part of Barnsley town centre was constructed during the 1960s. The area around Cheapside and May Day Green, the metropolitan centre, is home to the market and many national high street chains such as Marks & Spencer, WH Smith, Carphone Warehouse, Vodafone, Boots, and The Body Shop. It was due to be demolished in 2009 to make way for a new retail and leisure development; but remains standing. Alhambra Shopping Centre, which was opened in 1991, houses retailers such as Next, Thomas Cook, Poundstretcher, Barbour and Primark. Other prominent areas include Queen Street, where Marks and Spencer and stores such as Topshop, Topman, Wallis and Dorothy Perkins are located, Market Street, Eldon Street and the Arcade, which houses the majority of the independent and designer retailers in Barnsley. The town also has a large concentration of pubs and bars in the central district. There is also a cinema called Parkway cinema.

Outside the town centre are large retail units, retail parks and supermarkets, which include Asda, Morrisons, Currys, Halfords and B&Q.

The development of a new shopping centre is due to start in the town centre in 2015. Several stores such as Vodafone and Halifax Bank have opened.

## Development

Barnsley town centre is undergoing a period of change. Projects include:

- The new Barnsley Interchange (now completed).
- The digital media centre (now completed).
- Gateway Plaza at Town End (now completed). Second phase has started.
- Experience Barnsley – The creation of the Barnsley People's Museum and Archives Centre. This project has been awarded almost £3m of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which means two floors of Barnsley's distinctive town hall will be transformed into state-of-the-art museum galleries, the first devoted to the borough's stories, past and present. (Now completed)

- Barnsley College A Block was completed and opened in September 2011.
- The markets complex which was to house Barnsley Market and be the centre of the town's retailing, anchored by a Debenhams store, has been largely cancelled, instead being replaced by a much smaller scheme to provide public open space, through demolition of the long since vacated council offices, and a limited refurbishment of the existing 1970s market halls.

## Landmarks

- Alhambra Centre
- Barnsley College
- Barnsley Town Hall recently turned into museum
- Cannon Hall Museum, Park & Gardens
- Houndhill
- Locke Park
- Oakwell Stadium football ground, home of Barnsley Football Club
- Wentworth Castle & Gardens
- Barnsley Interchange
- Parish Church of Saint John the Baptist

The first bottle bank for glass recycling collection in the United Kingdom was introduced by both Stanley Race CBE, then president of the Glass Manufacturers' Federation and Ron England in Barnsley. According to a BBC Radio 4 edition of PM aired on 6 June 2007, and a web article, the bank opened in June 1977 but a BBC web article published in 2002 states that the bottle bank opened on 24 August 1977.

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## Transport

The main transport hub Barnsley Interchange, a combined rail and bus station, opened on Sunday 20 May 2007, first project in the remaking Barnsley scheme to be completed. Stagecoach Yorkshire run most bus services within Barnsley, operating to and from Barnsley Interchange. Stagecoach acquired the company from Yorkshire Traction in 2005, and has come under fire for operating the service poorly. Stagecoach overhauled bus services in a bid to improve performance.

Train services are provided by Northern Rail. Northbound there is a half hourly express service to Leeds which takes around 35 minutes augmented by a slower service via Castleford which takes around 50 minutes. There is an hourly service to Huddersfield via the Penistone Line. Southbound there are four trains per hour to Meadowhall Interchange and Sheffield, two of which are local stopping services and two of which are express. One service per hour continues to Chesterfield and Nottingham. Evenings and Sundays there is a less frequent service.

The nearest airport is Robin Hood Airport approximately 26 miles (42 km) away. There is a direct bus service from Barnsley to the airport; the X19, which runs hourly.

## Culture

English author Chris Roberts quips that the "small town" of Barnsley is "a couple hundred miles north of London geographically, but several time zones away culturally".

Barnsley is home to a tradition of brass bands, which were originally created as social clubs for the mining communities. Grimethorpe Colliery Band, located in Grimethorpe, 5 miles (8 km) to the east of Barnsley, is perhaps the best known brass band in Britain. It rose to fame in the film *Brassed Off* and is now the 'artist in residence' at the Royal College of Music, London. The band has performed in Hyde Park during the Last Night of the Proms. Other event include things such as Picnic In The Park, being held on 28 June 2014 to celebrate 20 years of Barnsley Hospice

The 'Bard of Barnsley' Ian McMillan writes a column in the *Barnsley Chronicle*. He was nominated for a chair of poetry at Oxford University, and appears on BBC Radio 4. The Barnsley accent is starting to wear off amongst the younger generation, but it has generally been better maintained than most other Yorkshire

accents. Barnsley has long been known as *Tarn* by locals however this seems to be heard less as the Barnsley accent seems to be spoken less amongst the younger age group.

Ken Loach's film *Kes* was set and filmed in several villages in Barnsley, including Lundwood and Monk Bretton, using local actors such as Freddie Fletcher.

There is a live rock and hip hop music scene, which reached its height in the Britpop years, around 1997, due to its close proximity to Sheffield and Manchester. The 1980s saw the rise of Saxon (metal band), Danse Society (Goth) and **Party Day (Indie-rock)**. Two of the Arctic Monkeys studied music at Barnsley College and Barnsley has its own rappers 'Yes Sir'. Barnsley is the home of several live music venues such as the Underground, Shambles St and hosts BOMfest, an outdoor summer music festival which caters for local and national artists which made the *Daily Telegraph* top 100 U.K. Summer festivals in 2009.

Barnsley Council operates four museums, Elsecar Heritage Centre, Cannon Hall, the Cooper Gallery and Worsbrough Mill. There are plans for a fourth museum in the town hall, a project known as Experience Barnsley. Other museums in Barnsley include the volunteer-run Darfield Museum and the Cawthorne Victoria Jubilee Museum. Other heritage sites include Wortley Top Forge, Wortley Hall, Wentworth Castle, Monk Bretton Priory and Pot House Hamlet.

HIVE Gallery is a contemporary art gallery founded in 2007 by Creative Barnsley and Patrick Murphy. It is situated in Elsecar Heritage Centre and curates eight contemporary art exhibitions per year. The HIVE programme ranges from supporting emerging contemporary artists to exhibiting the work of nationally and internationally known artists. Previous shows have included famous artists such as Sir Peter Blake and Patrick Caulfield.

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The Lamproom Theatre has four theatrical companies, and showcases theatre in the town.

The Academy Theatre is part of the Take 2 Centre where performances range from comedy, West End performers, musicals and the traditional "An Evening With. ... ". The Take 2 Centre houses The Take 2 Performing Arts Academy, The Academy Cafe, The Take 2 Music Centre and Lynx Training and Development.

The Civic, in Barnsley town centre, is a multi-purpose performance venue in a grade II listed building, The Civic was re-opened in March 2009 after a major redevelopment. The Civic has hosted high profile acts such as Al Murray and Russell Howard. The Civic houses a contemporary art gallery that hosts touring exhibition from the V&A and the Flow Gallery in London. The Civic also curates its own work for touring, such as Little Black Dress and most recently Brazil +55.

## Sport

Barnsley F.C. play in the Football League One, the third tier of English football. Their home ground, Oakwell Stadium is situated in Oakwell, just outside the town centre. The club has had a mixed recent history. In the late 1990s they had a brief spell in the Premier League, but were relegated after one season. Subsequent seasons saw them relegated to the third tier of English football. After four seasons, Barnsley regained a place in the second tier.

Speedway racing was staged at a track near Barnsley at Barnsley Lundwood. The track entered a team in the Northern Leagues of 1929 and 1930, and currently have professional speedway rider Josh Bates hailing from Barnsley

Rugby league is played in the town, at a number of clubs, past and present. Dodworth ARLFC played in the second division of the BARLA run Pennine League, playing through the winter. They played at the Miners Welfare ground in Dodworth until deteriorating player participation forced the club to fold 5 games into the 2013/14 season. The same fate befell Hoyland Vikings ARLFC, prompting talk of a merger. This however failed to materialise leaving only one club to represent the town. The only representation now comes from the Dearne Valley Bulldogs in nearby Bolton on Dearne. Like Dodworth and Hoyland, they participate in the Pennine League. Barnsley Broncos play in the RFL conference, which is a summer competition and runs from May to September. Also based at the Miners Welfare, Barnsley Broncos were set up to play in the less intense summer season.



Shaw Lane is the home to many sports in town, Cricket, Rugby Union, Squash, Bowls, Football, Athletics and Archery are all played to a high standard and host many of the towns teams including Barnsley CC and Barnsley RUFC. Peoples Sport in Barnsley is a project writing the history of participation in sport in Barnsley is in progress and is expected to be complete in 2015.

The town also has a high standard badminton league, with three separate tiers.

The town hosts Barnsley Harriers, a nationally recognised running club.

Ardley Golf Club, Barnsley, (now defunct) first appeared in the 1930s. The club disappeared at the onset of the Second World War.

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