

## Howard Trail Prayer Walk

This sheet is designed to accompany the Howard Trail leaflet available on [www.bunyan.co.uk](http://www.bunyan.co.uk).

Please feel free to pray with the leaflet, visiting each place in your memory or imagination. If you would like to, and within current government guidelines, you may wish to incorporate the trail, or parts of it, in one of your daily exercise walks. But please continue to observe social distancing and all guidelines and requirements to safeguard yourself and others.

1

Howard House: John Howard bought this house and let it to tenants free, on condition that he was given a light lunch and sole use of the parlour on a Sunday, so that he could walk to church from his home in Cardington. He did not wish to compel his servants to break their Sabbath by driving him to church in his carriage.

**Pray for employers and workers, including self-employed and voluntary workers at this time. Pray that businesses and charities may find ways to care for all staff, making use of government provision where possible, and for all those whose livelihood and future is causing anxiety.**

2

Bunyan Meeting Church, on the site of the Old Meeting, where John Howard worshipped. John had learnt his strong Christian faith from his parents, and he worshipped at a church where the powerful Christian message of John Bunyan (author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*) had been preached for generations.

**Give thanks to God for those who brought you to a living faith in Jesus Christ. Thank God for Christian teachers and leaders throughout the ages, especially those who have inspired you. Pray for grace to pass on your own faith in the present time, and to future generations.**

3

Howard Chapel: This church was founded following a dispute within Old Meeting church about baptism – whether infants could be baptised, or only adult believers. Howard tried to reconcile the two parties, but eventually gave a donation to build the new chapel, while still offering financial support to the minister of the Old Meeting.

**Pray for divided communities everywhere: families who have fallen out; neighbours set against each other; friends who quarrel . . . And further afield, especially in this time of global crisis, pray for the victims of violence and war, living in war zones, or refugees.**

4

Site of County Gaol: John Howard was appointed High Sheriff for Bedfordshire. Most holders of this post didn't take their responsibility for the County Gaol seriously, but Howard did, and he began a remarkable life of campaigning for better conditions for prisoners in Britain and all around the world.

**Pray for all those whose lives are given to the care of others, including those who work, or are imprisoned in Bedford Gaol in our own time. In these days, pray especially for health workers, providers of food and essential goods and services, whose work is necessary to our lives.**

**5**

John Howard's Statue: In his lifetime, John Howard avoided having his portrait painted, or statues erected to him. The present statue was erected for the centenary of his death, in 1890, and served the community for many years as a water trough and fountain. Both John Howard and John Bunyan are commemorated by statues in our town centre.

**Give thanks for the men and women who have shaped our communities, for those who have campaigned for justice and brought about social change. If you could put up a statue for someone, who would it be? How can you bring about change in your own community?**

**6**

John Howard's House in Cardington. John Howard worked with Samuel Whitbread to create a model community in the village of Cardington. They built houses for ordinary people to live in, replacing what were often squalid living conditions, and set up schools and community meeting places.

**Pray for your own neighbourhood. What changes would make it a better place for people to live in? Pray for people living in poverty in many parts of the world, in favelas, shanty towns and refugee camps, often in overcrowded conditions and lacking sanitation, especially where this makes the transmission of diseases like Coronavirus more likely.**

**Continue to pray for the people you have thought of today. If you would like to be linked to a community of prayer, keep in touch with Bunyan Meeting Church through our website, or email our church office for more information.**

**Website:** [www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk](http://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk)

**Email:** [bunyanmeeting@googlemail.com](mailto:bunyanmeeting@googlemail.com)

## John Howard 1726-1790

John Howard's parents, John and Ann were dissenters, Christians who did not belong to the Established Church of England, and there is evidence that his father was an occasional attender of the Old Meeting in Mill Street, (as Bunyan's church became known after it was rebuilt in 1707).

This strong faith passed down to their son **John**, a faith that was to carry him through the many challenges he faced throughout his life. John Howard's preferred place of worship was the **Old Meeting** and we read that as a young man he chose to walk there from his home in **Cardington**

rather than put his servants to the trouble of driving him on the Sabbath. John later bought the house next to the Old Meeting (now called **Howard House**), and let it to tenants rent free on the condition that he was given a light lunch and sole use of the parlour on a Sunday.

Following a difference of opinion with the Bunyan Meeting minister who insisted that baptism should be for believers only, John Howard contributed £200 and an interest-free loan in 1772, to build a new chapel, called **Howard Chapel**, in Mill Street.

In 1773 John Howard was appointed High Sheriff for Bedfordshire. As keeper of the **County**

**Gaol**, he was appalled by the conditions in which prisoners were kept, and he conducted a series of observations of other local prisons. Eventually he toured throughout Britain and visited many countries in Europe, presenting his findings on the condition of prisons to the House of Commons. His major work, *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* includes what he calls *Preliminary Observations and an account of some Foreign Prisons and Hospitals*.

Almost eighty years after his death, **the Howard Association** was formed in London. It merged with the **Penal Reform League** in 1921 to become the **Howard League for Penal Reform**. Today, the Howard League is Britain's biggest penal reform organisation.

The **statue of John Howard** in St Paul's Square was erected in 1890, the centenary of Howard's death. It shows Howard in the travelling dress of the time to denote he was a great traveller.



### Bunyan Meeting

Mill Street, Bedford MK40 3EU

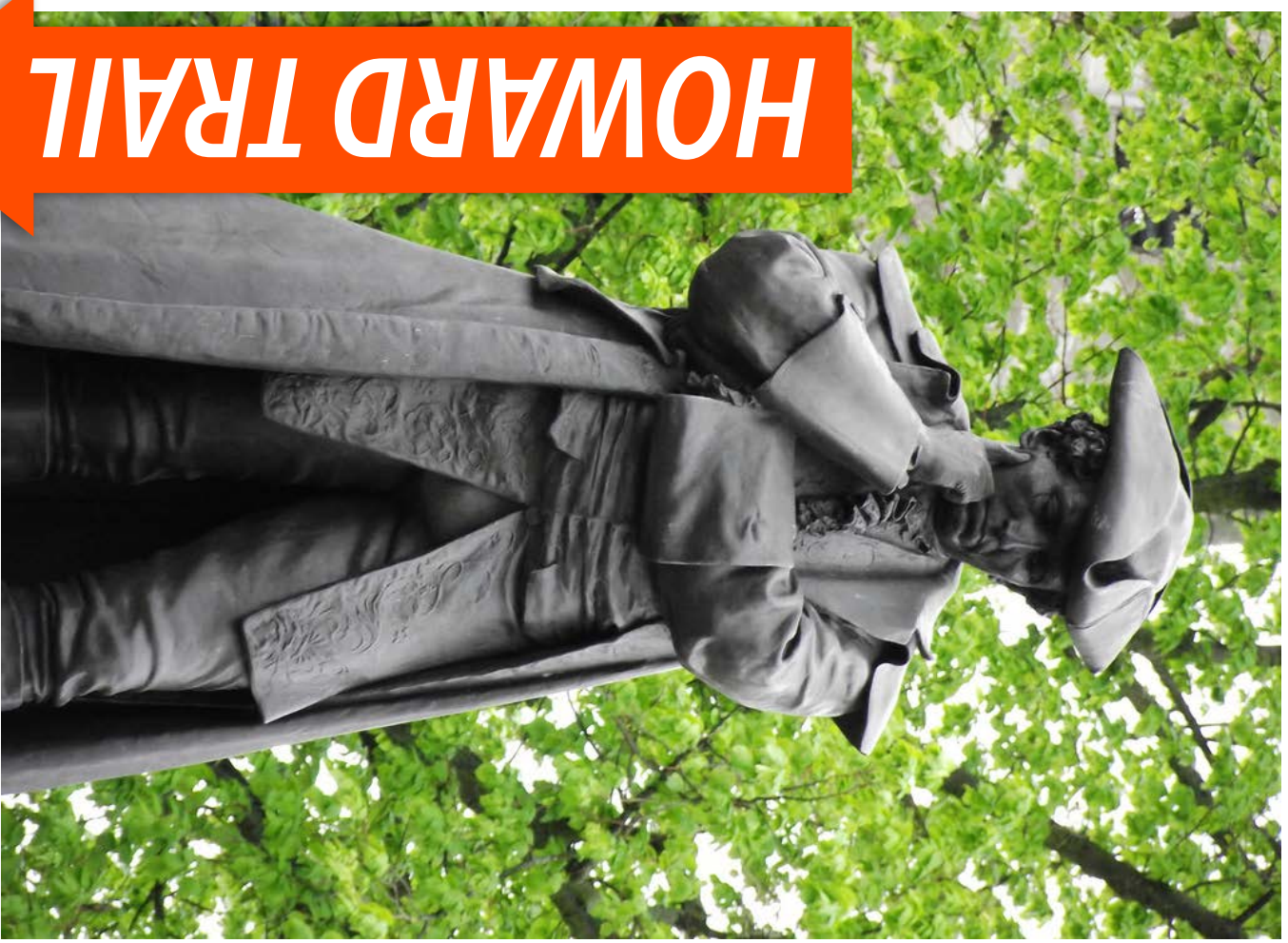
Telephone 01234 213722

email/ bunyanmeetin@gmail.com

website www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk

### 23 March 2020

Revised Howard Trail for use during the period of Government restrictions occasioned by the Coronavirus pandemic. **Please observe the social distancing recommendations.**



# HOWARD TRAIL

**LOCATIONS**  
1, 2, 3, 4 & 5  
ARE IN CENTRAL  
BEDFORD AND  
ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT...  
**LOCATION 6 IS**  
IN CARDINGTON & CAN  
BE REACHED BY CAR

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
AT THIS PRESENT TIME  
NONE OF THE  
BUILDINGS ARE OPEN  
TO THE PUBLIC



- Please tick:
- 1 Howard House** MILL STREET / NEWNHAM ROAD
  - 2 Bunyan Meeting** ON THE SITE OF 'OLD MEETING'
  - 3 Howard Chapel** MILL STREET
  - 4 Site of County Gaol** HIGH STREET / SILVER STREET
  - 5 John Howard's Statue** ST PAUL'S SQUARE
  - 6 John Howard's House** IN CARDINGTON   
BY CAR - VIA A6 & A603  
APPROX. 3.5 MILES FROM BEDFORD



**4**

Pedestrian Shopping Area - Silver Street

Bedford High Street

Mill Street

**3**

**2**

**1**

**5**

St Paul's Square

St Paul's Church

**6**

The Embankment

River Great Ouse

Castle Lane

The Basement at Bunyan

Bunyan Meeting Church

John Bunyan Museum

Offices and Meeting Rooms

Garden

The Higgins

Bedfords Castle Mound

St Cuthbert's Church

Panacea Museum

