

Gisburn Youth Hostel 1934 to 1940

Park Hostel, Main Street, Gisburn, Clitheroe, Lancashire

Historic County:

YHA Region: Manchester

GR: SD 829487

Yorkshire (West Riding)

YHA's Manchester Region opened its 40-bed 'Park Hostel', Gisburn, on 19th May 1934, in just the fourth year of the Association's existence. It occupied the former Park Hotel, an old temperance hotel, opposite the church at the east end of the village. An official opening was held on 8th September. By 1936 there were beds for 50: 34 men and 16 women. Even in those days of cramped beds and dormitories, this was one of the YHA's larger hostels. The hostel also boasted a store of basic tinned and packet goods.

From 1935 to 1940, and perhaps in 1934, Mr and Mrs JW Ainsworth were the wardens. The nearest hostels were at Slaidburn, 10 miles, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, 20 miles, Grassington, 17 miles and Edgworth near Bolton, 24 miles.



Guests leave Park Hostel, Gisburn, in 1935 – anonymous image (author's collection)

The hostel appeared in the 1940 handbook, but had to close at the end of the season, in October 1940, when the lease was reluctantly given up. A national notice of 5th November advised that it was closed until further notice, but Gisburn youth hostel was not to see any further use.

After the YHA era, the building continued as a hotel and has operated as a luxury guest house in recent years.

<i>Overnights – inclusive periods each year as follows</i>									
<i>1934-1941: previous Oct to Sept</i>									
†: the 18 bednights for the 1941 statistical year relate to stays late in 1940									
...	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
...	...	...	...	461	1494	1771	1891	1863	1667
1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
1111	18†	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...



A fine 1930s postcard image of Gisburn Hostel by E Pye. The large wooden painted nameboard was a feature of some early Manchester Region hostels; the one that adorned Slaidburn hostel was intact for many years. The unusual elongated triangle design and arrangement of the letters Y, H and A dated from 1931, the first full year of the Association. It is similar to the badge icon that is used by the YHA Archive. Eagle-eyed readers will notice three further YHA signs: a most unusual hanging illuminated glass lamp above the door, a probably home-made painted triangle on the front gate in one of the multitude of pre-war styles, and an indeterminate one on the side gate (author's collection)

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