

Chichester Heritage Trails



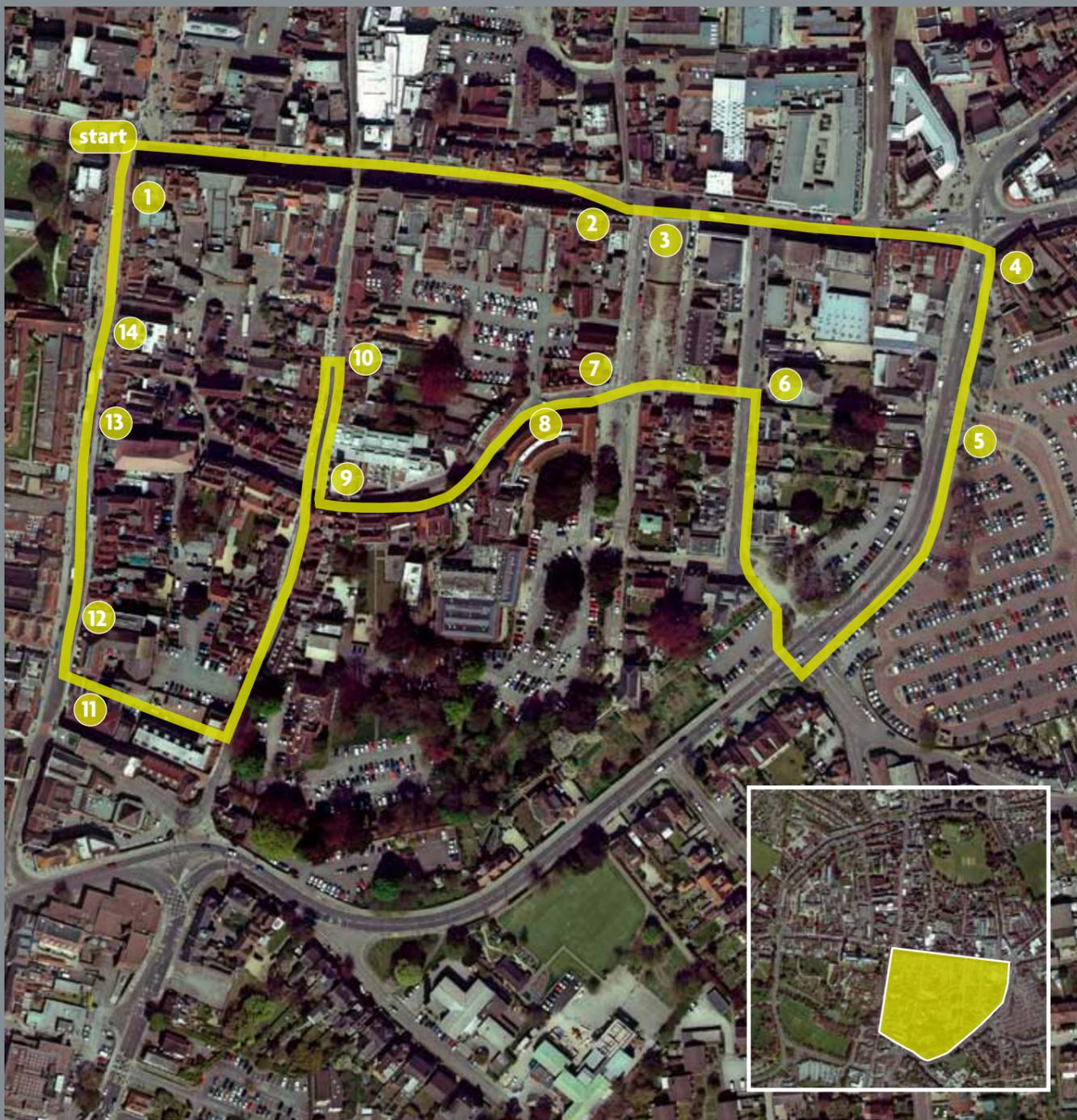
Trail 3: South-East Quadrant

General Introduction

Chichester's four principal streets still mainly follow the pattern of the Roman settlement, founded nearly two thousand years ago. The city walls – remarkably intact for an English town – also follow the Roman plan and contain masonry from the original construction. These four city centre walks explore each of Chichester's historic quadrants that are divided by the four principal thoroughfares of North, South, East and West streets. Each quadrant has its own special atmosphere and distinctive history. A great rebuilding from the late seventeenth century replaced or re-fronted timber-framed thatched houses with the characteristic Georgian street scene of brick and stucco buildings that exists today.

South-East Quadrant

This is very much a walk of two contrasting halves: the former inns and chapels of East Street, South Street and the New Town area, and the pristine Georgian solemnity of the Pallants area. The former has changed markedly in recent decades, while the Pallants has changed very little, remaining a bastion of high quality housing and offices for professional workers. This trail includes the east side of South Street and the south side of East Street. The west side of South Street is included in Trail 4 and the north side of East Street in Trail 2.



The Eve of St Agnes

Stop 4 on this trail and Stop 1 on Trail 4, refer to the time John Keats stayed in Chichester during the winter of 1819 – a visit that inspired his celebrated poem 'The Eve of St Agnes'. The story behind the poem can be found on our website – www.chichesterheritagetrails.org.uk – its mixture of the mystical and the divine, steeped in the harsh chill of an English winter, still enthralled the reader, two hundred years later. St Agnes Eve (20th January) was, in folklore, the time assigned when maidens, who performed certain rituals could conjure up the spirit of their true love. In these final verses, the lovers rise at daybreak to pick their way through the drunken revellers and escape into the night, or is it actually a flight from mortality to the next life on which they embark?

Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassaillers will never heed:—
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee.

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flaggon by his side;
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm....

Did you know?

Chichester has 518 listed buildings, 18 of which are Grade 1. Find out more about them on the heritage trails and discover a lot of hidden architectural gems and stories about Chichester's amazing history that will surprise you.

Do you have memories of old Chichester? If so, we would like to hear from you. We are recording memories of the city for future generations. A memory recorded, is history saved.

Please let us know what you think about this trail. We would really like to know which aspects of Chichester's history you would like future trails to cover. Local volunteers, including Chichester University students and pupils at Bishop Luffa School, are currently creating these walks leaflets through the Chichester Heritage Trails project, which is run by the Chichester Society and managed by History People UK.



Chichester City Council

The project has received a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £53,000. As part of the project, volunteers are doing archival research and carrying out oral history interviews with residents to recall their memories of Chichester in the past. They have received training in these heritage skills through the project.

Project partners: Bishop Luffa School, Chichester BID, Chichester City Council, Chichester Local History Society, Chichester Society, Chichester Walls Trust, University of Chichester, West Sussex Library Service, West Sussex Record Office.

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You will find a lot more about the Chichester Heritage Trails project and local history on our website and social media sites.



Chichester Heritage Trails

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History People UK
developing and delivering community heritage projects



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Chichester Heritage Trails



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South-East Quadrant





they are currently hidden by suspended ceilings. If you look up to the first floor and the roof above you can gauge the full extent of the original building.



Horses. The Puritan MP and regicide, William Cawley is said to have been born here in 1604. In the 1820s, one of the city's Members of Parliament, William Huskisson, used the inn as an election headquarters. Huskisson held many high offices of State, including, President of the Board of Trade and Leader of the House of Commons. He was killed by a train while attending the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, the first person to die as a result of a railway accident. As with Stop 1 above, stepping back will allow a full appreciation of the upper floors and roof line of this old building.



The imposing classical style building on the corner of Baffin's Lane was built in 1832 as the city's **Corn Exchange**. Its massive pediment is held up by six cast-iron columns. A large house was demolished to make way for this grand edifice – a symbol of the city's prosperity as a market town. Though a centre for trading, it was also used for entertainment purposes and in 1896 the first motion picture was screened here. A plaque commemorating the occasion can be seen on the side of the building. The old corn bins usefully doubled up as extra seating on these occasions. During the First World War, 242 soldiers from a cycling battalion of the Hampshire Regiment were billeted here. Ballroom dancing took place in the inter-war years. The cinema closed in 1980, since when the building has been put to several retail uses.

The Corn Exchange. Hazel Barnett (born 1927) remembers the cinema and dance classes held here in the 1930s and '40s years, when her parents were cinema pianists –

"It's going back a bit, but it was a cinema, of course, and my dad played there during the silent movies, and my mother played the piano at the interval. There were these big corn bins that my brother would remember sitting on... And later on, during the war, when I was beginning to go out, dances of course – there was Mr and Mrs Rodney Hudson and they taught ballroom dancing."



4 11 Eastgate Square is situated at the apex of The Hornet and Market Road. Look up to see an oval plaque commemorating the stay here in 1819 of the youthful poet, John Keats, whose visits to the Vicars' Hall Crypt in South Street (see Trail 4) are believed to have inspired his celebrated poem, The Eve of St Agnes.

5 Turn right into Market Road. The old **Cattle Market** was situated in the large car parking area on your left. The market gate piers can still be seen. The livestock market was moved to this spot in 1871 having previously been held in East Street and North Street. Stall holders selling all types of goods were a popular adjunct to the livestock market. On one day in January 1888, 2,493 animals were sold, an indication of the central role that the market played in the local economy. By 1985 however the animal market was in steep decline and, despite a campaign to keep it open, was forced to close five years later. In 2015 **The Bull Inn**, where many deals had been struck on market days, also closed.



Two residents remember the livestock market. Edgar Banks (born 1905) was a market stall holder for many years – *"Market every Wednesday. Very good – big market too – loads of cattle...Strides sold the cattle and sheep and Whites sold the pigsIn the old days, you see, before we had cattle lorries, all the cattle had to walk in, and the sheep and lambs and calves came in horse and cart transport..."*



Elizabeth Farrell (born 1916) remembered a childish pleasure found at the market –

"They'd be all the pens, they'd be sheep and lambs and cows and pigs and everything. It was a real country market – it was wonderful...It was just something to go and see. You didn't buy anything – just go round to see the animals."

6 Turn right into St John's Street. **The Chapel of St John the Evangelist** is a fine example of a yellow brick Georgian church in a neo-classical style, although its octagonal shape is rather unusual, certainly in West Sussex. It is a Grade I listed building. Designed by the London architect James Elmes, and opened in 1813, it was an Anglican proprietary chapel, built and run as a business to solve the overcrowding problem in the city's tiny parish churches. The money to build it came from the issue of shares; the income from the sale and rent of private pews was used to cover the running costs, including the minister's stipend. The church has not been used for regular services since 1973 and is now managed by the Churches Conservation Trust. Many musical and arts-based activities are held in the building. The Friary of the Blackfriars once dominated this part of Chichester, until it was closed, along with other monastic orders during the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s. The former Blackfriars site was developed as Newtown from 1808 – comprising St John's Street, New Town and Friary Lane.



Rev. John Fullagar, minister here from 1818–1861, was very active in the life of the city and helped found the Mechanics' Institute, a school, and the Chichester Savings Bank. An obituary stated that he "united with talent of no ordinary calibre ... a fearless love of truth and an instructive hatred of oppression".

8 You are now entering a part of Chichester known as the **Pallants**, an area once under the direct jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The name refers to this being a paled or fenced-off area within the city. Another derivation of Pallants is *Pallatinat*, meaning 'an area controlled by others', in this case the Archbishop of Canterbury. Up until the beginning of the eighteenth century this was a poor district, dominated by the leather industry. The four streets of the Pallants mimic the four principal streets of the city. Over three hundred years ago there was a cross where the four Pallants met from where the leather workers sold their wares.



7 Continue into New Town and into Baffin's Lane. Baffin's Hall (now Henry Adams Auctioneers) was built in 1721 as a **Presbyterian Chapel** later becoming the General Baptist Chapel and, finally, a Unitarian Chapel. The

9 Henry Peckham built **Pallant House**, in 1713, using the latest ideas in brick construction. His new house would have seemed very out-of-place amongst the squalid tenements, and a thorough redevelopment of the Pallants took place over the next century. The leather workers were moved out to Little London. Today Pallant House is a gallery of modern art. A modern extension has been built to house further exhibits. The birds on the entrance piers are supposed to be ostriches (a jest reputedly on the family name 'peck 'em'), although to generations of Chichester school children, it will remain the 'Dodo House!' The monogram HP appears in the metal overthrow to the gate piers.



10 7 and 8 North Pallant was sold in 1786 to the composer, John Marsh (look for the blue plaque) who converted it into one big house. It was later divided into two houses again and No 7 was purchased by the Chichester Literary and Philosophical Society as its headquarters in 1831.



11 Return from North Pallant and make your way down South Pallant and then turn right into Theatre Lane. On the northern corner with South Street you will find **The Old Theatre**, which was built in 1792. Georgian and Regency audiences did not observe the niceties of polite company that came to be expected in the Victorian age. Audiences were loud, drunken and

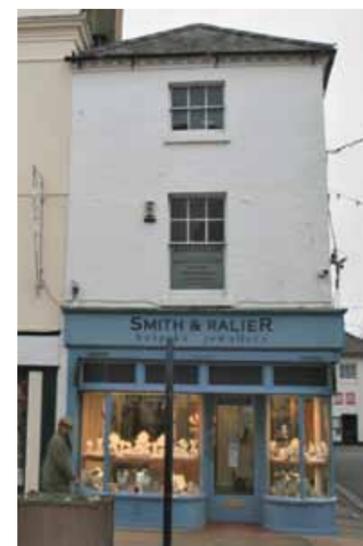


hard to please. This behaviour could also extend to the actors. On one occasion the actor playing Shylock in the Merchant of Venice was so drunk that he cut himself open while trying to incise his 'pound of flesh'. The theatre closed in 1850. The building is now Zizzi, an Italian restaurant and few of its former internal features remain.

12 45 South Street was a private members club called The Regnum. For some eighty years it housed the Chichester Philosophical and Literary Society after it moved from 7 North Pallant. The Society had an extensive museum but all the exhibits appear to have been sold ad hoc after the First World War. A fire in 1983 seriously damaged the building, leading to a major restoration of the building.



13 The White Horse (now Prezzo) was one of Chichester's oldest inns, dating back to at least 1533. The building was re-fronted in the eighteenth century although the original Tudor timber-framed jetty can still be seen at the back of the building when viewed from West Pallant. A sign hangs from the original ornate eighteenth century wrought-iron bracket and you can still see the White Horse stained glass in the windows.



14 69 South Street (the shop on the northern corner with Cooper Street) was the home between 1729 and 1742 of Benjamin Martin, described as being "one of the most eminent mathematicians of the age". Martin also made scientific instruments which he supplied to academic institutions, including Harvard College, in what was then the American Colonies. Return now to the Market Cross and the end of this trail.