



A guide to the history of Whittlesey



Welcome and background

Originally identified under proposal four in the Growing Fenland - Whittlesey Report, this project was funded by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The development of these exciting new walking routes was directed by a collaborative steering group made up of key stakeholders and independent local representatives. Project management and delivery was provided by Fenland District Council's Transport Team.

Highway works such as resurfacing footpaths, replacing safety barriers and providing additional dropped kerbs have been included in this project to improve accessibility for those on foot or using mobility aids along the route.

Encouraging more people to get out and about and explore Whittlesey and encourage visitors to enjoy this historic town is a key aim for this exciting project.

This brochure provides all the fascinating route information for the Whittlesey Heritage Walk and the wonderful locations to visit in this fantastic Fenland town. The trails can also be followed using the information boards installed along the route or with the amazing Love Exploring App where these routes and extra games can be experienced using your mobile phone (see page 28).

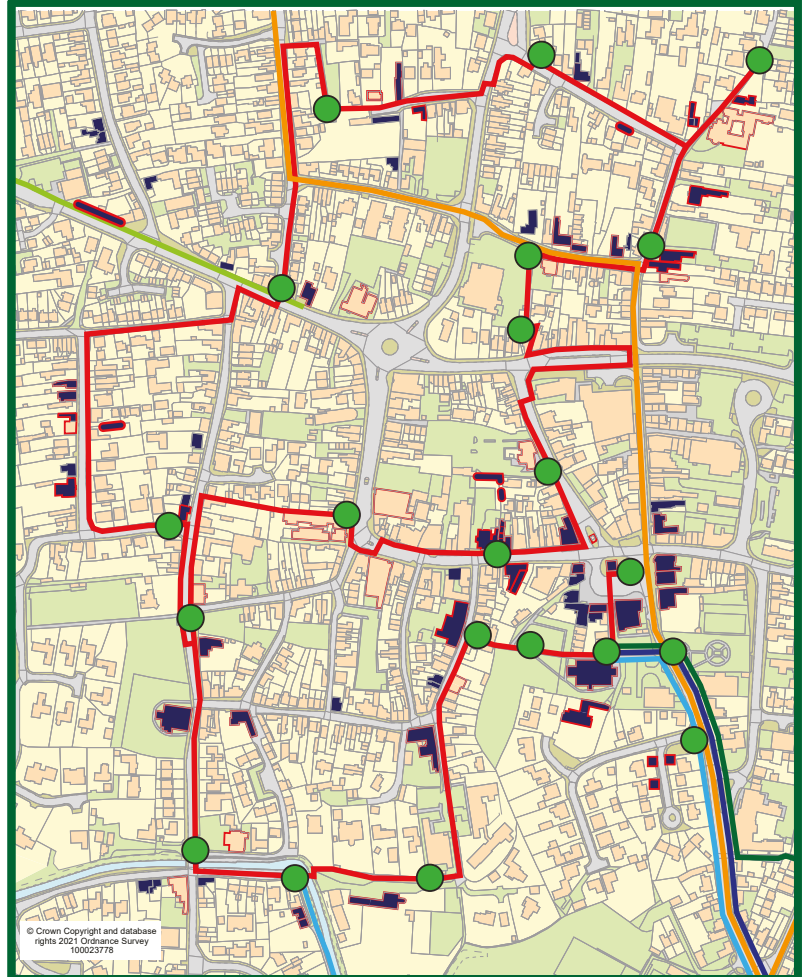
Details of Whittlesey's gardens, river and nature reserves can be found on pages 25, 26 and 27 of this brochure. Transport information to help you get in to town or to expand your exploration further afield is included on page 29.



Route information

The Whittlesey Heritage Walk provides a distinctive offer to encourage the exploration of this historic Fenland Town. The route includes historic local landmarks and provides insight into the history and heritage of the town. Key information regarding bus stop locations, access to Whittlesea Railway Station and the National Cycling Network Route 63 which runs through the town is also included.

This Walk is split into a long route (2.8km/90mins) and a shorter route (1.3km/40mins). Each route starts and finishes at Market Place and includes numerous stopping points with information panels shown on this map



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | Heritage Walk Route | | Route to Lattersey Nature Reserve |
| | Information Boards | | Route to King's Dyke Nature Reserve |
| | Heritage Walk Sites | | River Walk Route |
| | Listed Buildings | | Route to Whittlesea Railway Station |
| | National Cycle Network Route 63 | | |

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 1

This is Market Place in the middle of Whittlesey town and the central setting for weekly markets, twice yearly fun fairs and the famous Straw Bear Festival every January. Picturesque and surrounded by a variety of historic buildings and features each with their own stories and experiences covering hundreds of years. A perfect starting point for exploring the Whittlesey Heritage Walk....

The Butter Cross



Designated as a scheduled ancient monument the Butter Cross was built in 1680 to give shelter to people selling dairy goods. It has served as a meeting place for

old and young throughout its life. It has even been boarded round to create a polling station when necessary.

A valued focal point in the bustling heart of town and protected by the courts way back in 1759 when an order was made to fine youths if they kicked a football into the roof space as this was causing damage to the Butter Cross and surrounding properties.

8 Market Place

This property once formed part of St. Mary's coquinary or monks' kitchen supplying food for the monks at Thorney Abbey.



The building named Harrington House was built in the mid 17th century with the later edition of an 18th century pedimented

doorcase – just goes to show that home improvements have always been in fashion! The iron railings were added in the 19th century but, unlike many others, they escaped removal during the second world war.

4 High Causeway

An imposing building built in circa 1740, this property once had a walled garden on the opposite side of High Causeway. The original railings in front were taken down and re-purposed for the war effort but replaced in recent years.



Across the zebra crossing is 5 Market Place, striking in its heyday of the early/mid 19th century. This building was used by the town registrar for births, marriages and deaths in the 1950s.

6-7 Market Place

This late 18th century property was originally a bank, once a branch of Gurney's bank but long since used for a variety of purposes. A major one from at least 1896 was as a chemist shop which retained its old fittings and fixtures right up to the 1960s. It closed on the retirement of chemist Mr. Hutchinson who was well-known locally for making many of his own hand lotions and cough mixtures.



Please note: Panels 1 & 2 of the route feature on a double-sided board at Market Place.

The introductory text and directions to the next board are therefore identical on both panels.

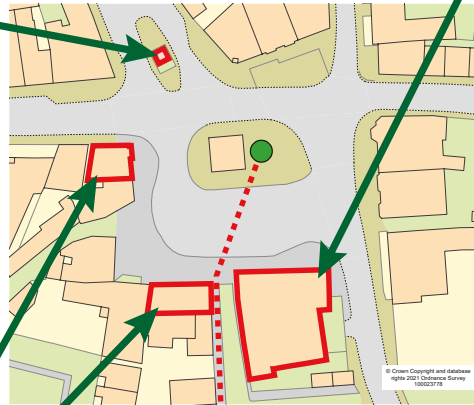
WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 2

This is Market Place in the middle of Whittlesey town and the central setting for weekly markets, twice yearly fun fairs and the famous Straw Bear Festival every January. Picturesque and surrounded by a variety of historic buildings and features each with their own stories and experiences covering hundreds of years. A perfect starting point for exploring the Whittlesey Heritage Walk....

The War Memorial



The War Memorial, funded by the people of Whittlesey and made of Portland stone, is surmounted by St George with his foot resting on the dragon. It contains the names of 245 soldiers who gave their lives in WW1 and WW2 along with two civilians in WW2 and one name from the Korean war.



14 - 15 Market Place

This thatched building on the corner of Market Street with rendered walls dates from the 17th century and has been extensively altered over the years for commercial purposes. It has lived many lives as a dressmakers, stationers, fish shop, cafes, green grocers and a bookies.



1 - 5 Mansion House

A glorious grade II* Georgian brick-built town house with parapet. This building has also had many uses including a doctor's surgery and a post office. Rent for this property was paid to the Lord of the Manor for well over a hundred years.



The George Hotel

A grade II listed public house popular with the locals for 100s of years.



But perhaps not so popular for Elizabeth Brown in 1863, as she was murdered in the maltings at the rear of the property by her date William Green. He was caught and sent to prison after trying unsuccessfully to push her body into the furnace.

The building remains a striking feature of the Market Place despite it's coaching arch and shop being demolished when Station Road was widened in the 1950s.

Can you spot?

The Famous Straw Bear – it is featured in many places across Whittlesey and you might even see him from right here!



DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Once you have viewed both sides of this board leave Market Place via the path between The George Hotel and Mansion House. Continue straight ahead to the entrance of St Mary's Church.

Distance to next information board approx. 72 metres. Distance to next seating area 140 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 3

St Mary's Church

Justly famous for its glorious and lofty spire rising 173 in feet from ground level. The building's massive ashlar-faced tower with elegant flying buttresses was built in the 15th century along with the extension to the Chancel. The rest of the church dates from the 13th and 14th centuries, having been constructed after a fire in 1244.

The interior of the church contains a beautiful altar and impressive west window depicting three local Saints: Guthlac, Audrey/Etheldreda, and Edmund.



The tower houses eight bells some with inscriptions, these include "The Lord to praise my voice to raise", "Peace and good neighbourhood" and "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God".

St Mary's Church is part of the Diocese of Ely.

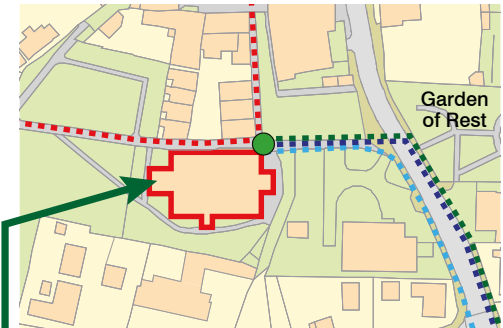


Fancy another option?

Whittlesea Railway Station, Lattersey Nature Reserve or a peaceful riverside walk?

From this point on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk you can choose to take a different trail and explore the Lattersey Nature Walk (1.4km) or stroll round the Bower next to the river (2km). You are also just a short stroll from Whittlesea Railway Station (0.6km) where you can hop on a train and be in Peterborough within minutes or Ely in less than half an hour.

Follow the footpath to your left towards Station Road. Taking care to cross the road you will find an information board upon the railings of the Garden of Rest showing these alternative routes.



To continue on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk please see the directions below.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Take the path to your right into St Mary's Churchyard where you will find the next information and a seat to relax and take in the peaceful space and wonderful view of the church spire.

Distance to next board and seating area approx. 65 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 4

Manor House



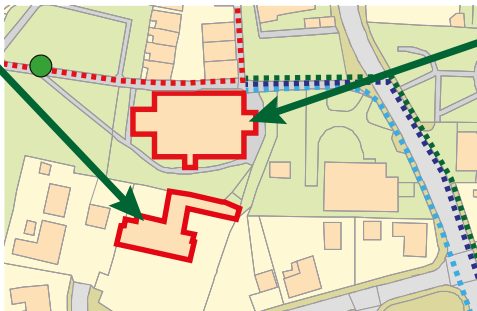
Immediately south of the Church peeping over the trees and hedgerows is Manor House, built between the 15th and 17th centuries in stone

although the house has been extensively altered.

This house has historic connections with Stamford. The house itself was once lived in by Lady Elizabeth Hatton, granddaughter of William Cecil, Lord Burghley. It formed part of her dowry on her marriage to Sir Edward Coke c1600. It has a beautiful slate roof that is made using Collyweston stone, quarried not far from Burghley House.



You can hop on a train at Whittlesea to Stamford, the house is 1.4km (27mins) from the station.



St Mary's Church

In 1869 Jokey Boyce, a local character, climbed the spire of St Mary's Church. His friends bet him a gallon of beer. He climbed, using the outside crockets and turned the weather vane. When he got down he said "I dare not cross a dyke on a plank". A copy of this story is in Whittlesey museum, taken from a newspaper article. Sadly Jokey was one of many who died in Whittlesey workhouse, which is now the site of Sir Harry Smith Community College.

St Mary's Churchyard

This land once served as a graveyard for the town and neighbouring villages, although not everyone could afford a headstone.

Courtesy of peterboroughimages.co.uk



In 1950 the headstones were relocated along the perimeter of what is now this lovely green space around you, although the graves themselves still remain beneath the grass.

Courtesy of peterboroughimages.co.uk



The cockerel weather vane, installed on 1st January 1914, was occasionally used as target practice for the Home Guard during World War II. In recent years, when the vane was taken down for some maintenance work one of the bullets was found still lodged in it. The bullet was left in place and remains up there to this day!

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Once you have taken the time to rest a moment and take in the tranquil scenery here, continue along the path to St Mary's Street to the next information board.

Distance to next board 50 metres. Distance to next seating area (Turners Lane) 180 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 5

The Old Vicarage



On St Mary's Street directly opposite is the former vicarage built around 1825 for St Mary's Church.

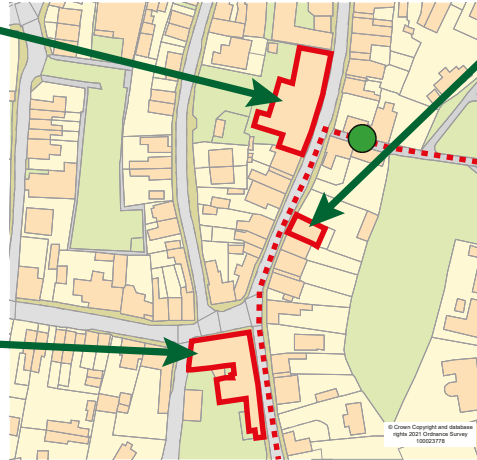
This once had a vicarage garden where the building behind you now stands.

The Falcon

This building is probably 18th century in origin with later additions. It has an unusual plaster plaque of a bird, masquerading as a Falcon, over the door.



To the right of the building is Paradise Lane, which leads to the site of one of the town's cesspits in years gone by. We can only assume that Whittlesey had a rather odd sense of humour when naming this lane!



Birthplace of the Hero of Aliwal

Further down St Mary's Street take a look at the plaque on the wall of no. 17. This was the birthplace of Sir Harry Smith, one of the most famous of Whittlesey's sons. Born in 1787 (not 1788) and educated locally, he joined the army in 1805 where he made a name for himself as an officer. Sir Harry was known as 'The Hero of



Aliwal' for his part in one of the many Indian campaigns. In 1847, during a home town visit

10,000 people lined the streets of Whittlesey to give Sir Harry Smith a hero's welcome.

Sir Harry later became Governor and Commander in Chief of the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa.



Bust of Sir Harry housed in St Mary's Church

Can you spot?



This wheel with the letters CTC in old English capitals indicates the Cyclists Touring Club met at one of the buildings featured on this board but can you spot which one as you pass?

The Cyclists Touring Club

was founded in 1878 became really popular and by 1886 it had 21,000 members.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

At the end of the path turn left and follow St Mary's Street south past The Falcon, along Turners Lane to Jenner Health Centre. The route continues through the car park, past the centre, between the high hedges and along the public footpath on the right. Please take care through the car park!

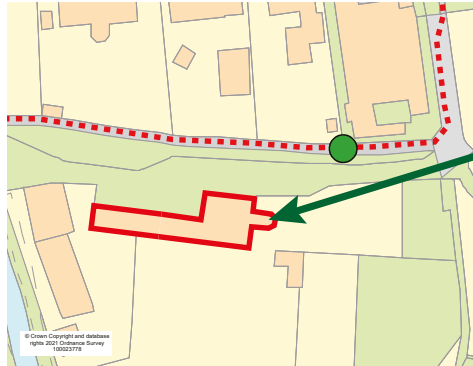
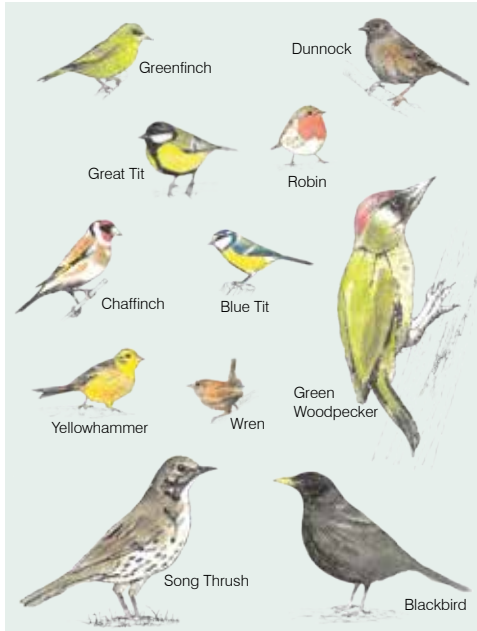
Distance to next board 300 metres. Distance to next seating area (Turners Lane) 140 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 6

Town and Country

This corner of Whittlesey is a hidden gem, just a few minutes from the bustling Market Place at the centre of town and here we are surrounded by trees and birdsong.

Here are some birds you may spot.



Grove House

Along this footpath over the fence is Grove House which was built between 1670 and 1675 by Robert Beale, a wealthy local gentleman farmer. It was once known as Cuckoo Hall from the name of the land Cuckoo Holt on which it was built. It is unusual for its 'hunting lodge' style with a railed balcony around a central chimney stack.



Footbridge

The wooden footbridge at the end of this path was built in 1982 to replace the original brick and stone bridge. It crosses the canalised section of Whittlesey Dyke named Briggate River, now part of the waterway link from the Nene to the Great Ouse. The area and tow path you will see on your immediate left, with its pleasant group of cottages and tree-lined riverside walk, was once called Darling's or Bunting's Bower, but is now simply known as The Bower.



Can you spot?

The Ginkgo Biloba tree is a large deciduous tree often referred to as a living fossil. Six of these trees survived the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. Fossilised



remains of this type of tree have been found dating back to the Jurassic period (around 170 million years ago). These are the leaves you are looking for.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Continue along this footpath and over the wooden footbridge. The next board will be on your right.

Distance to next information board approx. 110 metres. Distance to next seating area (Church Street) 385 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 7

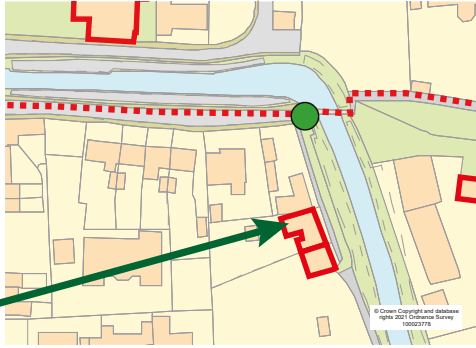
Fancy another option? A peaceful riverside walk

From this point on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk you can choose to take a different trail along the Bower path next to the river - **light blue route**. This will take you past Ashline Lock overlooking Manor Field and the moorings where boats can stay for 48hours.



The river walk links back to Station Road where you have a number of routes to choose from:

- Return to town (2km) and pick up the Whittlesey Heritage walk once more - **red route**.
- Head over to Lattersey Nature Reserve to the east of town (2km), a disused quarry now a haven for wetland wildlife - **green route**.
- Stroll down to Whittlesea Railway Station (1.2km) where you can hop on a train to Peterborough, Ely, Cambridge and beyond - **dark blue route**.



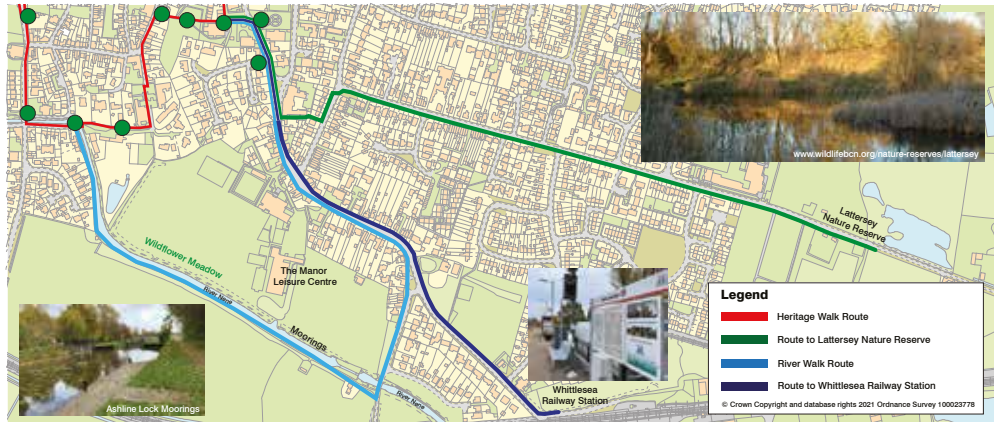
Bower Cottages

Two idyllic cottages seen over the wooden footbridge are both grade II listed and built of gault brick, English bond, now painted. The first of the two properties was built around 1750 with the cottage to left added later, around 1760.



Did you know?

This area is named Briggate as it was where goods were delivered by water. The word Briggate is a mixture of old English for bridge and old Norse for way.



To continue on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk please see the directions below.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Continue along Briggate East to Church Street. Turn right over the bridge where the next information board is on your right.

Distance to next board approx. 120 metres. Distance to next seating area (Church Street) 210 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 8

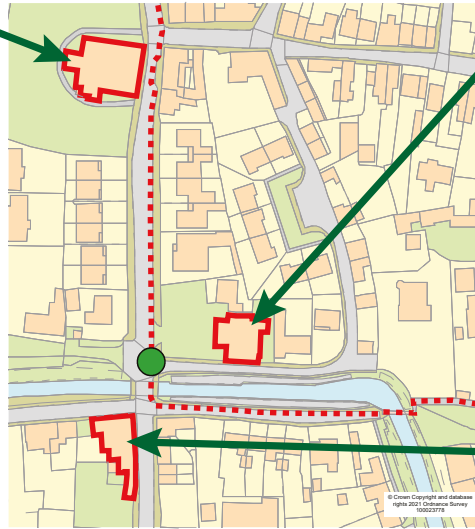
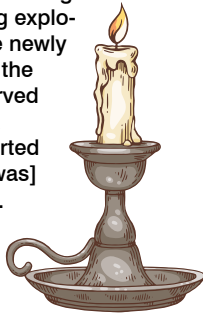
St Andrew's Church

St Andrew's Church is on the left further up Church Street.

The Church is mainly 14th century with a 16th century tower, which like St Mary's featured earlier on the route, has a ring of eight bells. The Chancel, Chapels and Nave have original roofs. The raised churchyard, which allowed multiple burials, has had the gravestones moved and repositioned.



In 1871 during restoration works a workman on site used a naked flame to investigate a smell of gas. The resulting explosion shattered nearly all the newly glazed windows, ripped up the floors and damaged the carved stones for the new pulpit. A newspaper at the time reported "A quantity of scaffolding [was] thrown in wild confusion..... and other mischief accomplished." There was no mention of what happened to the workman.



Did you know?

It is reported that Whittlesey once had so many pubs you could visit a different one each week of the year! They even had to start naming them after letters of the alphabet.



Whittlesey Veterinary Surgery



Although currently a veterinary surgery this interesting

building was once a public house. It has had many different names over the years including the White Lion and The Hero of Aliwal in 1950.



The Boat Inn

On the opposite corner before the bridge you have just crossed is another of Whittlesey's public houses - a common use for the buildings on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk. Although this public house in particular is rumoured to have some ghostly inhabitants!!



DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Continue up Church Street past St Andrew's Church. A bench is located with the next board. **Distance approx. 130 metres.**

Please take care along Church Street as this road can be very busy.

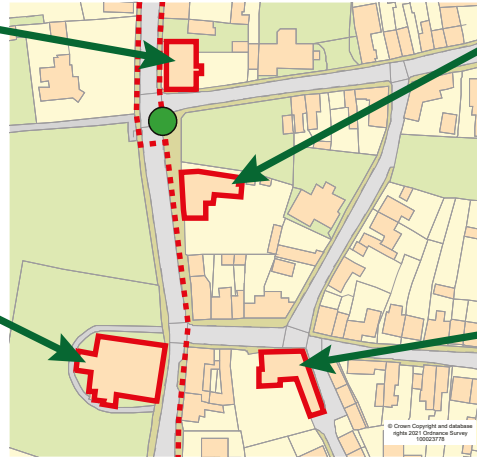
WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 9

47 Church Street

Built in 1861 to replace the old vicarage, the date stone features roman numerals on the side of the building.

Before the 'new' vicarage was built, this was the site of The Rose and Crown pub.

The property is now a private dwelling.



49 Church Street

This impressive 18th century house, named Park House, may have originally been thatched. The stone steps at the front door enabled ladies to enter the house from their coaches without stepping on the muddy ground.



St Andrew's Church

This church has a Barnack ashlar tower and porch. Barnack, where the stone was quarried, is 3.5 miles (5.6 km) south-east of Stamford.

During the Medieval period the stones were hauled on sleds to the river Welland, then

loaded onto barges travelling along the Nene and Fenland waterways. Famously, the stone was used to build Peterborough and Ely Cathedrals. However, by the 1500s the useful stone had been quarried out. Ashlar refers to how the stones were finished (dressed).



Did you know



The ornate brick boundary wall behind this board was part of the original vicarage of St. Andrew's. The site now houses the gardens of St Andrew's hall.

The Wilderness



Just off the route towards the church is a building named 'The Wilderness'. During WWII this building was used by the Fire Service and Women's

Land Army (WLA). The 'Land Girls' were critical to ensuring food production. They came from towns and cities as well as the countryside. The WLA was disbanded in 1950.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD: SHORT ROUTE OR LONG ROUTE?

SHORT ROUTE (0.5 km) - pages 12 & 13: At this point on the walk you can choose to take the short route through the town centre and back to Market Place. To take this route continue along Church Street to Thoroughfare Lane on your right, opposite number 46. The lane will take you directly to Market Street where you will find the next board for the short route (Board 10). At this location you will also find the next seating area.

Distance to next information board and seating area approx. 230 metres.

LONG ROUTE (2 km) - pages 14 to 22: To continue on the long route, cross the road at this point and continue up Church Street to Park Lane where you will find the next board for the long route (Board 12).

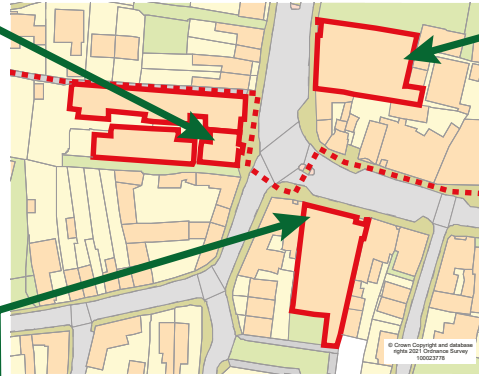
Distance to next information board approx. 95 metres. Distance to next seating area (Whitmore Street) 510 metres.

Please take care along Church Street as this road can be very busy.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 10

1 Broad Street

Erected in 1877, these buildings were used as a school until the 1960s when new infant and junior schools were built around the town. The rear extension was built in 1906 with the infant school located in a separate building behind the headmaster's house on the left.



Local Store



This former Co-Operative Society store, built in 1903, included a butchers and drapers with a meeting hall above. The premises also had a pneumatic pulley system for taking cash payments.

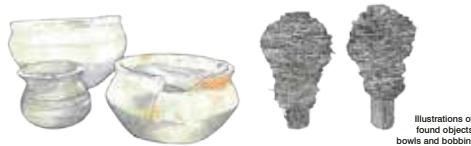
Community Hub

Built on the site of a thatched property named The Queens Head which survived a large fire in 1923 although many other properties on both sides of Market Street were destroyed. The 19th century public house had ample accommodation used by seasonal workers during harvest time. The thatched pub was demolished in the 1980s and replaced with the town's first large hardware store, later becoming the Town Library and the Community Hub.



Must Farm

Whittlesey is located on an important trade route dating back to the late Bronze Age (1100-800BCE). On the outskirts of town at Must Farm Quarry, archaeologists have discovered log boats and a group of near perfect round houses. It is understood that a fire caused these dwellings, originally built on stilts, to fall into the mud where they remained intact and untouched for 3,500 years.



Illustrations of found objects, bowls and bobbins

Prosperous Whittlesey

Whittlesey was particularly prosperous during the Middle Ages (1154 - 1485 CE), ranked as second wealthiest town in the Isle, Ely coming first. At that time most of the town was open fields where crops were grown and animals grazed on the marshy ground. The fields were farmed communally by the townsfolk. Their homes were timber, plaster and thatched cottages which stood at right angles to the High Street, with animals at one end and families at the other. Still economically important, Whittlesey retains its rich brickmaking heritage through Kings Dyke brick works neighbouring the amazing Must Farm and Kings Dyke Nature Reserve.



DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Head south towards Barr Street to cross both roads until you are on the north side of Market Street. If the road is busy use the zebra crossing to the north. Follow Market Place until you reach the Black Bull and Town Hall where you will find the next information board. **Distance to next information board approx. 140 metres. Distance to next seating area (Market Place) 270 metres.**

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 11

The Black Bull Inn

This public house was built of stone in the mid to late 17th century, with a slate roof and stone mullioned windows. The



stone frieze above the ground floor windows is typical of this period. The black tie bars on the front of the building were put in place in the 1960s as part of renovation works. Just like The Boat on Church Street, this pub is also reputed to be haunted.

Mud wall in the rear car park

Built from around 1780s to the 1900s Whittlesey's mud walls have brick or stone footings and coping made of thatch, pantile or wooden boards. There are 28 sections of mud wall around the town, 7 of which are registered as listed buildings including this one here at the Black Bull Inn. Please scan the qr code to look at the Mud Walls of Whittlesey leaflet.



Town Hall and Museum

Next door, this property was built on the site of some Alms Houses in 1825 at a cost of £315.

Its purpose was to house the town's fire engines and to provide a meeting room above. The date 1857 in red (faience) tiles on the front reflects the extensive alterations carried out in that year under the supervision of Cambridgeshire architect Richard Reynolds Rowe.



The Magistrates' court was held in the upstairs meeting room here until the 1960s. The building now belongs to The Whittlesey Charity and houses the Whittlesey Museum.

Can you spot?



This stone head, believed to originate from St Mary's Church can be seen on the west corner of one of the buildings featured on this board, can you spot which one?

9 Market Street

This property is mainly made of stone with some charming mullion windows in front. A map of Market Street (then named Alms House Street) in 1771 features this building with an adjacent walled garden.



The top of the building was heightened in the 19th century to turn the attic into a third floor. This space was at one time a recording studio used by 'Shades of Rhythm', a band once featured on Top of the Pops and who are still around today. During renovation some rare and important wallpaintings were discovered.



Previously protected by wood panelling, which was recently removed, the artwork is believed to be more than 350 years old. Painted on to the earthen (mud/clay) plaster that made up the original walls of the property this is similar to the materials used in Whittlesey's mud walls found along the Whittlesey Heritage Walk.

This is the end of the Whittlesey Heritage Walk Short Route.

The Long Route skips Panels 10 & 11 and continues from Panel 9 directly to Panel 12 on the next page.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 12 (LONG ROUTE)

21 & 23 Horsegate



These are two lovely examples of restored rendered and thatched cottages. A third identical cottage was lost some time ago.

17 Horsegate

This is an 18th century rendered brick cottage with an interesting roof of coloured corrugated clay pantiles (try saying that fast!). This and the other dwellings featured on this board are all grade II listed.

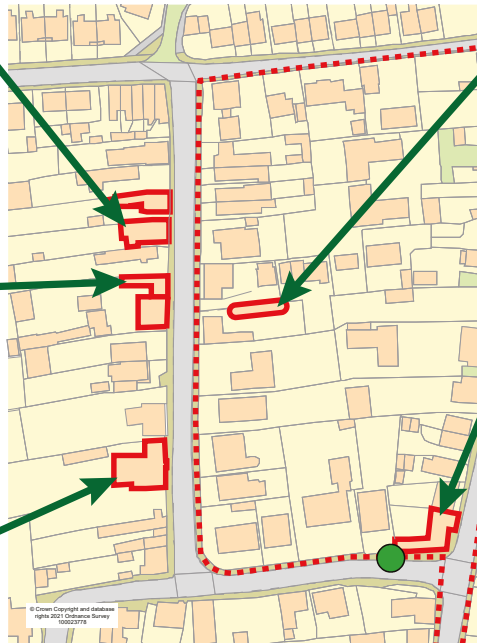


Horsegate House, 7 Horsegate



No. 7 is another former farmhouse built around the 18th century, originally its front garden extended as far as Church Street.

In 1834, it took all four of Whittlesey's fire engines and over 800 local townfolk to extinguish a horrendous fire that broke out in the malting building and stockyard behind this property!



Mud Wall



Recently designated as a Listed Building of Architectural or Historic Interest (April 2021). This example of a Whittlesey mud wall is tucked in between no. 14 and no. 20 Horsegate and can be glimpsed as you walk along the path.

48 Church Street

This imposing house on the corner of Park Lane is a typical 18th century brick built farmhouse with thatched roof.



Its former use as a stockyard with animal shelters once stretched all the way through to Horsegate at the rear.

Did you know?

The names of certain streets in Whittlesey for example Horsegate, Scaldgate and Briggate point to Danish influence. Horsegate is one of the oldest streets in Whittlesey and Horsegate Lane is on the course of an ancient trackway which ran from Peterborough to Whittlesey. Peterborough Abbey was plundered by the Danes in 870 which shows they were in the area at that time.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

Continue left along Park Lane to Horsegate on your right. Follow Horsegate to Horsegate Lane and take the one -way street back to Church Street. Cross Church Street and head north, turning right on Whitmore Street (A605) towards the pedestrian crossing. Over the crossing you will find the next board and seating area. **Distance approx. 420 metres.**

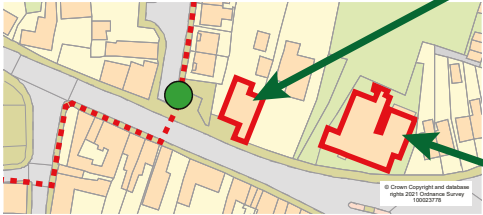
WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 13 (LONG ROUTE)

40 Whitmore Street



This pink colour-washed grade II listed property was built in the mid 18th century with timber framing and a thatched roof. It was formerly the

'Letter A' public house. It was said that there were so many public houses in Whittlesey that they ran out of names for them and had to resort to using the alphabet!



Conservative Club & Mud Wall



Towards the roundabout is the Whittlesey Conservative Club with its own section of mud wall forming part of its boundary.

For information about the Whittlesey mud walls visit www.facebook.com/WhittleseyMudWallsGroup

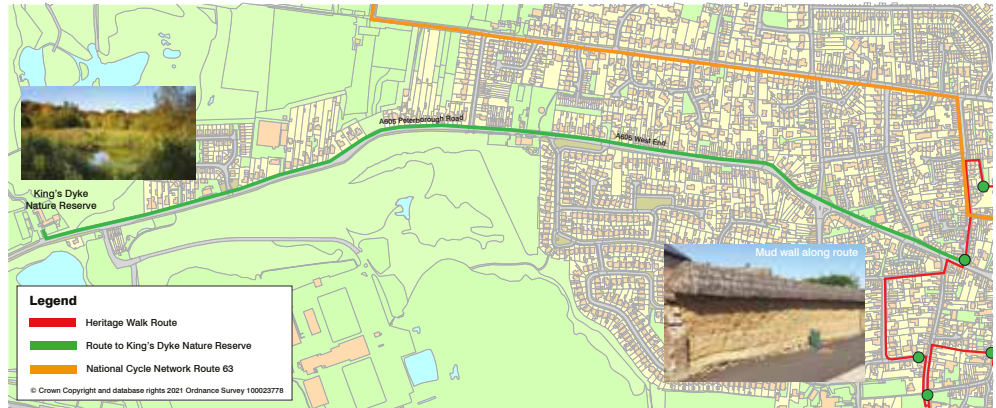
Fancy another option?

From this point on the Heritage Walk you can choose to take a different path and head to Kings Dyke Nature Reserve on the edge of town (green route).

To visit the reserve return to the footpath behind you and head west, away from the roundabout, along the busy A605. Remain on the north side of the road for 2km until you arrive at Fonterra on your right. This is the entrance to the reserve.

Please note: Access to the nature reserve is via a free membership permit which must be obtained prior to visiting. To obtain your free permit visit www.kingsdykenaturereserve.com.

Don't forget to admire the large section of mud wall next to the Co-Op along the way.



To continue on the Heritage Walk please see the directions below.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD:

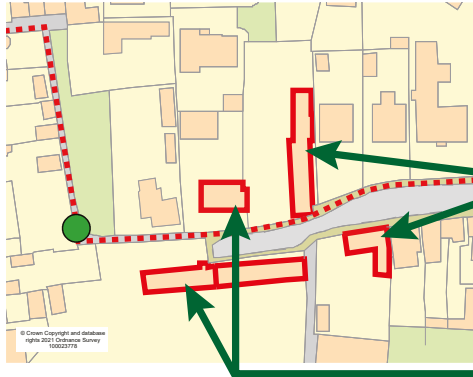
Continue northwards along Windmill Street until you reach the footpath to Claygate on your right. Follow the path through to the grassed area where you will find the next board and seating area.

Total distance approx. 280 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 14 (LONG ROUTE)

Ventilation Pipes

Victorian “stink pipes” can still be found at various locations around Whittlesey – one of which you have just passed (outside no. 30). These tall ornate columns, often mistaken for lamp posts, were originally built to disperse smelly sewer odours high into the air.



Further along this path through to Claygate, you will find a street that has retained much of its original 17th and 18th century character and layout with an impressive cluster of four grade II listed thatched cottages.

8 and 9 Claygate



Across the street no. 8 is a mid 18th century thatched and rendered cottage. 9 Claygate is a late 17th century timber-framed mud walled cottage with hipped

thatched roof and central chimney stack. It was beautifully restored by the Cambridgeshire Preservation Trust in 1987.

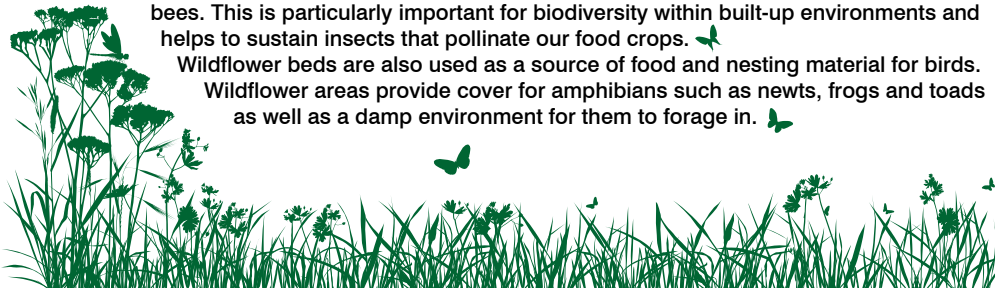


Wildflower Bed

Welcome to the section of Claygate once known as Crab End. This secret idyll, so close to the town centre, is a perfect place to sit and relax for a moment. Here you will find a wildflower bed introduced in 2021 to encourage insects. Depending on the time of year, the various nectar-rich wildflowers and plants help support native pollinators including butterflies, moths and bees. This is particularly important for biodiversity within built-up environments and helps to sustain insects that pollinate our food crops.

Wildflower beds are also used as a source of food and nesting material for birds.

Wildflower areas provide cover for amphibians such as newts, frogs and toads as well as a damp environment for them to forage in.



10 and 11 Claygate



No. 10 is again 18th century whilst opposite at no. 11 is an early grey brick house linked with an 18th century thatched and

rendered cottage complete with the original casement window in the dormer.



DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD

Follow the path through to Claygate and onwards to Orchard Street. Cross Orchard Street carefully (if the road is very busy please use the pedestrian crossing to the south). Head north along Orchard Street and turn right on to Delph Street where you will find the next board and seating area on the opposite side of the road.

Distance to next board and seating area approx. 200 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 15 (LONG ROUTE)

The Whittlesey Washes

This region has been building and maintaining flood defences for this low-lying, fertile agricultural land for around 400 years, something that has become even more important in recent years. Whittlesey Washes is a flood defence system that lies to the north of the town. During winter months it can be used to store enough water to fill 14,000 Olympic swimming pools.



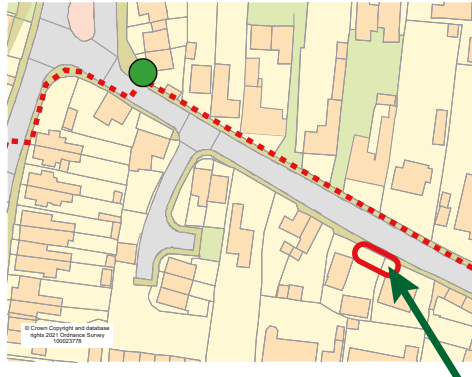
Did you know?

Some of the country's best speed skaters came from Fenland, such as Cyril Horn from Wisbech who competed in the 1924



Courtesy of peterboroughimages.co.uk

and 1928 Winter Olympics. European skating championships took place on the frozen washes in the 1970s. Above is an undated image of the frozen flooded washes.



Delph Street Mud Wall

This is a great example of a mud wall that can be easily spotted as you walk past. There are a further 3 sections of mud wall tucked away along the north side of Delph Street. These are part of private properties although they can be glimpsed by eagle-eyed-passers-by.



Whittlesey Mere

Management of water levels in and around Whittlesey has been key for hundreds of years. There was once a large freshwater lake known as Whittlesey Mere to the south of the town that reached up to 6 miles across. The Mere's abundant resources supported many local families and supplied several nearby abbeys with food, particularly silver eels and wildfowl. Sedge and reed used for thatching were also harvested from the waters.

In the 1800s demand for agricultural land meant the rich, fertile land became more valuable than the boggy Mere itself. Over a number of years various attempts were made to drain the Mere.

By 1851 the water was almost gone and a steam pump was installed to prevent it from returning.



Did you know?

Legend has it that King Cnut's sons drowned when crossing the Whittlesey Mere by boat during a storm. As a result, a watercourse was dug to bypass the Mere. This is still known today as Kings Dyke.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD

Continue along Delph Street (not Delph) until you reach Arnolds Lane on your left. The next board is a short distance (80m) along the lane.

Distance to next information board approx. 240 metres. Distance to next seating area (Syers Lane) 270 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 16 (LONG ROUTE)

1 & 3 Arnold's Lane

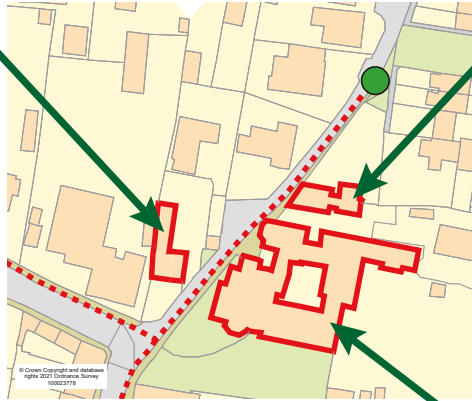
A pair of well-maintained 18th century brick and thatched cottages complete with early 19th century sash and casement windows. Note the painted garage sign on the cottage wall as you walk down the lane. It shows the town's former spelling 'Whittlesea' that is now spelled Whittlesey although the railway station is still Whittlesea.



The photograph below was taken in 1914, showing little has changed here in well over 100 years.



image courtesy of Whittlesey Museum



2 Arnold's Lane

This impressive building is now a care home. The house with extensive gardens was once home to the Bowker family.

Thomas Bowker was Lord of the manor. When he died in 1958 the title went to his daughter, Nancy until she died in 1999.



Thatched Cottage

A neat 18th century brick and thatch cottage with one gable set at an angle to follow the line of the lane. Note the tumbled brickwork to the gables, a feature of so many houses in Whittlesey.



What's in a name?

Throughout history Whittlesey has seen a few name changes all meaning "Wit(t)el's island". It was first referred to as Witlesig in the Cartularium Saxonicum (973 CE), in the Domesday Book it's shown as Witesie, and in the Inquisitio Eliensis (1086 CE) as Wittleseia. Placenames ending in '-ey' and '-ea' are commonplace in Fenland, only the railway station has retained the "Whittlesea" spelling which can cause some confusion for travellers.



DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD

Head back the way you came and along High Causeway until you reach The New Crown public house where you will find the next board.

Distance to next board approx. 185 metres - where you can stay awhile for a drink or bite at The New Crown.

Distance to next (public) seating area 480 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 17 (LONG ROUTE)

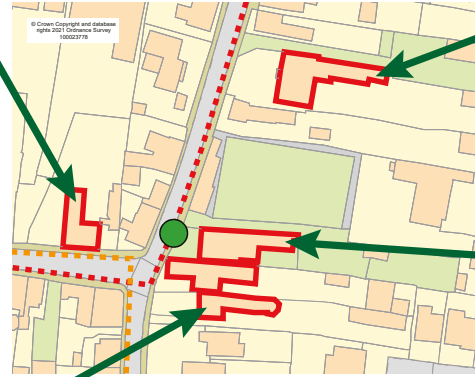
The Lindens

This grade II listed mid 18th century house has 19th century ornamental casement windows, a thatched roof and interesting small brick outbuildings. The front and rear walls of the property are timber framed and plaster rendered with contemporary tumbled brick gabled ends which are now painted.



The outbuildings consist of a mid 19th century brick wash-house and stable range – the fascinating curved wall of which you can see peeping from behind the main house.

The property once had an orchard to one side and gardens that extended all the way to Delph Street behind. It is possible that the mud wall section there was once part of The Lindens' boundary.



54 High Causeway

This property was originally thatched and has what remains of dormer windows to the front.



you walk past. It is believed that this style of front garden has been a feature here for hundreds of years.

The front wall has been heightened and the roof changed to tile.

A significant part of the charm of this property is its elaborate and fragrant box hedge flower beds that wafts scent as

68 High Causeway

On your left as you passed 2 Arnolds Lane you may have noted one of its neighbouring properties. An imposing early 19th century brick 'villa' with an impressive Greek Doric portico with circular columns and a flat roof over its entrance. This grade II listed building was once home to Doctor Logan. For many years GP surgeries were held here for Dr Bernard and later Dr Watson.



New Crown



Here are two 18th century grade II listed cottages which complement each other wonderfully. These seem to be attached to each other at first glance but are in

fact two separate properties. The New Crown public house is built of brick with a reed thatch roof. The property next door is a timber framed on a brick base but it has been rendered over and lined out to resemble ashlar (rough faced) stonework.

Both provide a lovely back drop to the sunny pub courtyard, a great spot to relax awhile before continuing along the route.

Did you know?

The National Cycle Network Route 63 runs through the heart of Whittlesey. This long distance cycling route takes you through the Fens, linking to a network running across the country and providing a direct route from Burton-on-Trent right through to Dover! Visit www.sustrans.org.uk to find out more.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD

Cross the road to the south side footpath along Gracious Street and continue until you reach the entrance to Old Crown Lane on your left.

Distance to next board approx. 100 metres. Distance to next seating area (Syers Lane) 290 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 18 (LONG ROUTE)

16 Gracious Street

This grade II listed property, also known as Black Cat Cottage, was built in 1764 according to its date stone. It

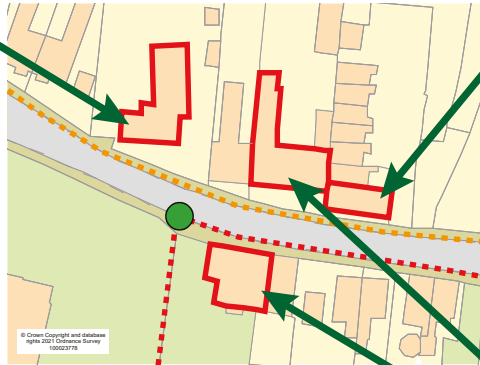


was extended in the 19th century, although retains all of its natural chocolate box charm and character.

Thatched animal finials are popular features for thatch and are great fun to spot as you explore the town. Needless to say, Black Cat Cottage would not be complete without its resident kitty!

Can you spot?

Along Gracious Street is another example of a Victorian sewer ventilation pipe. These can also be spotted at Claygate and Turners Lane. In many places across the UK these features have listed status.



10 Gracious Street

Many interesting properties featured on the route were once a pub or inn of some kind in the past. This quaint grade II listed thatched cottage is no exception. Built around the 17th or 18th century it was formerly the 'Kings Head' public house. Renovated and restored in the 20th century it is now a picturesque private residence typical of the layout and style to be found in this area.



13 Gracious Street

Although not a listed building this is another example of a private residence that was once a public house. Once named the Old Crown, the pub was re-built after a disastrous fire in 1858 when it and many surrounding buildings were destroyed. Confusingly, this meant that when it was re-opened the 'Old Crown' was not as old as the 'New Crown' on High Causeway.



8 Gracious Street



Also a grade II listed building this impressive large brick house which was built in the 1730s has numerous beautiful sash windows nestled under red brick arches.

The front of the property shows off the classic proportions and symmetry well recognised in Georgian architecture.

Did you know?

The Georgian period in Britain was from 1714 to 1830 and covered the reign of four Kings; George I, George II, George III and George IV.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD

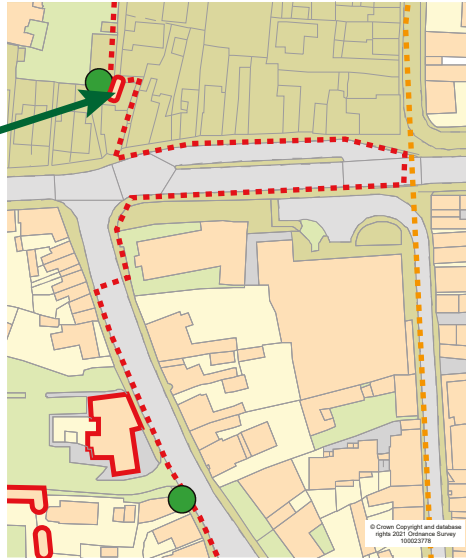
Cross the road to the south side footpath along Gracious Street and continue until you reach the entrance to Old Crown Lane on your left.

Distance to next information board approx. 185 metres. Distance to next seating area (Syers Lane) 290 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 19 (LONG ROUTE)

Mud Wall

This is a public footpath named Old Crown Lane due to a pub of the same name once being sited in the building on Gracious Street. This path will take you past a stretch of mud boundary wall with timber board capping, before going under the houses into Syer's Lane. Due to the narrow walk-way you will get up close to this grade II listed example. Check out all the little holes in the mortar, likely made by creepy crawlies and beasts like spiders and mason or mortar bees.



For more information about all of the mud walls please use this QR code to view the Whittlesey Mud Wall leaflet.



Did you know?

Masonry (or mortar) bees are non-aggressive solitary bees that nest in walls. Each nest can contain up to 12 eggs, each with pollen and nectar. Masonry bees are honeybee-like in size and appearance. You may also see bumblebees which are large, furry, and charismatic. These bees are well-known for their meandering, 'bumbling' flight, and their distinctive buzz – which is where their Latin name *Bombus* (meaning 'booming') originates. Bumblebees do not make honey, as they do not need to store food for winter. Instead, the queens hibernate to emerge in Spring to make their own nests.



Early
Bombus pratorum



Common carder
Bombus pascuorum



White-tailed
Bombus lucorum



Red-tailed
Bombus lapidarius



Garden
Bombus hortorum



Buff-tailed
Bombus terrestris

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT BOARD

Continue along Old Crown Lane public footpath under the building and on to Syers Lane (A605). This is a very busy road and although you will see Queen Street opposite we strongly recommend you turn left and use the pedestrian crossing to safely cross the road. Here you will also find the next seating area on the opposite side of the crossing (**distance 130 metres**). Once safely across the A605, turn towards Queen Street. Half way along Queen Street, at the entrance to the car park you will find the next information board.

Distance to next information board approx. 310 metres.

WHITTLESEY HERITAGE WALK PANEL 20 (LONG ROUTE)

18 Queen Street

Did you spot the plaque on this building with the initials J.L.?”

This was for John LeFevre, who was the owner of a saddlery and harness-maker's shop. LeFevre was one of the many protestant Huguenot/Walloon refugees who fled from religious persecution and civil war on the continent during the



16th and 17th centuries. The Huguenot/Walloon religious groups shared the same language, French, the Huguenots came from France and the Walloons from the Spanish Netherlands (now Belgium and Netherlands).



Did you know?

The name of this street was formerly Old Whittlesea. It is said to have been changed to Queen Street in 1877 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne.



Mud wall



Mud walling in Whittlesey is thought to date from the late 18th and early 19th century. During this period, a tax on brick and tile was in effect (1784-1850) but many town properties had long plots or gardens capable of producing goods for

the large market.

As the town grew, the creation of very long boundary structures helped to manage the land. Given the very long nature of many of these boundaries, the use of mud walling was a cheap and highly practical solution.

A group of grade II listed mud wall sections are still present around the boundary of the Black Bull Inn on Market Street. The rear section of wall can be viewed from within Queen Street Car Park.



War Memorial



Grade II listed for its special architectural or historic interest, the town's War Memorial was designed by Whittlesey resident stonemason Mr. Thomas William Ford. It shows St George, sword in hand, his foot resting on a dragon, and symbolically facing the way the fallen departed along Station Road.

245 names are inscribed upon the memorial, commemorating those who lost their lives in WW1, WW2 and the Korean War. Standards and regimental banners are carved on the memorial plinth.

**Congratulations, This marks the end of the Whittlesey Heritage Walk Long Route.
We hope you have enjoyed it.**



Fancy something different?

If you don't fancy the Whittlesey Heritage Walk (**red route**) today there are many other options to explore. You could:



- Take a wander to the Lattersey Nature Reserve to the east of town (1.5km), a disused quarry now a haven for wetland wildlife - **green route**.
- Take a peaceful stroll along the Bower next to the river (1.5km). This will take you past Ashline Lock overlooking Manor Field and the moorings where boats can stay for 48hours - **light blue route**.
- Take a short walk to Whittlesea Railway Station (1km) where you can catch a train and be in Peterborough within minutes or Ely in less than half an hour - **dark blue route**.

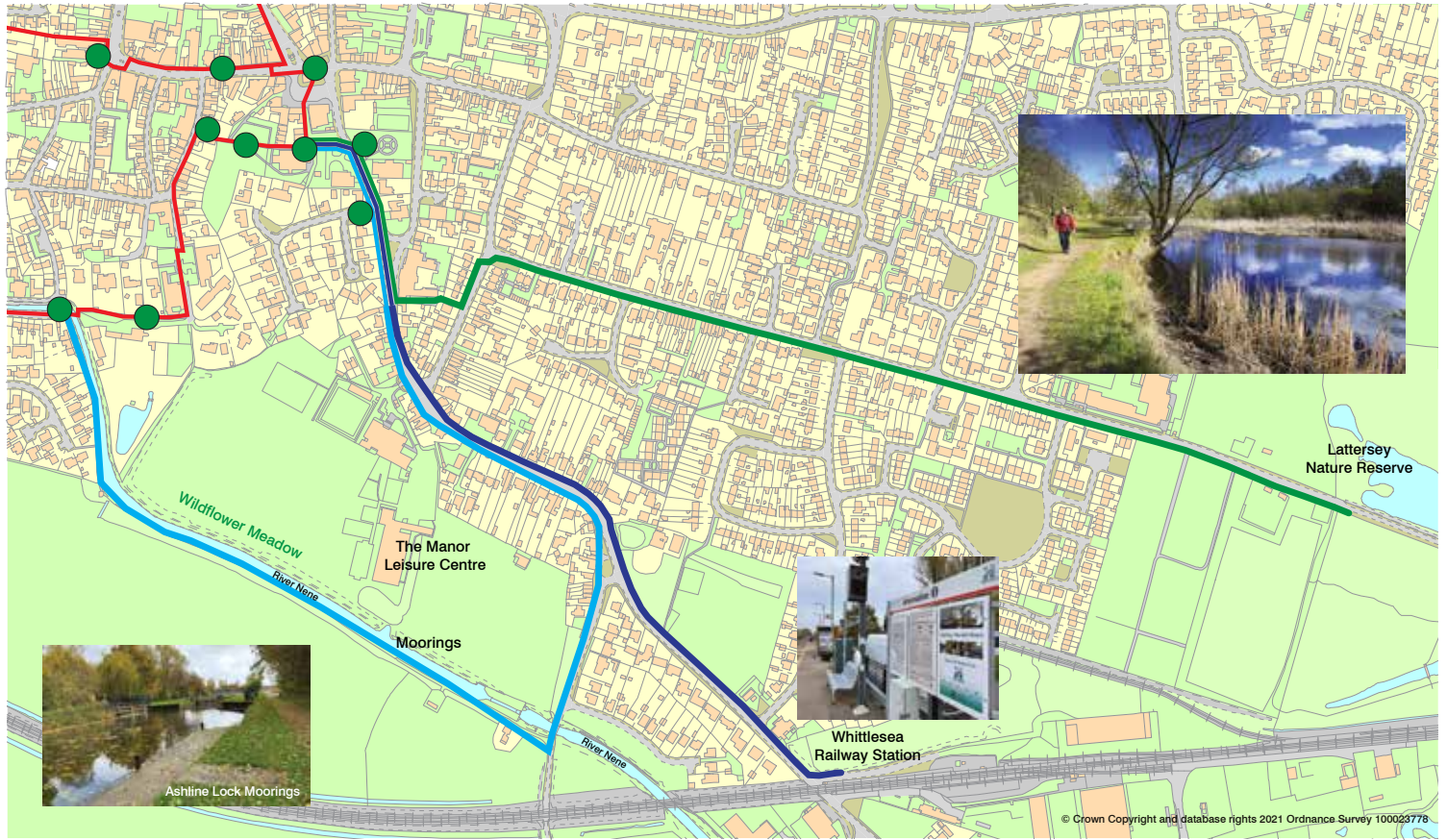
Follow the path and wayfinding arrows to take the route of your choice mapped out below.

Sadly something you won't see

Portland House

Portland House once stood on the site of Portland Place, a residential cul-de-sac south of St Mary's Church along Station Road. It was once a grand residence built in the early 1600s and enlarged later in the 17th century. The house was probably named after its owners, Jerome Weston, the 2nd Earl of Portland and his wife Frances. The Westons were influential people for the town and held the title of Lord of the Manor for St Andrews between 1641 and 1686. This image, taken in 1915 shows that the house had sadly fallen into disrepair. It was eventually demolished after the Second World War. All that remains today are two sets of gate piers which were once part of the north entrance to the property. These are now located in a private garden.





Legend

- Heritage Walk Route
- Route to Luttersey Nature Reserve
- River Walk Route
- Route to Whittlesea Railway Station



Gardens

Garden of Rest



During the 1960s this land was designated as a Garden of Rest. Once part of St. Mary's Churchyard, many of its gravestones can still be seen around the boundary. This beautiful and tranquil spot is a

lovely place to sit and relax, especially when the gardens are in full bloom. Take a moment to enjoy this special place on one of the benches and find out more about the history of this site and the Straw Bear on the information board on site.

The Pound

This lovely little walled garden has been created and looked after by the Whittlesey in Bloom team since 2013. It provides a tranquil and sunny spot, surrounded by wonderful flowers and shrubs to sit and relax amongst.

The site has retained its name, the Pound, as it was originally built to house the town's stray animals until their owners could be found. This included



horses, cattle or sheep that had been feeding on unauthorised land or had simply wandered off and become lost. The land was transferred to Fenland District Council in 1971 to be

preserved as a monument for the benefit of the town. The garden is usually open daily from 10am.

Rotary Club Gardens

Situated just south of the level crossing at Ramsey Road you will find a small wood to explore at your leisure. The site is open to the public and includes Oak, Ash, Birch, Alder and Willow trees together with a variety of shrubs such as Holly and Hawthorn. This wood was planted in 1992 to improve the environment for wildlife and local people. The work was funded by a grant from the Forestry Authority and donations of trees and labour from The Rotary Club.





Ashline Lock and Moorings



Ashline Lock is near to pleasant moorings and a picnic area on the edge of Manor Field overlooking the wildflower meadow. These public moorings allow boats to stay for up to a maximum of 48 hours. The unmanned lock is situated on Whittlesey Dyke/Briggate River, part of the Middle Level Navigation. This river is a tranquil route that links the River Nene to the River Great Ouse. Whether sailing a boat for a week, a day or choosing to silently paddle, this stretch of river is a popular choice for boaters as it has low side-banks allowing for stunning wide views over the fenland, interrupted only by the chimneys of the local brick-making industry.

Wildflower Meadow

This meadow was created by Fenland District Council in 2021. It is a 6000 square metre wildflower bed situated near to the riverside and moorings on Manor Field. Throughout summer it provides an impressive display of colourful wildflowers with the aim to improve biodiversity and encourage wildlife. These blooms can be admired from the opposite bank by those strolling along the beautiful River Walk or accessed directly via the Manor Leisure Centre or Aliwal Road entrance to the playing field.





Nature Reserves

Lattersey Nature Reserve



Lattersey Nature Reserve is located on the eastern edge of Whittlesey along New Road. This picturesque sanctuary for wildlife is free

to visit and open all year round. This important wetland is home to a variety of wildlife including water voles, water shrews and insects, rare beetles and moths. As with much of the heritage in this area, the origin of the reserve is closely linked to the railway, having been created from a 'borrow pit' used to build the line. To find out more about the Reserve visit:

www.wildlifebcn.org/nature-reserves/lattersey

Kings Dyke Nature Reserve

Located on the western edge of Whittlesey along the A605, the Kings Dyke Nature Reserve entrance is to the rear of the Fonterra car park. A map show-

ing the route to the site can be found on page 15. The history of the site dates back to the 1920s when it was formerly a clay extraction pit for the London Brick company. Brickmaking has been taking place in Whittlesey and the Peterborough area since the end of the 19th century, utilising the band of clay which runs from Peterborough to Oxford. This site was restored as a reserve in 1995 and now offers a wonderful example of how industrial land can be transformed to benefit both wildlife and the local community.



Please note: Access to the nature reserve is via a free membership permit which must be obtained prior to visiting. To obtain your free

permit visit www.kingsdykenaturereserve.com.



Love Exploring

LOVE EXPLORING™



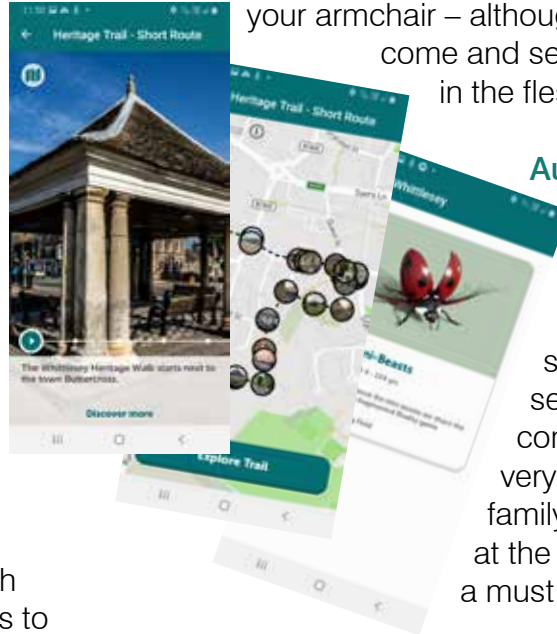
The Whittlesey Heritage Walk has teamed up with Love Exploring to enable users to access the route and all its fascinating facts via their mobile phone. Simply download the Love Exploring App

for free from Google Play or the App Store, select Whittlesey and off you go! The App currently offers full long and short route details and a spectacular Mini Beast game to play on the Manor Playing Field. With a variety of content to interest people young and old we aim to have something for everyone, all you need is your phone.

Heritage Trail – Short Route/Long Route

By using the App you can follow the route with nothing but your phone. This provides options to

discover more about each highlight at the touch of a button. Imagery and text bring each location to life with handy voice clips available so you can listen to the fascinating facts and historic tidbits whilst free to really take in your surroundings. You could even choose to tour the town from the comfort of your armchair – although we do hope you will come and see this wonderful place in the flesh too.



Augmented Reality Games

Prepare to have your mind blown as you search for clues and solve quiz questions to see magical characters come to life before your very eyes. Fun for all the family, our Mini Beast Trail at the Manor Playing Field is a must.



Transport Links

Whittlesea Railway Station



Train travel provides excellent travel links to and from huge swathes of the country with direct links from Whittlesea once daily

(Monday to Saturday) to Birmingham, Leicester, Cambridge and Stansted Airport and services 2 hourly to Peterborough, Ely, Norwich and Ipswich. For current travel information please visit:

www.nationalrail.co.uk

The railway station which serves the town of Whittlesey is to the south of the town. The station retained the original spelling 'Whittlesea' when the town's name was amended. Due to the large cost the town would have been charged to change the spelling of the station on the railway network it was not altered. The station itself retains its east-bound and west-bound platforms, set apart from each other with entrances either side of the level crossing, although the station buildings of yesteryear are long gone.

Grosvenor Road Bus Station



Whittlesey Bus Station is located in Grosvenor Road near to the centre of town and contains two bus shelters and ample seating for customers. The site is a main connection for each

bus route serving Whittlesey with additional stops also found along the A605 at Crossway Hand, West End, Broad Street, Coronation Avenue, Victory Avenue, and Ramsey Road. For current travel information please visit:

<https://transport.cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/buses/bus-timetables/>

Comfort Break?

You find a wide range of eateries, shops and food outlets around Whittlesey as you explore. Many of these are featured on the trail. However, if you need a quick loo break while on your travels public toilets are located at the rear of Market Place, opposite the Garden of Rest.

Car Parks and Disabled Parking

We understand that it is not always possible to travel using public transport or by foot or bicycle. We have therefore listed local car parks with disabled parking spaces for your convenience. Please note: there are no car park charges in force in Whittlesey although some sites may have time restrictions.

- **Station Road Car Park**
- **Queen Street Car Park**
- **Grosvenor Road Car Park**
- **Parkinson's Lane Car Park**
- **Woolpack Lane Car Park**
- **Manor Leisure Centre Car Park**

Cycle parking can be located at Grosvenor Road Car Park, outside 6-7 Market Place and at Whittlesea Railway Station.



Cycling



The National Cycle Network Route 63 runs through Whittlesey. This provides a direct, off-road link to Peterborough City Centre to the north and

continues south-east along Fenland's rural back roads connecting to March and onwards to Wisbech.

The section of route within Whittlesey is shown on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk Route Map on page 2.

It starts at Stonald Road, connects with Gracious Street and High Causeway via Windmill Road, continues south along Station Road to Inhams Road to head east along New Road and out of town.

The full route 63 is 89.1 miles long and passes via the large cities of Leicester and Peterborough before its final 19.6 mile leg across Fenland. To view the full route and find out more about the National Cycle Network please visit:

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network>



**Download
the
brochure**



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