



HERTFORD HERITAGE TRAIL

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HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL



Introduction

Hertford is steeped in history, from its once royal castle set in elegant, peaceful riverside gardens, to the architectural mix of six centuries in St. Andrew Street. The oldest purpose-built quaker meeting house survives in Railway Street, a classic Georgian Shire Hall overlooks Fore Street's rare pargeting and at Bluecoats, once a Christ's Hospital School, an ancient water pump still graces the courtyard. Nearby, Hertford East Station is one of W.N. Ashbee's finest creations. Just some of the delights our county town has to offer.

This heritage trail has been created jointly by Hertford Town Council, who funded the project, Hertford and Ware Local History Group, who provided the plaque texts, and Hertford Civic Society, whose volunteers undertook all the work associated with installation of the blue plaques.

1

Hertford Castle
Castle Street



2

25 Castle Street



3

12 14 Parliament Square



4

Green Dragon Vaults
The Green Dragon Inn
The Wash



5

1 Fore Street



6

War Memorial
Parliament Square



7

Bayley Hall
Bell Lane



8

Shire Hall
Fore Street



9

Egyptian House
42 Fore Street



10

Samuel Stone
76 – 78 Fore Street



11

Corn Exchange
39 Fore Street



12

The Former Post Office
84 – 86 Fore Street



13

Master's House
88 – 96 Fore Street



14

The Former Ram Inn
112 Fore Street



15

Christ's Hospital



16

Hertford East Station
Mill Road



17

The Priory
St. John's Church
St. John's Street



18

Quaker Meeting House
50 Railway Street



19

Hertford Museum
18 Bull Plain



20

Lombard House
Bull Plain



21

Old Cross Library
Old Cross



22

McMullen & Sons Ltd
Hartham Lane



23

Hartham Chapel
Hartham Lane



24

Prince Albert
Cottages
Cowbridge



25

W.E. Johns
41 Cowbridge



26

Old Cross
Post Office
1 St. Andrew Street



27

Wallace House
5 – 11 St. Andrew
Street



28

Yeomanry House
28 St. Andrew Street



29

50 St. Andrew
Street



30

43 St. Andrew
Street



31

North Road House
2 North Road



32

Former Ebenezer
Chapel
North Road

Plaque
to be
installed

33

Elsden Photographer
Carriage Court,
North Road

Plaque
to be
installed

34

Sele Mill
North Road



35

County Hospital
North Road

Plaque
to be
installed

36

37d West Street



37

Hale's Free
Grammar School
Churchfields



38

School of Industry
for Girls
Churchfields



39

The County Gaol
Yeomans Court car
park, Ware Road



40

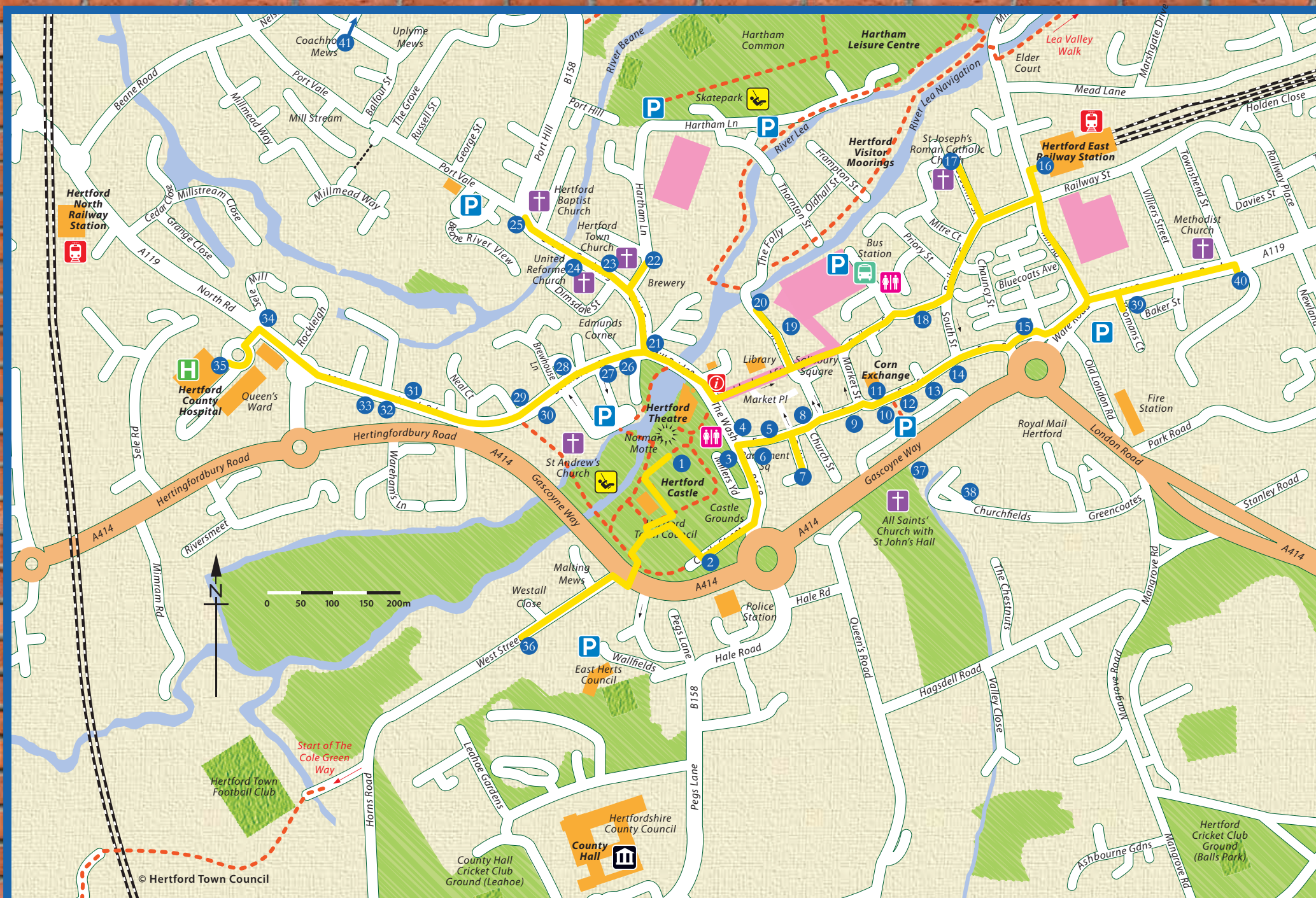
Former Addis Site
36 Ware Road



41

Port Hill House/
Pest House
Byde Street

Buildings
not visible
from path



- ① **Hertford Castle:** A gatehouse built in brick 1463-5. South wing c1780, north wing 1937. Crown property until 1628 when it was granted to Lord Salisbury. Leased in 1912 to Hertford Borough Council, now Hertford Town Council's offices.
- ② **25 Castle Street:** Since at least the early C18 the home of the Andrews family, prominent builders and timber merchants. A famous preacher, John Wesley, stayed here in the late C18.
- ③ **12 – 14 Parliament Square:** John Briant, bell founder and clock maker, was in Hertford from 1778. Sage Ward occupy the site of his house, demolished 1972. The Job Centre dates from after 1810 when Briant's workshops on the site were destroyed by fire.
- ④ **Green Dragon Vaults – The Green Dragon Inn:** The original inn existed in 1621. It was rebuilt modestly in 1858 but destroyed by fire in 1902. The present structure was built to include shops, a vault, stabling and a motor pit.
- ⑤ **1 Fore Street:** Stephen Austin reportedly began work in Maidenhead St about 1768, later moving to No3 Fore St – shown in his pre 1854 advertisements No5 was then rebuilt as the Herts Mercury offices. This became No1 Fore St after renumbering in the late 1920s.
- ⑥ **War Memorial:** Unveiled 6th November. 1921. Architect: Sir Aston Webb, builder: Andrews stonemasons, bronze hart: Alfred Drury RA. The site, originally shops, was donated by Sir Edward Pearson of Brickendonbury. Renamed Parliament Square after demolition of the old Parliament Row. The area was then renumbered.
- ⑦ **Bayley Hall:** The Master's House in Fore St. was sold and Bayley Hall became the boarding house of Hale's Free Grammar School. Walter New was the first headmaster to live here.
- ⑧ **Shire Hall:** An earlier Sessions House of c1560 was demolished in 1768. Architect James Adam designed the present building, completed 1772. The Assizes were held here until 1974 and the ballroom was used for County Balls. Completely restored and reopened 1989.
- ⑨ **Egyptian House:** JM Gilbertson, the grocer who chose the Egyptian style, was Mayor in 1832. The family later was in partnership with Alfred Page to form Gilbertson and Page, very successful game product manufacturers.
- ⑩ **Samuel Stone:** An early pupil of Hales Free Grammar School and a student at Cambridge University, Samuel became a minister and travelled to the New World in 1633, where with friend Thomas Hooker, he founded Hartford, Connecticut.
- ⑪ **Corn Exchange:** After the gaol removed to Ware Rd the old building here was used for election purposes and then demolished in 1784 for a butchers' market, later vegetables. Corn samples were inspected here from the 1840s. The new Corn Exchange was also a venue for entertainment.
- ⑫ **The Former Post Office:** The Chequer Inn: John Browne, Citizen of London left £300 for the poor of Hertford in 1628. The inn was purchased by Hertford Poor's Estate. Later used as dwellings and demolished 1890 for the Post Office.
- ⑬ **Master's House:** Built 1727 replacing an earlier house. Became the boarding house of Hales Free Grammar School until 1900. Notable headmasters Dr. John Carr C18, and Clement Cruttwell C19.
- ⑭ **The Former Ram Inn:** Was the Golden Lion until 1775. It was reported that in 1832 the landlord fired a shot at hired thugs who tried to demolish his inn during election disturbances.

- 15 Christ's Hospital:** London children during the later C16 and C17 were sent to Hertford to be boarded away from disease by the governors of Christs Hospital, Newgate Street A schoolroom and boarding facilities existed on this site before it was purchased as Christ's Hospital in 1682. The buildings, also known as the Bluecoat School were erected from 1689.
- 16 Hertford East Station:** Designed by W N Ashbee in Free Renaissance style with Dutch Gables. With James Wilson, Ashbee also designed Norwich Thorpe and the old Liverpool Street Stations.
- 17 The Priory / St. John's Church:** Was founded c1087 by a nephew of William I, Ralph di Limesi. The church Sanctuary was dedicated to St. Mary and used by the monks and the nave to St John for parishioner worship.
- 18 Quaker Meeting House:** The Society of Friends began to form in Hertford in the mid C17. The Meeting House was completed in 1670 on land given by Edward Parkin, tailor, and was largely the work of carpenter John Helder.
- 19 Hertford Museum:** This building, mentioned in the 1620 Norden Survey, is described, with No20, as two cottages. It was purchased by RT and WF Andrews in 1913 and opened as a free public museum in 1914.
- 20 Lombard House:** This ancient building has also housed the assize judges, the visiting Duke of Cumberland and a C19 ladies boarding school before becoming a club. The 1915 Zeppelin raid killed several members as they left the premises.
- 21 Old Cross Library:** Pollard's Printing Office for the "Herts Guardian" and Wigginton's Bacon Store were demolished prior to the opening of the Library and School of Art in 1889. Fragments of the Church of St. Mary the Less were found in the cellars, and from which the drinking fountain was constructed. Building was designed by prolific British architect, Reginald Blomfield.
- 22 McMullen & Sons Ltd:** Built in 1891 this tower brewery incorporated the turret clock of 1829 by Moores of Clerkenwell. The old Great Northern Station was a few yards to the north at the end of Station Approach – now Hartham Lane.
- 23 Hartham Chapel:** The remaining wing of Cowbridge House built c1600 and the C18 home of the Dimsdale family, can still be seen behind the late C19 Hartham Chapel. The square garden on the corner was once a town centre allotment.
- 24 Prince Albert Cottages:** Builders: the Hertford Building Company – an organisation concerned with better housing for the poor, the land given by Baron Dimsdale. Importantly, each bedroom had a separate entry.
- 25 W.E. Johns:** The author of "Biggles Books", educated at Hertford Grammar School, spent his childhood here, living over his fathers tailor's shop. He joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1917.
- 26 Old Cross Post Office:** Originally at Durrants the Chemist no1 Old Cross from November 1891. Transferred here to Mrs E. Munnings' "Bazaar" No1 St. Andrew Street in 1899.
- 27 Wallace House:** One of several boyhood homes of nationally known explorer and naturalist Alfred Russell Wallace. He arrived independently at the same conclusion as Darwin on 'Natural Selection'.
- 28 Yeomanry House:** The building was described by Nicholas Pevsner:- "This house and the houses in the immediate neighbourhood are the best of Hertford." Built c1726.

- 29 50 St. Andrew Street:** First Hertford home of novelist Annie S. Swan and husband Dr. Burnett Smith, local GP and WW1 hero. He had a surgery next door from 1912.
- 30 43 St. Andrew Street:** One of the earliest surviving domestic buildings in Hertford. It is said that Queen Elizabeth I visited whilst staying at the Castle. A church house in the C19 and after extensive restoration in the 1970s it was home to Beckwiths Antiques until 2016.
- 31 North Road House:** Built by architect Thomas Smith c1827 after his success with North Crescent. Also, the home of Annie S. Swan after 1912. One wing bombed during the Zeppelin raid of October 1915.
- 32 Former Ebenezer Chapel:** Heritage Plaque yet to be installed. Site of Ebenezer Strict and Particular Chapel 1773 to 1967. In its last years it was moved to opposite its original site.
- 33 Elsden Photographer:** Heritage Plaque yet to be installed. Arthur Elsdon and his son, Arthur Vincent Elsdon were photographers who lived and worked here 1859 to 1882. They were prolific photographers and much of their work can be seen in Hertford Museum.
- 34 Sele Mill:** Originally thought to be John Tates paper mill before it became a flourmill. In 1890 a fire destroyed the mill but not the mill house adjoining. The new mill was rebuilt away from the house. Garratts were here 1866-1988.
- 35 County Hospital:** The site was given by Earl Cowper and the building designed by Thomas Smith who designed many notable buildings in C19 Hertford. The foundation stone was laid in 1832. Originally known as The Infirmary.
- 36 37d West Street:** The Bridgeman family of nurserymen lived in the house from the early C17. Their C18 cousin, Charles, was the royal gardener. Lodging with them from 1748-91 was musician Thomas Green who influenced the young organist to choose a musical career.
- 37 Hale's Free Grammar School:** Founded 1617 by Richard Hale, citizen of London. The name changed to Hertford Grammar School in 1904. The school hall was built in 1906. In 1930 the school moved to new premises, now in Hale Road and called Richard Hale School.
- 38 School of Industry for Girls:** Also known as the Brown Coat School it was founded in 1793 by "Three Quaker Ladies" and started life in Water Lane Cottages, later moving briefly to West St. Girls were trained for service to the middle and upper classes.
- 39 The County Gaol:** The wall flanking Yeoman's Court car park was part of the (lowered) gaol west wall. The gaol (1779 – 1878) stretched as far as Hampton House – The Raj – with a long frontage to Ware Road. Baker Street did not exist then.
- 40 Former Addis Site:** William Addis started a toothbrush factory in Whitechapel in 1780. Bristle and bone were used in the manufacture. From 1920 the firm was a major employer in Hertford.
- 41 Port Hill House / Pest House:** Dr Thomas Dimsdale held a 'clinic' at Port Hill House for inoculation against smallpox. The corporation built the Pest House in 1763 as a small isolation hospital. The patients were used by the doctor in the inoculation process.

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