



Stage Eight Salthouse Lane to Silver Street

Takes approximately 25 minutes



This part of the walk takes us back into the old town and onto the Victorian Commercial quarter of the city.

Start this stage where Alfred Gelder Street meets 'Little' High Street and Salthouse Lane but do not cross Alfred Gelder Street at this point. Instead turn right.

Alfred Gelder, architect and Mayor of Hull, designed a new city centre sweeping away many slums. The street named after him runs from Drypool Bridge, to your left, to where Victoria Square is now. It cuts across High Street and it cuts across Lowgate, further down.

As you walk down Alfred Gelder Street you will pass The White Hart Hotel, a half timbered Pub built in 1904. It is interesting both outside and inside. Don't confuse it with Ye Old White Hart which we will see later in this stage.

Next to the pub you will see, through the trees, the back of Alfred Schofield House. Built in 1780 by Henry Wilkinson it became a branch of The Bank of England in 1828. In 1856 it was bought by the trustees of the Sailors Home to give sailors on leave a safe lodging. Renamed The Flying Angel but now it is apartments.

A little further on you will come to a drop down kerb and a stretch of double yellow line. From here you will be able to see when it is safe to cross. At the other side turn right and continue down the street until you come to the traffic lights. You will now be on the corner of Lowgate and Alfred Gelder Street where the two streets cross each other. *Don't cross the road yet.*

Here, on the traffic island to your right,* stands the statue of Charles Henry Wilson, founder member of the Ellerman Wilson Line.

From this point look around. Diagonally opposite, is The Guildhall, built between 1904 and 1919. It houses the headquarters of Hull City Council. Above it is the clock tower and above that is the Time ball, the highest in the country. On Thursday 29th June 2023 it fell for the first time in over 100 years. You can read more about this in our "*Want to know more?*" section.

.The headquarters of the City Council and many of its offices are in the Guildhall. It originally housed the local Law Courts too but new ones were built in 1990. (They are behind you!) Externally the Guildhall is pretty spectacular. If it had been built with an open square in front it really would have been a sight to be seen. As you look down the Alfred Gelder side you will see 35 bays with alternating arches and pediments over the windows and columns on either side. Above the roof line are two huge statues, one at each end of the building. The near one represents 'Strength' Britannia on a chariot drawn by lions. At the far end is Maritime Prowess being drawn by seahorses. The building has been used many times for filming.

. The inside is pretty impressive too but guided tours are only available in Heritage Week, in September. However you can step inside the foyer and see the magnificent marble staircase and mahogany panelling. If you ask, the receptionist will direct you to a small anteroom which displays the Hull Tapestries.

- There are toilets and changing facilities for anyone who has a radar key. Ask at reception

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Further along Lowgate, to your right and in the middle distance is the grand column that supports the statue of William Wilberforce which was originally erected in Victoria Square with public donations (crowd funding isn't new)

. You may see a wedding party on the steps, as the register office is now in the Guildhall.

(If you took time out to visit the Guildhall please cross Alfred Gelder Street to the grand white building on the corner). If you stayed where the Law Courts are behind you, cross Lowgate to the white building. This is the former General Post Office. It now houses Three John Scotts. It is now a Weatherspoons pub. It was built during the same period as the Guildhall and is of Portland stone. The scale of the stonework on these two imposing civic buildings indicates the wealth of Hull during the early 20th Century.

The Post Office was built on the former site of Suffolk Palace, the 13th Century residence of the Royal Keeper of Hull. It was granted to the De la Pole family in May 1330 and later belonged directly to the King, hence the later name of King's Manor. The Manor covered a large piece of land, and survived until the 17th century. The names, Manor Lane and Bowlalley Lane indicate its historical connections.

As you stand outside Three John Scotts the ancient **St Mary's Church** is facing you. It is Hull's second oldest existing church, built in about 1327-1333. Note the unusual walkway through the church tower which was put through in 1863. The town planners wanted to widen Lowgate and the body of the church was shortened to make space. However, they didn't want to demolish the tower so instead, the street entrance was blocked up and a pavement was knocked through. During the 18th Century St Mary's was ministered by three vicars who were three generations of the same family, all named John Scott. This is commemorated in the name of the pub opposite.



Continue down Lowgate. The next building you come to is **Ocean Chambers**, built around 1900 as law offices. Just past Ocean Chambers, look on the pavement and you will see the image of a fish pointing towards an ornate alley entrance.



This is **Exchange Alley** although it is called Exchange Court on a brass plate at the entrance. It is the best surviving example of Hull's L shaped alleys. This one dates back to 1794. It was this type of alley and courtyard that covered this area before the Alfred Gelder development. Most of the original alleys and courtyards contained around 10 houses on either side, with no bathrooms and only 2 or 3 earth closets and 1 stand pipe to serve them all. Can you imagine what they would have been like, cramped, insanitary, and unhealthy? I'm sure

the people would have been delighted to see the back of them. If the gate is unlocked there is public access so it's okay to take a look but please bear in mind these are working offices. The wall at the end actually turns a sharp left and comes out in Bowlalley Lane, which we will see in a few minutes.

For now, return to Lowgate. Continue to walk down Lowgate and you will be passing the former **Shipping Exchange Building**, built in 1866 for the Hull Exchange Company. It was described then as 'one of the chief ornaments of the town'. Time has not been kind to this building. The next street on the right is **Bowlalley Lane** (it is said Henry VIII played bowls here when he stayed at Suffolk Palace).

When crossing Bowlalley Lane remember traffic comes from the right.

Cross Bowlalley Lane and continue until you reach Silver Street. Cross over and go on to Hepworth's Arcade. You will see the sign just past a small post office.



Once at the arcade, look across Lowgate and you will see the four storey **Old Custom House** again. Just below the top cornice, carved into the stone, you can see “Post & Telegraph Office” from when it opened in 1877. Now it is a restaurant and offices.

At the entrance to Hepworth’s Arcade take a little time to appreciate the decorative outside of the arcade and then go through.

Hepworth’s Arcade was built in 1895 for the gentlemen’s outfitters, Joseph Hepworth. It now has 25 shops and cafes and is fascinating for both the building and the shops.



The third shop on the right is a favourite with children of all ages, **Dinsdales** established in 1930. Just take a look. Dinsdales is an Aladdin’s Cave of magic tricks and jokes. If you can’t find it, just ask for the joke shop. The shop window seems to have remained unchanged in living memory. If you can drag yourself away from it, look up at the arcade itself. It is a very ornate two storey building with a glass roof. In between the windows are half columns

decorated with swags and tails.

Continue down the arcade towards the shops facing you. In the corner is one of the entrances to the indoor Trinity Market. You can pop in there, but first let’s complete this stage. Turn right and continue to the exit on Silver Street. Look to your right and on the opposite side of the street you will see the entrance to Ye Olde White Harte Alley.



Inside Ye Olde White Hart you will get the real 17th century atmosphere of the place with its flagstone floors and inglenook fire places. You can imagine parliamentarian men with their large wide brimmed hats, long black coats and wide white collars, leaning against the fireplaces. Upstairs, on the right is The

Plotting Parlour, where, it is said, that John Hotham and the Aldermen of Hull met to plan their refusal to allow King Charles I entry into the city. This was one of the events that lead to the start of the English Civil War. This could well be a correct interpretation of events but some historians believe the actual plot was hatched some 50 years later to rid Hull of its Catholic Governor, imposed by Charles II.

Whatever happened here 370 years ago this is a ‘must see’ place to visit whilst in Hull. (You can read more about the Plotters Parlour in **Hull & The Civil War** in the ‘Want to know more’ section)

Now return back down the Alley to Silver Street. This is the end of Stage 8.

Stage 9 starts here.

If you wish, you can go back into into the market through the corner entrance, where you can find something to eat and a place to sit before you carry on.

End of Stage Eight