



## Stage Eight – Alfred Gelder Str to Silver Street

This part of the walk takes us back into the old town and onto the Victorian commercial quarter of the city and introduces us to Ye Old White Harte, Hull's most historic pub.

We start this stage where Alfred Gelder Street (north side) and Salthouse Lane so turn right and walk down Alfred Gelder Street.

Alfred Gelder, architect and Mayor of Hull, designed a new city centre sweeping away the many slums which blighted the area. The street named after him runs from Drypool Bridge to your left to where Victoria Square is now. It cuts across both High Street and Lowgate which we'll see in a few minutes.



As you walk down Alfred Gelder Street you will pass The **White Hart Hotel**, not to be confused with Ye Olde White Harte which we will see later in this stage.

This one is a half timbered pub built in 1904 and it's interesting both for its interior with its elaborate tiled bar as well as its exterior.

Next door but one to the pub you will see through the trees the back of Alfred Schofield House built in 1780 by Henry Wilkinson. (The front of the house faces Salthouse Lane). 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. It is now apartments.

Walk further down from Alfred Schofield House about 30 metres and you will come to a drop down kerb and a stretch of double yellow lines. From here you get a better view of the traffic and will be able to see able to safe to cross.

*(Traffic comes from both directions here).*

So please cross over and once on the other side of the street turn right and continue down until you come to a set of traffic lights. You will now be on the corner of Lowgate and Alfred Gelder Street.

*Don't cross the road just yet.*



On the traffic island to your right stands the statue of venerable **Charles Henry Wilson**, founder member of the Ellerman Wilson Shipping Line.

Diagonally opposite to your right is The Guildhall, built by the renowned architect Edwin Cooper between 1904 and 1919. It houses the headquarters of Hull City Council. Above the clock tower is Hull's time ball, the highest in the country and the only one on a municipal building. It was used to help ships calculate longitude before GPS.



**The Guildhall** originally housed the local Law Courts, they were replaced with new ones opened during the 1990's. (One of them is behind you!).

If you look down the side elevation of the Guildhall along Alfred Gelder Street, you will see on the first floor 35 bays with alternating arches and triangular pediments over the windows with columns on either side.

Look up above the roofline and you will see two colossal statues. The nearest to you is Britannia riding in a chariot pulled by lions. Further down in the distance is Aphrodite in a boat being drawn

by sea horses. The Guildhall is fascinating both inside and out. It has been used in many films.

There is public access to the foyer of the Guildhall and its impressive marble staircase and flooring, as well as wonderful mahogany wall panelling. The foyer has frequently appeared on screen as a double for royal palaces and government offices.

If you ask at the reception, you can visit an ante-room which displays the Hull Tapestries and other items of civic interest. Guided tours do take place each year during Heritage Week which takes place in September. You may see a wedding party on the steps of the Guildhall is a popular place to get married.

I hope you agree the Guildhall really is quite spectacular.

You can hear more about the Guildhall in our “*Want to know more?*” section.

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

(If you took time out to visit the Guildhall please return to the light controlled crossing to continue) the walk.)

From the crossing look to your right, beyond the Guildhall and in the middle distance, you can see the grand column and statue of **William Wilberforce**.



It was originally erected in Victoria Square shortly after his death in 1833 for the princely sum of £1250 all from public donations. (crowd funding isn't new). You will recall from Stage 2 that it was moved to its present site in the early 1930s following a traffic reorganisation.

Now's the time to cross over Lowgate by the light controlled crossing. Once over turn left and make your way towards a pair of our famous **Cream Phone Boxes**. (This pair are grade 2 listed)



You are now close to the entrance of the former General Post Office built in Portland stone during the same period as the Guildhall.



So let look at the **General Post Office** itself, notice the 4 round arched windows on the ground floor and 2 small doors each has a key stone caved in the shape of a human head.

Also notice the first floor windows each has a pediment alternating between round arch and triangular to matching the Guildhall.

The scale of the stonework on these two imposing public buildings indicates the wealth of Hull during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

It is now a pub called the Three John Scotts, named after three vicars of that name who served as ministers at St Mary's, the church opposite in the 1800's.

The General Post Office was built on the former site of Suffolk Palace, the 13<sup>th</sup> 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 this area until the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.



On the other side of Lowgate is **St Mary's Church**. Remember the three vicars? It's Hull's second oldest existing church built around 1333. Note the unusual walkway through the church tower was put through in 1863. The town planners wanted to widen Lowgate so 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.

Continue down Lowgate. The next building you come to is Ocean Chambers and just passed it, on the pavement and you will see the image of a



fish pointing towards an 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 1800. It was this type of alley and courtyard that blighted 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 down.

However 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. Once you've seen the alley go back to the entrance and continue to walk down



Lowgate. On your right you will pass 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'. I

think it's fair to say time has not been kind to this building.

The Shipping Exchange Building is on the corner of Bowlalley Lane. It is said Henry VIII played bowls here when he stayed at Suffolk Palace.

Please cross over Bowlalley Lane (*remember traffic comes from the left*) and continue until you reach Silver Street.

Cross over the street (traffic comes from the left again here) and go on to an overhead sign which reads Hepworth's Arcade. Once at the arcade, look across Lowgate and you will see the four storey Old Custom House.

At the entrance to **Hepworth's Arcade** take a little time to appreciate the decorative outside of the arcade before you walk through.

Hepworth's Arcade is a grade 2 listed building opened in 1895 for the gentlemen's outfitters Joseph Hepworth. It has 25 independent shops and cafes and is fascinating for both the building and the shops. As you walk through look carefully at the decor.

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.

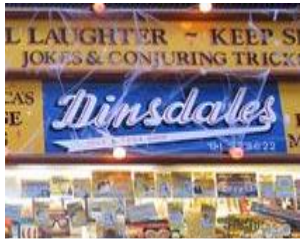
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The third shop on the right is a favourite with ‘Hull kids’ of all ages, **Dinsdales** it was established in 1930. Just take a look. It’s an Aladdin’s Cave of magic tricks and jokes. The shop window seems to have remained unchanged in living memory.



In 2024 Selfridges in London used the Dinsdales shop image for one of their special promotions.

So, if you can drag yourself away from Dinsdales 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 it’s worth a look but first let’s complete this stage.

Please now turn right and continue to the arcade 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.



Please now cross over Silver Street (watch for traffic coming from the right) and walk down the alley.

The courtyard is interesting in itself (please bear in mind the seating is for customers).



Now let's consider the inside **Ye Olde White Harte** itself. Once you are inside you will get the real 17<sup>th</sup> century atmosphere of the place with its flagstone floors and inglenook fireplaces. 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 elders of Hull met in April 1642 to plan their refusal to allow King Charles I entry into the city.

This was one of the events that led to the start of the English Civil War.

This could well be a correct interpretation of events however some historians believe the actual plot was hatched was some years later to rid Hull of a Catholic Governor imposed by Charles II.

Whether it happened in this room or not Sir John did refuse the King access to the town and hence the weapons stored within the walls.

The problem for Sir John was that he kept changing sides. For this he and his son were eventually beheaded by the Parliamentarians’!

Well! Whatever did happen here over 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 of our website.

When you are ready, retrace our steps back to Silver Street and you will be at **the end of Stage 8 of our walk.**

Now might be a good time to visit Ye Olde White Harte or Trinity Market.

When you are ready to start Stage 9, please come back here to the entrance to Ye Olde White Harte alley and go from there.

If you would like to let us know what you think about this or any other part of our website, please go to **Trip Advisor and enter Hull Heritage Walk/reviews** and take it from there.

Thank you