



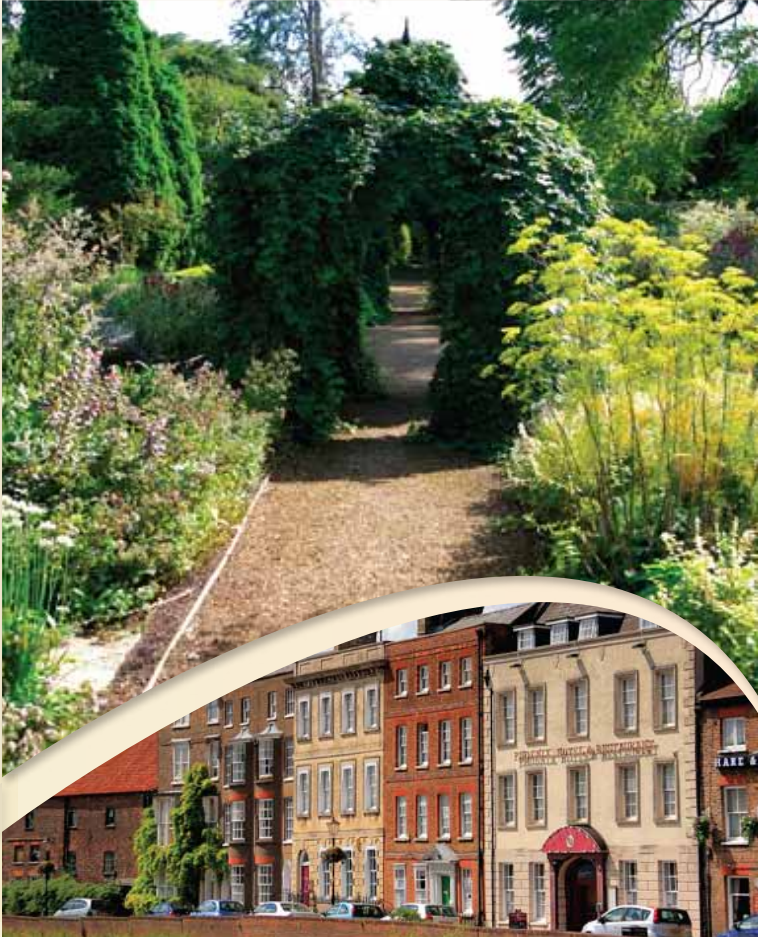
marked by a blue plaque. lived nearby at 8 York Row, which is their father's death, the Clarkson family Sharp and a chained African. After legislation in Parliament), Granville Wilberforce (who pushed through his life to campaigning tirelessly for the end of the African Slave Trade and for Emancipation. The sandstone panels depict his fellow campaigners William School headmaster, Clarkson was one of the early leaders of the

by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1880. The 68ft high limestone monument has a statue of Thomas Clarkson who played a leading role in the anti-slavery movement. Born in Wisbech in 1760, son of the Grammar School headmaster, Clarkson was one of the early leaders of the

single walk. Both walks highlight the older and most interesting buildings in Wisbech and the stories behind them. The Town Trail starts at the Fenland @ your service shop / Tourist Information Centre

The Town Trail

Wisbech served as a port in medieval times but when the estuary of the River Ouse became silted up it was diverted into the sea at Kings Lynn. The present artificial course of the River Nene was constructed from Peterborough to the Wash. The drained marshes provided rich productive farmland and Wisbech became the centre of a thriving agricultural region and an important trading centre.



Wisbech & Mini Guide & Town Trail



Cambridgeshire Fens



of the Norman Castle. having been built on the moat, are distorted due to settlement, Museum and Castle Lodge 'Great Expectations'. Both the original manuscript of Dickens Their library contains the visit for its varied collections. The museum is well worth a buildings in Museum Square.

Leaving the church, Museum Square is to your right. As you approach the steps to the Square, The Castle is in front of you. The Wisbech & Fenland Museum is to your right and Castle Lodge to the left. The Museum, built in 1846-47, was one of the first purpose-built museums in the country. Its late Georgian style (note the door cases and cornices above the windows) fits in well with the earlier

In the 14th century the church was expanded to its present size, with two naves spanned by a single roof and ceiling, believed to be unique. The early 16th century tower was built following the collapse of the old tower into the nave. It houses a unique peal of ten bells and was probably sited in its unusual position to obtain a firm



St Peter & St Paul. The Churchyard was converted into a garden to mark the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. Some fine headstones still remain. The church is the oldest building in Wisbech. The earliest work is in the north arcade which has the columns and round arcades typical of the Norman period.

Further along on the left hand side is the Angles Theatre. Opened in 1992 the Angles Theatre is one of the oldest surviving Georgian theatres in the country. This remarkable community theatre with only 105 seats offers a very intimate performance space - specialising in drama, dance and musical theatre - and an art gallery. Opposite the Angles Theatre is The Luxe Cinema, fully licensed luxury cinema with 66 leather armchairs opened in 2009 in the former WI Hall. Continue along Alexandra Road, originally known as Deadman's Lane.

Continue past the Post Office, an attractive building in French Gothic style, turn into Post Office Lane and then left into Alexandra Road. A short distance along is a blue plaque to commemorate the birthplace of William Godwin, radical thinker and novelist. He was married to Mary Wollstonecraft, author of 'Vindication of the Rights of Woman' and their daughter was Mary Shelley who wrote 'Frankenstein'.

Places to visit

For more information www.visitcambridgeshirefens.org

Elgood's Brewery and Garden

Traditional 18th Century family brewery with a 4 acre garden and many delightful features. Tel: 01945 583 160



Octavia Hill's Birthplace House

The House is a Grade II* listed Georgian house, in which Octavia Hill, social reformer and co-founder of the National Trust, was born. Tel: 01945 476 358



Peckover House and Garden - National Trust

The elegant Georgian Town House with 2 acre walled Victorian styled garden has summer houses, croquet lawns and licensed tearooms at the Reed Barn. Tel: 01945 583 463



Wisbech and Fenland Museum

A purpose-built Victorian museum retaining the charm and character of the time. Exhibits include Fenland history, agriculture and geology. Tel: 01945 583 817



Merchant Trails:

Enjoy a leisurely walk around Wisbech. This guide brings to life many famous characters of this town and tells you why Wisbech became one of the most prosperous ports in the country during the 18th and 19th centuries. Look on www.strideguides.com/wisbech



Cambridgeshire Fens

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Wisbech Information Centre - 4 Post Office Lane, Wisbech, PE13 1HG Tel: 01945 464 058



Cambridgeshire Fens

From the Market Place turn into Union Street then left into New Inn Yard. On the left can be seen one of the oldest timber framed buildings in Wisbech, dating from around 1500. It is often described as a barn, but it may have been a boathouse or warehouse.

The Market Place superseded the Old Market from about the 12th century as the focal point of commercial activity. The west end is dominated by the recently refurbished Rose & Crown Hotel. Its courtyard retains evidence of an open gallery and there are other early features from the 17th century. No.29 Market Place conceals an excellent medieval vaulted cellar which has religious origins. The church end of the Market Place once accommodated stocks and a whipping post, and at the other end there was a large horse trough which is now at Elgood's Brewery.



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Turn left into The Crescent which was the result of planned speculative development by Medworth. It lies within the Norman Castle moat. Medworth developed The Crescent, Union Place and Ely Place as an almost complete circus between 1793 and 1835. Continue past Castle Square and the United Reformed Church into Union Place, then turn left into Market Street which leads into the

The present 'Castle' was built in 1816 by Joseph Medworth. It is an odd mix of Regency with many architectural features of Thurloe's mansion. The gate piers (three sets in all) survive from the 17th century and stand as attractive features around The Crescent.



The Castle site has been occupied at least since the Conquest, firstly by a Norman Castle which was replaced in 1478 by the Bishop of Ely's palace. In the 17th century a fine mansion was built for John Thurloe who was Oliver Cromwell's Secretary of State.

Retrace your steps to Union Street and then onto Hill Street. Almost ahead of you at the junction is an interesting building, now a Conservative Club, which was the Grammar School from 1549 to 1898. It was here that Thomas Clarkson, the anti slavery campaigner, was born when his father was the Headmaster. It is believed it was originally a Guildhall.



Head along Hill Street towards the river. To your right is the Working Men's Club and Institute which was provided for the people of Wisbech and the surrounding villages by the Peckover family. The imposing clock tower contains a carillon which used to play tunes on the hour.

At the end of Hill Street the tidal River Nene comes in view. Once ships berthed here in the centre of town, offloading their cargoes directly into the warehouses and granaries. The main port area which incorporates a Yacht Harbour is now beyond the Freedom Bridge. The warehouse of H Friend & Co, Skin and Feather Merchants, on Nene Quay has now been converted into flats, but the traditional painted sign on its west side remains.



Turn to your left and head towards the Town Bridge. As you approach you will see the large stone abutment of an earlier iron bridge.

Cross the bridge into Old Market, a triangular space surrounded by fine Georgian buildings which testify to the golden days of the river trade. Architectural details to look out for are: cast iron work on Barclays Bank and nos.8 & 9 Old Market, the sumptuous door cases and fanlights on nos.1 & 2, and a medieval door at no.10. On the north side of Old Market, no.33, is a good 18th century building, while the neighbouring property, Sulehay House, is one of the most important Georgian buildings in the town. It is a Grade II* Listed Building which has been restored. Next door is the former corn merchants Counting House with glazed pantiles, usually associated with Norfolk.

You can now continue your tour of Wisbech by following the second trail along the Brinks - The Brinks Trail.

The Brinks Trail

The second trail takes you along the Brinks. North Brink and South Brink face each other across the tidal River Nene. North Brink is considered by many to be the most outstanding feature of Wisbech. In his ‘Buildings of England’, Nikolaus Pevsner described it as one of finest Georgian brick streets of England. It has been the backdrop to several period dramas including Martin Chuzzlewit, David Copperfield and Dean Spanley. As you proceed along North brink there are many interesting properties to look at.



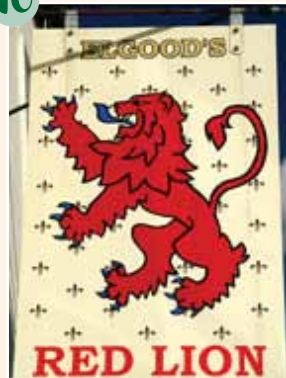
- The Town Hall was originally built as a Corn Exchange and Reading Rooms in 1811 by Joseph Medworth who was responsible for developing the Castle and Crescent. The building was extended in 1858 and again in 1872 when the roof was raised creating the splendid Council Chamber where the Wisbech Town Council still meet.
- Lloyds Bank was built in the 1920s in a Baroque revival style. Because of the architect’s meticulous attention to detail, it sits comfortably into the street scene alongside much earlier buildings.
- The former Phoenix Hotel was previously known as the White Hart and was one of several coaching inns in the town.
- Numbers 7, 8 and 9 are now the North Brink Doctors’ surgery. No.7 dates back to 1662. The stone façade which was added later is an attractive contrast to the more prevalent brick. Records show that buildings to the rear included an oil mill and granary and later a brewing office. The house itself has a long connection with the medical profession.
- No. 12 and its adjacent warehouse testify to the commercial origins of Georgian wealth. The simplicity of the warehouse is a perfect foil to the house fronts of the Brink.
- The next two houses are the finest in town. Both are Grade 1 listed and are part of the Peckover Estate, now in the care of the National Trust.



The Peckovers were a Quaker banking family who had a great influence on the history of Wisbech. Peckover House was built in 1722 and the low wings added in 1878. The house has a finely proportioned façade with arched

sash windows and a grand stone door case raised on steps. The interior has panelled rooms and ornate plasterwork. Behind the house is a 2 acre Victorian-style walled garden with many attractive features including summer houses, an orangery and a reed thatched barn. The House and Garden are open to the public.

- Continuing along North Brink, no.21 is the Friends Meeting House, opened in 1854 and designed by Algernon Peckover. The small graveyard behind the Meeting House is where the remains of many of the Peckover family lie.
- Numbers 22 to 25 were also designed and built by the Peckovers. They have a fascinating array of architectural features. The gables are crow-stepped, there are mock Tudor chimneys, fish scale tiles, hexagonal slates and fleur-de-lys ridge tiles. These type of embellishments were very popular in Victorian times, reflecting styles of earlier periods.
- To the west of no.27 North Brink there is a later 19th century gazebo, probably based on the earlier one at no.54. These gazebos or summerhouses were built by members of the Peckover family as view points to overlook the busy river.
- The Red Lion Inn at no.32 was built as a hostelry around 1764 and remains a popular riverside pub serving the locally brewed Elgoods ale. The Rose Tavern, a little further along the Brink, also serves real ale.



- Wisbech Grammar School now occupies Harecroft House (nos.47 & 48) which was built in 1844 in the style of an Italian villa by Algernon Peckover, and was later the home of his son Alexander and his family.
- Sibalds Holme, a large house along the North Brink beyond the Barton Road turn, was purchased and rebuilt by Algernon Peckover at the time of his marriage in 1828. It was lived in continuously by his family for almost a hundred years before being divided into two prior to being sold.
- Elgoods Brewery and Gardens is the final stopping off point on the North Brink Trail. One of the first classic Georgian breweries to be built outside London, it was established in 1795 from a converted oil mill and granary. It changed hands a number of times until 1877 when it was purchased along with 70 tied houses by John Elgood, a maltster of Godmanchester and Peterborough.



The first brew of Elgoods ale was mashed here on an autumn morning in 1878 and the family have continued to brew fine traditional ales ever since. Their visitor centre is an ideal place to stop for refreshment before continuing the trail back to town.

- Returning along North Brink, South Brink can now be viewed from across the river. Opposite the gazebo at No.27 North Brink is Ede’s Terrace where Georgian Wisbech ends and modern industry begins. Ede’s Terrace consists of seven Regency period houses with mansard roof, shallow bows at the ends and simple fanlights.
- In contrast, No.15, formerly part of Wisbech Grammar School, is much grander in style. It has a charming cupola and a widows walk, so called because it formed a look out post for ships returning from sea.
- Further along, No.12 formerly the Queens Hotel has a grand stone door case. It was built as a residence around the same time as Peckover House and has many similar internal features.



- No.7 & 8 South Brink was the birthplace of Octavia Hill, a crusader for housing and open space, and a founder of the National Trust. The house is now a museum which commemorates her life and work and is open from mid March to October.
- The principal message of the Brinks is harmony in architecture. Each building is different but they blend together. Many kinds of architectural detail are visible, for example urns, friezes, pilasters and columns. Such details are not considered necessary today, but they enrich the historic landscape of Wisbech and help make it an interesting and attractive town.

Entertainment

- The Luxe Cinema**
The Luxe Cinema is a stylish and independent film-lovers delight, offering a whole new experience where you can cosy up and relax on a leather arm chair or two-seater sofa. The elegant fully licensed bar provides an ambient setting for the pre and post film drinks and nibbles.
Tel: 01945 588 808
- The Angles Theatre**
Built in 1793, The Angles Theatre is one of the oldest surviving Georgian theatres in the country. This remarkable community theatre is tucked away in Wisbech.
Tel: 01945 474 447



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