



# Chester u3a Walk, Tour, and Treasure Trail 2 - Directions



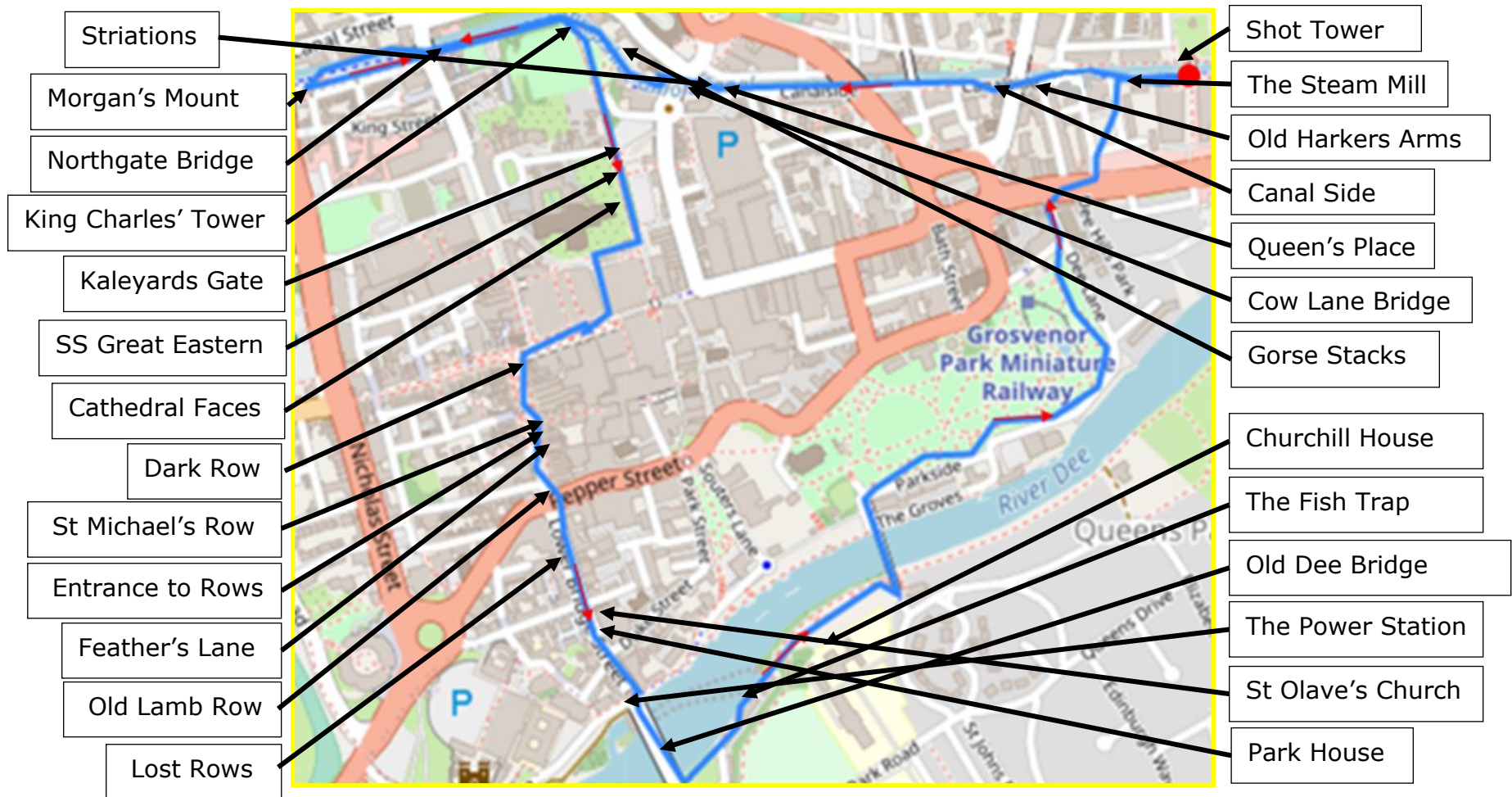
You can go for a **walk**, an **Historical Tour**, or a **Treasure Trail** around Chester (or any combination of the three). You can even do it online using Streetview or similar.

## Directions

- Start at the hotel Moxy next to Waitrose on the canal towpath.
- Walk along the towpath towards Chester; you will pass three bars, The Artichoke, Old Harker's Arms and The Lock Keeper.
- Continue along the canal towpath past the City Walls on your left. The canal will take you through a cut in the rocks on either side under Northgate Street.
- After passing under Northgate Street walk towards the next road bridge over the canal. Immediately before passing under the bridge, take the footpath up to the Walls on your left (this is the second footpath).
- Go through the gap in the Walls and turn right. Climb the steps on to the Walls and turn right, onto the Walls.
- Follow the Walls across Northgate Street. You will see the Cathedral grounds to your right and, if you look down, the canal towpath to the left.
- Continue around the Walls until you have the Cathedral to your right and just past Iceland to your left.
- Turn right down the steps/ramp at the Bell Tower of the Cathedral and follow the footpath with the Cathedral gardens on your right.
- Turn left into St Werburgh Street and follow it until it ends in Eastgate Street.
- Turn right into Eastgate Street until you get to the Cross.
- At the Cross, turn left into Bridge Street. Follow Bridge Street and cross Grosvenor Street and follow Lower Bridge Street down to the Old Dee Bridge.
- Cross the river on the bridge and turn immediately left down the steps and follow the footpath by the river to the Queen's Park Bridge.
- Cross over the Queen's Park Bridge and turn right into Grosvenor Park.
- Keep to the path in the park shown on the park map by blue dots.
- Leave Grosvenor Park by the gate into Dee Lane. Turn left into Dee Lane and walk towards the main road.
- Cross the main road by the pedestrian crossing lights and walk down Russell Street towards the canal.
- Turn right along the canal back to the Moxy Hotel and Waitrose.



## Chester u3a Walk, Tour, and Treasure Trail 2 - Map





# Chester u3a Walk, Tour, and Treasure Trail 2 - Map Park

Three Medieval  
Arches

Billy Hobby's  
Well







# Chester u3a Walk, Tour, and Treasure Trail 2 –Trail



## Shot Tower

The walk starts at Chester Shot Tower, also known as Broughton Shot Tower. It is a grade 2\* listed building; built in 1779 and the oldest of the remaining three shot towers in the country.

Lead was taken to the top of the tower and melted. The molten lead was then poured through a sieve, cooled and solidified as it fell. The round lead shot pellets were collected from the bottom of the tower. Production ceased in 2001.

It is rumoured that the molten lead was covered in mesh to prevent suicidal pigeons taking their last hot bath!

## The Steam Mill

The Steam Mill now contains the restaurant called Artichoke (you can take your dog in!). The Steam Mill was one of the first steam powered canal-side flour mills in the country.

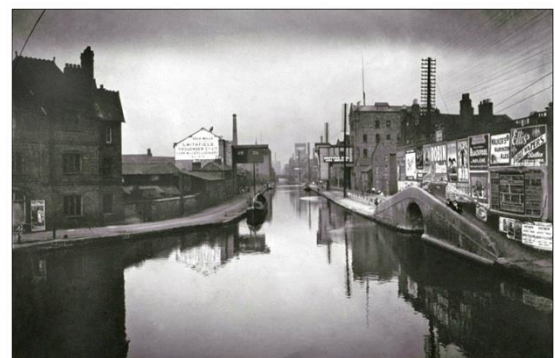
## Old Harkers Arms

Harkers was originally a canal-side chandlers selling all manner of goods to the people who lived and worked on the narrowboats on the canal.

## Queen's Place

As you pass Queen's Place on your left you can see the façade of a building at the end of the street. This is the frontage of a lecture hall, originally from Queen St, which was relocated here in 1978.

## Canal Side



All along the side of the canal up to Cow Lane Bridge were salt works, coal merchants and timber yards.

## Cow Lane Bridge

Frodsham Street used to be known as Cow Lane, hence Cow Lane Bridge. It is the road that cows were



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driven down on their way to the beast market.

## **Gorse Stacks**

On the right as you go under Cow Lane Bridge is Gorse Stacks. Bundles of gorse were used as kindling for the ovens but after the Great Fire of London people became nervous about storing flammable materials. A decree went out in Chester that bundles of kindling were to be kept together at one place which became known as Gorse Stacks.

## **Striations**



Along the canal, you should be able to see striations in the walls. These have been caused by the ropes that were used to attach horses to canal boats.

## **Northgate Bridge**

In the region of Northgate there was a former prison with a notorious cell known as the Chamber of Little Ease. This was a hole hewn out of the rock with very small dimensions so that a prisoner was forced into an uncomfortable position which could be made even more cramped by the use of boards.

The prison and the gate were maintained by the sheriffs of the city from tolls extracted from people and goods entering the city. They also maintained the stocks and pillories as well as executing convicted felons from the whole of Cheshire.

You can see a reconstruction of the old Northgate in a short video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1hsY6yUTQo>

## **Morgan's Mount**

As you leave the canal make sure you look to the right to see Morgan's Mount. Originally this was named the Raised Square Platform. Skeletons were discovered beneath the walls here when the Chester Canal was being dug.

## **King Charles' Tower**

King Charles' Tower used to be known as the Phoenix Tower and you may be able to see the symbol of the phoenix above the door. The tower was leased to two guilds; Painters and Stationers, and Barbers and Chandlers, who sublet it to other guilds. The phoenix was the symbol of one of the guilds that met here.

It was later named after King Charles' as he was said to have stood here to see his armies defeated at Rowton Moor. This cannot be true as Rowton Moor is unable to be seen. A more likely vantage point is the top of the Cathedral Tower.

## **Kaleyards Gate**

The Kaleyards Gate, in former times, used to be locked at the start of a



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curfew at around 9:00 pm signalled by the ringing of a bell at the cathedral. The curfew bell still tolls, but I am not sure whether the gate is locked any more.

## SS Great Eastern

SS Great Eastern was an iron sailing steam ship designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. This mark on the Walls shows the length of the ship – 692 feet from the Phoenix Tower.



## Cathedral Faces

On either edge of the Cathedral Tower there are two faces in profile that you can see but that disappear as you walk past them. According to legend these are cruel caricatures of the architect done by the stonemasons.



## St Michael's Row

As you look into St Michael's Row (the entrance to the Grosvenor Precinct), try to picture that originally this was the site for Fleshmongers Lane, and would have

led into Newgate St, behind the precinct.

## Dark Rows

This section of the rows known as the Dark Row was formerly known as Buttershop Row. You can probably guess the reason; this is where you went to buy butter. Next to it, running down to St Werburgh St, was Baker's Row.

## Entrance to Rows

(31-35 Bridge St, aka St Michaels Buildings)



When this entrance was first built it was constructed in white faience. The people of Chester hated it and made the architect change it to fit in with the more traditional black and white used in Chester. Faience can still be seen at street level.

## Feather's Lane



Feather's Lane is one of the four remaining medieval lanes in Chester. It was also called Fletcher's Lane. If





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you walk to near the end of the lane on the left, there is a door. If it has been left open, then it will take you on a pathway that leads out onto Row Level.

## Old Lamb Row

Old Lamb Row once stood at the crossroads at the top of Lower Bridge St, near the Falcon. It collapsed in 1821, but you can see a reconstruction video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yd423TmdaA8>

## Lost Rows

Originally the Rows extended down Lower Bridge St, and you can



see remnants of them if you look carefully. Above Jason Lea is the last stretch of Row that is unenclosed; Unity Passage is a section of Row that still exists but is enclosed on the outside. The long stretches of steps leading to unnecessarily high front doors are also a giveaway.



## Park House

The two acres behind this were once Chester's first public pleasure gardens, with extensive flower gardens and a bowling green.



## St Olave's Church

St Olave's (or Olaf's) Church was built in part of the city that was associated with Vikings. There is evidence of both a Viking mint and tannery in this area.





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## **The Power Station**

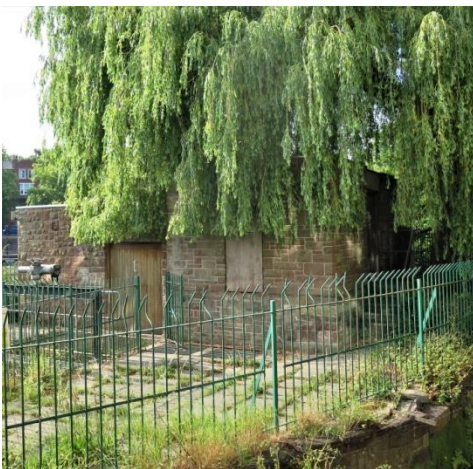
The Power Station stands on the site of a tallow factory and tobacco mill. They were demolished and the Power Station built; this was later changed into a pumping station. Now, there is a consortium of people in Chester hoping to turn it into a 'Hydro Hub'.

## **The Old Dee Bridge**

The Old Dee Bridge was originally built by the Romans; the remains of what are believed might be Roman blocks can sometimes be seen at low tide. The later Medieval Bridge was built with a tower and a drawbridge. These were used to enable the levying of tolls on the traffic into the city.

The arches are unequally spaced, and there was speculation that this was because they were paid for by different people, but no, it is just that they occur where there is suitable bedrock.

## **The Fish Trap**



The Fish Trap is a monitoring station that monitors the numbers of trout and salmon. You can also see a (restoration of) the waterwheel that

was used to power the snuff mill located above it. There was also a needle and pins factory located near here; young children were employed because of their nimble fingers.

## **Churchill House**

Churchill House is roughly opposite the bandstand on the other side of the river. There is a network of tunnels and rooms under Churchill house that has an entrance amongst the bushes to your right. The network is a bombproof emergency centre used during World War 2 and consists of nineteen rooms and four tunnels. The structure was blasted out of the sandstone by Royal Engineers (mostly Welsh ex-Miners) and is still there today.

## **Three Medieval Arches**

The three Medieval Arches seen in the park were all moved from other locations within Chester. St Mary's Arch formerly stood in St Mary's Benedictine Nunnery. The Shipgate Arch stood west of the Shipgate and was moved to the park in 1831. The third arch was moved from St Michael's Church.







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### Billy Hobby's (or Obbie's) Well



Billy Hobby's well is situated in what was Billy Hobby's field. Grosvenor Park was developed from fields given to Chester by the Second Marquess of Westminster in the 1860s. The spring feeding the well was believed to have magical powers; young women are said to have stood in with the waters covering their right leg in the hope of gaining husbands. ("Some women choose to follow men, and some women choose to follow their dreams". ... Lady Gaga.) The structure is now used as a pump house for the water in the park.

### Treasure Trail Instructions

On the following page is a sheet of photos. By following the map and/or directions you should go past all of them, but not necessarily in the order in which they are shown. Please take a photo of each one as you find it and submit them to [treasuretrail@chesteru3a.org.uk](mailto:treasuretrail@chesteru3a.org.uk) (but please send them all at once, not one at a time!).

What we would really like to know is: are members following the trail, and, should we do any more? If you don't let us know what you think, we might stop producing them. (If you hate them, we might still stop producing them).

Any fully correct set will win a small prize, and be covered in glory. If you want a copy of the Word template to put your photos into, please ask. If you can't find them all, and get frustrated, then you can ask for our Hints sheet (but then you won't win a prize...).

***So, get out there, and get hunting!***



