



# King's Lynn u3a History Trails



## Street Names Trail no 1

# Introduction

King's Lynn was known as **Bishop's Lynn until 1537** when Henry VIII decreed that the town belonged to the King. Many streets in King's Lynn were renamed in **1809**. We have listed the old names where known as they give an important historical background to the town. Many of the old names refer to trades or occupation. Others were named after public houses, in reference to a church or descriptive of the area itself. "Gate" in street names originates from the Norse word "Gata" meaning road or street.

As you walk round you will often see **blue plaques** on buildings giving additional, interesting information. Places en route worth a second visit are: **Stories of Lynn, The Minster, St. George's Guildhall, St Nicholas Chapel, True's Yard Museum and Lynn Museum.**

We hope you enjoy the walk, which should take 1 ½ to 2 hours. If you want further information use the QR code on the back of the leaflet to connect to the U3A website.

**START at Saturday Market Place by Stories of Lynn.....**





Note the plaque on the Gaol House.

Walk across the road and head down.....



Margaret, as legend has it, was eaten by a dragon but by holding onto her cross the dragon spat her out. The King's Lynn Town Arms shows 3 dragon heads with crosses emerging from their mouths.

Turn left into **Priory Lane** (note the plaque on the left), then turn right down **Church Street** then next right to.....

	<p>(Formerly named Lath Street) This was named in the naval hero's honour after his famous Battle of Trafalgar victory in <b>1805</b>. Lath Mansion, 15 Nelson St, was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The buildings in this street span the medieval period to the</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	

As you walk along you will see.....



Legend has it that the devil was spotted and cornered by a priest, in what is now called Devil's Alley, looking for souls to steal. The priest banished him with holy water and prayers. The infuriated devil stamped

his foot with such fury that it left an imprint. Devil's Alley was once completely roofed and ran to the quayside and there was a large cobble that was shaped like a gigantic foot.

Unfortunately this has now been replaced.

At the end of **Nelson Street** turn left down.....



which leads onto **the Quay** and the **River Great Ouse**. Note the plaque on the Hanse House.

Turn right, then right again to.....

**3** COLLEGE LANE



This goes down the side of **Thoresby College** which is one of the most complete survivals of medieval Lynn. The college was built in **1508-11** by **Thomas Thoresby** for priests serving at St Margaret's Church (now The Minster). In front as you walk you get a lovely view of the chequered Town Hall.



Turn left into.....

**4** QUEEN STREET  
formerly  
Wingate Street

formerly **Three Crown Street** (from the Inn) and before that **Wingate Street**. The name Wingate probably derives from the Anglo-Saxon words windig (windy) and geat (road) meaning windy or winding road. The old Norse word 'gata' also meant a gate or street. Note the plaque on the right on Burkitt Homes.

As you walk along you will see.....



Named after  
**"Three Crowns Inn"**  
which used to be on this site.  
If you wish, walk through this hidden street to the car park, then retrace your steps  
Note the plaques on Three Crowns and Clifton House.

Carry walking along Queen Street and turn left into.....

<b>KINGS STAITH LANE</b>	
	<p>'The importance of the <b>King's Staithe</b> and <b>Purfleet Quay</b> are reflected in The medieval <b>Hanseatic League</b> which comprised a group of towns around the Baltic and the North Sea, and was an influential trading association and part of King's Lynn's historic past.'</p>

Walk along, then turn first right into.....

<b>5</b>	<b>King's Staithe Square</b>
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If you've ever wondered what a "staithe" is, it's a Norfolk word for a quay.



From here walk forward towards the benches and walk through the gap and over the sluice to.....

<b>6</b>	<b>Purfleet Quay</b>
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Purfleet means pure stream. The quay is a loading point of the Purfleet from the 13thC

Walk up to the **Custom House** which was built in **1683**. Both the Custom House and **The Duke's Head Hotel** were designed by local architect Henry Bell, a contemporary of Christopher Wren. The historian **Nikolaus Pevsner** described the Custom House as 'one of the most perfect buildings ever built' Note the information plaque...

Turn left into.....

<b>7</b>	<b>King St</b>	<p><b>Chequer Street</b> until <b>1814</b> and <b>Stockfysh Rewe</b> before.</p>
		<p>Such a quantity of cod and herring was being imported into Lynn by Hanseatic merchants that in the 14thC the street was known as '<b>Stockfish Row</b>' probably because so many fish merchants lived there. Stockfish is unsalted fish, especially cod, dried by cold air and wind on wooden racks, one of the oldest preservation methods.</p>
		<p>With a listed building every 25ft or so, this street was established in the 12th century.</p>

As you walk you will pass.....



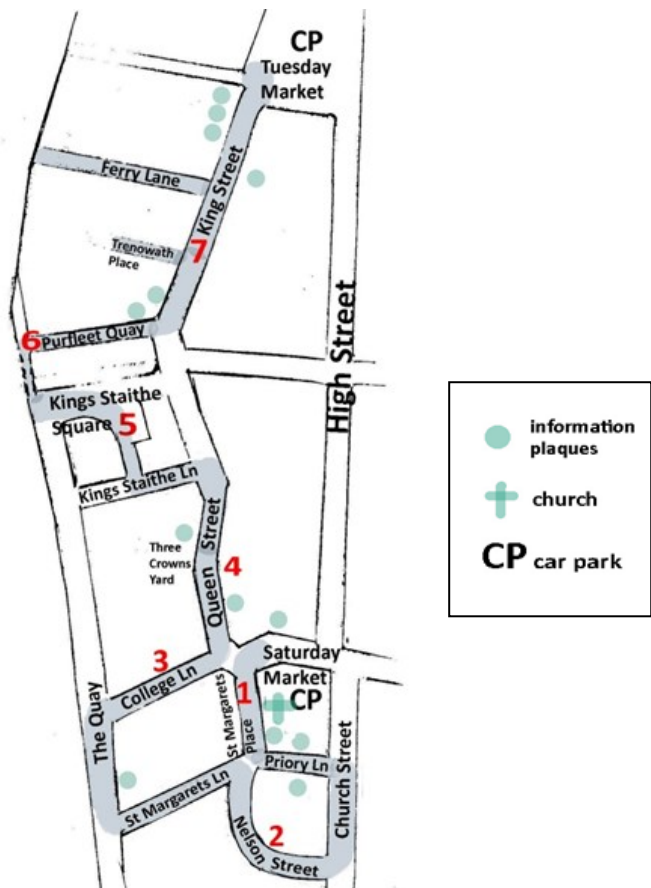
named after the 4 Trenowath families living in Norfolk in 1891. This was 100% of all the recorded Trenowaths in the UK. The Trenowath families owned drapery, furniture and removal businesses from 1862-1889, including 110 High Street, the former John Collier shop.

Carry on down **King Street** until you reach



note the plaques on nos 28-32, 23-25, 27, 29.

To the end of your walk and the **start of trail no 2**



# King's Lynn u3a History Trails

We hope you enjoyed this u3a Town Trail. This and other trails are available on the King's Lynn u3a website :

[www.kingslynnu3a.org.uk](http://www.kingslynnu3a.org.uk)

Then select 'Town Trails' from the menu.

