

The Fen Edge Trail

Peterborough to Stanground

2 miles (3.3 km) or 5.5 miles (8.9 km)

In partnership with

Fenlandia

'the museum is a treasure in itself'

Stewart, Fenlandia

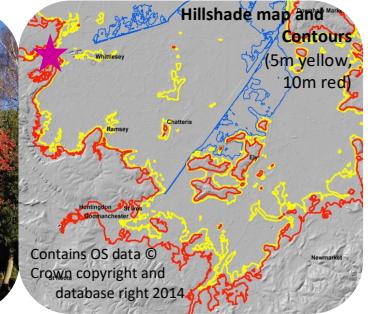
'now I just want to walk it all again'

Paul, Fen Edge Trail team



The route: 'from the 'sacred rock' to the fenland Washes of the River Nene'

From the **Cathedral city of Peterborough**, this walk crosses the **River Nene** to follow the old course of the river along the fen edge to the village of **Stanground**. A longer walk can be taken by following the new river along the **Nene Washes** east, crossing by the **Millennium Bridge** and returning along **Morton's Leam**, with an option to visit the famous **Flag Fen Archaeological Park**. The impressive view of the magnificent **Cathedral** near the start of the walk contrasts strongly with the extensive views over the Nene Washes from the small village of Stanground at the end of the walk. At the start, it is worth taking time to see the excellent displays in **Peterborough Museum** including the **huge, marine reptile fossils** that were found in the local **Jurassic Oxford Clay**. After a fascinating journey through the historic city centre, including the rich cultural setting of the Cathedral Precincts, the walk takes you along and then over the river to wind through Stanground and finish at the **Lock**. This is an important point on the fen edge and particularly on the local waterway network; from here, although most of the water is taken along **Morton's Leam** towards the Wash, the **old course of the Nene** turns south, still supplying water to the **Middle Level** and also linking the **Nene with the River Great Ouse**.



Photos: 12.1f Stanground Lock; 3.3f Peterborough Cathedral West Front; 6.1f Millennium Signpost (Rowe type); 4.2f Hostry Passage; 9.2f Stanground Church; 3.1f The Guildhall; 7.1f Previous view of the Embankment from the bridge; 5.2f Gates Memorial in Bishop's Gardens.

Practicalities As with all walks on the Fen Edge Trail, you can complete the full walk using transport one way or choose a short or long round trip option, or just visit some places on the route. The walk is divided into numbered parts as shown on the maps. Photos are shown in the order seen except for those on this front page (f). The walk links with the **Hereward Way** and the **Nene Way**. The **shorter walk is on paths that are wheelchair accessible**, following Route 12 of the **Sustrans National Cycle Network**, from the Embankment onwards. The long route follows Routes 63 and 21; www.sustrans.org.uk includes information on the **Millennium Mileposts**. From point 7 on both routes, you are following the **Peterborough Green Wheel** www.pect.org.uk/projects/green-wheel/. **Peterborough Museum** has displays on local fossils, geology and archaeological finds www.peterboroughmuseum.org.uk. Other websites: www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk, www.flagfen.org.uk.

Length of walk (one way) 2 miles (3.3 km), OR (longer walk) 5.5 miles (8.9 km), walking guide time 1hr plus stops (longer walk 3hrs plus stops). Maps O.S. Explorer 227. Free, easy to use online geology map viewer on www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer. OD = Ordnance Survey Newlyn (metres above sea level).

Transport and services There are **buses** between Peterborough and Stanground www.stagecoachbus.com and **train services** to Peterborough. Parking is available in several Peterborough car parks. On-street parking in Stanground is possible. Please only park where allowed and in consideration of others. There are many cafés, pubs and shops in Peterborough and a shop and pubs in Stanground. Peterborough Museum, the Cathedral and Flag Fen have cafés.

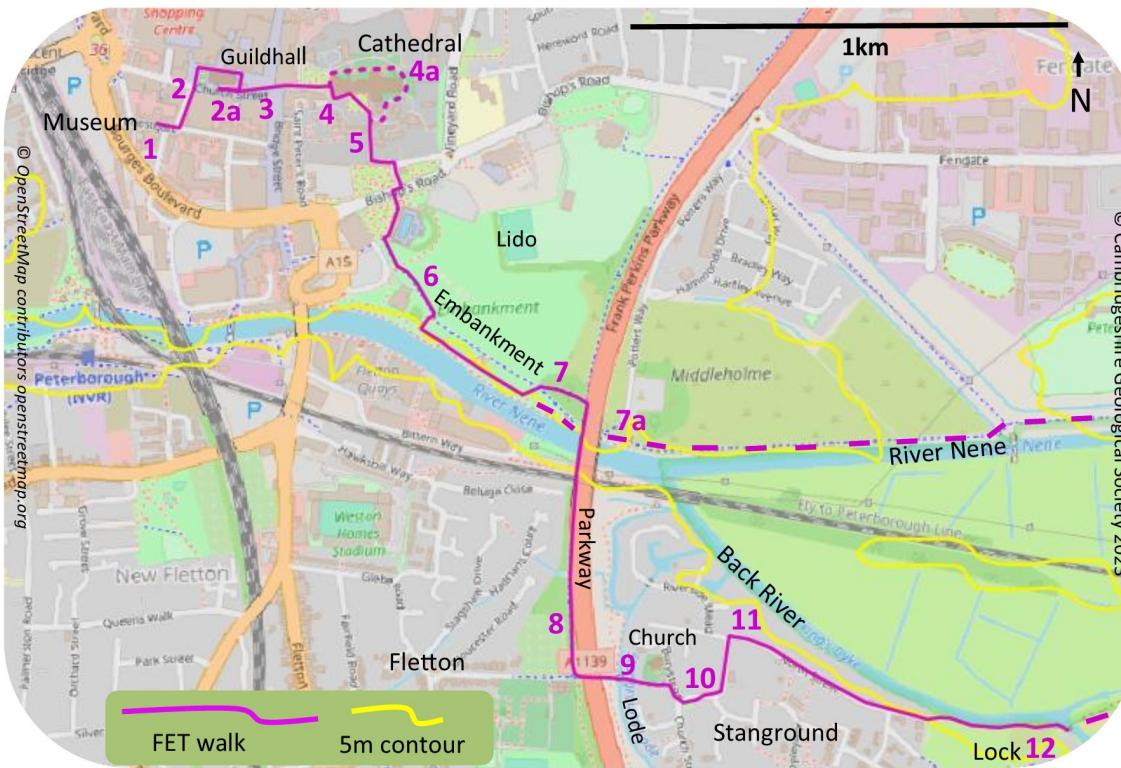
Safety Be aware of risks you may encounter and take note of warnings given by landowners or on pathways. The terrain is generally flat, with a slight walk up (ramp) to the bridge(s) over the river. Take particular care with uneven terrain, when near water, on soft or slippery ground, in the presence of livestock or walking along or crossing roads. Ensure your dog is kept under control as needed. All Fen Edge Trail walks are on publicly accessible routes. **Anyone undertaking walks on the Fen Edge Trail does so at their own risk, these notes are for general guidance only.**

The Fen Edge Trail

Walk: Peterborough to Stanground

Directions map

2 miles (3.3 km) or 5.5 miles (8.9 km)

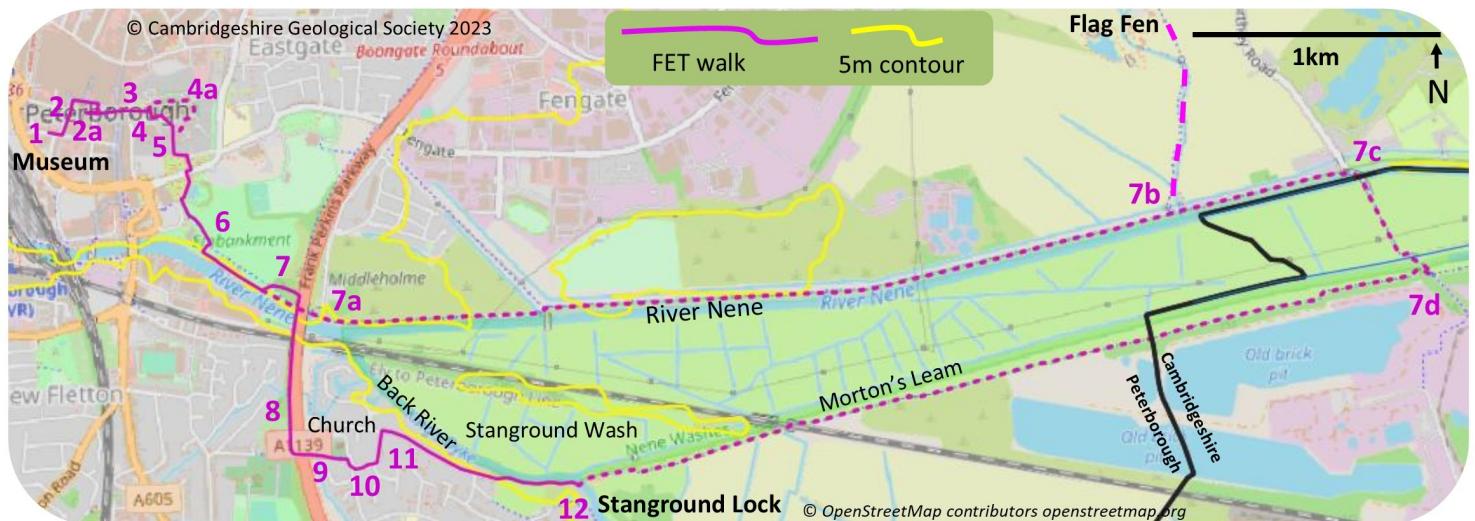


- 1 Start at **Peterborough Museum** and, with your back to the building, turn right to walk a short way along **Priestgate** before crossing the road to turn left down **Cross St.**
- 2 At the end of **Cross St**, walk ahead past the **green** towards shopping centre and then turn right to walk past **St John the Baptist Church** along **Exchange St** until you reach the **Guildhall** on your right.
- 2a To visit the church walk right along **Church St** to the south entrance (then retrace your steps).
- 3 Walk across **Cathedral Square** to the gated archway entrance to the **Cathedral**.

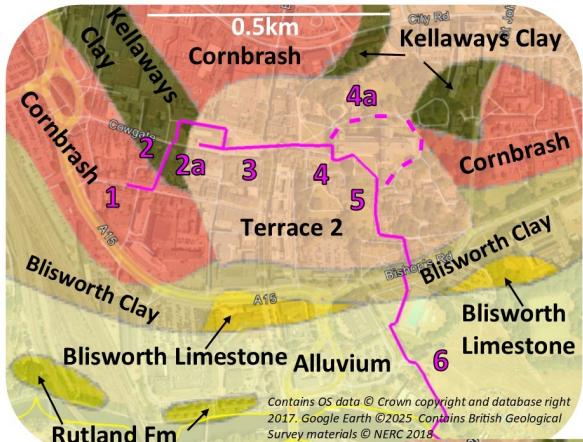
- 4 Go through **iron gate** on right side of Cathedral to walk diagonally through the garden of the **Cloisters** and out through **Hostry Passage**. **4a** If gate is closed, walk left past front of Cathedral and around left side to back, then bear right to Hostry Passage.
- 5 Walk straight on (**Minster Precincts**) to turn left onto **Gravel Walk**, reaching **Bishop's Road Gardens**. Turn right here to the main road, **Bishop's Rd** (via the Gardens if you wish). You are walking here on '**Foundry Walk**' which you follow as you cross **Bishop's Rd** at the **Pedestrian Crossing** and take the path straight on past the **Lido**. Turn left, before road, towards river joining **Embankment Walk**.
- 6 Passing the **Key Theatre**, turn left towards the river to turn left (east) along **Riverside Walk** (or continue on **Embankment Walk**).
- 7 To take the **short route**, rejoin Embankment Walk and take the path left, up the slope to reach the **footpath alongside the main road** (Parkway) and turn right to **cross the River Nene** and the **railway**. **7a** To take the **Washes (longer) route to Stanground** see below.
- 8 The path gradually leaves the road and descends to **Fletton Cemetery**. Turn left here to walk through the **subway** under the road.
- 9 After crossing the bridge over **Stanground Lode**, follow **Church Lane**, past the **church** to join **Church St** on a bend where you turn left.
- 10 Follow **Church St**, which bears left and becomes **Mount Pleasant**. At the end turn right into **North St**.
- 11 Follow **North St** into a 'dead end' where you can enter **Tenter Hill Meadow**. Walk along the river through the meadow (open access) towards **Stanground Lock**, the end of the walk, **12**.

For a longer walk, along the river and over the Nene Washes:

- 7a Continue on **Riverside Walk** under the **flyover** and along the **North Bank**, crossing over a small bridge at one point.
- 7b To visit **Flag Fen**, cross the small bridge taking a footpath, crossing another bridge before reaching the entrance. Return to river.
- 7c Cross the river on the **Millennium Bridge**, the footpath taking you across the **Washes** and the southern channel, **Morton's Leam**.
- 7d Turn right to follow footpath along the **South Bank**, passing under the railway, to reach **Stanground Lock**, the end of the walk, **12**.



Walk: Peterborough to Stanground - geology and landscape



Peterborough has two outstanding geological features; firstly, the **ridge of Jurassic limestone** (with some accompanying Jurassic clays) on which its stands, rising above the low fenland to the east, and, secondly, the **valley of the River Nene** in which it lies at the point where it discharges into the **Fenland Basin**. The **Lower Nene fen edge** has a complex and significant collection of both Pleistocene ('Ice age') and Holocene deposits, the latter providing the setting for the internationally important archaeological sites of **Flag Fen** and **Must Farm**.

Underlying the adjacent fenland is the **Oxford Clay**, one of the county's most famous rocks known for its many **Jurassic fossils** including huge marine reptiles such as **Pliosaurs** and **Ichthyosaurs** and the biggest (bony) fish ever found, **Leedsichthys**. Peterborough Museum has an excellent, and very significant, collection of these fossils that can be seen prior to the start of the walk.

Ages of the rocks

(Holocene): less than 11,700 years

Alluvium & Peat

(Pleistocene):

River Terraces

Terrace 1 c.30,000 yrs

Terrace 2 c.125,000 yrs

Glacial Lake Deposits

c.425,000 yrs (or younger)

Bedrock (Jurassic):

(millions of years)

Oxford Clay c.160 my

Kellaways Sand c.163 my

Kellaways Clay c.164 my

Cornbrash c.165 my

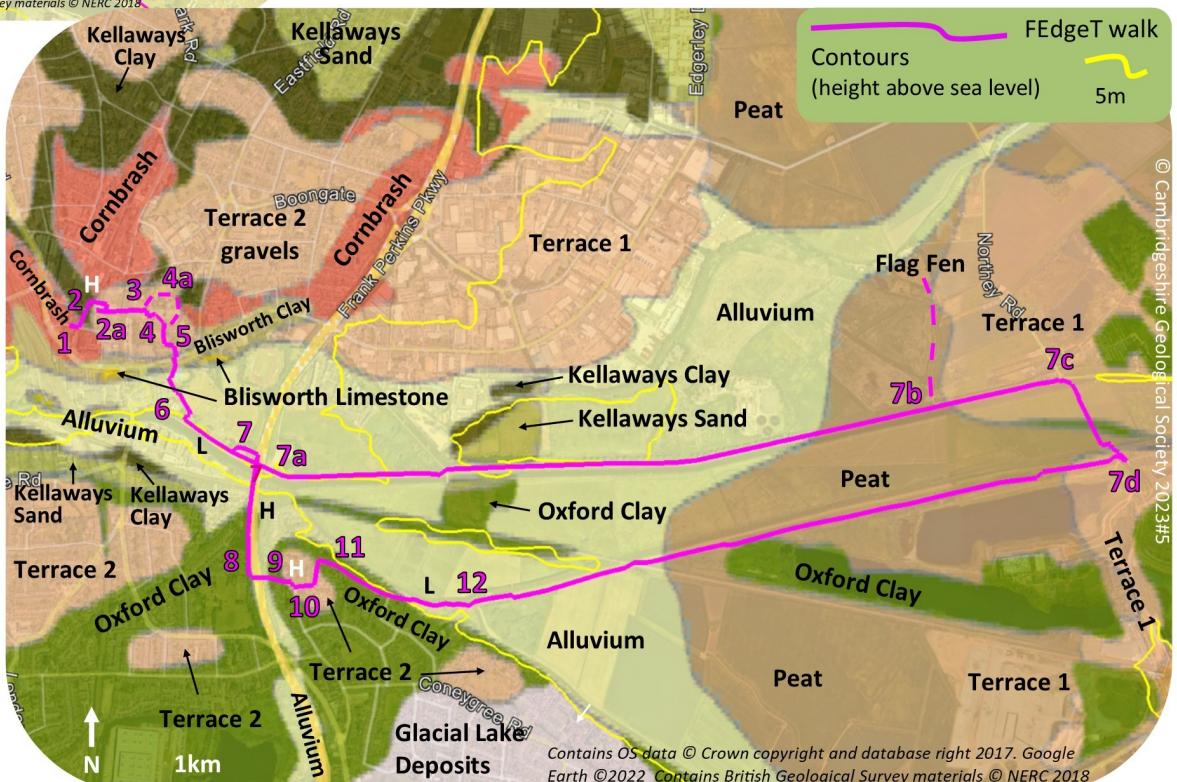
Blisworth Clay c.166 my

Blisworth Limestone

c.167 my

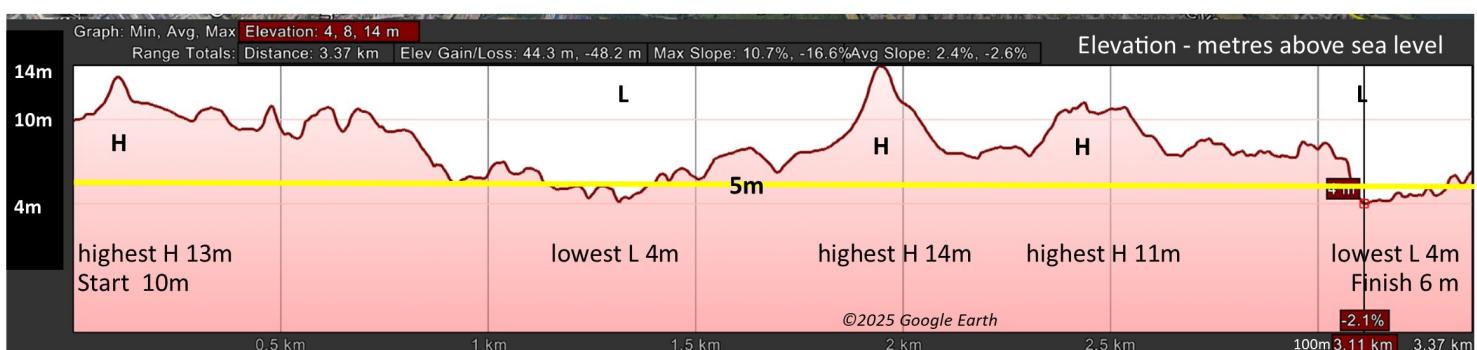
Rutland Formation clays

c.168 my



The start of the walk is on the **Cornbrash limestone**, an often very fossiliferous rock that weathers to a buff or yellow colour and produces tabular blocks of stone; it can be seen in many local buildings including some in **Priestgate**. After crossing a narrow strip of **Kellaways Clay**, by the time you arrive at the **Cathedral** you are back on the **Cornbrash**, but here it is covered by the **gravels of the (2nd) Terrace** of the River Nene. These gravels were deposited during the last 'Ice Age' (the **Pleistocene**), having been carried along by the powerful river that formed a braided delta as its gradient diminished on reaching the fen basin. As the channel cut down into the bedrock at various times, lowering the valley floor, the gravels have been left in a series of three 'terraces'. The 1st is the youngest (c.30,000 years old) and nearest to the river channel, whilst the 2nd is older, dated at c.125,000 years old, its gravels mostly being limestone with flint. The 3rd occurs upstream at a higher elevation and further from the centre of the valley.

The trail crosses a narrow band of exposed **Blisworth Clay** (Jurassic) before passing onto **Alluvium** from the river (Holocene). A borehole just to the west of the bridge (7) had almost **5m of Alluvium** within which were 3 bands of **Peat**, showing the influence of fenland conditions on the river valley; about 750m upstream, Peat within the Alluvium has been dated to **c.3500-4,500** years ago. Across the river, to the south, the Jurassic rocks are younger; you are walking up through time onto the **Oxford Clay**. You cross another patch of **Terrace 2 gravels** before finishing on the Alluvium. Taking the longer route along the Washes, you pass an area of Kellaways Sand bedrock before walking off the extensive Alluvium onto the Peat.



Places of interest along the Trail

Peterborough's name reflects its **geology** and its position on the **fen edge**. Named after **St Peter** (derived from **petra/petros**, Greek for **rock**), it truly was a 'rocky place', located on **Jurassic limestones** that raise it above the extensive, low marshes to its north, east and south. On the banks of the **River Nene**, just upriver from where it flowed into the fenland, it also has significant areas of river gravels, which add to its elevation and enhance its position as a refuge of drier land. With the river providing excellent transport links, it also benefitted from the rich resources of the nearby marshes, grazing pastures on the fertile river alluvium and local clays available for making bricks and pottery. This **strategic location on the fen edge and on a major river system** was used to good advantage by the Abbey community. The waterways were used extensively for the supply of materials to the Cathedral Precincts, especially during building works. Today, the low fenland is still little more than a kilometre away, and there is access along the Nene to the fenland waterways. There are a number of **fine buildings** in the city, in addition to the magnificent Cathedral. There was once a **Geology Trail** that guided you through the building stones used, some of which (for example, in Queensgate) contain some impressive fossils.



1 Peterborough Museum (1.1) is in the historic area of Priestgate and is one of the modern-day 'treasures' of the city. Its various displays include an excellent (and internationally important) collection of fossils of the huge Jurassic, marine reptiles (1.2) found in the local Oxford Clay, such as **ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs and pliosaurs**, and the **large fish** called **Leedsichthys**, named after the **Leeds brothers** who lived in Eye. Other displays trace local human life back to the Middle Palaeolithic (over 200,000 years ago). Built in 1816 as a private mansion for Thomas Alderson Cooke, a prominent local resident, the building reflects the classical **Georgian style**, including a Greek influence. After Cooke's death, it was purchased, in 1856, by the 3rd Earl Fitzwilliam to be the **first hospital in the city**, being used until 1928 when the War Memorial Hospital opened. It was then passed to Sir Malcolm Stewart, chairman of **London Brick Company**, who donated it for use as a museum in 1931. Its front walls are built of **Clipsham Stone** (a shelly **limestone**) from north of Stamford, whilst the main entrance has **Corinthian columns made of white Hollington Limestone from Staffordshire**.

Just before crossing the road to enter Cross St, have a look at the **Ordnance Survey Cut Benchmark** to the left of the door of no.32 Priestgate; it shows 0.3m above the ground and **8.35m above Ordnance Datum Newlyn** (slightly different to the elevation shown on page 6 due to the difficulty in measuring in built up areas. The neighbouring property has a **Blue Plaque**; it was the home of the **Hake or Hacke family** from 16th to the early 19th century. The family is typical of a rising merchant class in the mid-16th century, able to take advantage of the break up of the monastic estates after dissolution of the monastery in 1539. A sundial on a rear wall (not publicly accessible) expresses the Royalist sympathies of the family following the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

2 On the lawn in front of the church is the **Holocaust Memorial Stone**, laid in the grass, which also commemorates other, more recent, genocides. A ceremony is held here on Holocaust Memorial Day each year. As you walk around the north side of the church, it is worth turning left toward the entrance of **Queensgate Shopping Centre** to see the last building on the left which has a Blue Plaque. This is **Cumbergate**, built in the 15th century and timber framed. Probably originally built for **woolcombers**, part of it was still occupied by 'John Simpson, wool-comber' in the early 17th century. It was acquired, together with nearby buildings, by the Peterborough Feoffees (a board of trustees with responsibility for the administration of parish charities and some local government functions). Used as the '**Old Workhouse**' until 1837, it was then the '**Almsrooms**' until 1969. It underwent major repair and conversion to shops in the 1980s and is now Grade II listed along with the adjacent buildings in the row.



St John the Baptist Church (2.1) became **Grade I heritage listed** in 1952 as a prominent '*parish church, exemplifying Perpendicular town church design*'. Construction of the current church, built of coursed stone rubble, began in 1402 and it was dedicated in 1407. It has an '**outstanding**' **early 15th century porch**, a 15th century font, interesting monuments and tombs. The original parish church, dating from the 11th century, was some distance to the east of the Abbey but when the centre of Peterborough was relocated to drier ground to the west, the **church was moved stone by stone** (in 1402); the stones of the nave are reworked from the **chapel dedicated to St. Thomas A Becket** near the west gate of the Abbey.



2a To see inside, walk to the Church St side to the archway entrance; here there is another **OS cut benchmark** (with a bolt) showing **8.81m above OD** (2a.1). Note the fine craftsmanship of the **ceiling**.

3 Walking towards the Cathedral you pass the **Guildhall** (3.1f), also with a Blue Plaque, and Grade II* listed, which was built in 1671 by leading local master mason John Lovin and shows Dutch Influence. It stands on the site of a covered '**Butter Cross**'. An earlier **Moot Hall** stood nearby on the northern side of the square. The Royal Arms is prominently displayed on the Guildhall as a celebration of the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. In 1876 it was used by the City as a debating chamber following 'incorporation' in 1874 and this continued until the current Town Hall started to be used in 1933. This is also the site of the **Peasants' Revolt** on **17 June 1381**. Cathedral Square used to be called **Market Place** as it hosted the market until it was moved to a new site in 1963 to improve traffic flow in the city. At this time, the **Gates Memorial, which used to stand here**, was moved to **Bishop's Road**, minus its fountains. The council asked the public to suggest a new name for the Market Place and **Cathedral Square** was submitted by a Stamford woman and subsequently chosen. Before walking through the gated archway to the Cathedral grounds, note the HSBC bank on the right, on the corner of **Cathedral Square and Bridge St** which is built of **Cornish Granite**, as are a few other nearby buildings. Although it looks grey from a



Photos: 1.1 Museum; 1.2 Display in Museum; 2.1 St John the Baptist Church; 2a.1 Benchmark on church; 3.2 Cathedral Great Gate; 4.1 Cathedral cloisters.



distance, this hard, crystalline rock consists of several minerals: white plagioclase feldspar, grey quartz, and dark muscovite mica. In contrast, the former Lloyds Bank on the left is built of **Portland Limestone** with lower walls of **black marble** (a limestone that has been 'metamorphosed' to a crystalline rock). To the right, along tree-lined Bridge St, you can see the large 'Corinthian columns', made of **Hollington Sandstone** (from Staffordshire) at the entrance to the Town Hall.



You walk through the **Great (Norman) Gate** (3.2) of the Cathedral, which has the **Chapel of St Nicholas** above it. It is part of the **Cathedral Precincts Scheduled Monument** that includes many of the monastic buildings. There was once (from c.650) a Benedictine abbey in the area of the current Cathedral but, in



1166, the Saxon monastic complex suffered a great fire, after which the new Abbey church of St Peter (now the Cathedral) was built. The archway on the right is the **Bishop's (or Abbot's) Gate** - the gatehouse to the **Bishop's Palace**. It was built c.1220 by Abbot Robert of Lindsay. It is three storeys high with two crenelated turrets. Each has a niche containing a statue of an abbot and prior. In the centre is a statue of King Edward. The room above the entrance is known as the **Knights' Chamber**. The archway to the left of the Cathedral is the entrance to the **Deanery Garden** within which is the man-made **Tout Hill**, in the north eastern corner of the Precincts. This is an **11th century motte**, part of the city's **short-lived medieval castle**, incorporated into the Garden in the mid/late 19th century. The **Cathedral** (3.3f) is made of **Barnack Stone**, a Jurassic limestone, from the famous quarry (near Stamford) that was owned by the Abbey. The **font** and some of the columns at the **West Front**, which faces you, are made of **Alwalton Marble**, a polished oyster-rich limestone from the village to the west of the city.



4 Once through the cloisters (4.1), you are in the vaulted-walled, Grade I listed **Hostry passage** (4.2f), part of the Scheduled Monument. **4a** To the left of the path is the **grave** (4a.1) of **Edmund Gill Swain**, once the **Cathedral's Librarian and Precentor** (and writer of 'ghost' tales - see **9**), who died in 1938.

5 On the right on Gravel Walk you pass **Almoner's Hall** (5.1), Grade II listed, now offices. The timbered **St Peter's House**, on the left as you turn off Gravel Walk, was purchased by public subscription as a memorial to Florence M Saunders, founder and benefactor of Peterborough District Nursing Association in 1886. **Bishop's Road Gardens** were, many centuries ago, the garden of the Abbot, and reached all the way down to the river. On the north side of the gardens is the **Gates Memorial** (5.2f), a stone fountain made of **Clipsham Stone** (a **Lincolnshire Limestone**) with Aberdeen Granite basins. Erected in 1898 in

honour of **Henry Pearson Gates**, who became the first Mayor of Peterborough in 1874, it was gifted to the city by his widow and moved here in 1967 from Cathedral Square. There are information boards in the Gardens. Also in the Gardens is a memorial to three soldiers, two of whom died in N. Ireland during The Troubles and the third in Afghanistan. The memorial (5.3), dedicated in 2001, is made of very hard, **metamorphic rocks** from the **Mourne Mountains** in County Down.

You are walking on **Foundry Walk**, which is a circular trail around this part of the city that commemorates the work of **Henry Penn** who ran a foundry near the river (near what is now Bridge St) in the early 1700s; the bells were floated down to barges on the river via a landing stage on a small channel, 'Bell Dyke'. Among many other bells, he cast a **peal of ten** for Peterborough Cathedral, reusing the old bells. The ten bells rang out for a hundred years until the Cathedral sold them to a local bellmaker. The only surviving bell is the **Cathedral clock tower bell**, heard today as the clock chimes; also, a 2018 sculpture 'The Voice of the City' on Bridge St incorporates a brass bell. There are several information boards on Foundry Walk. Over the road, you walk past the **Lido** (the 'Corporation Swimming Pool'), which was built in the 'hacienda-style' (5.4), of which it is a fine example, and opened in 1936 (now Grade II listed).

6 Once you reach the river, look right to see the bridge, built in 1937; the first wooden bridge here was built in 1307. On the near side of the bridge is the old **Customs House** (Grade II listed), built c.1700, which collected tolls as part of the city's port. Opposite, on the south bank of the river, is **Whitworths Mill** (now part of a redevelopment area). It was one of three mills built in 1840-50 for the Earl Fitzwilliam and has Flemish bond brickwork under pitched slate roofs; its tunnel provided access for barges that transported grain. As you turn along the river, you reach one of the lowest two points on the walk, both 4 metres above sea-level. By the path is a **Sustrans Millennium Signpost** (6.1f), one of many around the country on the **National Cycle Network**. There are four designs, each by a different artist, this one being a '**Rowe Type**', named after the artist, who was inspired by the nautical and industrial heritage of his local area in Wales. They are all based on the elements Fire, Earth, Air, Water and the Ether and represent a '**Time Trail**' (a journey through Time and Space); very similar to the **Fen Edge Trail**! For the longer option of walking via the Nene Washes (**7a-7d**), see page 6.

7 From the **Nene Bridge** there is a great view (7.1f) looking back towards the city and the Football Stadium in **Fletton** to the left and the Cathedral on the right. In the other direction, on the other side of the bridge, is the flat countryside of the Fens! Fletton was once a separate town after which the famous **Fletton Brick Company** was named (eventually becoming the London Brick Company). A well-established brick industry, producing very different sorts of bricks than today, existed long before the area became famous in the 19th century for its '**Flettons**', bricks known for their economic firing due to the high organic content of the **local Oxford Clay** of which they were made. The dominant products were pale bricks (due to the calcareous nature of the clay), superficially resembling those made from the Gault, a younger (Cretaceous) clay found around Cambridge. '**gault**' is a common name used for many types of clay and bricks, not always made from the true Gault clay itself.



8 As you descend from the walkway, to your right is **Fletton cemetery**, which opened for burials in 1893. Part of it was mainly for Roman Catholics, as thousands of Italian immigrants settled in Peterborough between 1950-60, many working in the **Fletton brickworks**. **St Anthony's Roman Catholic Mission Church** was established for them in 1960 (closing in 2010 due to its poor structural state) along with their own cemetery; the Victorian chapel is in a finely detailed Gothic style (8.1) and many gravestones made from imported crystalline stones.

Photos: 4a.1 Grave (foreground) of E G Swain; 5.1 Almoner's Hall; 5.3 Memorial in Bishop's Rd Gardens; 5.4 The Lido; 8.1 New Fletton cemetery.

9 After crossing under the flyover, you walk over **Stanground Lode** (9.1) that lies in a narrow, shallow valley filled with Alluvium - evidence that a much larger river once flowed here. **Stanground** was once a village, known as 'Standy Ground' at the time of the Domesday Survey. The church stands on slightly higher ground underlain by gravels from the **Nene's 2nd Terrace** that cover the Oxford Clay here. **St John The Baptist Church** (9.2f) dates from 1300 although the octagonal stone font is older, possibly from an earlier church on the same site. It has a **stone altar** at the east end that is a memorial to the local men who died in the **1st World War** (possibly the only such memorial in the country. The church is built from Lincolnshire Limestone with stronger bedded limestone on the corners (9.3). It has an Ordnance Survey Cut Benchmark, 1.2m above the ground and **10.68m above OD**, last verified 1962. One of the gravestones is in the form of a **Lampass cross** (9.4). From 1905 to 1916 the vicar was **E G Swain**, who wrote '**Stoneground Ghost Stories**' in 1912, based on his experiences at Stanground, one of the last known areas to be raided by bodysnatchers! During Georgian and Victorian times, bodies were difficult to come by as it was only legal to perform a dissection on the corpse of a recently executed criminal. Bodysnatchers, also known as '**resurrection men**', made money by digging up fresh corpses and selling them to medical schools and hospitals. He later worked at Peterborough Cathedral, where he is buried (see 4a).



10 On the right at the bend is the Thatched House, a rare example of an early 20th century cottage with 'romantic' architecture. In the Fens, 'straw' (rushes) was often used for thatching but the better quality 'Norfolk' reed would also have been available in the village from the extensive reedbeds around nearby Whittlesea Mere.



11 On the left, is the highly rated **Woolpack Pub**. The Peterborough and District branch of the Campaign for Real Ale voted it its **Pub of the Year in 2016**. Until the mid-19th century, the barn to the rear of the pub served as the **village mortuary**. Originally constructed in 1711 and last used in 1850s, it is said to be haunted. There is also a medieval wall in the rear garden. The beer garden leads to boat moorings (for use by pub customers only) on the **Back River** (11.1), which now connects the Nene with Morton's Leam and King's Dyke, but was once the main course of the river. Along the bank here there were once a series of **staithes**, the public one at the eastern end, being used until 1904. Further along, on the other side of the road is the Grade II listed, late 17th/early 18th century, timber-framed **52 North Street**. It is roughcast rendered with a steeply pitched **Belgian tile** roof with gable ends.



Tenter Hill Meadow (11.2) has been saved as a public open space after local residents fought to protect it from development. A planning report stated that '*the area of Tenter Hill Meadow*' is a 'rich Roman landscape' with '*evidence for a Roman settlement and industrial activity represented by kiln sites together with pottery and coins*' and '*the remains of a wharf and a road covered with Roman potsherds were also recorded close to the kilns*'. The pottery dated from the middle of the 1st century to the end of the 4th century, spanning the whole of the Roman period. 'The archaeology recorded during the excavation is suggestive of either an **Iron Age or early Romano-British cemetery** and, although no skeletal remains were found, the form and nature of the features are indicative of graves and burial monuments.' Clay from the area has been dug to line the sides of the rivers and drains. Along the riverside here, is the 2nd of the two lowest points of the walk, at 2m.



12 **Stanground Lock** (12.1f), also a sluice, is the end of the walk. Rebuilt in the 19th century, it is a major **junction of fenland waterways**, where the old **River Nene**, splits into **Morton's Leam**, along the south side of the **Nene Washes**, and **King's Dyke**, which flows east via **Whittlesey Dyke**. Morton's Leam was a very early fenland drain dug under the direction of Bishop John Morton of Ely from 1478 to 1490, before the River Nene's main course to the north was straightened over later centuries. The land between it and the Nene, known as the **Nene Washes**, is used for **flood alleviation**, receiving excess water from the Leam. The water is then directed back into the Nene further east (near Guyhirn) when the risk of flooding subsides. The lock is on the northern edge of the **Middle Level** and is operated by the Middle Level Commissioners, whilst the waterways to the north, including those in the Washes, are part of the **North Level**. The Middle Level has rights of access to the waters of the Nene via the lock and it is an important **entry point to the navigation of the Level**. The **Nene Washes** is also a very important nature conservation area with national and international designations: **SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar Site**. The **Wildlife Trust's Stanground Wash Nature Reserve** is on the opposite bank to the north of the lock (access by crossing the lock to turn left over the footbridge (see www.wildlifebcn.org/nature-reserves/stanground-wash for safety info).



Longer route via the Nene Washes



7a Following the river along Route 63 of the National Cycle Network, you pass another **Sustrans Millennium Signpost** as you head east along the north bank of the **Nene Washes**.

7b It is possible to walk north from here to visit **Flag Fen Archaeological Park** (7b.1), known for its **Bronze Age timber causeway and platform, preserved on site**. It has a visitor centre, café, shop, exhibitions and activities. **Being a site of international archaeological significance and also of geological interest, it is worth returning for a full day's visit**.

7c The **Millennium Bridge** was designed to minimise disturbance to the **birds of the Nene Washes**. It is part of the **Peterborough Green Wheel**'s 60 miles of cycleways, it connects to the **Hereward Way**. You are now on **National Cycle Network** Route 21 to the lock.

7d There is another **Millennium Signpost** of the 'Rowe' design, just over the bridge. You follow the very straight, **15th century Morton's Leam**, passing the entrance to **Stanground Wash Nature Reserve** (see 12), to Stanground Lock, the end of the walk, 12.

Photos: 9.1 Stanground Lode; 9.3 Limestone quoins; 9.4 Lampass Cross; 11.1 View along Back River; 11.2 Tenter Hill, from lock; 7b.1 Flag Fen.