

17 **Harnet Street**

The Golden Crust Bakery coffeehouse (now no. 38) was the first to serve real coffee in Sandwich. The enterprise was not due to Sandwich's proximity to the continent, but the custom of discerning Jewish refugees from the Richborough Kitchener camp. Independent coffee shops continue to thrive in the town, a signifier of surviving good taste.

18 **Breezy Corner**

Is it really that draughty here? Or could this be named after the French Marshal, Pierre de Brézé, who led the attack on Sandwich in 1457 and sacked this area of town?

19 **Market Street**

A hub for shops and trades, fitting its name. Sandwich boasts a long lineage of watchmakers, many of them trading from premises in this street. 'The sign of the golden key' above Regal Estates served to advertise the wares of Walter Akhurst's ironmonger's shop (as did the building's comic 'tools of the trade' statues), and later The Golden Key Hotel, before being adopted by the equally appropriate estate agents. Shop doormats in the town can hide decorative entrances: look underfoot at no. 19 for F.H. Jacobs, ironmonger, china and glass dealer, who also published early picture postcards of the town.



# Not the blue plaque tour of Sandwich

compiled by Sonia Overall

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*Walking Heritage*

### 1 The Quay

Now a landscaped park and play area, the reclaimed space here wasn't always so green and pleasant. This was once the site of a shipbuilder's yard, a blacksmith's forge and by 1839, the Sandwich Corporation Gas Works.

### 2 High Street

Pelicans House was the town's munitions building; the chequerboard flint and castellated roofline the flexing architectural muscles of a strong-house. Rumour has it that this area is honeycombed with smuggling tunnels running into St Peter's Church. When a landlord of the nearby Admiral Owen attempted to pump out his flooded cellar, he soon discovered that he had set himself the task of draining water from his neighbours' cellars too...

### 3 Holy Ghost Alley

Inmates from the old Gaol opposite would walk through this alley to a day's labour on the town treadmill. The alley's sudden bend is said to have been employed by local pranksters avenging themselves on an unpopular teacher, and as a useful bluff for smugglers pursued by excise men.

### 4 Love Lane

Now known for the most part as St Peter's Street, this aptly-named area was the site of the medieval 'stews' of Sandwich. The town was rare in having a municipal brothel or 'galey', something usually reserved for cities. You can still find 'Love Lane' signage at the Strand Street end.

### 5 King Street

Dutch and Flemish rooflines are evident above buildings here - as are the painted advertisements for Martin, cake and bread maker, still legible over no. 30.

### 6 New Street

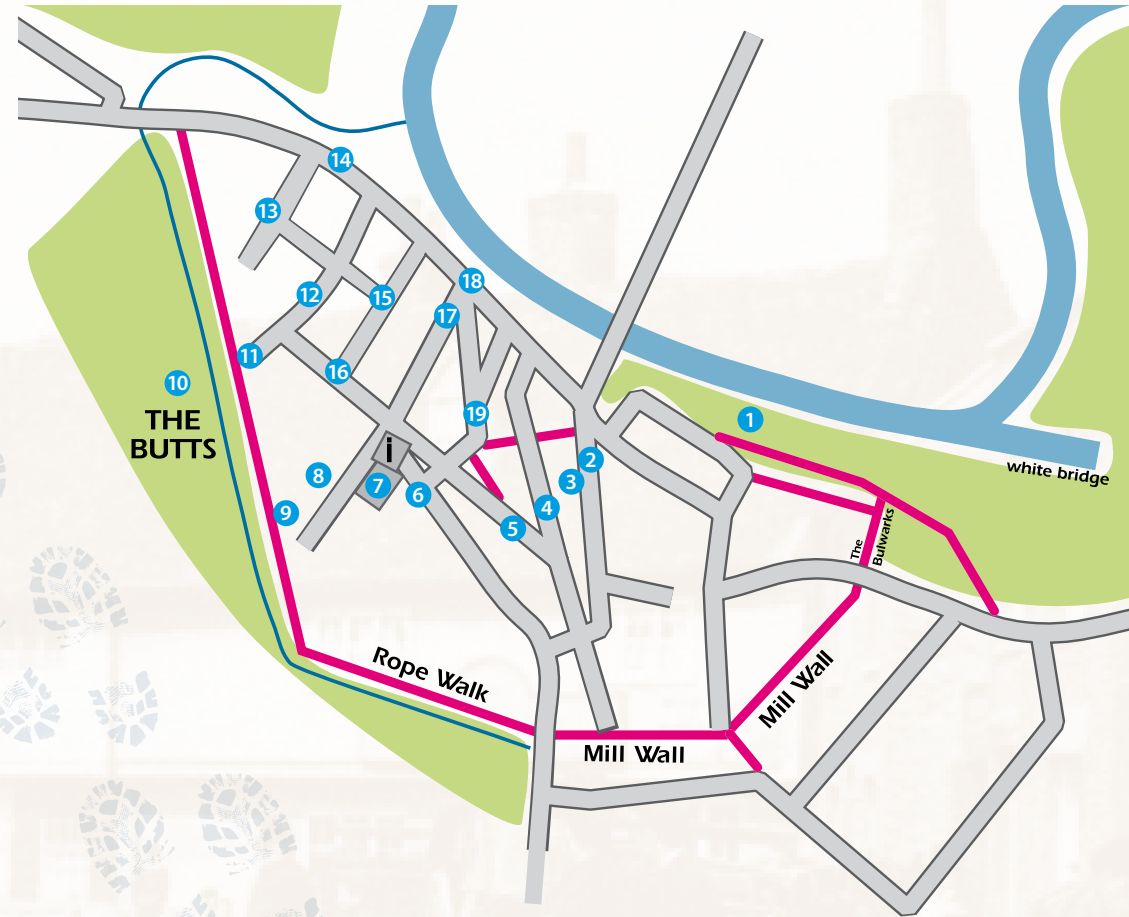
In the 14th Century, Augustinian cannons could be seen walking from St Thomas' Hospital, sited here, to the chantry chapel in St Peter's Church. Their regular shortcut gave the name to Austin's (Augustine's) Lane.

### 7 Guildhall

An impressive focal point for the town, the Guildhall had origins in a more modest Moot Hall which stood in the churchyard of St Peter's. The forecourt was part of Cornmarket, the market itself taking place on Wednesday afternoons in the Fleur de Lis pub.

### 8 Cattle Market

Pens, stalls and a stock ring stood here before the car park and doctor's surgery. The nearby Red Cow served the agricultural traders: the wall and empty windows next door are stark reminders of the workhouse, demolished in the 1890s.



### 9 Moat Sole

In the 1970s, residents of a rented cottage here were puzzled by the unexplained sound of children singing, an event which occurred every September. The singing halted abruptly whenever investigated. When a handwritten book of hymns from St Peter's Church Choir was found in a local bookshop, one of the tunes - a distinctive reworking of The Holly and the Ivy - matched the singing exactly. The hymnbook dated from the 1890s. Presumably the singers did, too.

### 10 The Butts

The Butts was used to practice archery skills, and is said to have served as a range for the longbowmen of Henry V before Agincourt. Less well-known is the field's use as an encampment for plague victims. Following outbreaks in the 1600s, a small village of plague tents was pitched here, overseen by a courageous on-site doctor.

### 11 Tannery Lane and Loop Street

This area boasted the aromas of an abattoir, tannery and bone-button factory, all located in rather sinister proximity to Horse Pond Sluice.

### 12 Church Street St Mary's

St Mary's parish was the 'rough' part of Sandwich, housing poorly-paid drovers from the cattle market. This street was once known locally as Blood and Thunder Alley due to the number of brawls on the 'green' by the church. Poverty was a concern well into the 1900s. A bread dole, prepared in the bakehouse at the corner of the King's Head, was distributed by St Mary's Church to the poor of the parish. The large ovens were also used by local residents to roast Sunday joints and Christmas dinners.

### 13 Paradise Row

Given the name, it's no surprise that this backstreet is rumoured to have served a similar function to Love Lane.

### 14 Strand Street

Famed for its timber-framed houses and once the medieval port's waterfront. The merchants who lived here were great importers of wine: so many wine barrels were rolled along this street that an order was given for the removal of all metal barrel-rims. The constant traffic was breaking up the road. Appropriately, Three Kings Yard served as a public house, its distinctive 'bridge', carved with grapevines, providing access for coaches. Did those wine barrels roll into the Norman merchant's cellar next door? The long-standing tradition of brewing in the town was also to be found in this street. The East Kent Brewery Company, last of the many Sandwich brewers, operated from Guestling Mill - part of which is said to contain a stretch of the medieval town wall.

### 15 Bowling Street

Bowling was a regulated activity in the 16th Century: the combination of gaming and drinking distracted the lower classes from work and archery practice. Henry VIII, a keen bowler, levied taxes on bowling alleys to exclude all but the wealthiest players. Gaming laws were easily winked at and Sandwich had at least one bowling alley at the sign of the White Hart in Strand Street, probably sited opposite Bowling Street. There were certainly plenty of taverns in this area to accommodate would-be gamers.

### 16 Delf Street

Industry thrived here, including a famed 19th Century iron foundry. A tradesman making pipes in this street cannily carved his sign into the shutters of Claypipes: next door, Cobbler's Cottage still boasts an early Victorian shopfront. Across the road, the sign of the Malt Shovel House reveals the premises of a pub. The parish boundary sign of St Peter's and St Mary's can be seen painted on the wall here, delineating responsibility for the poor of the town. (A grander counterpart for St Clement's and St Peter's is cut into stone in the far wealthier High Street.)