

ROYAL BLOOD



A brief history of royal Winchester

Winchester has been a focus for royal activity and patronage since the Early Middle Ages when it was the effective capital of Wessex under the Saxon kings. A succession of royal residences were constructed here and the cathedral has been a key location for royal ceremonies and important events such as weddings, coronations and royal tombs. This trail will guide you around Winchester, making connections between the particular places in the city which have featured in royal visits and events from the Saxon era to the present day.



11 Hamo Thornycroft's iconic statue of King Alfred (right) commemorates the king's famous links with the city – collect a copy of the City Walk at the tourist information centre for more about this famous ruler. At the bottom of The Bookway, at the intersection with Eastgate Street, King George III and Queen Charlotte stayed at Eastgate House as the guests of Winchester's MP Henry Pelton on their visit to Winchester in 1778. The grand house no longer survives.

Continue on towards the Guildhall – Abbey Gardens will be on your left hand side; these gardens were built on the site of St Mary's Abbey – the land was given to the city by Mary I as a gift to celebrate her wedding here to Philip of Spain in 1554.



Queen Charlotte

You are now back at the Guildhall, where your royal tour of Winchester began. Should you wish to extend your tour of royal Winchester, there are several sites in the city with royal connections that you may wish to visit including High Abbey, where the bones of King Alfred and Edward the Elder were moved and the Hospital of St Cross (below), founded by Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, (nephew of Henry I) and brother of King Stephen. Henry's decision to hold the royal treasury at Winchester for his brother helped Stephen to seize the crown before Matilda, the rightful heir, was crowned in England to claim her rights. Winchester became a key focus of conflict during the war between Stephen and Matilda for the crown as both sought to control the city due to its long standing connection as an important seat of royal authority.



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10 Though Wolsey was the palace of the Bishop of Winchester, not the royal palace, it took on an increasingly important role during royal visits after the fire at the castle in 1302. In 1306 Queen Margaret came to Winchester for the birth of her child but due to the recent fire in the royal apartments at the castle, she was lodged at Wolsey's Palace for her confinement. Richard II and Anne of Bohemia stayed at the palace in September 1393. At the end of June 1415 Henry V received the French ambassadors here for an unsuccessful round of peace talks hosted by Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England. The failure of these talks led to the Battle of Agincourt (25 October 1415), where Henry V famously defeated the French.

ROYAL EVENTS
 19 September 1355: Ceremony of consecration for three new bishops, attended by Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn and officiated by Thomas Cammer, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Many Tudor was lodged here before Henry V famously defeated the French. Philip of Spain lodged at the cathedral Dean's house in the Cathedral Close – see **8** and the dinner and festivities to celebrate her marriage were also held here. More recently, Queen Elizabeth II began her 1955 visit to the city here where she was welcomed by the mayor, the town clerk and the Bishop of Winchester.

Take a walk along the river and the city walls. When you reach the High Street, again turn left.



9 Winchester College (above) has played host to many royal visits from the fifteenth century to the present day, a popular stop on any royal tour of the city. College records show that Henry VI visited at least eight times during his long reign while Henry VIII brought Emperor Charles V here during his Winchester visit in 1522 and Mary Tudor and Philip of Spain were entertained here during the celebration of their wedding in Winchester in July 1554. Charles I was welcomed with speeches in 1629 and other Stuart monarchs visited including Charles II (1682), his brother James II (1687) and Queen Anne (1705). George II was also greeted with pealing bells during his 1778 visit. Royal visits continued in the 20th century. George V visited in 1912 as did his heir, Edward, Prince of Wales (who later abdicated the throne as Edward VIII) in November 1923. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited the college on 17 May 1946 while their daughter Queen Elizabeth II was also greeted formally in the 'ad portis' tradition of the college and presented meals during her visit to the college in 1955. The Queen returned to visit the college again 27 years later in 1982.

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 1912: St Swithun's Day. George VI holds transcribing feast for preservation of cathedral.



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6 Charles II accepted an invitation to visit Winchester in August 1682. This visit was so enjoyable that the king decided to construct a palace here as a country seat. The following year the court returned and construction began, assisted by the city who gave him the Great Hall and considerable ground around the old castle site for the building work. In 1684, the king returned to the city twice to oversee construction on the palace under the design of St Christopher Wren. Charles II's untimely death on 6 February 1685 brought an end to the construction.

James II did not share his brother's desire for a country seat at Winchester and the works stopped during his brief reign. James' daughter Queen Anne visited the city with her consort Prince George of Denmark in August 1705. Anne intended to complete the work of her uncle Charles II on his palace but did not finish the project during her reign. A fire in 1894 destroyed what became known as the 'King's House' and Peninsula Barracks (left) was constructed on the site using some of the materials which survived – today you see a mix of private housing and Winchester Military Museums – well worth a visit.



7 The cathedral, both the Old and New Minster, has long been a focus for important royal events, particularly in the Middle Ages. As the centre of royal power, it was the natural location for coronations and royal burials. Even after Westminster supplanted Winchester as the cathedral of England, monarchs still came here for second coronations and a number of weddings were celebrated here. Two of these weddings, Joan of Navarre's wedding to Henry IV in 1403 and Mary Tudor's wedding to Philip of Spain in 1554, brought sizable remains of important foreign visitors to pin in the celebrations.



Joan of Navarre

8 Though nothing remains today, it is believed that the Saxon royal palace at Winchester was built in close proximity to the cathedral – most likely on what is now Cathedral Green.



The text in this leaflet has been researched by Dr Elena Woodacre, Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Winchester with assistance from colleagues in the departments of History and Archaeology, particularly Dr Katherine Weikert, Dr Simon Royle and Dr Ryan Lavelle as well as students from the Royal Winchester WR&P Project: Luke Barnes, Jessica Watson, Ashleigh Bridgeman and Emma Harbot.

Explore the layered royal history of Winchester in depth with these trails:

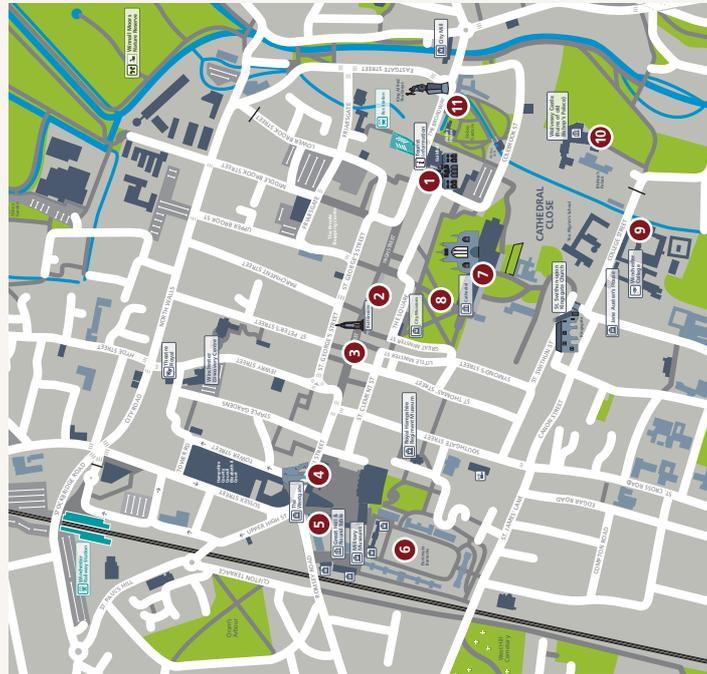


This leaflet is also available to download from www.visitwinchester.co.uk. Winchester's official tourist guides run tours on this and other fascinating themes. See www.winchestertouristguides.com

If you would like this leaflet in a larger format please contact the tourist information centre on **01962 840 500** or email tourism@winchester.gov.uk

Cover image of Mary Tudor's wedding chair reproduced with the kind permission of Winchester Cathedral © Winchester Cathedral 2016. Illustrations of King Charles, arriving at the Westgate, Queen Mary and King Philip's wedding feast, King Edward I and Margaret of France escaping the burning royal chambers by Wendy Bramall www.wendybramall.co.uk © Wendy Bramall 2016

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The trail starts from Guildhall Winchester – if you collected this leaflet at the tourist information centre, you are perfectly situated to begin the walk.



1 On 6 May 1939, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth arrived in Winchester and received the keys to the city at the Guildhall. They returned again after WWII on 17 May 1946 – a ball was held to celebrate their visit. Queen Elizabeth II visited the city 25 July 1951, giving a speech on the balcony of the Guildhall. Contemporary photos show children on the roofs of shops and houses along the Broadway positioned to see the Queen. The Queen's visit followed in the footsteps of her predecessors, including her namesake, Elizabeth I, who visited Winchester several times during her annual 'progresses', including visits in 1560, 1574, 1586 and 1591.

CORONATIONS
 → Eghert (802) – First King of England
 → Aethelred the Unready (978) – only 10 years old
 → Edward the Confessor (1043) – Second Coronation
 → William the Conqueror (1068) – Second Coronation
 → Henry II (1154)
 → Young Henry (1172)
 → Richard I (1189), again 1194

2 Recognising the importance of Winchester as a centre of royal power, William the Conqueror built a palace here after his conquest of England in 1066. Though very little trace of these buildings remain, archaeological evidence suggests that the palace kitchens may have been sited at what is now 28–29 High Street. You can see a plaque commemorating William's palace on the side of St. Lawrence Church, which is believed to have been built on the site of the royal chapel in William's palace.



The Canute mortuary chest in Winchester Cathedral



3 In 1012 King Aethelred II (the Unready) granted to his wife Queen Emma the manor of God Begot House. Although still within the city walls, Queen Emma's manor was largely outside of the city of Winchester and under Emma's control. In the modern city, the site of this Anglo-Saxon manor is bounded by the High Street, St Peter, and St George's Streets with the western boundary near Waterstone. The current God Begot House (left) though, is a later construction. Although nothing physical is left of her property on Winchester's High Street, the location of her chapel of St Peter's is picked out in brick on the pavement behind God Begot House. In the Royal Oak (next door) you can see some of the older, flint construction in the basement that marks a much older Medieval segment of the building.



ROYAL EVENTS

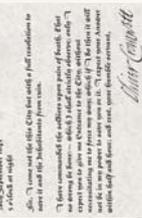
Treaty of Winchester (1153): King Stephen named the Empress Matilda's son Henry as his heir, ending decades of war between Stephen and Matilda for the crown, known as 'The Anarchy'.
 The daughter of Duke Richard I of Normandy, Emma was queen consort to both Aethelred II and, after his death, his Danish successor Canute. She also engineered the reigns of sons by both of her husbands: Harthacnut, king of Denmark and England, and Edward the Confessor, the last Anglo-Saxon king of England. Emma had strong links to Winchester – both of her marriages took place here, her son Edward the Confessor celebrated his second coronation here in 1043 and she was buried here, with her husband Canute when she died in 1052.

BURIALS

→ Cyneige (643) → Eghert (839 – his bones still lie in a chest in the choir screen) → Alfred (869 – moved to Hyde Abbey in 1110). Ealswith (903, Aethelwold) → Edward the Elder (924 – son of Alfred, buried beside father then moved to Hyde) → Ealric (935) → Eadwig the Fair (959) → Edgar (975) → Canute (1035 – mortuary chest (see left) is still visible in the cathedral and also contains the bones of Emma and William Rufus) → Harthacnut (1042) → Emma (1052) → William Rufus (1100 – originally buried under a tower in the cathedral which later collapsed, it was claimed that this was due to Rufus's wickedness. He is believed to be the last king buried at Winchester).



4 Charles I visited Winchester in December 1648 en route to his trial in London and was briefly detained in the Westgate as a prisoner of the Parliamentary forces. According to contemporary sources, Charles was met at the Westgate by the Mayor of Winchester, who had Royalist leanings – when he tried to offer the king the keys to the city in the traditional manner, the Parliamentary guards attacked the mayor.



Offer to the Mayor of Winchester from King Charles I (1648)



King Henry I

5 The marriage of Henry I and Matilda of Scotland was celebrated in Winchester in 1110 and Henry II and King John were frequent visitors during their reigns. The 'History of the King's Works' notes consistent expenditure on the castle from 1155 onwards, suggesting its importance as a favoured royal residence. Henry II was born here in 1207 and spent a considerable sum on improvements to the castle, repairing damage suffered in a siege by Louis of France in 1216 and building impressive additions to the residential and defensive elements of the castle. Henry is believed to have spent in the region of £10,000 – a considerable sum in the 13th century, transforming the castle including work on the Great Hall (top right), various royal chapels, the kitchens, gatehouse and the apartments of both the king and queen.

Winchester continued to be a favourite royal residence in the reign of Henry III's son, Edward I but, unfortunately, while Edward I and his second wife Margaret of France were staying at the castle in 1302, a fire broke out. The king and queen had a lucky escape from the burning royal chambers out of a side door but their apartments were destroyed by the blaze and it appears were never fully restored to their original glory. This lack of adequate accommodation for the royal family and court after the fire, arguably contribute to a decline in prominence of Winchester as the king spent less time in the city.

However, royal visits continued – Henry VIII brought Emperor Charles V to the Great Hall in 1527 to admire the Round Table. Mary Tudor brought more Spanish guests to the Great Hall in 1554 for her wedding to Philip of Spain.



BAPTISMS

Cyneige (635), Arthur, Prince of Wales (1486, born Winchester)