

The trail starts from the passageway behind the Buttercross which can be found in the High Street.

1 In this passageway is a plaque commemorating the palace of William the Conqueror, who invited Jewish merchants to England in 1070 as money lenders and traders. Unlike Jews, at this time Christians were forbidden to lend money for interest (usury) because of regulations in the New Testament. Jews loaned money to the King, the Church, and to Christian merchants in the city.



2 In this location (at the rear of the current property) stood a property held by Duceman. Duceman (also known as 'Asher' and 'Sweteman') was a wool merchant and the son of Licoricia (Winchester's most famous female money-lender) and David of Oxford; Duceman held several properties in Winchester.



3 Here there once stood a property associated with Samme, a converted Jew. A small number of Jews in Winchester converted to Christianity; one was Henry of Winchester. Henry acted for the king in 1275 when usury (the main source of income for England's Jews) became illegal. Because the work Jews were allowed to do was limited, the community sometimes turned to coin clipping; a crime that carried the death sentence. Henry travelled around England noting the names of coin clippers, and in 1279, 269 Jews and 29 Christians were executed for this offense. One man hanged for coin-clipping was Benedict, son of Licoricia, and step-brother to Duceman.



4 Currently Princess Court, in the Middle Ages a house in this exact spot was owned by Benedict.



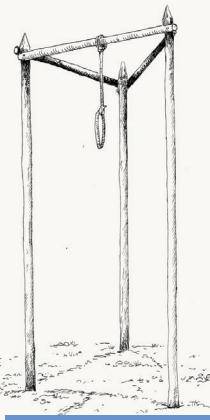
5 There was once a property that belonged to Isaac of Newbury, another Jewish wool merchant here. Jewry Street looked a little different in medieval times; originally called Scowrtenestret Street (Shoemakers Street), it was a busy area with many properties. It was close to the castle 15 where the Jews' Tower served as a Jewish refuge in troubled times.



6 You are now in the heart of Medieval Jewish Winchester; an area sacked in 1265 by Simon de Montfort the Younger, who killed all the Jews that did not take refuge in the Jews' Tower. This property marks the spot where Abraham and Jaceus held land from the abbot of Hyde Abbey until 1290, demonstrating that Jews had close business connections with the church.



7 Here was where the medieval synagogue (scola) was located. The scola was in the courtyard of a property owned by Abraham Pinch (son of Chera, a female money-lender). Pinch was an active usurer, and this made him unpopular. He was accused of murdering a child, and although the child's mother was guilty of that crime, Pinch was accused of theft and so he was executed for that instead. Pinch was buried beneath the gallows erected in this street opposite the scola, specifically for the purpose of hanging him.



8 This location marks where an unnamed Jew convicted of a felony held property (there is no record of his crime). His name was Samarian.



9 A property here was sold by Isaac of Southwark to William de Seleborn in 1280; Seleborn (Selborne) priory was part financed by loans from Winchester's Jews.



Winchester City Council would like to thank members of the local community for their help in championing the story of the Medieval Jews in the area. The text in this leaflet has been researched by Charlotte Andrasi, Adele Beston, Tracey Churcher and Cader McPhail, students at the University of Winchester, working under the guidance of Dr Christina Welch, Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies, and was inspired by the work of Sue Bartlet and Toni Griffiths.

For more information about Medieval Jewish Winchester please email MJW@winchester.ac.uk or see www.winchester.ac.uk/MJW where you will find more detailed information on each of the sites in the walk. 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 e-mail tourism@winchester.gov.uk

Cover image: A 12th or 13th century lead token with Hebrew lettering found during excavations on Lower Brook Street in 1968, possibly a synagogue token or of some commercial use.



In loving memory of Jack and Gretel Habel, refugees from the Holocaust who found a home in Winchester.

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MEDIEVAL JEWISH TRAIL



Winchester has an important Jewish past. The earliest record of Jews in the city date to the mid-1100s, making it one of the earliest, largest and wealthiest Jewish settlements in England. Although fascinating, the story is little known. This trail has been created to bring the narrative to life.



Medieval Winchester had a slightly different layout to the city today. The white lines show the city's current layout, whilst those in grey indicate how Winchester's road system looked when the Jewish community lived here.

10 A property here (no longer visible) was owned by Jospin (whose mother was called Gloria) who was another Jewish wool merchant.

11 Here was another property owned by Ducemen. His father, David of Oxford, was a very wealthy man. Licoricia (Duceman's mother) married David after he divorced his first wife. On David's death in 1244, Licoricia was imprisoned in the Tower of London until she promised to pay death duties of 5,000 marks; an enormous sum of money; part of his money financed the building of the shrine to Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. A mark (which weighed 8 ounces in silver) was a little over 13 shillings; a knight earned 2 shillings a day and a kitchen servant, 2 shillings a year.

12 13 The passageway from Jewry Street to Staple Gardens is not in the same place as it was in the medieval period. Records tell us that properties **12** and **13** were owned by Abraham. Property **13** was a stone house which was unusual and indicated wealth and social status.

In the area between Jewry Street and Staple Gardens, was the medieval gaol. We know that Benedict (hanged in 1279 for coin clipping) was buried by the gaol.

This Oxford house (left, no longer existing) was owned by David of Oxford and gives an idea of what a grand stone house looked like.

14 Occupying the same footprint as Bilberry Court was a Jewish tenement; an area with many buildings on it.

15 In Winchester Castle (founded in 1067) was the Jews' Tower; an area where the Jews could go for their own safety. In May 1287, the city's entire Jewish population was imprisoned in Winchester Castle to ensure they paid a very large tax (tallage) of 20,000 marks that King Edward I imposed on the country's Jewish residents. Duceman recorded his stay during this time with some graffiti, although he signed it 'Asher'.

From 1253 onwards, Jews aged 7 years and older were required to wear a strip of yellow felt, 6 inches by 3 inches in the shape of the two stone tablets given to Moses on Mount Sinai.

16 The cemetery was located outside the city walls and served the Jewish communities in Southern England. Before 1177 Jews had to be taken to London for burial as the law allowed only one Jewish cemetery in the country. But in 1177 King Henry II permitted other cemeteries to be established. Excavations at Winchester's Jewish cemetery show that whilst some Jews in the city were wealthy, the majority of the Jewish population was very poor.

17 Near the site of this property is another recorded as belonging to Benedict. A laying stone was found here after the Jews were expelled in 1290; the stone indicates that it was here that the ritual washing of bodies before burial occurred.

18 The cathedral in Winchester had a complex relationship with Jews. Once, outside Winchester Cathedral there were statues of Synagoga and Ecclesia; they were always shown together with Synagoga (right) shown blindfolded and holding the Ten Commandments to symbolise her blindness to the New Testament and Jesus which were represented by Ecclesia. In the cathedral's Holy Sepulchre Chapel Jews feature in some wall paintings dating to around 1160 (see illustration top left of map). They are identifiable by their conical, pointed, and funnel-shaped hats.

The interior of the cathedral does not form an integral part of this trail but there are many stories to tell that span centuries of history – visitors are requested to pay a modest entrance charge at most times when not attending services and free events and tours are available.

