

Walk Through the History of Lincoln's Lower High Street

A MAZE OF INDUSTRY

WALK
2

11

A circular walk of approximately 2.5 miles that can be completed in 60 - 75 minutes

15



A walk around the industrial landscape of the Sincil Bank.

The area to the east of the Lower High Street is dominated by 19th and 20th century gridded streets known as 'The Maze'. The area had previously been pasture and water meadow, draining into the Sincil Dyke, that in turn flowed into the Witham. The land was owned and developed by Reverend Francis Swan from the 1860s onwards and its growth was fuelled by the expansion of Lincoln's factories and an increased demand for workers. That said, it is an area that also supported numerous small businesses and attracted considerable attention from the authorities and religious groups.

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1. Tentercroft Street carpark is a convenient place to begin as it has parking and toilet facilities.
2. **Portland Street** is typical of the Victorian streets that were built from the High Street towards and across the **Sincil Dyke**. These streets were laid out by the land owner, **Reverend Francis Swan**, and sold in plots to speculators and developers who built housing on them for Lincoln's growing population.
3. As the population grew, **nonconformist churches** were established to supply spiritual support to the people of the area. In the 20th century increased secularism has made many of these buildings, such as the chapel here, redundant and they have been put to different, non-religious uses.
4. The site of the former **St Andrew's Church** at the junction of Portland Street and Canwick Road shows the changing fortunes of the Church of England in the 19th and 20th centuries. Built in 1877 it was an attempt to stem the advance of the **Free Methodists** who had built a chapel a short distance to the east. Seating 600 people it was a large and expensive church. As attendance declined it was deconsecrated and demolished in 1968. At this junction is a bench where you can rest.
5. **85 Canwick Road**. This house has an unusual history. It was once the factory of **Joseph Fambrini**, a producer of architectural mouldings in artificial stone. You will see many examples of the mouldings produced here as you go around the walk.
6. **Robey & Co's Factory**, also known as The Globe Works. This was the base of a global engineering company that produced steam engines of all kinds, and later produced **aircraft** during the **First World War**.
7. **Globe House** was originally built as a "Coffee Palace" for the workers at Robey & Co' Factory, providing an alcohol-free alternative to the many public houses that were opening in the area to serve the workforce.
8. At the corner of Ripon Street and Cross Street the terraced houses are overshadowed by the imposing frontage of the **Lincoln Equitable and Cooperative Industrial Society** building. A number of cooperative societies existed in the Victorian era to support workers and their families. They were involved in everything from housing to funerals.
9. Walking south along Cross Street you get a flavour of the **19th century housing** that was built on former water meadows. Many houses are small and simple to be rented out by factory workers, but occasionally, usually on the corners, you will see larger, more ornate houses for merchants and small businesses.
10. At the southern end of Cross Street is the entrance to the **LNER Stadium**, home to **Lincoln City Football Club**. Association football was played in Lincoln from the very foundation of the sport in 1863. Lincoln City was formed in 1884 playing on ground behind St Mar's Guildhall, and moved to its current ground in 1895.
11. Turning east there is a narrow footpath that emerges into St Andrew's Close, a recent development built along the lines of a **former railway line**. Here you will find **St Andrew's Garden**, a pocket park developed by the Sincil Community Land Trust to provide a stand of trees, flowers and green space with benches where you can sit and rest.
12. At the end of St Andrew's Close a path goes between a small area of allotments and Bishop King Primary School, past Kingsway and to a pedestrian crossing over South Park Avenue.
13. Continuing south the path rises to a bridge over the former railway cutting, this leads to South Park and the edge of the **South Common**.



14. South Park was formerly a very wealthy area of large ornate houses overlooking the common. Today many of these houses are care homes and rented accommodation. **South Common** is a rare survival of **medieval common land** where people once grazed their animals. In the 19th century there was a risk that the land would fall prey to property speculators, as many other town and city commons had, but an act of parliament preserved the land in its current state as a recreational green space on the edge of the city.

15. South Park extends west, across the railway cutting via an old road bridge, and re-joins the main road, South Park Avenue, at a pedestrian crossing. At the roundabout, where South Park meets the High Street, there is the old **City Police Out Station**. You can still see features such as barred windows.

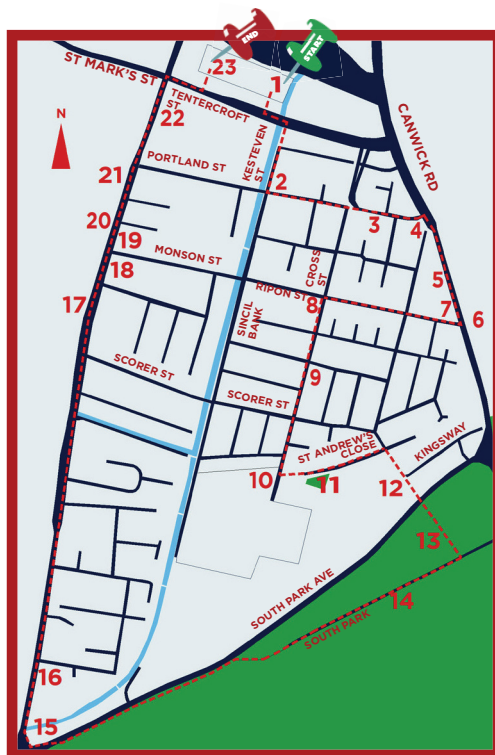
16. On the east side of High Street, and sandwiched between two modern developments, is a non-conformist chapel with rather nice Tudor revival windows. A short distance to the north is a distinctive black and white mock Tudor building.

17. Going north along the High Street you can see a variety of Victorian and Edwardian buildings that formed housing, rows of shops as well as numerous pubs and hotels. On the west side of the street is the **Salvation Army** building, a 20th century addition to the landscape intended to support a growing local congregation.

18. On the east side, at the corner of Monson Street, is the **City Police House**, a substantial building that included cells and a training yard.

19. Providing a glimpse into the High Street's more rural past is the small, but very fine, **Unitarian Chapel**. Built before the streets of terraced houses, this would have served the mercantile community that lived in the area.

20. In sharp contrast is the more elaborate **Central Methodist Church** built in 1905. This was built in the boom years of the area, which may account for its size and architectural flamboyance.



21. At the junction of High Street, Chaplin Street and Tanner's Lane we get an unusual perspective of the religious development of Lincoln. Looking above the level of the shop fronts to the west of High Street and there is the upper story and roof of an original chapel of the **Independent Congregationalists**. They moved to Newland in 1840 and the building subsequently became a warehouse. On the east side is the latest **Baptist Church**, built in 1972 when the congregation outgrew the original church in the city centre.

22. On the west side of the High Street, opposite Tentercroft Street, was formerly **St Mark's Square**. It derived its name from the church that once stood there, which was restored and rebuilt several times, the last time being in 1871. Like other churches in the area it saw declining congregations and was sacrificed to progress in 1972. North of Tentercroft Street, the High Street is pedestrianised and there is seating for those wishing to take a rest.

23. Returning to Tentercroft Street carpark, the walk is complete.





10 Lincoln City Football Club at the John O'Gaunts ground in Lincoln on 23rd November 1889, Photographer Unknown
 22 St Marks Church Lincoln by Samuel Hieronymous Grimm (1733-1794)

