

POOLE HIGH STREET DISCOVERY TRAIL

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It is 1798, huge sail ships return to the harbour laden with goods from Spain or France after a treacherous trip across the Atlantic with salt cod from the Newfoundland fisheries... The crews have been away for months, and the alehouses are full of mariners with the strict landlady keeping order and children cart the goods along the muddy high street to the Corn market to stock the traders' stalls.

Rows of mail carriages with eager horses wait outside the coaching inns to take merchants to London or Bristol. Poole has a population of about 5000 people, while the ship owners build elegant mansion houses, most people live over their family-run shops or workshops.

Poole was described as *'the most considerable port and populous town in the county. The buildings are generally mean and low, but of late years many elegant houses have been erected.'* (*The Universal British Directory*)

Poole is one of 60 English towns to have been awarded funding to improve and celebrate its town centre as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone initiative. Poole is an established visitor attraction and has a lively sense of place with a mix of Georgian houses, fine Victorian commercial buildings and 1930s art deco shop fronts. From its origins as a medieval fishing harbour, the town became a major port by the late 17th century and its High Street links the historic Quayside with the town centre.

Find out what you can discover today!



1. Scaplen's Court/George Inn

Sarum Street.

(Currently by Poole Museum)

This grade I listed medieval building dates back to the 1300s. Building now outlines a 1500's courtyard inn called The George. Graffiti made by Parliamentarian soldiers who were lodging here in the 1630's can be seen carved into one of the stone fireplaces.



2. The Antelope

8 High Street . (Still The Antelope)

There has been an inn on this site since the 1200s. During the 17th and 18th centuries, many women in Poole held the position of inn-keeper or alehouse-keeper including Elizabeth Melledge and her daughter, Alice at The Antelope Hotel.



In the 1890's, Councillor Simon Whittle, was dared as a bet to walk down the high street everyday for a week to The Antelope 'without wearing trousers'. He happily appeared everyday in his kilt and won the bet!

3. Corn Market

38 - 52 High Street.

This area has always been important for trade since merchants sold their goods from wooden market stalls to a row of Georgian shops and by 1911, the census listed 200 high street businesses including 17 grocers, 16 butchers, 9 drapers, 9 shoe makers, 12 hotels or pubs and 7 tea rooms!



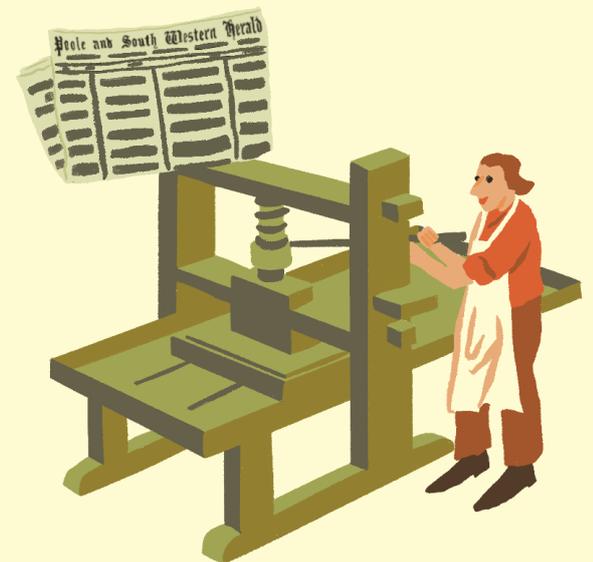
4. Sydenham's (Printers)

67 High Street.

(Currently Frontline Army Surplus)

Moore's nephew, John Sydenham produced the first edition of the Poole and Dorset Herald on presses behind the shop in 1846. By 1861, the newspaper employed 7 men, 3 boys, 13 apprentices (3 of them were girls).

Back in the 1700's Joseph Moore, a stationer, bookseller and printer here also sold lottery tickets 'Moore's Lucky Lottery Office'.



5. Philip Henry Gosse

Blue Plaque by United Reform Church on Skinner Street.

(Take alleyway by Toast2Roast.)



Gosse (1810-1888) spent his childhood living at No. 1 Skinner Street (opposite his blue plaque) developing his love for marine life with the help of his aunt, Susan Bell.

In 1827 he sailed to Newfoundland to serve as a clerk and also studied wildlife. In the mid-19th century, Gosse built the first successful long-term tank for studying marine life and invented the word 'aquarium'.

6. Barfoot Mansion

87 High Street.

(Currently Ginali's Italian Restaurant.)



This was once a magnificent mansion belonging to a Newfoundland merchant, William Barfoot, it was built in 1704, and was originally twice the size - so you can imagine how many staff were required to run it!

In 1574, a quarter of households had at least one maid servant, 65 maids listed in total.

7. London Hotel

88 High Street.

(Currently Butler & Hops.)

Previously, The London Tavern Inn, merchants could take coaches to London or Bristol from here.

In 1897, as The London Hotel, it was highly decorated with lights, flags and the letters 'VR' for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and later hosted a royal visit in 1905 to Princess Beatrice (King Edward VII's sister).



8. J.A. Hawkes & Son

99 High Street.

(Currently UK Mobility Shop.)

A family-run shoe shop & workshop for 150 years, started by making oiled skin fisherman boots for those fishing locally in Poole and on the larger ships in Newfoundland.

Hawkes were the first High Street shop to be lit by electricity, they installed their own gas engine and dynamo which also powered the shoe repair machines.



9. Amity Hall

123-125 High Street.

(Currently Poundstretcher.)

Amity Hall, used for talks and lectures, hosted Poole's first moving picture in 1896 and in 1897 hosted 'Myriorama' accompanied by performing foxes, rats and ducks. The cinema survived for over 60 years until it closed in June 1959.



10. Beech Hurst

153 High Street.

(Currently Jacobs & Reeves.)

Beech Hurst was built in 1798 by Samuel Rolles with the small fortune Rolles had inherited from his uncle, Samuel White. White made his fortune as one of the seven family firms that are said to have controlled the Poole-Newfoundland trade.

It was also home to Heber Dowling Ellis, a medical pioneer and Poole's first Medical Officer of Health, who encouraged the building of Poole's first permanent hospital at Baiter.



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