

Start from the Market Place which developed from the stalls that clustered round the entrance to the early medieval Abbey. Looking east, the archway you see between St Nicolas' Church and the Guildhall was the Abbey gateway. The south side is dominated by the late 17th century County Hall, now a museum. The buildings on the north side mostly date from a 1960s redevelopment. Many of the other surrounding buildings retain their timber framing, even if refaced. The market area was originally much bigger, but over time the space was encroached on by infilling.



Start walking down Bridge Street.

The [County Hall Museum](#) is on your right. It was built in 1683 to provide a covered market space at street level and to house the Berkshire Assizes on the upper floor.



The [Guildhall](#) is on your left, a much altered and extended development of the medieval Hospital of St John. It is used by the town council.



Just past the Guildhall you will come to [The Crown and Thistle](#), a former coaching inn built in the early 17th century.



On your right you will pass the [former County Police Station](#) and then the entrance leading to the [Old Gaol](#). Both have now been developed for housing.



Continue straight on and start crossing [Abingdon Bridge](#). The main part of the bridge was built in 1416 through the initiative of a town guild. A southern extension of the bridge was financed in 1429 by Maud Hales, a wealthy local widow.



On your left, as you approach the end of the bridge you will pass [Maud Hales Terrace](#), a row of mostly 19th century cottages.



Turn back to towards the town centre. On your left, across the river, you will see the the [Old Gaol](#) on the opposite bank (from a different angle to this view). It was completed in 1812 and served as a county gaol until 1868. For much of the 20th century it belonged to the [Matthews family](#) who ran a local company of seedsmen and corn merchants and who used it as a store.

Walk back up Bridge Street to return to the Market Place.

We'd welcome your comments on this walk. Please give your feedback [here](#).