



The Day Column stands in a prominent position at the centre of the market square and is an important reminder of the town's early industry. It was the first public street light, originally fuelled by oil, quickly followed by gas, and finally electricity. During its life on the square the Day Column has been moved around and today stands in the centre of the car park, surrounded by wooden benches and statues of monks, another reminder of the town's history

In the older photograph, taken in the 1920s, the structure had ornate lights and a flagpole. The market square was open with no pavements or lines to mark where cars could park and next to the column was a paved area with a telephone box and metal benches. The absence of a public telephone box in the square today reflects modern society.



See also – The Lost Priory Trail, Eynesbury Village Trail, Great War Trail

Thanks are due to many local residents who helped in the compilation of these trails and willingly walked them.

This leaflet has been extensively revised from a trail published by the Planning Department of Huntingdon District Council in June 1996, and a later trail published by St. Neots Town Centre Management Initiative in November 2008 and reprinted with minor corrections May 2012.

© St Neots TCI 2018



www.visitstneots.co.uk

Printed by XL Press, Alington Road, St Neots, Cambs. PE19 6WE
Tel: 01480 474787 E-mail: sales@xlpress.co.uk

TRAILS AROUND THE TOWN

St Neots Town

(excluding Eynesbury and the Eatons)



Discover the buildings, characters and history of St Neots

St Neots Town

Note – These trails are around the town of St Neots, within St Neots Church Parish. Today the town encompasses Eynesbury and the Eatons which have separate trails.

The town is full of interesting buildings and in these trails there is no attempt to provide information on all of them but rather to give the reader a glimpse of life, its characters and changes in the town. C.F Tebbutt, in his book 'St Neots History of a Huntingdonshire Town', goes in to much more depth on many of the buildings (see page 39).

Some questions that might be asked about the town are -

- Where are Tuzzy Muzzy and Lammas Meadows?
- How were the St Neots bank robbers caught?
- How did the industry of St Neots in the 19th century impact on the world?
- What happened in the 1960s and how did it affect the town?

The road running through St Neots, formerly the A45, was the main east-west route linking the Midlands with the east coast ports for many centuries. When the southern bypass was opened in 1985 the Market Square and High Street became less busy for a while and gave a new opportunity for the town to use these areas for leisure.

In this booklet are 4 trails of differing lengths to explore the town of St Neots within the parish of St Neots

Trail 1 Distance about 0.8 miles

Trail 3 Distance about 1.6 miles

Trail 2 Distance about 0.7 miles

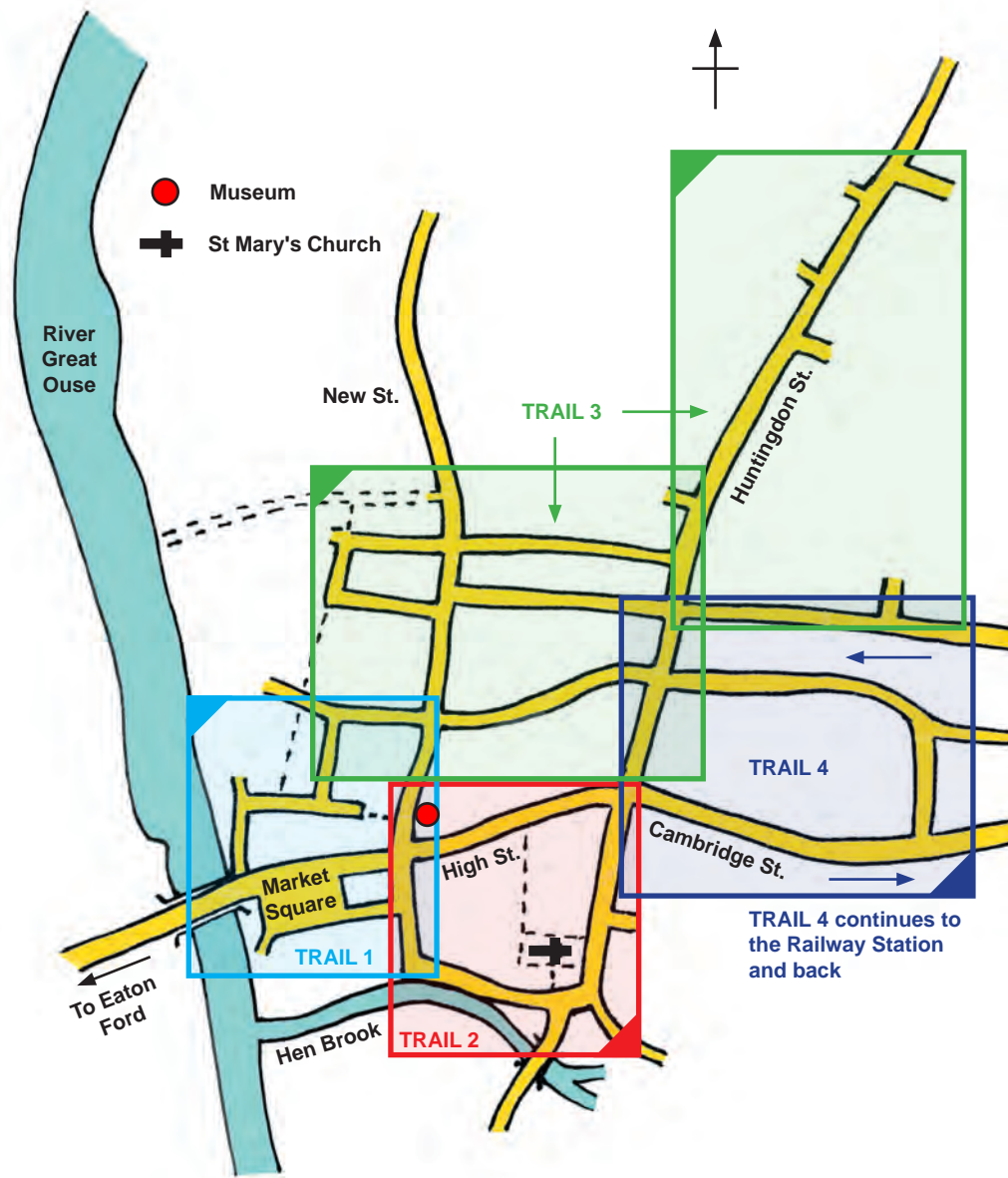
Trail 4 Distance about 2.2 miles

● Plaque

■ Heritage Board

Please open for map

St Neots Town Trails



TRAIL 1 – Market Square, Priory Lane and Tan Yard

Distance about 0.8 miles

Much of the early history of this area is covered in the trail of 'The Lost Priory of St Neots' so where you see a * please refer to the Lost Priory trail booklet.

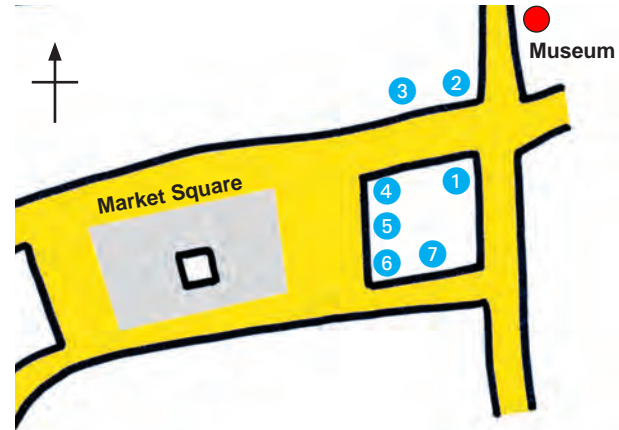
If starting at the Museum turn left and head for the crossroads. Pause at the crossroads to look at the two properties on either side of the road as the road goes right into the Market Square.

1 Santander – built as the Midland Bank in 1936 and became the Abbey National Building Society around 1980 when Midland (now HSBC, see Trail 2 no 3) moved into the High Street.

2 Shops on the corner of Market Square and New Street – once a small family clothier and outfitter's shop on the corner started by Arthur Edward Barrett in 1888. After his early death, aged 28 years, his widow married one of the assistants, Charles Huckle. During the 20th century the shop enlarged and became a department store extending to include all the premises on this corner. In 2016 the Huckle family began to split the premises into smaller shops. Look up to see the 1960s façade, thought to be stylish and modern at the time (see photo on the right showing Barretts in the 1940s).

3 Walk towards the Market Square passing - a passageway on the right. For centuries there were small cottages and industries along this passageway, known as the Fox and Hounds Yard. The inn was on the left of the passage.

The Market Square is one of the largest in the country and has been used since at least 1137, when the monks of the Priory (which stood to the north) were granted a charter for a weekly market, still held on Thursdays.* Over the centuries the height of the market square has been raised considerably in an effort to reduce the effects of flooding from the river.



Leave the railway station along the footpath with the small car park on your left, where the Railway Hotel once stood.

Cross Station Road and continue along the footpath to find -

15 Priory Junior School – a unique building based on a pentagon with a 10 sided school hall. It was built in 1968 to replace the school in Priory Road (see Trail 3 no 12).

16 Longsands Academy – built as Longsands School and opened in 1960 as the town's secondary modern school and later became a comprehensive school.



Turn left to walk down Longsands Road to find -

17 Longsands Shops – one of several small groups of shops built around the town in the 1960s/1970s to serve the new housing estates. One of the buildings was originally built as a pub but has been replaced by eating outlets.

Just past the shops turn right and walk along Princes Drive, then turn left and immediately right into Avenue Road – a road once lined with trees.

Follow Avenue Road to reach Huntingdon Street and the town centre.

To return to the museum turn left towards the High Street and right to walk along the High Street. Finally turn right at the traffic lights to turn into New Street to return to the Museum.

For further information about St. Neots:

C.F. Tebbutt, 'St. Neots, History of a Huntingdonshire Town', Phillimore & Co Ltd, 1978
 D.W. Bushby, 'St. Neots - A History & Celebration', Francis Frith Collection, 2005
 R.E.Young, 'St. Neots Past', Phillimore & Co Ltd, 1996
 R.E.Young, 'The History of St Neots for Children', 1994
 J. Mountfort & M. Hadfield, 'St Neots Through Time', Amberley Publishing, 2014
 J. Slack, 'The Secret Life of St Neots Station', Horizon Editions Ltd, 2010

St. Neots Museum. www.stneotsmuseum.org.uk
 St. Neots Local History Society. www.stneotslhs.org.uk
 Eatons Community Association. www.escan.org.uk
 St Neots Community Archive. www.st-neots.ccan.co.uk

St. Neots Library:- Local Studies Collection.
 Huntingdon Archives Office