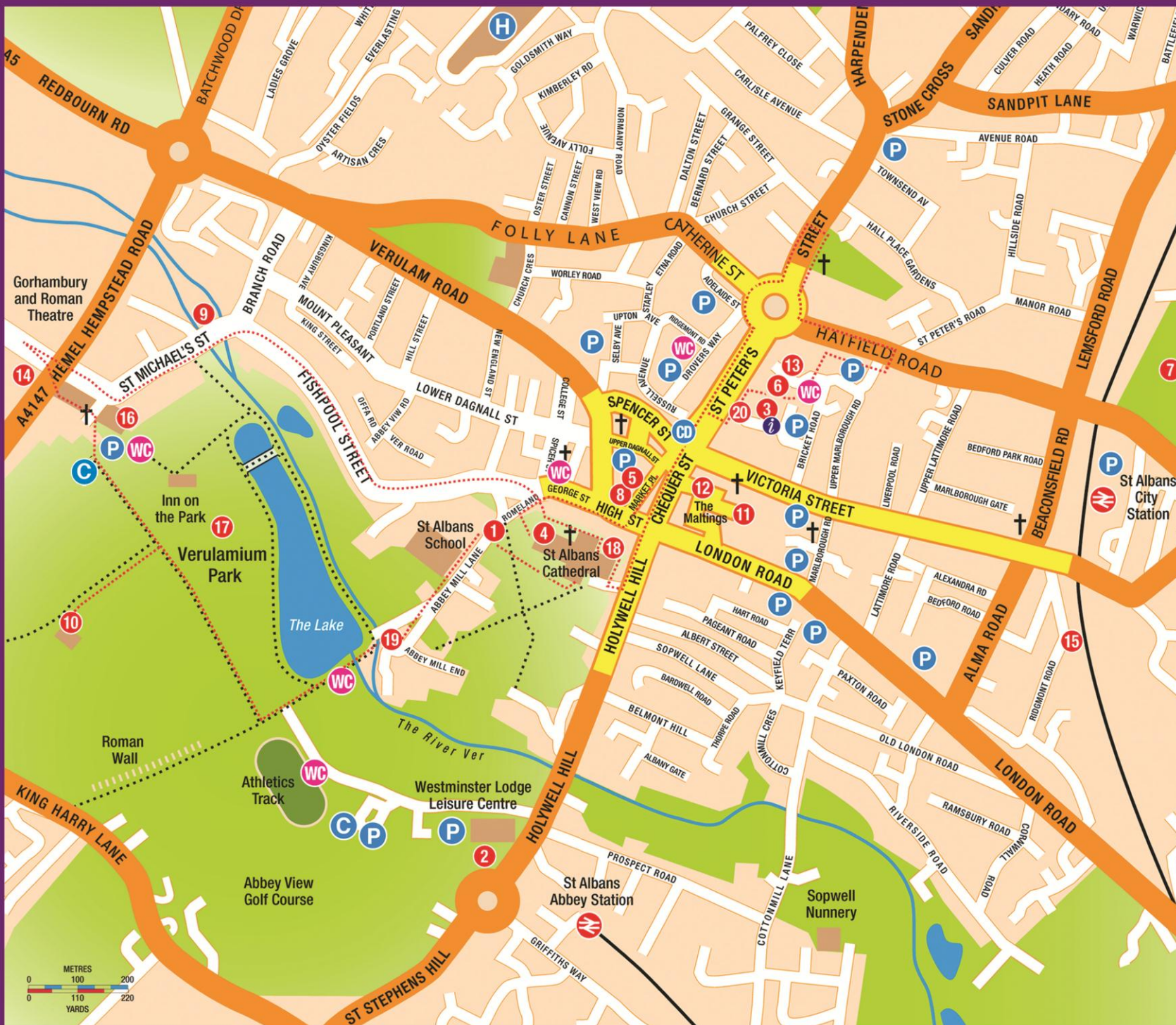


ST ALBANS

Map and City Trail




City Centre map key

- 1 Abbey Gateway
- 2 Abbey Theatre
- 3 Alban Arena
- 4 Cathedral
- 5 Christopher Place
- 6 Civic Centre
- 7 Clarence Park
- 8 Clock Tower
- 9 Kingsbury Watermill
- 10 Roman Mosaic & Hypocaust
- 11 Maltings Arts Theatre/Library
- 12 Maltings Shopping Centre
- 13 Police Station
- 14 Roman Theatre
- 15 St Albans South Signal Box
- 16 Verulamium Museum
- 17 Verulamium Park
- 18 Vintry Garden
- 19 Ye Olde Fighting Cocks Inn
- 20 Forrester House
- i Visitor Information Centre
- St Albans City Trail
- P Car Parks
- CD Coach Drop Off Point
- C Coach Parks
- † Churches, Places of Worship
- Footpaths
- Yellow Main Shopping Centre
- WC Public Toilets

Turn over for the
St Albans City Trail
- a self-guided walk
around the main
sights of the city.



ST ALBANS City Trail

Leave the **Visitor Information Centre** housed in the **Alban Arena (3 and **), the city's main entertainment venue and head straight from out of the door to get to St Peter's Street, the main thoroughfare with a number of handsome Georgian façades.

There is a variety of shops and, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, a bustling street market. Turn left but look back up at the mosaic on **Forrester House (20)** which was named after the 5th Earl of Verulam, Lord Forrester. The mural in mosaic was designed in the 1960s and represents the history of St Albans.

Cross the road and you continue left down St Peter's St to arrive at the **Old Town Hall**. The Grade II* listed Georgian building was built in 1831, and will house a new museum and gallery for the city, slated to open in late 2017.

From here, continue straight (keeping the Town Hall on your left) to head into Market Place. At the Jack Wills shop bear right into French Row, noting some fine old buildings including the 14th century "**Fleur de Lys**" inn where King John of France was imprisoned after the Battle of Poitiers in 1356. At the end of French Row is the **Clock Tower (8)**, (open weekends from Easter to end September) one of only two remaining medieval curfew towers in the country.

At the junction with High Street, cross on the pedestrian crossing, turn right and continue on down into George Street with its mixture of boutiques, antique shops and restaurants. At the end of this short street turn left into **Romeland** and left again towards the west front entrance of the spectacular **St Albans Cathedral (4)**.

After visiting the Cathedral leave by the Chapter House door and turning right, cross to the **Abbey Gateway (1)** dating from the 14th century and now part of St Albans School. The Gateway has had several uses including a printing press and town gaol.

Continue left down Abbey Mill Lane to the **Ye Olde Fighting Cocks (19)**, reputedly the oldest licensed inhabited inn in England. The name derives from the practice of cock fighting for which it was a renowned centre.

Across the bridge lies **Verulamium Park (17)**, which covers the site of the Roman city of Verulamium and is now a popular recreation area with lakes, tennis courts and a mini-golf course. Straight ahead is the Causeway, a wooded path leading to a section of the original Roman town wall.

In the centre of the park is a building erected over the **Roman mosaic and Hypocaust (10)**, a preserved example of Roman underfloor heating (hypocaust) beneath a fine mosaic. From here a short walk takes you to **Verulamium Museum (16)** - a must on every itinerary as some of the finest treasures of Roman Britain are housed here including several spectacular mosaics.

Next to the Museum is **St Michael's Church**, founded in 948 AD by Abbot Ulsinus and containing a monument to Sir Francis Bacon, the philosopher and first Earl of Verulam, who was also a local resident. From the church, cross Bluehouse Hill – the main Hemel Hempstead road - and go through the gateway past the lodge house of Gorbambury, home of the Earls of Verulam. The entrance to the **Roman Theatre (14)**, the only theatre of the period open to visitors in Britain, is situated just inside the gateway (Please note that there is a charge to enter the Roman Theatre).

Cross back over Bluehouse Hill to St Michael's Street and return towards the city centre by way of pretty **St Michael's Village** with its cottages, inns and fine houses. By the bridge, crossing the River Ver, is **Kingsbury Watermill (The Waffle House) (9)** offering a fascinating glimpse of the past with its great waterwheel still on show. Alongside the Mill can be seen an example of Hertfordshire "pudding stone", a natural concrete composed mainly of flint pebbles unique to this area.

Bear right from St Michael's Street into **Fishpool Street** – a name probably deriving from a monastic fishpool. Here can be seen reminders of the City's coaching past in the high pavements which enabled passengers to alight with ease. The mix of cottages and houses includes the 17th century **St Michael's Manor**, now a hotel. Note also the unusual **street war memorial**, one of ten in the Abbey area, recording the names of street residents killed in the First World War.


At the top of Fishpool Street is Romeland again and a small garden marking the site of the burning of George Tankerfield, a Protestant martyr in the reign of Mary Tudor. By Romeland turn right and re-enter the Cathedral grounds. Walk up the path by the north side of the Cathedral which passes through the graveyard. As you approach the north transept you pass on the right the tall modern gravestone of the late **Robert Runcie**, a former Bishop of St Albans and Archbishop of Canterbury.

Continue round the corner for the distinctive grave of **Lord Grimsthorpe**. He was famed as the designer of Big Ben's clock mechanism in Westminster but he also saved the Abbey from dereliction with his own money in the late 1800s. The path leads into **Sumpter Yard**

passing the **Vintry Garden (18)** behind the walls on your left.

When you have passed through Sumpter Yard to Holywell Hill, notice the **Clarion Collection Hotel** opposite. This building was originally built by Samuel Ryder as his office for his seed company and Café Rouge, next door, was originally his greenhouse. Ryder went on later in life to found one of the most famous competitions in the world of golf, the Ryder Cup. Walk up Holywell Hill, straight across the crossroads and up Chequer Street. On your right is the **Maltings Shopping Centre (12)**, on your left is the Old Town Hall.

Walk up the length of St Peter's Street. At the roundabout, cross straight over and continue up St Peter's Street to the **Pemberton Almshouses** on the left. A plaque over the door tells the sad story of their benefactor. Cross the road to **St Peter's Church** opposite, then back to the roundabout, turning left into Hatfield Road. Cross over the road outside the Courtyard Café and turn right to see the **Marlborough Almshouses**, a gift from Sarah, 1st Duchess of Marlborough, a friend of Queen Anne and a local resident.

Turn left to walk down the alleyway at the end of the Almshouses. At the end, on your right, are the tranquil **Municipal Gardens** with lovely plant displays, a pleasant place to rest for a while. Carry on around the Civic Centre, which houses the **District Council Offices (6)** and back to the **Alban Arena (3)** and the **Visitor Information Centre**. 

Here the trail ends, but St Albans offers much more to explore including London Road and Catherine Street with their specialist shops and **Clarence Park (7)**, a classic Victorian town park 15 minutes' walk from the city centre.

(Numbers in brackets shown on map overleaf)