

CITY OF PEEL HERITAGE STROLLS



Peel is a part of our magical island. The streets are steeped in the memories of time's past. It has had many lives from the Vikings to military to religious to fishing and many more.

Peel wears its history on its sleeve for all to see. These walks will give you a flavour of what happened here. If you listen carefully Peel may tell you its many secrets. We hope you enjoy these walks and stories.



Walk 1:



KIPPERS, BOATS & QUAYS

Allow 1 to 2 hours



Peel Harbour. Photo courtesy of The Leece Museum

- 1 Take the Number 5 or 6 bus to the stop at the Town Hall, then walk for 3 minutes down Michael Street to Market Place. There is also short term parking of two hours and toilet facilities in Market Place.

On the left you will see the clock tower and archway that once belonged to St Peter's Church, which was built in 1551 and was subject to many modifications through the 18th and 19th centuries before being demolished in 1958 following a fire. There is an information board in the churchyard to find out more.

The large pink building on the right hand side of the square is the former Peel Castle Hotel which opened in the 1840s and was the site of various formal functions and balls over the years. Stage coaches were also run from here with the stables kept in the car park.

- 2 Go down Castle Street

This was the original street in Peel that joined the town with the castle and dates from the Viking era when the castle was constructed, making it one of the oldest streets on the island.

Every house on this street has a story, but we have highlighted some: The Old Crown was a pub, but the façade is much younger than the date would suggest. It was bought in 1901 by a former circus clown who applied the false Tudor decoration and painted the name and date to make it appear older.

Near the end of the street, you will find the Old Bonded Warehouse which is an antiques shop. Underneath, there is a vault which was used for storage in several houses on the quay. The owner is happy for you to explore the vault and also look at the house, which contains an unusual staircase turret.

The Ward Public Library opposite was built as a gift to the town by Hon JK Ward who was a Peel resident who made his fortune in the timber trade in Canada. The library was opened in 1907 and contains many books on Manx history.

- 3 Turn right onto Crown Street

The house on the corner of Crown Street and Shore Road is called Munn's Corner. This was the original sea line before the promenade was constructed and the house walls and foundations were built extra thick to cope with the battering from the sea in Peel Bay during high tide.

- 4 Turn right onto Shore Road and walk along the Promenade

On the seafront, you will see the Marine Hotel, which was built by Joseph Mylchreest 'the Diamond King'. He left Peel to make his fortune in the South African diamond mines and returned a wealthy man in 1888 to set about improving Peel. He built the Marine in 1890 on the site of an 18th century townhouse that soon became a thriving hotel and restaurant.

- 5 Turn right up Market Street

The old Co-op shop is directly ahead of you with the date of construction clearly marked above you. It is built of Ruabon bricks which acted as the ballast for the boats on the return trip from North Wales when the Peel boats imported goods such as the Foxdale mine's lead.

On the right you will see the Grace Baptist Church. This was previously Moore's Mathematical School which was founded in 1763 to provide mathematics and navigation classes for the poorer boys of Peel. It was rebuilt in 1844 into the Church, but the shipbuilding yard behind it still remains.

- 6 Turn right onto Love Lane then right onto Castle Street. Opposite Love Lane is Castle Street Gardens. Enter through the archway.

This is the site of the old Kipper yards, stables and outbuildings for Kelly's shop on Castle Street. The three crests were moved here from the Clothworker's School.

- 7 Turn right down St Peter's Lane to East Quay then turn right. Follow the path along the harbour.

On the right, you will find the Leece Museum. Founded in 1984, this museum was the former courthouse and had a prisoners holding cell in the basement called the Black Hole. Today it houses a permanent exhibition of TT & MGP winning racing machines, vintage, and off-road bikes. The upper floors of the museum house a wide range of local items of interest from Peel's history, including handmade pieces from the World War One internment camp along the coast at Knockaloe.

- 8 Follow the road to Weatherglass Corner

This corner has long been a meeting place where for many years people have sat, chatted and looked out to sea where you can still sit awhile and enjoy the sea air.

You can extend the walk by turning right onto the Promenade to enjoy the many seaside treats such as the local ice cream, fish and chips, paddling in the sea and visiting the charity shops. Toilets can also be found on the right-hand side of the road before the Sailing Club.



- 9** Turn left and cross the footbridge across the Marina entrance then turn right along West Quay

Just inside the Fenella Beach car park, you will see the wooden statue of Fenella at the base of Peel Hill. Fenella was carved from a single piece of ash by artist Nick Barlow and she looks out over the beach named after her. Fenella was a female character in Sir Walter Scott's 1823 novel 'Peveril of the Peak' which was set around Peel Castle and due to the novel's popularity, became the namesake of the beach which formed after the causeway to Peel Castle was constructed.

- 10** Follow the causeway along West Quay to the Castle

Peel Castle is built on a seven-acre island named after St Patrick. Built originally as an 11th century Viking castle, it is now in the care of Manx National Heritage and between March and November, you can explore the castle's ruins.

A visit will take about one hour, complete with audio tours to bring the castle's history to life.

You can also walk around the outside the castle throughout the year by taking the steps on the left at the corner of the causeway. This walk provides panoramic views across the sea to Ireland and you may even see a seal or basking shark while you walk.

- i** Visit www.manxnationalheritage.im for more details of Peel Castle.

- 11** Follow West Quay along to the pier

You will see the Lifeboat House on the left beside the slipway. There has been a lifeboat in Peel since 1884 and there is an information board by the boathouse doors to discover more.

The breakwater was completed in 1897 to allow easy access as Peel became a thriving fishing port. Stroll along the breakwater and enjoy a cup of tea or a kipper bap from the Breakwater Kiosk, then watch the boats enter and leave the harbour.

- 12** Return along the West Quay past the footbridge

Peel Hill to the right has good bracing walks towards Corrin's Folly, a tower standing proud at the summit of the hill overlooking the Irish Sea. This was built in 1806 by a local man, Thomas Corrin, as a memorial to his beloved wife Alice and their two children who are all buried nearby.

The War memorial on the hillside has 25 trees which were planted in 1995 to commemorate the loss of 25 Peel men in World War Two.

- 13** Cross the second bridge at the far end of the Marina

Straight ahead of you, you will see Moore's Kipper House which is the home of the traditional smoked Manx kippers. This was one of the original smoking houses which were busy in the 19th century when Peel was a big herring fish port. There are tours around the factory from May to September to see the process from herring to kipper and there is also a shop where they can post kippers to your home.

- 14** Continue along Mill Road, keeping the anchor to your left

On your right, you will find the Manx Transport Heritage Museum. Housed in the former office for the Peel Brickworks, this small but perfectly formed museum has a wealth of exhibits to discover from models, exhibits, photographs and unique artefacts including the famous Peel P50.

- 15** Return to the bridge then continue along East Quay

The House of Manannan on your right is an audio-visual museum of the Celtic, Viking and maritime history of the Isle of Man. It is built on the site of the former Peel Railway Station which can be seen from the remnants of the railway lines along East Quay, and the museum incorporates the old booking hall and waiting room.

- i** A visit takes 1-2 hours, visit www.manxnationalheritage.im for more information.

- 16** Go up Lake Lane to the right of the Creek Pub

Look for a wide red door on the left. This was to provide access to the overnight cow stalls for cattle the grazed on the harbour side and provided milk for the residents of Peel.

- 17** Follow Lake Lane to return to Market Place

Finish with the modern art installation of twelve metal panels which interpret lines from 'The Deer's Cry', a historical poem and prayer written by St Patrick. The panels were designed by local artist Nicola Dixon in 2017 who used the work to relate to Peel's history and environment.



We hope you enjoyed this walk and the many eateries and shops along the way.