



Workhouse Walk – King's Lynn

Workhouses provided care for people who were poor and needed help. They were set up by the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. Every town and village in the country was supposed to send their poor to a workhouse.

There were 22 workhouses in Norfolk. Each workhouse served a group of 40 to 50 parishes known as a Union.

Life in the workhouse was supposed to be tough. Workhouse food was boring, families were split up and adults had to work to help pay for their keep. It was hoped that people would only come in to the workhouse if they were desperate.



The King's Lynn Poor Law Union was formed in 1835. Initially the new Union continued to use the existing St James' Workhouse and spent money enlarging it. In 1854 the central tower of this workhouse collapsed. This led to a new workhouse being built on Extons Road.

This new workhouse was designed by Alfred Maberly and James Medland who later designed the Norwich Union Workhouse.

It was completed in 1856 and it could house 468 inmates.

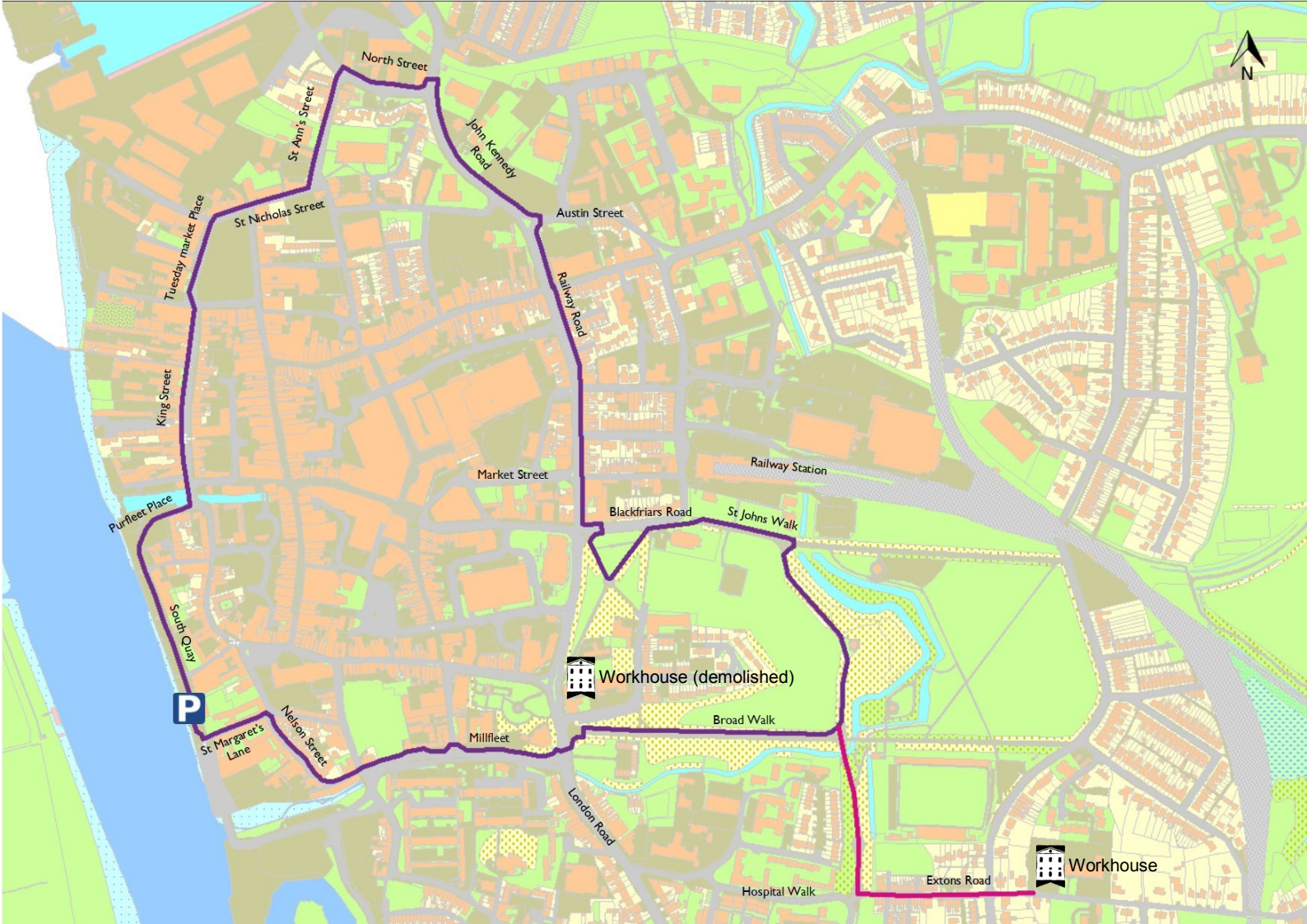
The workhouse became St James' Hospital until it closed in 1985. The building is now used as offices for the Norfolk and Norwich Health Authority, where various outpatient departments can be found.

This walk was developed as part of the *Voices from the Workhouse* redisplay project at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. For more information visit www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/Gressenhall



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Start Point - South Quay

Grid reference TF616197

Distance – 2 miles

Start at South Quay. Facing the river, turn right along the quayside. Continue along Purfleet Place as the road bends right in to King's Staithe Square. When reach the junction with King street and Queen Street, turn left on to King Street, and continue until you reach Tuesday Market Place. Continue straight on past the Corn Exchange and then bear right around the Market Place. Turn right onto St Nicholas Street. At the end of St Nicholas Street, you will see St Nicholas Chapel in front of you. Turn left onto St Ann's Street.

At the end of St Ann's Street, turn right on to North Street. At the end, turn right on to John Kennedy Road. Continue down this road (which becomes Railway Road) until you reach the cross road junction with Blackfriars Street and Blackfriars Road. Cross to the corner of Blackfriars road and follow the path in to The Walks. Walk down to the fountain and then turn left on to a path that heads back up towards the road. This path takes you past St John's Church and on to St John's Walk.

After passing the church, bear right off St John's Walk and follow the path past the Red Mount Chapel. (For the workhouse, continue straight along the path and at the end turn left along Extons Road. Continue straight to reach St James which was the workhouse but has been converted to NHS offices)

At the crossroads, turn right along Broad Walk. Cross the road to Millfleet passing the library on your right. At the end of the road, continue straight on past Church Street to Nelson Street. Turn left along St Margaret's Lane and at the end, turn right to arrive back at South Quay.