

Exploring diversity through a sense of place and time

What does the history of Winchester reveal about how Jews were treated in medieval England?

KS3 history enquiry 2 on the experience of the Jewish medieval minority built around questions of historical significance

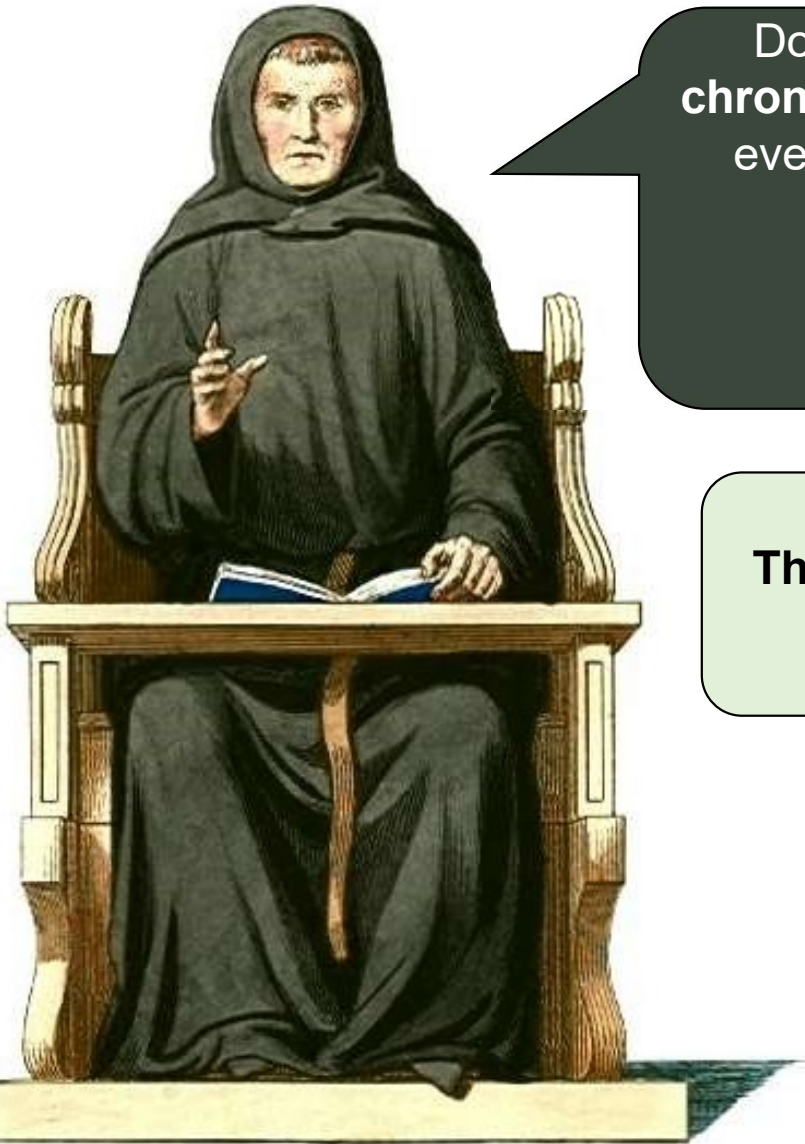
What does the history of Winchester reveal about how Jews were treated in medieval England?



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Enquiry 2 Lesson 2

What do you think this monk meant?



Do you remember me? I am **Richard of Devizes**, the **English chronicler** and a monk from Winchester who wrote about places and events in the 12th Century (1100s). In 1190 I wrote this about the Jews in Winchester:

“Winchester ... spared her vermin”.

Think: Why might Richard have used the word “*vermin*” to describe the Jews?

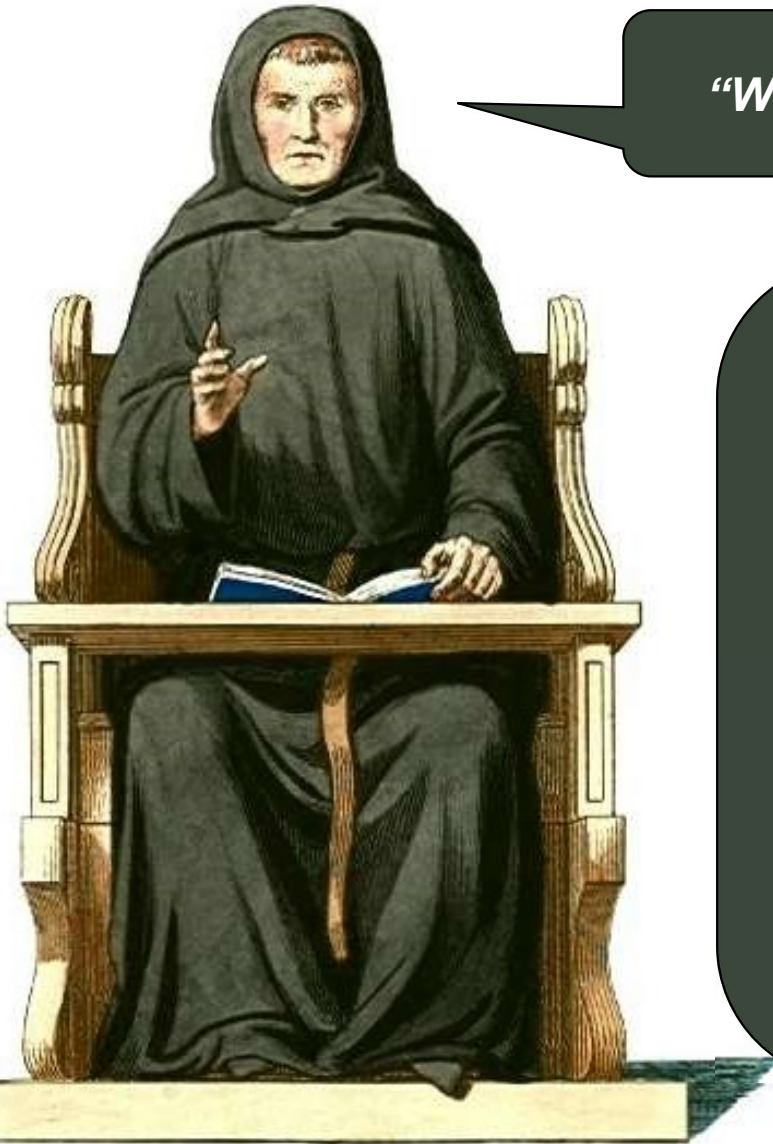


Key terms:

Vermin – wild animals or pests that cause harm

Spared – decided not to kill or hurt someone

Were Jews treated with respect in medieval Winchester?



“Winchester ... spared her vermin”.


When writing about Winchester. I was talking about the **massacres** of Jews that followed the coronation of King Richard I in 1190. When he became king, people were whipped up by the religious frenzy of the **Crusades** to win back Christian control of Jerusalem in the Holy Land from our Islamic enemies. Jews also began to be seen as enemies because of their different religion. As a monk, I was not sympathetic to Jews as I saw them as outsiders to Christianity.

On this occasion, Winchester, London and other archa towns did not join in the killings – so the Jews in Winchester escaped. Had I lived longer I would have probably recorded the Barons War in 1264-5 in which hundreds of Jews were killed when Winchester was captured and Jewish homes were attacked.

Were Jews treated with respect in medieval Winchester?



“Winchester ... spared her vermin”.



This is an example of **othering** people. Richard of Devizes **dehumanised** Jews by comparing them to *vermin* in his Chronicle.

Think:

- *What does this chronicle suggest about **medieval attitudes** towards Jews? Were Jews treated with respect?*
- *How were Jews treated in Winchester and other towns and cities? Were Jews able to live in safety?*
- *What arguments and evidence might you use to challenge Richard of Devizes if you could speak to him?*

Reflection: how are minorities treated in Britain today?



Sadly, the mistreatment of minorities has not gone away. It is worrying that recently anti Jewish attitudes and behaviour, we call **anti-semitism**, has got worse. A recent [article in the newspaper The Guardian](#) reported that the number of recorded acts against British Jews in 2019 was the highest ever recorded. You may have seen the Black Lives Matter campaign against the racist treatment of black people, another example of othering. However, there has been much progress since Licoricia's life during the medieval period. Today:

1. UK law now treats everyone equally and with the same rights

2. We do not exclude or segregate people because of different religion or skin colour

3. However, some prejudices from the middle ages still exist. Some people still wrongly **dehumanise** minorities and try to make them seem evil.

On the plinth of my statue is written "**love your neighbour as yourself**", which comes from the Hebrew Bible and is also a teaching shared by Christians and Muslims.

Think: *how can we improve our behaviour to others and make the world a better place for minorities to live in?*



Challenge: One way that historians try to tackle prejudice is by educating people about the past. Your challenge is to create a **walking tour** of Winchester that takes young people visiting Licoricia's statue to revealing places in Winchester that help you to explain the treatment of the Jews in medieval Winchester, including Licoricia.

Step 1: Map of Medieval Winchester in c1300



This was the stone house that belonged to David of Oxford, Licoricia's second husband. This house in Oxford had to be **fortified** for protection. Most houses were made of wood.

The possible site of **Licoricia's house**. We know she lived in Jewry Street. The house would have been a stone house with a secure cellar to store her money and valuables. The **synagogue** may have been within her courtyard, along with an orchard of fruit trees and animals. Licoricia's son Asher owned properties here

Merchants and tradesmen are people who made money by selling things they had made or bought. The **Guildhall** was where they met to set rules for trade and ask the king to grant freedoms to trade in documents called **charters**. They worked with the King's officer. This was the beginnings of a local government.

Along High Street you would find large buildings for lots of separate **trading booths**, which were like early shops. This was the main place for trade known as the **commercial centre** of the city.



This medieval Jewish token was found here on Lower Brook Street



The Winchester Bible with its famous, expensive artwork, was paid for by a wealthy Bishop who lived at the **Bishop's Palace**



Suzanne Bartlet's garden. She researched and wrote the history book on Licoricia

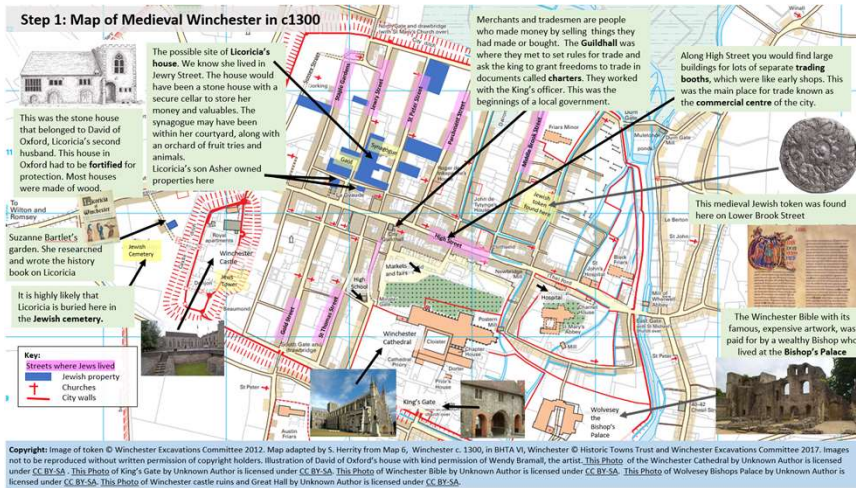
It is highly likely that Licoricia is buried here in the **Jewish cemetery**.

Key:
Streets where Jews lived
Jewish property
Churches
City walls



Wolvesey the Bishop's Palace

What sites in Winchester reveal the story of the Jews in medieval Britain and how they were treated?



Step 1: Look at the map. Can you spot:

1. the **house** where I might have lived and the **Jewish cemetery** where it is likely I was buried?
2. the area where most of the Jews lived known as the **Jewish quarter**?
3. a **Jewish Synagogue**?
4. **churches** – how many can you count?
5. the **castle** where the king lived?
6. the **Bishop's Palace**?

Step 2:

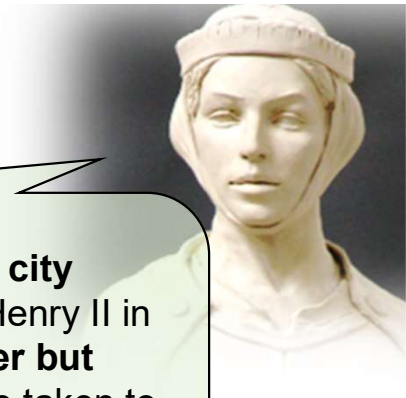
1. Can you plot a tour through Winchester that would include places/buildings that help young people learn about:
 - the life of Licoricia
 - how the king, the Church and other traders treated the Jews
 - some of the dangers they faced?

Think:

- Did Jews live in a separate part of the city or next door to their **Christian neighbours**?
- Did Jews live closer to Winchester **Castle** or the **gaol**?
- What do the many churches reveal about how important the Christian religion was?
- Who do you think held the most **power** and **influence** in this city – the king, the Church or merchants?

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What can the Jewish cemetery reveal about the lives of Jews in medieval Winchester?



Step 1: Map of Medieval Winchester

The possible site of **Licoricia's house**. We know it was a **stone house** belonging to Abraham the name of Licoricia's first husband and it is next door to another Jewish money lender house belonging to her step son. Most houses were made of wood known as timber.

This was the stone house that belonged to David of Oxford, Licoricia's second husband. This house in Oxford had to be **fortified** for protection.

Suzanne Bartlet's garden. She researched and wrote the history book on Licoricia

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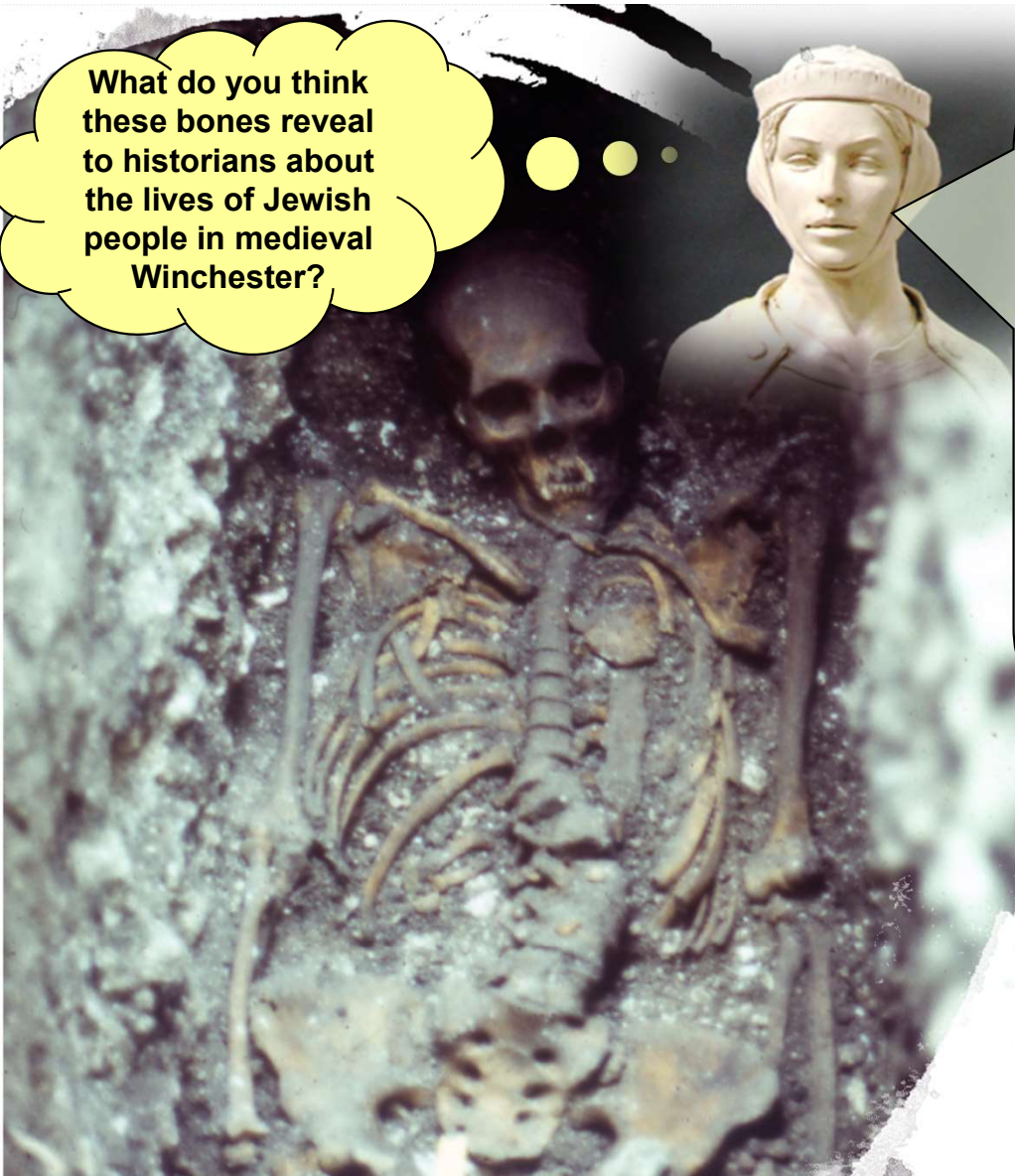
Key:
Streets where Jews lived
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The Jewish cemetery was built **outside Winchester's city walls**, as was Jewish custom, with the permission of Henry II in 1177. It was not only **for Jewish people in Winchester but across southern England**. Before this Jews had to be taken to London for burial as the law allowed only one Jewish cemetery in the country.

Think:

1. Would you include the Jewish cemetery on your tour?
2. What does this reveal about the way people with a different religion were treated in medieval England?
3. The bones are archaeological evidence of Jewish people in Winchester. What do you think the bones might reveal about their lives?

What do you think these bones reveal to historians about the lives of Jewish people in medieval Winchester?



In 1995, 72 people, including 69 children in Winchester's Jewish cemetery were excavated.

- Some skeletons suggested a **better than average diet**.
- Many of the bones showed signs of a **bone disease called rickets**. This was caused by a lack of vitamin D and calcium suggesting a poorer diet.
- One skeleton tells us about the **violence that the city's Jewish people had to live with**; the skull of one man showed two cuts to his head, from either an axe or a sword.
- Winchester burials include a **high proportion of infants**.

Jews buried elsewhere in **York** had a **greater number of healed fractures** than non-Jewish skeletons which is evidence of Jewish medical skills.

More recently, 17 medieval Jewish people's bones were found at the bottom of a well in **Norfolk**. 11 of them were children. It is likely they were **murdered** and thrown down the well, a harsh reminder of the **persecution** that Jewish people could suffer in medieval Britain.

Photograph of Winchester excavated grave ©Winchester City Council.
Kindly provided by Hampshire Cultural Trust.

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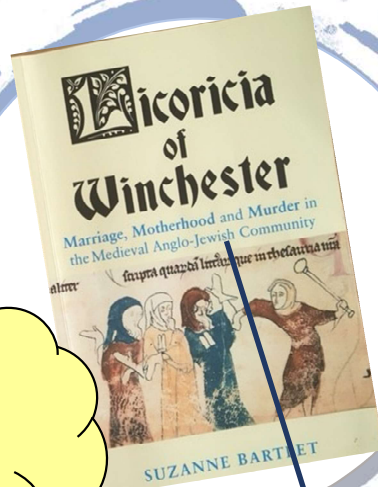
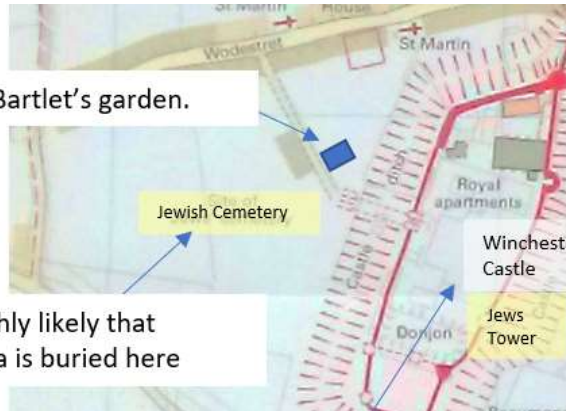
How was Licoricia of Winchester was discovered by historian Suzanne Bartlet?

One Jewish grave was discovered under a garage in St James' Terrace in Winchester. Archeologists studied the remains and reported that they were likely to be from the medieval Jewish cemetery that also ran under the house of Suzanne Bartlet.

This discovery led Suzanne Bartlet to do extensive historical research into the Jews that lived in medieval Winchester. This is how she discovered the records on Licoricia, who may have been buried under her house! Sue wanted to write a history book on Licoricia. This **historical scholarship** is now used by other historians researching Jewish history and was used to write these lessons on Licoricia of Winchester.

Step 3: What can this new historical scholarship reveal about where Jews were living in Winchester and why?

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Where does this phrase come from and what does it mean?

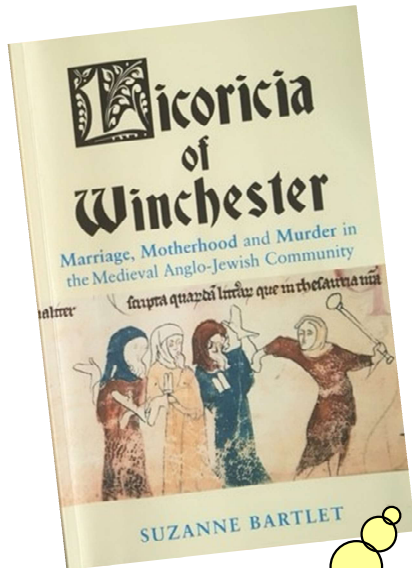
Think: Why does Suzanne Bartlet call the Jews an Anglo-Jewish community?

Step 3: What does this recent historical scholarship reveal about where Jews lived and why?

Listen as the teacher reads this extract from **Suzanne Bartlet's** book, *Licoricia of Winchester* (2015) Chapter 2.

Underline what information helps you to understand:

1. where Jews lived
2. the dangers they faced
3. where they might receive protection.



Think: would you include any of these places on the guided tour of Winchester and why?

The first Jews are recorded as living in Shoemakers Street. This was the main street from the North gate towards the central crossroads where it met the main **commercial** High Street, before continuing towards the South gate ... The importance of its **position** so close to the **commercial centre** and the through traffic from outside the city made it **attractive**. The Jews increasingly **settled** there but it never became a **ghetto**. Despite always having a **mixed population** ... it came to be called **Jewry** Street, its name today, but there were other [Jewish] properties elsewhere in the city.

Jews tended to live as close to the royal castles or the **gaols** as possible, because at times when they were under attack the king had promised them his protection, and they were entitled to seek **sanctuary** ... Winchester was no exception ... Jews Tower, on the southside of the castle, was supposed to offer protection, but its position raises many questions. To access it from the city side would have required Jews to make their way to a wicket gate **reputed** to be beside the **West gate**, which for most of them meant a **dangerous journey** across a **hostile** city. While this would have been safe enough when the attacks came from outside the walls, the fact is they were in greater danger from inside the walls, most frequently from their **fellow citizens**. On the west side of Shorten Street itself there was a gaol, which would have given greater protection to those living nearby. More **ominously**, Jews saw the inside of both of these places when they were **imprisoned awaiting trial**, or in **advance** of a particularly **heavy tallage** [a very large amount of money all Jews had to pay as a random tax].

Create a walking tour of Winchester for visitors who visit the statue of Licoricia. Explain how each site reveals how medieval Jews were treated. Start the tour at my statue where it will be outside the Winchester Discovery Centre on Jewry Street.

You are here at Licoricia's statue

Step 1: Map of Medieval Winchester in c1300

The possible site of **Licoricia's house**. We know she lived in Jewry Street. The house would have been a stone house with a secure cellar to store her money and valuables. The **synagogue** may have been within her courtyard, along with an orchard of fruit trees and animals. Licoricia's son Asher owned properties here

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It is highly likely that Licoricia is buried here in the **Jewish cemetery**.

Suzanne Bartlett's garden. She researched and wrote the history book on Licoricia

Key:
 Streets where Jews lived
 Jewish property
 Churches
 City walls

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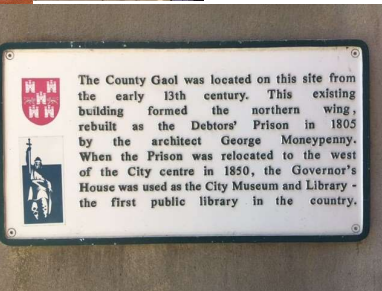


Step 4: To create your tour:

1. Number the places you will visit on your map of Winchester in the order you will visit them.
2. Make a leaflet that explains at each site what you have learned about the way Jewish people were treated in medieval Winchester.
3. You might want to include photos of the sites to help visitors.



Images of Jewry street today including the site of the old gaol

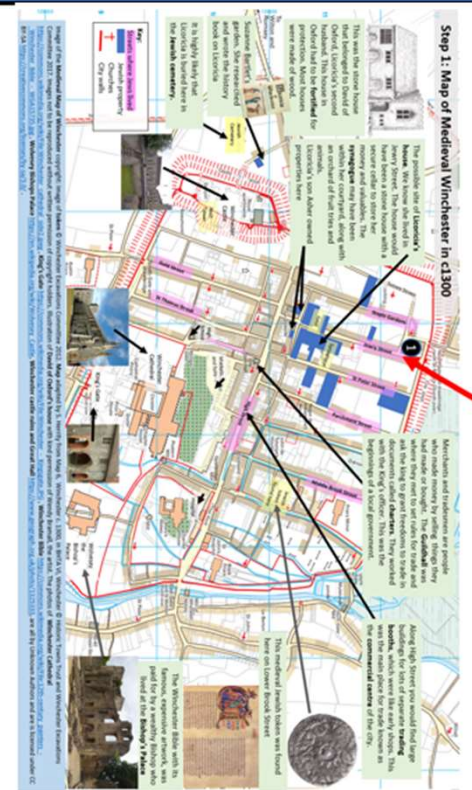


The history of Licoricia of Winchester



Walking tour site information:

1. The statue of Licoricia outside the Discovery Centre represents ...
2. ?
3. ?
4. ?
5. ?.



You are here at Licoricia's Statue

The Licoricia of Winchester walking tour



Step 4: You might want to do some further research. There is an adult Jewish trail in Winchester created with the help of the University of Winchester. Use the links below to look at the trail and give you an idea what your trail might look and sound like.

Further resources to support a more in depth trail of Jewish history in Winchester from University of Winchester

To see a Jewish trail for adults, including photos of the sites, click here:

www.visitwinchester.co.uk/app/uploads/2017/10/medieval-jewish-trail-print.pdf

Find out more about the sites in the trail and what they reveal about the lives of Jews in medieval Winchester here:

www.winchester.ac.uk/media/content-assets/documents/rke-documents/MJW-walk-information-brochure.pdf

Find out more about those involved in creating the trail here:

www.winchester.ac.uk/research/our-impactful-research/research-in-humanities-and-social-sciences/research-projects/medieval-jewish-winchester/

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What might these places reveal about the history and treatment of the Jews in Winchester?

Use this table to make notes on what you would say at each of the sites that you choose. Some boxes may be blank.

Possible sites to visit on the walking tour.	How the Jews were treated by the king	How the Jews were treated by the Church	How the Jews were treated by their neighbours/tradesmen
Licoricia's statue outside The Discovery Centre on Jewry Street			
The gaol			
Jewry Street shops			
Site of the Jewish Synagogue			
Site of a Jewish property and possible house of Licoricia			
The Castle, its Great Hall and site of the Jews Tower			
Winchester Cathedral and Bishop's Palace			
The site of the Jewish medieval cemetery			
Site of the medieval guild hall (you might also point out the new guild hall built in 1873 built on the medieval site of St Mary's Abbey)			
Other site			

What does the history of Winchester reveal about how Jews were treated in medieval England?



Which five places in Winchester would you take visitors to see to help explain how medieval Jews like Licoricia were treated by the king, the Church and their neighbours? Explain your choices.

A large, empty, light blue rounded rectangular box intended for a student's response to the question.

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All pages Images of **Licoricia**: Images of the maquette with kind permission from the sculptor, Ian Rank-Broadley and The Licoricia of Winchester Appeal.

Page 1 and 2 Photo of **Winchester Cathedral rising above the city** by Graham Horn, at <https://www.wondermondo.com/winchester-cathedral/> is licensed under Wikimedia Commons / CC BY-SA 2.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>.

Page 3-5 Medieval monk, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medieval_Priest,_Friar,_or_Monk_\(2\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medieval_Priest,_Friar,_or_Monk_(2).JPG), Paul Mercuri, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Page 6 Photo of **Black Lives Matter protest at the empty Edward Colston statue** at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edward_Colston_-_empty_pedestal.jpg taken by Caitlin Hobbs, CC BY 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>, via Wikimedia Commons.

Star of David https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Star_of_David.svg Zscout370, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Page 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 **Map of Medieval Winchester: Map** adapted by S Herry from Map 6, Winchester c1300, in BHTA VI, Winchester © Historic Towns Trust and Winchester Excavations Committee 2017. Images not to be reproduced without written permission of copyright holders. Illustration of **David of Oxford's house** with kind permission of Wendy Bramall, the artist. The photos of **Winchester Cathedral** https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Winchester_cathedral_side2.jpeg, **King's Gate** https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Winchester_-_Kingsgate.JPG, **Winchester Bible** https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:12th-century_painters_-_Winchester_Bible_-_WGA15735.jpg, **Wolvesey Bishop's Palace** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolvesey_Castle, **Winchester castle ruins and Great Hall** <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/1325333>, are all by Unknown Authors and are licensed under CC BY-SA <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>. Image of **token** © Winchester Excavations Committee 2012.

Page 9 and 11 Photograph of **Winchester excavated grave** ©Winchester City Council. Kindly provided by Hampshire Cultural Trust.

Page 11 and 12 The book *Licoricia of Winchester* by Suzanne Bartlet (2015) ISBN 978 0 85303 832 0 cover image used with kind permission of publishers Vallentine Mitchell.

Page 14 Photos of **Jewry Street and Old County Gaol** taken by S Herry.



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What does the history of Winchester reveal about how Jews were treated in medieval England?

What do you think this monk meant?



Do you remember me? I am Richard of Devizes, the English chronicler and a monk from Winchester who wrote about places and events in the 12th Century (1100s). In 1190 I wrote this about the Jews in Winchester:

"Winchester ... spared her vermin".

Think: Why might Richard have used the word "vermin" to describe the Jews?



Student resource

Step 3: What does this recent historical scholarship reveal about where Jews lived and why?

Listen as the teacher reads this extract from **Suzanne Bartlett's** book, *Licoricia of Winchester* (2015) Chapter 2. Underline what information helps you to understand:

1. where Jews lived
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The first Jews are recorded as living in Shoemakers Street. This was the main street from the North gate towards the central crossroads where it met the main **commercial** High Street, before continuing towards the South gate ... The importance of its **position** so close to the **commercial centre** and the through traffic from outside the city made it **attractive**. The Jews increasingly **settled** there but it never became a **ghetto**. Despite always having a **mixed population** ... it came to be called **Jewry Street**, its name today, but there were other [Jewish] properties elsewhere in the city.

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Hampshire Services

Reflection: how are minorities treated in Britain today?



Sadly, the mistreatment of minorities has not gone away. It is worrying that recently anti-Jewish attitudes and behaviour, we call **anti-semitism**, has got worse. A recent [article in the newspaper The Guardian](#) reported that the number of recorded acts against British Jews in 2019 was the highest ever recorded. You may have seen the Black Lives Matter campaign against the racist treatment of black people, another example of othering. However, there has been much progress since Licoricia's life during the medieval period. Today:



1. UK law now treats everyone equally and with the same rights

On the plinth of my statue is written "**love your neighbour as yourself**", which comes from the Hebrew Bible and is also a teaching shared by Christians and Muslims.



We do not exclude or segregate people because different religion or skin colour

However, some prejudices from the past still exist. Some people still wrongly discriminate against minorities and try to make them seem inferior.

Challenge: One way that historians try to explain the treatment of the Jews in medieval Britain is through a **walking tour** of Winchester that takes you to the sites that help explain the treatment of the Jews in medieval Britain.

Step 4: To create your tour:

1. Number the places you will visit on your map of Winchester in the order you will visit them.
2. Make a leaflet that explains at each site what you have learned about the way Jewish people were treated in medieval Winchester.
3. You might want to include photos of the sites to help visitors.



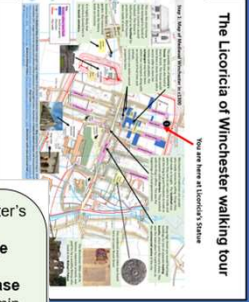
Images of Jewry street today including the site of the old gaol



The history of Licoricia of Winchester

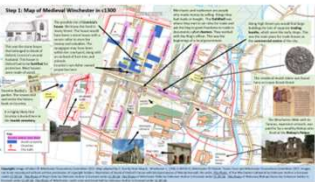


- Walking tour site information:**
1. The statue of Licoricia outside the Discovery Centre represents ...
 2. ?



The Licoricia of Winchester walking tour

What sites in Winchester reveal the story of the Jews in medieval Britain and how they were treated?

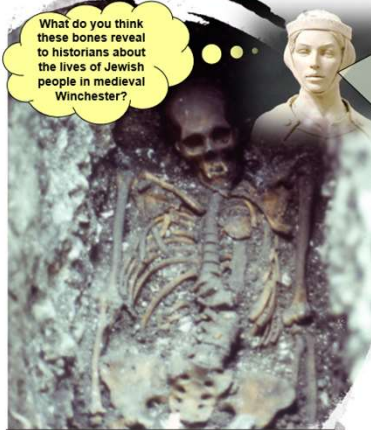


- Think:**
- Did Jews live in a separate part of the city or next door to their **Christian neighbours**?
 - Did Jews live closer to Winchester **Castle** or the **gaol**?
 - What do the many churches reveal about how important the Christian religion was?
 - Who do you think held the most **power** and **influence** in this city – the king, the Church or merchants?

- Step 1:** Look at the map. Can you spot:
1. the **house** where I might have lived and the **Jewish cemetery** where it is likely I was buried?
 2. the area where most of the Jews lived known as the **Jewish quarter**?
 3. a **Jewish Synagogue**?
 4. **churches** – how many can you count?
 5. the **castle** where the king lived?
 6. the **Bishop's Palace**?

- Step 2:**
1. Can you plot a tour through Winchester that would include places/buildings that help young people learn about:
 - the life of Licoricia
 - how the king, the Church and other traders treated the Jews
 - some of the dangers they faced?

While they were on the action to they were large



What do you think these bones reveal to historians about the lives of Jewish people in medieval Winchester?

- In 1995, 72 people, including 69 children in Winchester's Jewish cemetery were excavated.
- Some skeletons suggested a **better than average diet**.
 - Many of the bones showed signs of a **bone disease called rickets**. This was caused by a lack of vitamin D and calcium suggesting a poorer diet.
 - One skeleton tells us about the **violence that the city's Jewish people had to live with**; the skull of one man showed two cuts to his head, from either an axe or a sword.
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Photograph of Winchester excavated grave ©Winchester City Council. Kindly provided by Hampshire Cultural Trust.

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