

OLD TOWN

# BRINGING WELL- SEASONED HISTORY TO THE TABLE

UNCOVER  
THE STORY TRAILS

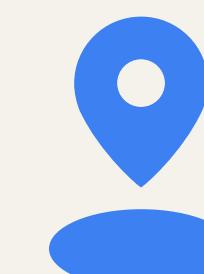
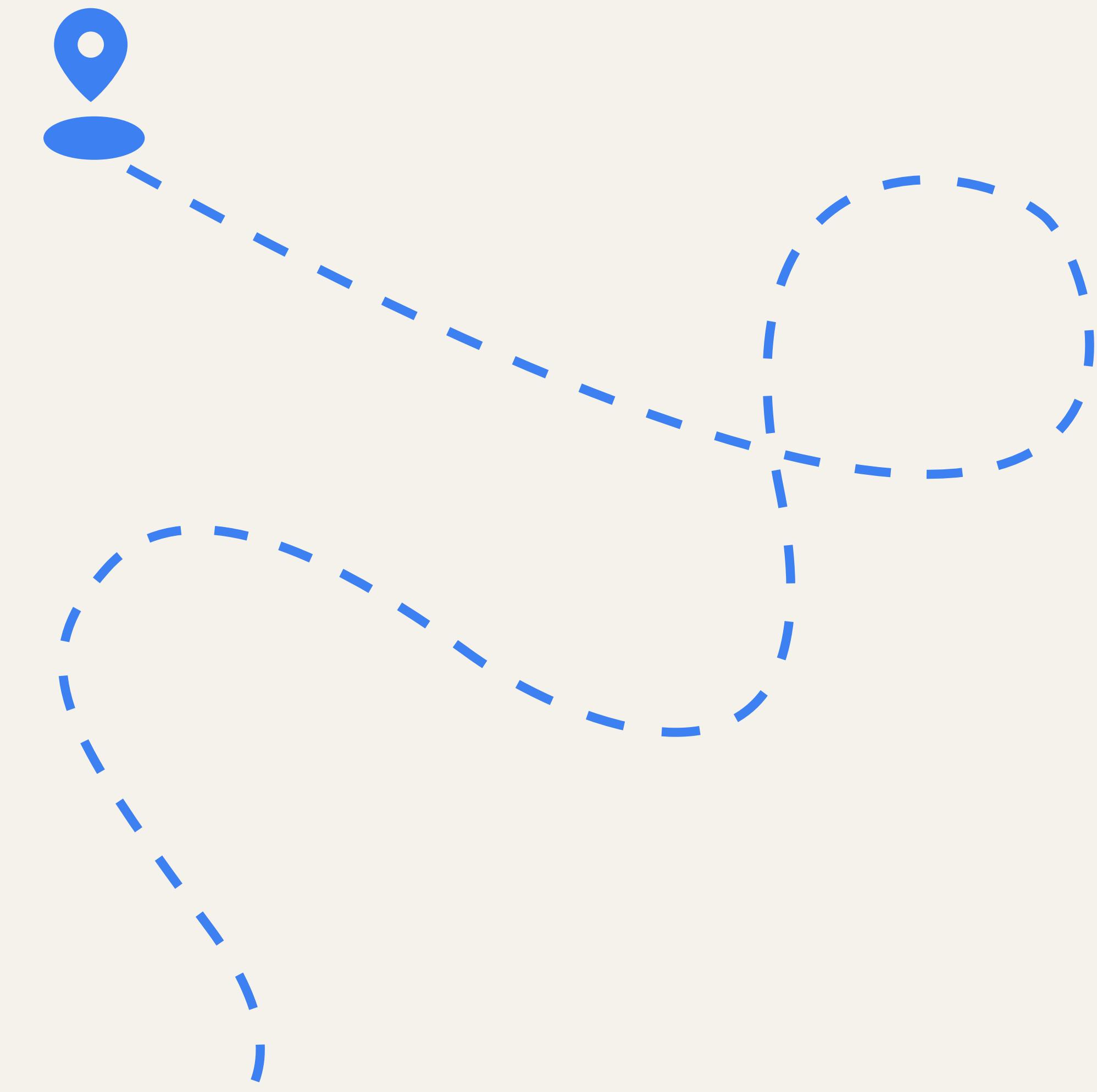
Leicester  
[visitleicester.info](http://visitleicester.info)

# **WELCOME TO A NEW** **APPROACH IN TELLING** **OUR STORIES.**

Leicester's Old Town has many notable attractions but the sightseeing doesn't have to stop when you fancy a bite to eat or something to drink. Heritage buildings that may have sat empty for years have been given a new lease of life by independent restaurateurs. The adaptive reuse of buildings helps to preserve the history and visitors can enjoy the unique space for the price of a dinner or drinks.

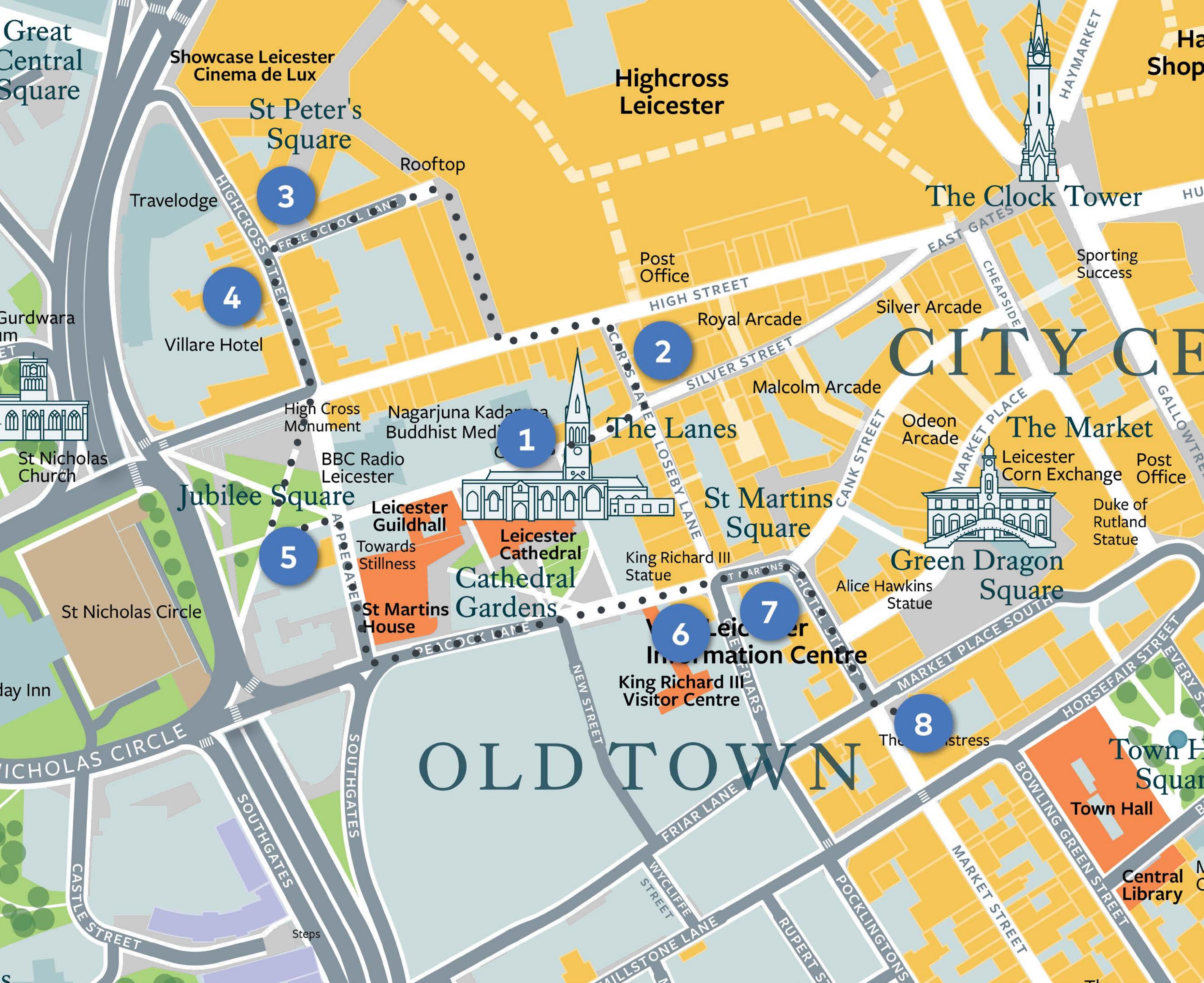
From converted factories to medieval houses, banking halls, an Assembly Room to traditional pubs, soak up the historic ambience as you enjoy fantastic food to sate your appetite.

## **JOIN US ON THIS FASCINATING TOUR TO FIND OUT MORE.**



# POINTS OF INTEREST

1. **The Gadabout**  
10 Guildhall Lane
2. **The Globe**  
43 Silver Street
3. **Free Grammar School**  
Freeschool Lane
4. **Cosy Club**  
68 Highcross Street
5. **Wygston's House**  
12 Applegate
6. **Sonrisa**  
4 St Martins
7. **Pares Bank**  
2 St Martins
8. **The City Rooms**  
16 Hotel Street





## THE GADABOUT

This 17th Century building, originally called the Queens Head, has had several changes of ownership over the years. Around 1883 the owners Bates & Bishell Brewery changed the name to the Opera Hotel. The Opera Hotel closed in 1913.

The building was used for commercial dealing until late 1990s when it was restored and opened as the Opera House Restaurant in 1999 gaining a reputation as one of the best in the East Midlands. The Opera House closed in 2007 and a champagne bar, Espernay, opened but closed shortly afterwards. Taps opened in 2008 and was so named as there was a beer pump on each table and customers helped themselves, settling the bill at the end of the evening. In 2018 The Gadabout cocktail bar opened and offers 'drinks from every corner of the globe.'

[thegadabout.co.uk](http://thegadabout.co.uk)



## THE GLOBE

The Globe has been synonymous with serving fine ales and food since 1720, where quality ales were brewed using spring water drawn from its own well beneath the pub, which still exists today.

Prior to becoming a public house, the Globe had several interesting uses including a cattle merchants and accommodation for women awaiting impending execution at the hands of the noose man in nearby Gallowtree Gate. This may go some way to explaining the reported hauntings within the premises!

[theglobeleicester.com](http://theglobeleicester.com)



## FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Old (Free) Grammar School is a Grade II listed building built originally in 1573 using stone, timber and lead from St Peter's church that had been demolished following an appeal to Queen Elizabeth I. The royal coat of arms is displayed over the entrance. The school was founded by Thomas Wigston using money from his brother William's estate. Today, it is one of the oldest school buildings in England.

In later years the building was a carpet warehouse and a booking office for Barton Transport of Nottingham. In 2009 1573 Bar & Grill opened and prides itself on creating menus using only the best fresh seasonal produce.

[fifteenseventythree.com](http://fifteenseventythree.com)



## COSY CLUB

The building has been used since the 1800s. Cosy Club is housed in the former Veejay Knitwear factory which produced all sorts of vestments from boots, shoes, hats, clothes, hosiery products and more.

The restoration and transformation of the original factory into a modern bar and restaurant was done carefully to ensure the original industrial feel of the building was retained. The interior features brightly coloured cotton and spinning wheels in the bar and some original textile pieces from Leicester on the walls.

It has a strong sense of the original feel with ceiling high windows, authentic factory lighting, bare steel riveted girders and original stone walls. This, combined with the quirky and eccentric Cosy Club stamp and a secret garden, makes it a must visit.

[cosyclub.co.uk/leicester](http://cosyclub.co.uk/leicester)



## WYGSTON'S HOUSE

Wygston's House is the oldest house in Leicester. It has been here since medieval times and the road it stood on, High Street, was the widest and busiest thoroughfare in the town. The house comprises a timber hall of around 1490; a brick block of 1796 which replaced an earlier timber shop and chamber; and a Victorian (1800s) wing standing on the site of the medieval kitchen.

After being restored in 1974 it housed a Museum of Costumes tracing the history of Leicester's role in knitting and shoe manufacture.

In 2017 it opened as a bar and restaurant serving real ales, draught beers, and high-end cuisine. There is a garden and outdoor seating space on Jubilee Square.

[wygstonhouse.co.uk](http://wygstonhouse.co.uk)

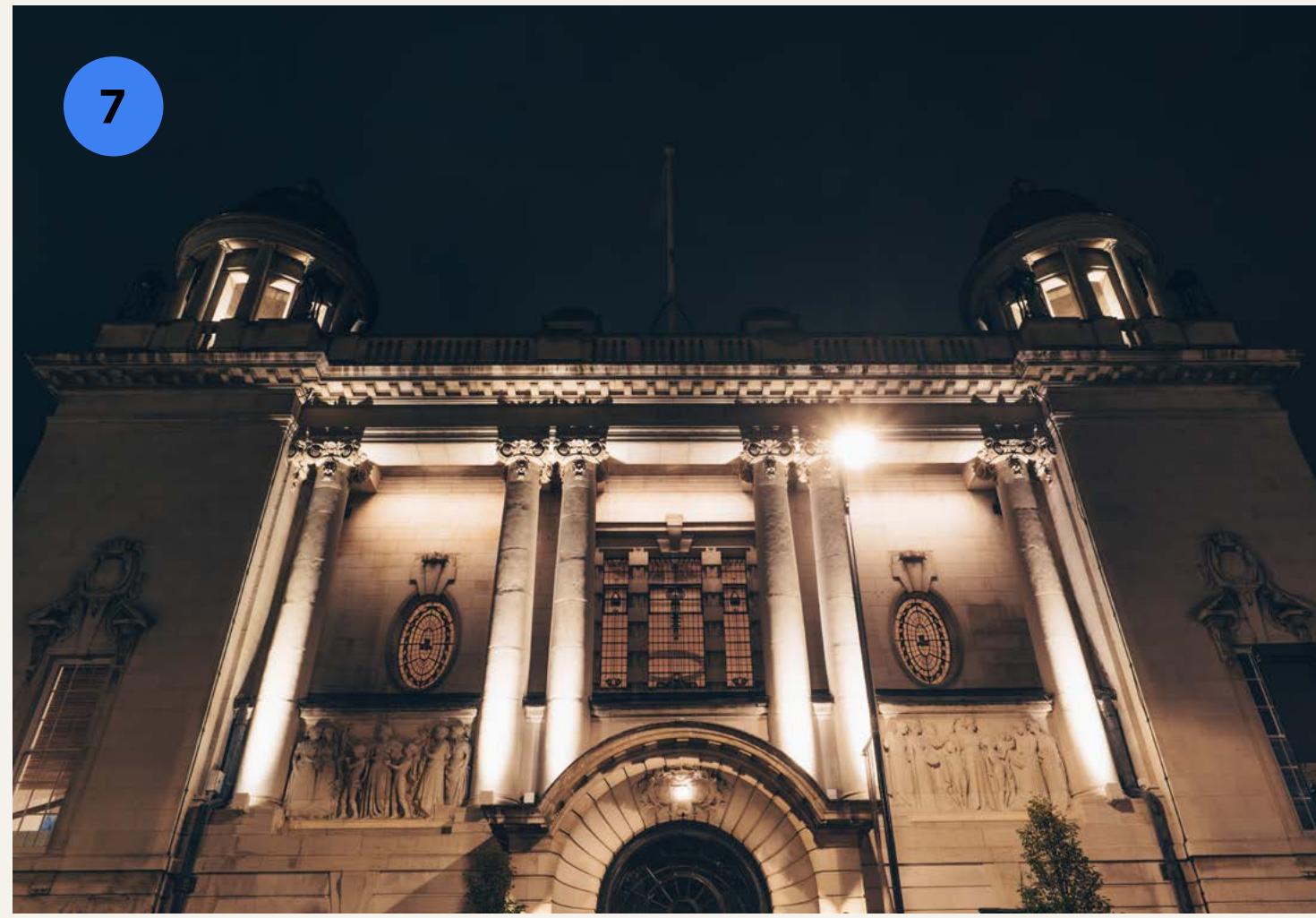


## SONRISA

The Leicester Savings Bank building is a Grade II listed building designed by Edward Burgess in 1874. The building fell into decline because of the 2008 recession and was identified as a priority project for the Greyfriars Townscape Heritage Initiative grant scheme. Work carried out included re-glazing and restoring the building's striking lantern-style roof light and the installation of a new mezzanine floor. Key architectural features including work to the windows and decorative stonework were restored.

The building is now home to Sonrisa a modern Latin American restaurant café-bar serving dishes inspired by Buenos Aires. "Where the soul of Buenos Aires meets the heart of Leicester".

[sonrisa.uk](http://sonrisa.uk)

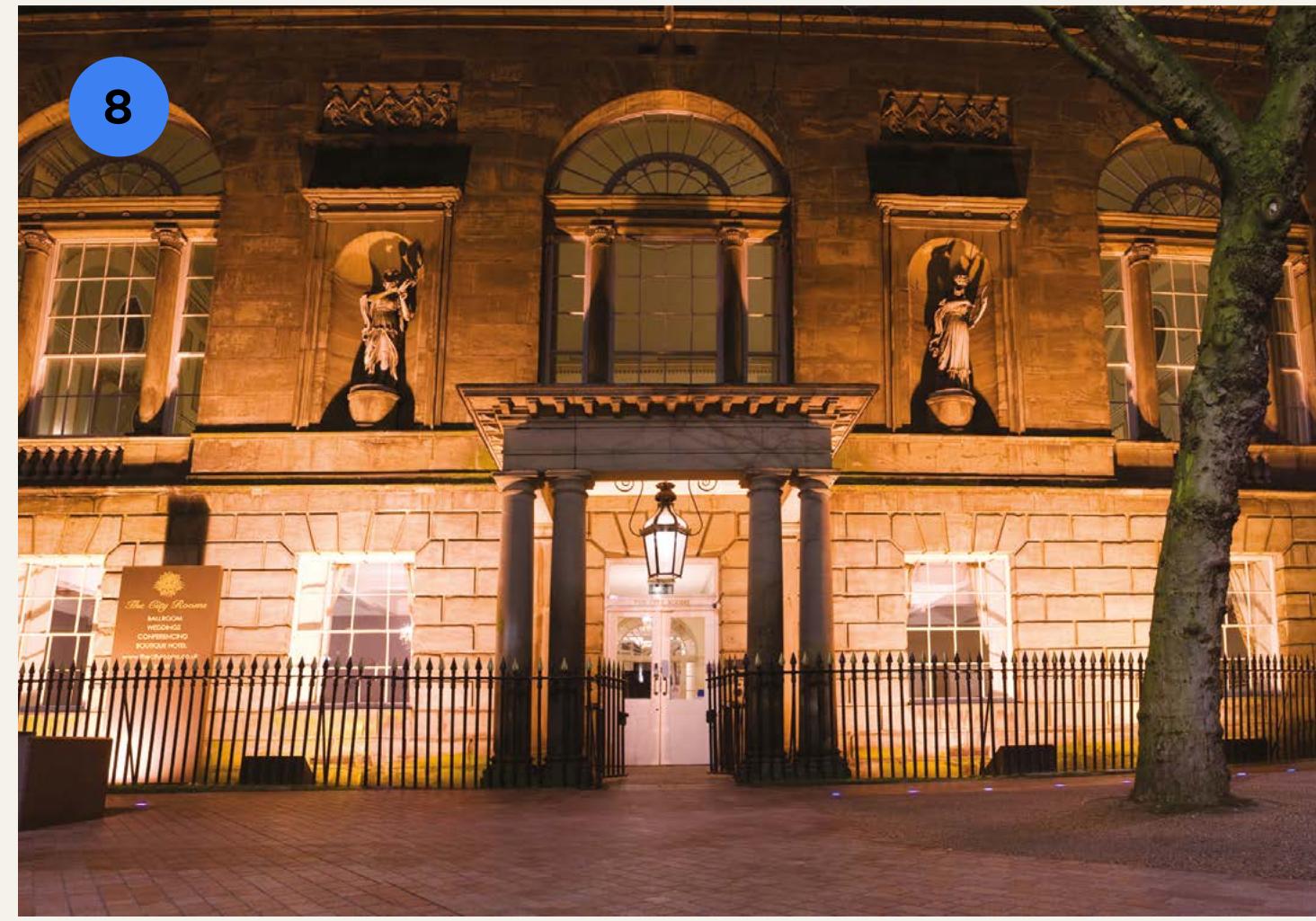


## PARES' BANK

The present building is often said to be the most elegant bank in Leicester. It was designed by J B Everard & S Perkins Pick for Pares' Bank in 1901 but became Parr's Bank in 1902 following a takeover. It eventually became a branch of National Westminster Bank until its closure in the 1990s.

Today Pares Bank is home to Middleton's Steakhouse & Grill serving a delicious mix of prime cuts of meat, grills, burgers, fresh fish and mouth-watering desserts. It is located on St Martins in the heart of the Old Town.

[middletons-shg.co.uk](http://middletons-shg.co.uk)



## THE CITY ROOMS

The elegant Georgian building, completed in 1800, was originally intended to be Leicester's first hotel, which is how Hotel Street got its name. It was then opened as the Assembly Rooms designed by local architect, John Johnson.

In 1817 the building was sold to the county Justices of the Peace for use as Judges' Lodging during the Court Assizes. The ownership passed to the new Leicestershire County Council and in 1986 transferred to the City Council.

In 2006, following a two year restoration project by a private developer, the Grade I City Rooms reopened as a wedding venue, banqueting hall and boutique hotel.

[thecityrooms.co.uk](http://thecityrooms.co.uk)

OTHER TOURS

**HERITAGE**  
**THE NEWARKE**  
**OLD TOWN**  
**NEW WALK**  
**KING RICHARD III**

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[visitleicester.info/uncoverthestory](http://visitleicester.info/uncoverthestory)

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