

Caistor of yesteryear had everything that a small Lincolnshire town could need and want. Boasting an impressive Town hall, four market squares, grammar school, numerous pubs, chair maker, foundry, ropewalkers, carriage maker, butchers shop, library, stone mason and loads of little shops supporting a bustling community drawn from two different congregations each supporting their own.

Whilst Roman walls and Roman remains are still visible there is also the Saxon church of St Peter & St Paul and later methodist churches to visit. Alongside a splendid Georgian house that has a tunnel passageway carved out under the road connecting one garden to the upper garden and accessed by a Tower with a stone spiral staircase which leads to a magnificent view at the top of the Lincolnshire Wolds. (If you are tempted, it could be yours for just over half a million)!

But what makes a place is its people. The members of the Caistor Civic Society have worked tirelessly to transform one of the derelict methodist churches into an Arts and Heritage Centre which now also houses the library. It is a great place to meet up for a coffee and even lunch, which is exactly what the Architecture Group did the day they were taken on a walking tour. Local historian “Elizabeth Jefferson” had mapped out a route around the town for us which she led with enthusiasm whilst telling us endless fascinating stories. At the top of Lucy Lane, (named after a travelling performer) we were fortunate to meet Mr King just outside his old butchers’ shop and slaughter yard. He regaled us with tales of the children running down the hill after school to pet his pigs and to watch more gruesome goings on. Now over 90 he lives out a comfortable retirement in his converted stable block.

The Civic Society have installed many Blue Plaques around the town which describe Caistor’s buildings, notables and the townspeople’s historic part in the Pilgrim of Grace – the rebellion against Henry VIII. The Heritage Centre is appealing for support as many of their grants have come to an end, so pay them a visit, you won’t be disappointed.

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