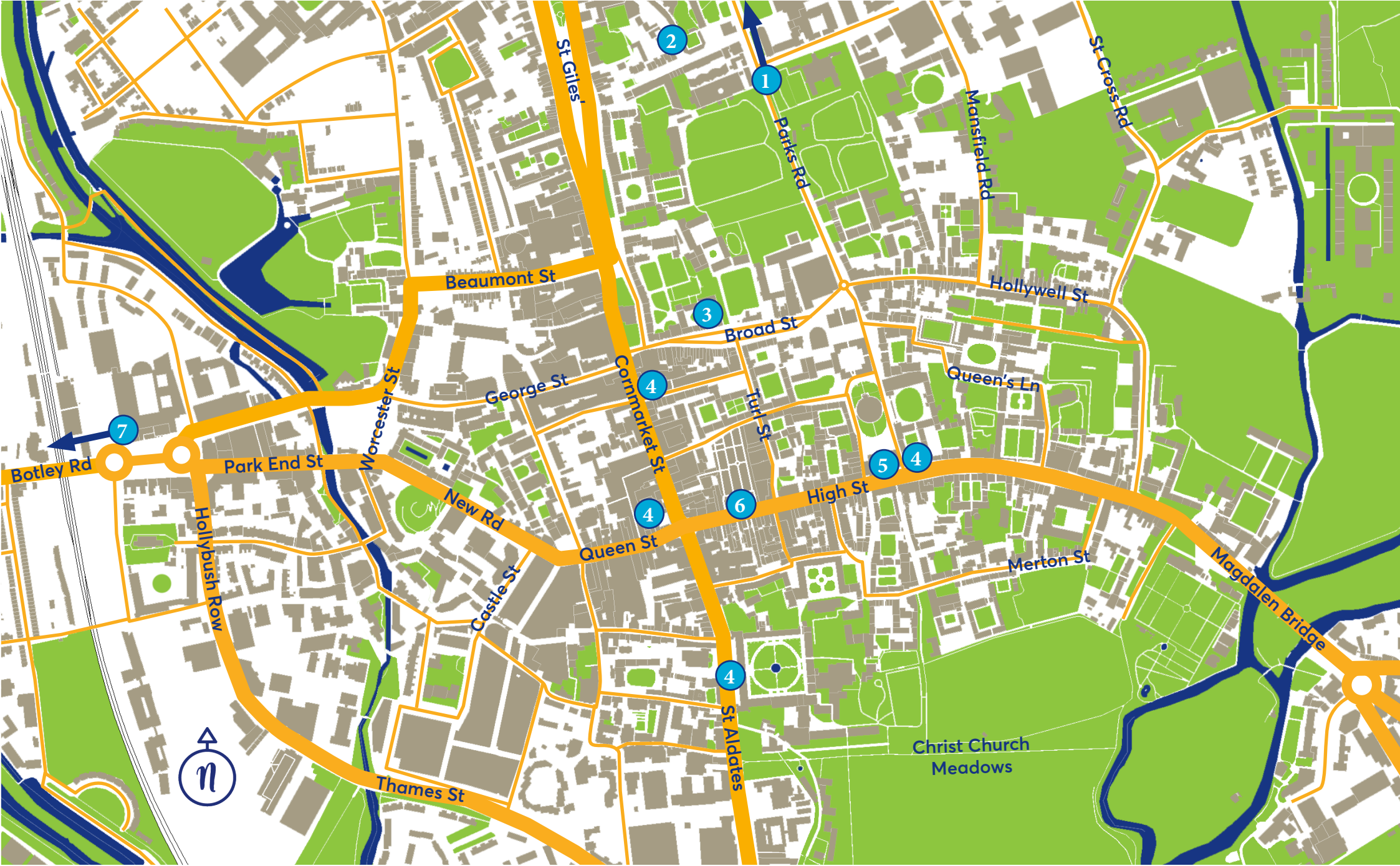


# Hidden Heritage Graffiti Trail



Ever since there have been walls, there has been graffiti. Graffiti nowadays is often seen to be bad or even illegal, but before the 19th century it was a very common way for the ordinary person to express themselves. Graffiti also has a long history within political activism as a way for people to spread messages quickly and effectively. This graffiti trail celebrates the everyday people of Oxford who made their own mark on the city.

**1 “Hands off Vietnam,” Keble College** *(view from Parks Road)*

The graffiti sprawled on the side of Keble College dates back to Oxford student demonstrations against the Vietnam War (1955-1975). The UK government backed the controversial American involvement in the war, which sparked outrage, especially with the younger generation.



**2 Dinosaur, Blackhall Road**

One of the longest lasting pieces of outdoor graffiti in Oxford, the Dinosaur, was painted in the early 1970s. It was created by Keble students as a response to the formation of a rival College’s ‘Destroy Keble Society’. The entry requirement for the Society was to remove a brick from Keble, with the aim of eventually dismantling the building! A red brick got you a year’s membership, a blue one lifetime... The exact meaning of the dinosaur remains a mystery.



**3 “No More Jabuba,” Balliol College** *(open Sunday 10 September only)*

Inside Balliol College, find a carving of British Prime Minister William Gladstone annotated with the text ‘No More Jabuba’. This is a thinly veiled reference to the protest phrase ‘remember Majuba’. This refers to the Battle of Majuba Hill (1881), where the British military suffered a decisive defeat at the hands of the Boers. Consequently, Gladstone made the controversial decision to call an end to the first Boer war.



**4 Broad Arrows, University Church, Christ Church & St Michael at the North Gate, and Carfax Tower**

At the bottom of each of these four ancient towers, you will find a geometric carving. This design is called a broad arrow, or crow’s foot, and has been used by the Ordnance Survey since the 18th century as a fixed point to calculate a building’s height relative to sea level. Similar geometric carvings are often left in stone by workmen, like mason marks and banker marks.



**5 Pew Carvings, University Church of St Mary the Virgin**

You can find many carvings on the pews of University Church of St Mary of the Virgin. These pre-Victorian geometric patterns could have been carved for good luck or to catch evil demons and spirits, possibly made by people distracted during church services. What do you think their life was like? Explore more carvings by climbing the steps to the tower.



**6 Mural, Covered Market**

Inside the Covered Market, the murals on the walls highlight graffiti as a form of modern art. Created by Oxford graffiti artist Mani, this colourful mural celebrates the heritage of Oxford’s covered market, which is nearly 250 years old. To get involved with graffiti art in Oxford, check out the Open Walls Network, which opens up walls, underpasses, and tunnels for street artists to legally paint.



**7 Chiselled Graffiti, North Hinksey** *(±50 min walk from centre)*

The North Hinksey Conduit House is the site of Oxford’s first piped water supply. Built in the 17th century, it took clean water to a fountain in the centre of Oxford. On the walls are numerous carved names, some over 300 years old! For thousands of years people have left their names and marks on buildings in this way... Have you ever carved your name somewhere?

