

So we're in the Eastgate Chamber, which is situated in front of Boots on Eastgate Street in Gloucester. In the 1970s when this Boots building was built, it's got an absolutely massive cellar and as part of the construction works the builders uncovered a huge stretch of the Roman city wall. And as part of a building works unfortunately, some tens of metres, perhaps 60 or 70 metres of the Roman city wall were dug up and thrown away, which I consider to be a bad thing, as you can imagine.

Thankfully, though, there was a public outcry. So the stretch of the city wall we have here, and the Roman gatehouse, and part of the mediaeval gatehouse, were all preserved. They were built over and they were left here in the care of the city for people to enjoy and come and see. And today, you can stand in front of Boots, look down through the glass and you can see the remains of the mediaeval

gatehouse. And you can come down here on tours and you can see the, I think, really rather impressive remains of the Roman city walls, which are about one thousand eight hundred years old.

These walls were still standing during the English Civil War. These walls behind us were standing when Charles I came to lay siege to Gloucester in 1643. These walls withstood cannon shot. So they are very good walls. And the fact that they survive still today is wonderful. And again, if you can use your imagination, you can step back and say the wall goes as far as King's Square this way it goes as far as Parliament Street that way.

It's 400 metres long just on the eastern side. And then you go, oh. And then you start to see it. And you get some some notion of what you're living in, what you've been walking over all this time.

Andrew Armstrong, City Archaeologist

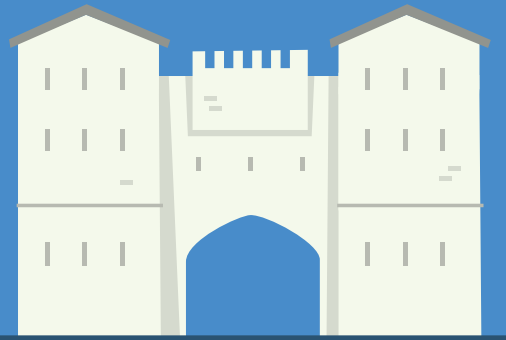
Eastgate Chambers



Historic England



Gloucester
History Festival



The Eastgate Chamber and the King's Walk Bastion are great examples of the hidden history of the city that survives below everyone's feet throughout the city. And they're a great way for people to understand what exists all around them in Gloucester.

The Bastion remains are, I think, particularly surprising for people, because people who have walked through there hundreds of times only see a shopping centre. They don't know they're following the historic line of the city walls.

They don't know that there's a massive surviving masonry structure below ground under all those shops. You go down there and you see this nine foot high Roman wall. You see this very large 13th century tower, the Bastion itself, and you get an inkling about scale.

Because one of the things we struggle with in Gloucester, because nothing survives above ground or very little survives above ground, is conveying the scale of the city, the sheer grandeur of it all.

Andrew Armstrong, City Archaeologist

King's Bastion