

A walk around Stamford town centre post boxes

For a small town, Stamford has a wide range of postboxes covering six monarchs, and examples of all of these can be found in and around the town centre, covering the three main types of post box:

- pillar: free standing, usually cylindrical
- wall: rectangular, in the wall of a building or sometimes with its own brick surround
- lamp: a smaller rectangular box, either attached to a lamp post or on its own supporting pole

This is a self-guided walk to visit the postboxes, it will take about 60-75 minutes, although this can be extended to include shopping or a coffee somewhere along the way. It is circular so it can be started at any convenient point.

Note: the route involves walking alongside and crossing busy roads, and you will need to take responsibility for your own safety at all times.



We start at the railway station, obviously handy for those arriving by train, but also close to the Cattle Market car park. Here you will find a **Victoria wall box** on platform 1. Most postboxes have the cypher of the reigning monarch when they were installed and this one has VR, Victoria Regina, who reigned from 1837 to 1901. The station was opened in 1848, and is now a Grade II* listed building and wall boxes were first introduced in 1857.

#2 GR High Street Saint Martins



From the station, walk along Station Road where you can see a **George V pillar box** across the road junction on the corner of High Street Saint Martin's and Water Street. Cross the busy road with care for a closer look. George V reigned from 1910 to 1936 and his cypher is GR. Although you might expect his cypher to show GVR in some form as the fifth King George, he took the view that he was the first George with a postbox so GR was quite sufficient. This box is the only GR on our walk.

#3 EIIR Water Street



Walk along Water Street right to the end to see an **Elizabeth II lamp box**, outside the old Stamford East station, now converted to two houses. Elizabeth II reigned from 1952 to 2022, and her cypher is EIIR. This is the closest lamp box to the town centre and the only one on our walk.



Retrace your steps, cross the Albert Bridge, and walk up Albert Road. Turn right at the top onto Wharf Road, and look across to see an **Elizabeth II wall box**, opposite the Wharf Road car park entrance, on the wall of what used to be the Co-operative dairy, now residential. This may have been a Victorian box that has been replaced in recent years.



Continue up Wharf Road and turn right at the end into Saint Leonard's Street. Walk along here, past the mini roundabout, onto Priory Road, to see an **Edward VII wall box** on the corner of Cherry Holt Road. Edward VII reigned from 1901 to 1910, his cypher was EVIIR in a very ornate script. There are only two EVIIR post boxes, both wall, in Stamford.



Cross Priory Road, and turn left into Pinfold Lane. At the top, at the roundabout, turn right to cross Uffington Road, then left in front of the early 14th century Friary gate. The associated plaque mentions Whitefriars and over the years there has been much interchangeability of names between White and Grey Friaries. Recent studies suggest that this is the gate for Greyfriars, in which case you are standing on the spot where Elizabeth I passed through the gate, and who stayed in the friary building inside, as a guest of Lord Burghley.



Turn right to walk down Ryhall Road to see Britain's third rarest type of post box, an **Edward VIII pillar box**, outside what was a sub post office, now a barber's shop. Edward VIII only reigned from January to December 1936 and his cypher is EVIIR. There were about 271 post boxes installed during his short reign, and only about 130 still exist with his cypher, although others may have had the doors changed to a later monarch. I say third rarest because, in addition to the pillar boxes, there are only one or two wall boxes in existence, including one in Bawdsey in Suffolk. Currently, the second rarest post box is Charles III, although this will change as more are installed. Perhaps we'll see a CIIIR in Stamford one day.



Retrace your steps slightly to cross Ryhall Road, and turn left along Ryhall Road. Stay right at the mini roundabout onto Saint Paul's Street, crossing the end of East Street, to continue towards the town centre. Our second **Edward VII** wall box is on the right outside Stamford School.



Continue along Saint Paul's Street, crossing Star Lane, into the High Street to the **Elizabeth II pillar box** outside Stamford Library. From here, you can either go up the narrow lane to the left of the library, Goldsmith's Lane, usually known as the library passage, and turn left at the top into Broad Street, or turn right further down the High Street into Ironmonger Street which will also lead you to Broad Street.



#10 EIIIR Broad Street

Cross Broad Street and turn left to the **Elizabeth II pillar box** outside Browne's Hospital. Browne's Hospital is an almshouse, and house of prayer, originally built in 1475, by William Browne, a wealthy wool merchant. Visit their website for more information, including opening times. The almshouses at the rear of the building are still in use today.



#11 "ghost box" Broad Street

Cross Broad Street again and pause at the top of Ironmonger Street to see a **"ghost box"** where a wall box used to be. It's possible this box was relocated to Kesteven Road, where there's a GR (1910-1936) wall box in a 1950s housing estate.



Continue down Ironmonger Street, turn right into the High Street, and turn left into Cheyne Lane, which is between Fairfax & Favor and the Cornish Bakery. At the bottom, turn right onto Saint Mary's Street and walk a short distance to the only **Victoria pillar box** in town. From here, you can look down Saint Mary's Hill to see the Town Hall on the left and the town bridge over the River Welland at the bottom of the hill.

You can either continue along Saint Mary's Street and follow the road round to the right to walk up Saint John's Street into Red Lion Square, but, as the road here is busy and the pavement very narrow, you might prefer to return to the High Street and turn left to walk down to the square.



At the end of the High Street, cross into Red Lion Square, and head diagonally right, past Nelson's Butchers to the corner with All Saints' Place, turn left and you will find two **wall boxes at the post office**. These don't have a cypher, but a stone carving above them shows the cypher of GVR and date of 1937.



Continue into All Saints' Street, where a visit can be made to **Harrison & Dunn**, a traditional ironmonger's shop, otherwise turn left into Mallory Lane and down into Sheep Market. Cross the road and walk down Castle Dyke to the path across the meadows back to Station Road to complete our circuit.

If you have enjoyed looking for Stamford's town centre boxes, and want to see more, there are 38 in total in the town itself - happy hunting!

Trish Auciello

©August 2025