



Twenty Stories. One City. The City of Stories.



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Overview

Marking twenty years of VisitNorwich in its role as the city’s official Destination Marketing Organisation, VisitNorwich has launched a collection of stories centred around twenty people spanning 1000 years of history in Norwich.

Through the writings of guest authors from across the city’s creative, tourism and cultural community, this series is a celebration of the people who have helped shape Norwich into the city it is today and whose legacy can still be discovered in interesting ways.

From medieval rebels and mystics to pioneering reformers, artists, entrepreneurs and unsung heroes. **This is a city you don’t just read about - you experience.**

Step Into The Story.

At the heart of each story there is a simple invitation: **Step Into The Story**- a portal to discover curated ways in real life to explore that person’s Norwich. From plaques featured on ancient walls and museums housed in medieval buildings to walking tours led by experts, book benches to take a moment, pubs to raise a toast, and lots of free public spaces.

By connecting storytelling with physical exploration, our aim is to join the dots, turning heritage into lived experience. Encouraging residents and visitors alike to rediscover Norwich, spend time here, and see the city through fresh eyes.

Who are our characters?

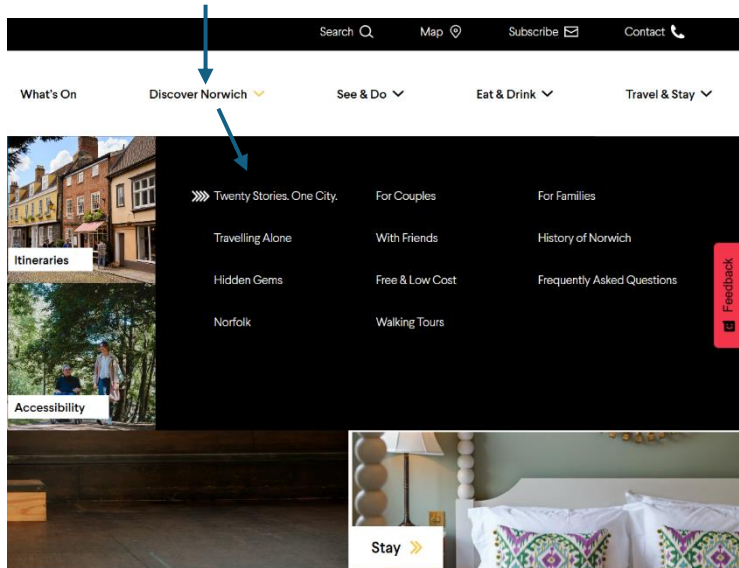
Our chosen characters are a mix of extraordinary people across 1000 years, from folklore and legend to heroes and game changers. Some are household names locally, some even nationally and internationally. Others you will not have heard of. All, though, are inspirational in their own way and deserve their stories told and talked about.

FIRSTS	
Julian of Norwich 1343 – 1416 First woman published in English STORY Step Into The Story Author: Josiah English – St Julian’s Church	Harriet Martineau 1802 – 1876 First female journalist, abolitionist STORY Step Into The Story Author: Peggy Hughes – National Centre for Writing
Pablo Fanque 1810-1871 Britain’s first Black circus proprietor STORY Step Into The Story Author: Bruce Lindsay - Author	
MAVERICKS	
Emma De Gauder 1059 - 1096 16-year-old who held Norwich Castle STORY Step Into The Story Author: Daisy Henwood - Poet	Robert Kett 1492 - 1549 Medieval rebel leader STORY Step Into The Story Author: Ali Smith – Journalist, photographer
Sir Thomas Browne 1605 - 1682 Polymath, author STORY Step Into The Story Author: Marion Catlin - Sir Thomas Browne expert	Samuel Bignold 1791 – 1875 Mayor of Norwich, businessman STORY Step Into The Story Author: Katie Thompson - VisitNorwich
George Skipper 1856 - 1948 Architect STORY Step Into The Story Author: Paul Dickson – Historian, tour guide	Rumsey Wells 1877 – 1937 Edwardian hatmaker STORY Step Into The Story Author: Stacia Briggs - The Assembly House
PIONEERING WOMEN	
Amelia Opie 1769 – 1853 Author, songwriter, philanthropist	Elizabeth Fry 1780 - 1845 Prison reformer

<p>STORY Step Into The Story Author: Siv Sears - Tour guide, historian</p>	<p>STORY Step Into The Story Author: Rowan Whiteside - The Forum</p>
<p>Caroline Colman 1831 – 1895 Philanthropist STORY Step Into The Story Author: John Osborne - Poet, journalist</p>	<p>Margaret Fountaine 1862 - 1940 Lepidopterist STORY Step Into The Story Author: Jo Warr - Norfolk Museums Service</p>
<p>Edith Cavell 1865 - 1915 WWI Nurse STORY Step Into The Story Author: Revd Dr Peter Doll</p>	
STORYTELLERS	
<p>Margaret Paston 1423 – 1484 Prolific medieval letter writer STORY Step Into The Story Author: Bethan Holdridge - Strangers' Hall</p>	<p>Peter the Wild Boy 1713 - 1786 Historic character STORY Step Into The Story Author: Emma Healey - author</p>
<p>John Crome 1768 - 1821 Artist STORY Step Into The Story Author: Kate Wolstenholme - Sainsbury Centre</p>	<p>Anna Sewell 1820 - 1878 Author STORY Step Into The Story Author: Harriet Cooper - journalist</p>
<p>Jack Valentine Victorian Norfolk folklore STORY Step Into The Story Author: Mel March - VisitNorwich</p>	<p>Margie Fahey McGrath 1918 - 2000 WWII letter writer, Nurse STORY Step Into The Story Author: Caroline Jarrold</p>

Where and when can I find the stories?

Linked from our website header navigation, hover over **Discover Norwich** then click the link to the landing page for [Twenty Stories. One City.](#) In addition to the stories, online



listings for **Step Into The Story** have been created to further promote the characters and the places linked to them.

Stories will be published until 31 October 2026 with many timed to anniversaries or significant cultural dates.

Where can I Step Into The Story?

FIRSTS	
Julian of Norwich 1343 – 1416	St Julian’s Church & shrine (free) The Julian Centre (free) All Hallows Guesthouse Her Story Walk (Norwich Story Walks) Paul Dickson Tours
Harriet Martineau 1802 – 1876	Blue plaque at Gurney Court (free) Annual Harriet Martineau Lecture, City of Literature, Norfolk & Norwich Festival (May)
Pablo Fanque 1810-1871	Blue plaque on John Lewis (free) Poem at Pablo Fanque House (visible through the glass window from All Saints Green) (free)
MAVERICKS	
Emma De Gauder 1059 - 1096	Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery Her Story Walk (Norwich Story Walks)
Robert Kett 1492 - 1549	Museum of Norwich Norwich Castle Paul Dickson Shardlake’s Norwich tour Kett’s Heights (free) Mousehold Heath (free) Wymondham
Sir Thomas Browne 1605 - 1682	Hay Hill (free) St Peter Mancroft Church (free) Weird & Wonderful Story Walk (Norwich Story Walks) Eaton Park (free)
Samuel Bignold 1791 – 1875	Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery
George Skipper 1856 - 1948	Boardman and Skipper (Paul Dickson Tours) The Royal Arcade (free) Jarrolds (free) The Magnificent Marble Hall Tour (The Shoebox Experiences)
Rumsey Wells 1877 – 1937	The Museum of Norwich The Rumsey Wells (free)
PIONEERING WOMEN	
Amelia Opie 1769 – 1853	Opie Street, Café Gelato - statue on roof (free) Her Story Walk (Norwich Story Walks)
Elizabeth Fry 1780 - 1845	Gurney Court (free) The Quaker Meeting House on Upper Goat Lane (free)
Caroline Colman 1831 – 1895	The Museum of Norwich Carrow House Tour (The Shoebox Experiences)

	Graves of Jeremiah Colman and his family, Rosary Cemetery (free)
Margaret Fountaine 1862 - 1940	Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery
Edith Cavell 1865 - 1915	Norwich Cathedral (free) Tomblant statue/memorial (free)
STORYTELLERS	
Margaret Paston 1423 – 1484	The Museum of Norwich Norwich Castle – The Paston Treasure Elm Hill Blue Plaque (free) Various self-guided walking tours via Paston Footprints (free)
Peter the Wild Boy 1713 - 1786	The Museum of Norwich The Wildman (free) Norwich Lanes post on Bridewell Alley (free)
John Crome 1768 - 1821	Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery Sainsbury Centre objects collection online (free)
Anna Sewell 1820 - 1878	Norwich Book Bench, Upper St Giles (free) Anna Sewell House, Great Yarmouth
Jack Valentine Victorian	The Museum of Norwich
Margie Fahey McGrath 1918 - 2000	The American Library (free)

Why?

With tourism contributing over **£801m** annually to the local Norwich economy, VisitNorwich continues to position culture, creativity and heritage as drivers of sustainable visitor growth, community pride and city-centre vitality. It supports businesses who benefit from tourism by creating awareness and reasons to visit with initiatives such as Twenty Stories.

How can I get involved?

Your business may be linked to one of our stories or several. Or you are a business that benefits from tourism, or one that supports tourism and culture in Norwich. Join in this free initiative- you can get involved in many ways.

- @visitnorwich - follow, share, like and comment on our Twenty Stories posts
- Create a link from your website to our Twenty Stories landing page or to any of the stories that resonate with your business
- Include mention and a link to Twenty Stories in an e-newsletter

- Organise an activity/pop-up event/product with a Twenty Stories or Twenty Stories character theme to attract footfall to your business or awareness of your brand. These activities will be promoted within our PR activity where we can

Creative ideas to get involved

Attractions and retailers may be interested in putting on simple children's activities themed to Twenty Stories such as storytelling, activity sheets or dressing up. Or you may be a business better suited to pop-up events, or themed drinks and dishes such as The Herbert which you can sip at The Rumsey Wells.

If you are interested in organising something, please get in touch with mel.march@norwichbid.co.uk.

Are there any 'In Real Life' Twenty Stories events/activities already planned?

Norwich - City of Mavericks and Pioneering Women with VisitNorwich

14 July, from Norwich History Festival

[Tickets £5.42](#)

Norwich Story Walks: The Norwich "Twenty Stories. One City" Story Walks

[Monday 20th July, 4pm \(Part 1\)](#)

[Friday 24th July, 5.30pm \(Part 2\)](#)

Tickets £10 per tour

The Rumsey Wells

Order a special cocktail '[The Herbert](#)' made from a blend of dark rum, hot honey, lime and ginger beer.

Self-guided Walking Tour

Follow our [free guided walk](#) taking you around the Norwich that is or was significant to our twenty characters. Explore putting people and place together- wander at your own pace be that over a few hours, a day or several.

PR & Collaborations Twenty Stories. One City.

- March industry launch VisitNorwich members event live performance of *In 1075, Emma de Gauder Held This Castle Against the King* by Daisy Henwood

- March launch live performance of *In 1075, Emma de Gauder Held This Castle Against the King* by Daisy Henwood live broadcast and interviews with BBC Radio Norfolk
- March issue Norfolk Magazine (International Women’s Day)
- [FOLK Features](#)
- April issue Norfolk Magazine & also published on [Great British Life](#)
- UNESCO City of Literature e-newsletter
- City of Stories Summer Trail Map
- Norwich History Festival
- Norwich Book Festival
- Heritage Open Days
- UNESCO City of Literature strategy group
- Jarrolds
- Norwich Book Bench Map
- Newsquest/National Centre for Writing, Year of Reading, Born and Read campaign/Norwich City Community Sports Foundation

Brand Guidelines

- [Download logos available](#): Twenty Stories. One City. The City of Stories.
- Black background use white logo. White background use black logo.
- White logo can be placed on coloured background.
- Photographic backgrounds use white logo.
- Do not: distort or skew the logo, rotate the logo, recreate the logo.
- Brand language use: **Twenty Stories. One City. The City of Stories.** as one line of over two with The City of Stories being the second line as the logo. OR **Twenty Stories. One City.** Do not mix the spelling of numbers with numbers.
- Tag line **This is a city you don’t just read about - you experience.**
- [Download press release](#).

Social Posts examples

Marking twenty years of championing the city, VisitNorwich has launched a year-long cultural celebration: Twenty Stories. One City. The City of Stories.

This anniversary series shares twenty extraordinary stories spanning 1,000 years of Norwich history told by twenty invited guest authors from across the city’s creative, tourism and cultural community. Followed by a Step Into The Story invitation to find out

more in real life. From plaques and museums to walking tours, book benches, exhibitions, pubs, performances and lots of free public spaces.

Because this is a city you don't just read about - you experience.
(tag @visitnorwich)

Awareness/promoting Norwich and Norfolk

There has never been a better time to promote awareness of Norwich and all it offers having, over the last two years, been in the media spotlight nationally and internationally:

- 2025 VisitNorwich and Fabbrica Media won nationally with **“Integrated Marketing Campaign Of The Year Under £500,000”** at the prestigious **Travel Marketing Awards**.
- Lonely Planet's annual **Best In Travel 2025** guidebook named East Anglia as one of the best places to visit. Curated by a panel of leading travel experts and publishers they said about Norwich: *“a night out in Norfolk's cultured capital to enjoy theatre, live music, art shows and creative dining.”*
- **The Sunday Times Best Places to Live Guide 2026** – Norwich national winner. The judges highlighted *“the cultural riches on offer in the first UNESCO City of Literature, with its six theatres, vibrant music venues, pioneering Sainsbury Centre art gallery, newly revamped Norman castle and much more.”*
- **Art Fund** shortlisted **Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery** alongside The Box (Plymouth), The Fitzwilliam (Cambridge), The National Gallery (London) and V&A East Storehouse (London) for **Museum of the Year 2026** in the world's largest museums award. They said *“The five shortlisted museums this year showcase the extraordinary creativity and innovation that make museums such vibrant and essential places. From opening up world-leading collections to connecting with communities of all ages through ambitious exhibitions and programmes, each one offers something special.”*

Questions & Answers

Q: What is Twenty Stories. One City. The City of Stories?

A: Twenty Stories is a PR story led initiative from VisitNorwich to celebrate its 20th anniversary as the official Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) for the Norwich area. The story series can be used as a whole or in isolation- devised to be fluid to reach a diverse audience across broadcast, print and online.

Q: Why is this good for Norwich?

A: Presented as short form stories followed by an invitation to **Step Into The Story** we want to inspire more adults, children, locals and visitors to join the dots between people and place in Norwich. Twenty Stories aims to grow interest, footfall and learning across the city's 1000-year history in creative and curated ways for everyone to enjoy. In their own way and at their own pace.

Q: Who are the guest authors of Twenty Stories?

A: From former journalists, published authors and poets to tour guides and people working in customer facing tourism roles- we have recruited a broad and talented line-up of individuals penning a story, musing, observation, poem or whatever creatively responds to their historic character. *See their names further up this document.*

Q: Does it cost anything to get involved?

A: There is no cost to participate in Twenty Stories other than your time and resource if you wish to put on a themed/linked event or share on social media.

Q: As a business/attraction/individual, how can I get involved?

A: Your involvement could be something as simple as liking and engaging with our social posts, or mentioning in a customer newsletter to organising your own pop-up/one off events themed around the full Twenty Stories series or just one or a handful of characters.

Q: Have any pop-up events been organised already?

A: Norwich History Festival is launching with [Norwich-City of Mavericks and Pioneering Women](#) on 14th July (£5) which will see ten individual speakers give a five-minute talk (consecutively) on one of our twenty historic characters. And Siv Sears of Norwich Story Walks has devised a two-part walking tour "Twenty Stories. One City" on [20th](#) and [24th July](#) (tickets £10 via Norwich History Festival).

Q: Where can I read the Twenty Stories. One City series?

A: Hover over Discover Norwich featured on the top navigation bar of visitnorwich.co.uk and click [Twenty Stories. One City](#) from the list. Several stories will drop each month until 31 October 2026- to keep up to date watch our social channels or [sign up](#) to our consumer e-newsletters, we will also highlight in our monthly B2B newsletters.

Q: Step Into The Story - where can I visit?

An online map has been created plotting all the places to visit in Norwich relating to our twenty characters- in some cases, such as the Museum of Norwich, you can see display cabinets for more than one character. But **Step Into The Story** isn't just about visiting museums. The series is about introducing places and things to do including sculptured Norwich Lanes posts, cosy city pubs, blue plaques, open spaces, medieval streets, incredible buildings, towering monuments, ancient trees and even a place to eat delicious authentic Italian gelato!

Q: Can I walk Norwich to discover the Twenty Stories characters?

A: Yes, following our online map and enjoying this pastime in all seasons walk over one day or several across Norwich from Kett's Heights to Carrow House and from Julian of Norwich Church to The Forum.

Q: Who will Twenty Stories appeal to locally?

A: This series will appeal to a wide local audience as they will have heard of most of our characters, though they might not necessarily know their story well! Anyone with an interest in local and social history and who take pride in the city they live, frequent or work will enjoy these stories and where they lead them.

Q: Does Twenty Stories work for visitors who do not know Norwich?

A: Twenty Stories is a great series for people new to Norwich. Discovering the stories of the people who have helped shape Norwich over 1000 years, explaining the backstories to many of our beautifully preserved buildings, streets, pubs and more. Providing introductions to places they may not have planned to visit. This series opens doors to our city in uniquely creative ways, storytelling led- followed by in real life experiences.

Further Information & images please contact Senior PR & marketing manager

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