

Kingsbridge



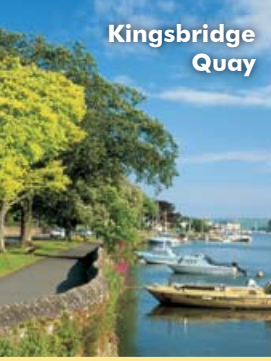
Kingsbridge is an ancient market town on a steep hill which rises from the head of a beautiful, many branched estuary. The town today is made up of two medieval towns – Kingsbridge and Dodbrooke.

In 1219 the abbot of Buckfast Abbey was granted the right to hold a market selling the monks' produce – honey, cream, vegetables and fruit and so began the tradition of Kingsbridge as a market town.

The quay was once under water and in medieval times The Creeks End Inn would have sat on the banks of the creek. The estuary is home to plenty of birdlife, stand on the quay and scan the mudflats at low tide and you will more than likely be rewarded with sightings of little egret, redshank, curlew and shelduck. Buzzards, sparrowhawk and peregrine are often seen commanding the sky. Look for mullet feeding in the river at high tide, the estuary itself and just out to sea is home to dolphins, porpoises and whales along with seals, so keep a look out.



Kingsbridge Quay



The town has a history of mills, although Mill Street now has no reminders other than its name. It was the site however of the Abbot of Buckfast's

medieval corn mill. The mill wheels were powered by water which was channelled down the hill through leats. These give the town its medieval shape – bounding it like city walls. You can see the mill leat by walking along the narrow alley aptly named 'squeezebelly lane'.

As you walk up Fore Street, it's worth looking above the shops to see that many of the buildings are slate hung as protection against the weather, but many are hiding medieval 15th and 16th century buildings. Explore the narrow side



View over Kingsbridge

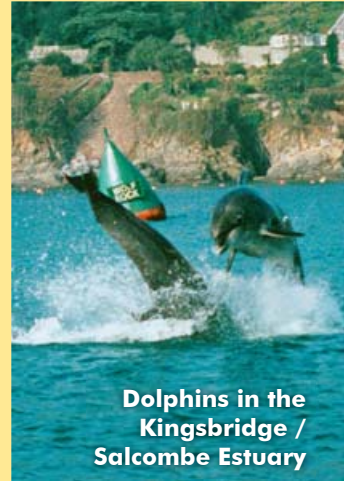


alleys, which will reward you with a surprising view out from the town. In the summertime watch the swifts screaming around the town, look carefully up at the eaves to see if there are nesting house martins on the buildings around the town.

The old Town Hall was built in 1850 with a large stage, reading rooms and cells! It is now a cinema and hosts farmers' and WI markets.

The heart of medieval Kingsbridge is known as the

old shambles which is a granite pillared walkway; it was relocated from the middle of the street to one side in the 18th century when Kingsbridge experienced its first road widening. The Kings Arms hotel was the town's main coaching inn in 1824 when the first regular coach ran to Plymouth. Look for the high coaching arch beside the building.



Dolphins in the Kingsbridge / Salcombe Estuary

Bridge at Bowcombe Creek

