



Welcome to OSWESTRY

Enjoy exploring our historic border market town

Begin at Castle Mound for great views over the town and call in at the Tourist Information Centre. Our staff are Oswestry Tourism Ambassadors and will make sure you don't miss any highlights.

Visit on market days. Browse for bargains as you discover the many independent shops and stalls. Find antiques and arts, indulge your inner MasterChef, be a bookworm or go on a discovery of local flavours in the speciality food shops.

Take a walk in the park - its "much loved" status says so much about how it brings together locals and visitors alike. Stroll past the stunning flowers in the memorial gardens, the life size bronze sculpture of Wilfred Owen the war poet, then on to the Victorian bandstand and children's play area. Enjoy ice creams and picnics all summer long and why not spend a sunny Sunday afternoon chilling - there might be a local band playing.

Relish the tastes and flavours of Oswestry - the café culture is scrumptious and the pub scene friendly. Pubs, cafés and restaurants are as lively or laid back as you could want. Enjoy local produce in the restaurants, add a cocktail or a locally brewed ale and don't miss the vibrant pub music scene.

Oswestry began in the Iron Age. Old Oswestry, the ancient hillfort on the edge of town is one of England's finest. Take a walk to the top and you will see why we say Oswestry is where Shropshire meets Wales - the views of Shropshire and the Welsh Borderlands are stunning.

Oswestry Tourist Information Centre
Castle View SY11 1JR

T: 01691 662753 www.visitoswestry.co.uk



Front cover images: St. Oswald's Church, Llwyd Mansion, Wilfred Owen sculpture in Cae Glas Park



Don't miss Oswestry's events



Chill out in the park



Visit Old Oswestry Hillfort



Discover our railway heritage



What's on in OSWESTRY

If you want to know what Oswestry is really like then come along to one of our events. Oswestry is famous for its unique events like the free Food and Drink Festival and the Hot Air Balloon Carnival.



All Year

Oswestry Town Market - Wednesday and Saturday. Indoor Market also Friday. Speciality and Artisan markets on last Friday of each month.

February

Love Oswestry Oswestry's art festival with a finale lantern parade.

Easter

The Street Circus comes to town. Easter Fun day at the market. Cambrian Heritage Railways trains begin running.

May - Late Spring Bank Holiday

The beach comes to Oswestry three days of seaside fun on Festival Square.

July

Oswestry's fab, free and fun 2-day Food and Drink Festival.



July and August

Summer Sundays Music in the park.

August

Oswestry Show a one day extravaganza of all things rural. Oswestry Hot Air Balloon Carnival a fun filled weekend with live take offs from the park and a magical night glow (weather permitting).

September

Heritage Open Days England's biggest free history festival.

October

Apple Day.

November

Christmas Lights switch on with live music in the market square.

December

Christmas Live for one night only. Fairground rides, live bands. Christmas market. Christmas Parade with decorated floats, vintage vehicles and more. Santa Run.



Scan the QR code to see the latest events.



Friendly - Historic - Surprising



Further Information

Oswestry Tourist Information Centre
Castle View, SY11 1JR
T: 01691 662753
www.visitoswestry.co.uk

Oswestry Markets
T: 01691 680222
www.oswestrymarket.co.uk
Market days: Weds, Fri, Sat.

Oswestry Town Council
T: 01691 680222
www.oswestry-tc.gov.uk

Oswestry Business Improvement District One Oswestry
T: 01691 700365
www.oneoswestry.co.uk

Oswestry Minor Injuries Unit
Oswestry Health Centre SY11 1GA
T: 01691 663617

Qube - Shop Mobility and Wheelchair Hire
Oswald Road, SY11 1RB
T: 01691 656882
www.qube-oca.org.uk

Oswestry Police Station
Park Street Oswestry SY11 2HE
T: 101 or 999

Oswestry Leisure Centre
Shrewsbury Road SY11 4QB
T: 0345 000 7006

Citizens Advice Bureau
34 Arthur Street SY11 1JN
T: 03444 99 11 30

Oswestry Library
9 Arthur Street SY11 1JN
T: 01743 250351



Points of interest on the Heritage Trail...

1. Castle Bank
2. Bailey Head
3. The Guildhall
4. "We're in No Hurry" Sculpture
5. The Old Fighting Cocks
6. Cambrian Heritage Railway and Museum
7. Cambrian Railway Engineering Works
8. Wilfred Owen Green
9. The Black Gate
10. Llwyd Mansion
11. The Cross
12. Old Chapel Court
13. The Fox Inn
14. The Borderland Farmer Statue
15. The Wynnstey Hotel
16. The Coach and Horses
17. Oswald's Well
18. The Old School House
19. St. Oswald's Church
20. The Broadwalk
21. Cae Glas Park
22. The Wilfred Owen Sculpture
23. Sir Walford Davies
24. Butchers Arms
25. The Train Mural
26. Christ Church



Begin at Oswestry Tourist Information Centre and go straight ahead to 1. Castle Bank. This is the highest point in town with a fine view over the town and across to the hillfort. It was almost certainly fortified before the Norman Conquest and is named in the Domesday Book as castle L'Uvre. It was a 'motte and bailey' castle, with a steepened mound and crowned with a wooden tower. Ditches, ramparts, and sharpened stakes would have formed the outer defences.

The castle was rebuilt by the Welsh prince Madog Ap Maredudd in 1148 to control trade over the border. Subsequently the castle changed hands frequently as wars and conflicts flared up. The last significant border conflict was around 1400 when the Welsh, led by Owain Glyndŵr, captured Oswestry, but the English quashed the rebellion. Peace returned until 1644 and the outbreak of the Civil War. Oswestry was a Royalist stronghold and so targeted by a Parliamentarian campaign. The town was besieged. It capitulated when the Roundheads destroyed the castle main gate with a landmine and Cromwell ordered the demolition of the castle. Today, the only remains are the stones on top of Castle Bank. The site was acquired by the Town Council and opened in 1890 as a public park commemorating Queen Victoria's Jubilee. Recent excavation has suggested that the castle was larger than previously estimated. At the base, notice the gate posts. They were originally part of the town gate in nearby Beatrice Street. If you look carefully you can still make out the words 'Toll Through' carved in the stone.

From here take the 2nd left into **2. Bailey Head**. This was the outer courtyard of the castle, and was where complaints were heard, and judgements made. Punishments were meted out every Wednesday and the town stocks, a pillory and whipping post were sited outside the Red Lion pub. It was also the marketplace, where traders could sell their wares under the protection of the castle garrison. A market is still held on the square every Wednesday and Saturday, although the punishments have ceased!



3. The Guildhall, built in 1893, is in the French style. On the left of the ornate façade is a carving of the town seal and shows King Oswald holding a sword and a branch. Go inside and look to the left of the stairs at images of old pub signs. These are just some of the 100+ pubs that were in the town. Visit the Town Museum on the second floor (Open Wed, Fri and Sat, lift available) to see more of Oswestry's story.



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You won't miss it when the town crier is about!



The Oswestry Town Heritage Trail

Oswestry is an ancient market town close to the English/Welsh border. Its strategic position has given it a turbulent history, as well as an important trading role. Most of the town centre is a designated Conservation Area, displaying many architectural styles: old timber framed, Georgian and Victorian. But the real story of Oswestry is about its people. Enjoy your visit and we hope you will want to return and find out more.



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Head away from the market and turn left down Albion Hill. Look above the door to The Griffin pub at 4. "We're in No Hurry" Sculpture by Jas Davidson. Watch out for lots more on the trail. Turn left into Beatrice Street, which was once lined with 140 barns mainly storing grain.



The gabled **5. The Old Fighting Cocks**, once a coaching inn, dates to the 14th century and is one of the oldest buildings in the town. Further along near The Plough, a plaque shows the site of Beatrice Gate. Cross the road and just beyond the petrol station, turn down Orchard Street. Imagine many terraced houses crammed into the area, families sharing toilets and facilities. Disease was rife. These poor-quality houses were built quickly to house the influx of families arriving to find work with the railways.



Turn left at the end and left again onto Oswald Road towards the old station and 6. Cambrian Heritage Railways and Museum. Oswestry was the HQ of the Cambrian Railways, and the carriage works were a major employer in the town. The father of WW1 poet Wilfred Owen, Tom Owen worked here for a time. The Cambrian Railways museum is open and trains run to Weston Wharf (and the local brewery!) most weekends from Easter to September. (Check website for details.)



Walk ahead towards the tall chimney and the 7. Cambrian Railway Engineering Works. They were erected in 1865 and closed 100 years later. The railways were the main employer in Oswestry providing work for up to 1,000 people. This resulted in a rapid growth of the town in the late 1800's. In 1861 the population of Oswestry was a mere 5,500, but had risen to 10,000 40 years later. The buildings now house an antiques centre and other retail outlets.



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Turn right and cross the railway tracks turning right into 8. Wilfred Owen Green. This area is dedicated to the memory of Wilfred Owen. There is a stunning wildflower meadow and a 40 metre grass labyrinth, one of the largest in the world. Climb Shelf Bank for views over town. On the top of the bank is an impressive house with a tower. It was built by John Thomas, a successful maltster who was elected mayor of Oswestry four times. At the outbreak of the First World War his widow allowed the house to be used as a hospital for wounded soldiers.

Follow the path through the park turning right across the railway and cross the road at Sainsbury's, then go straight on to Salop Road. On your right, next to 'Upstairs, Downstairs' was the site of **9. The Black Gate** (marked with a plaque). The gate was removed in 1766. Opposite and to the left is an old timber-framed farmhouse dating from the 16th century known as the Black Gate, it has been a school, restaurant and cafe.



Turn right towards the traffic lights and turn left into Cross Street. Note the fine Victorian façade above the shops on the right. On the right at the junction with Bailey Street is **10. Llwyd Mansion**, built in 1604 as a town house for John Lloyd of Llanforna, a local dignitary and merchant.



Slightly further on is 11. The Cross which was once a market and a gathering place for townfolk. The original cross was replaced, first by a pump, and later by road signs. It has now been reinstated albeit in a different position. In 1842 the market was moved indoors, the remaining white fronted building was one entrance. It continued in use until it was taken over for the storage of munitions in WW2. The Latin inscription above the door translates as 'Time and Money, Space and Weight. By One Fixed Standard Calculate.'



Continue along Church Street and take the alleyway through after the zebra crossing. (Outside shop opening times you may have to miss this part of the trail and continue to Number 13). There are many alleyways or 'Shuts', some behind locked doors. At the end of the alley, you are in English Walls with the Central Car Park ahead. This was the town cattle market from 1849 to 1969 when it moved to the outskirts of the town. Livestock Markets are held there every Wednesday. In the distance can be seen the spire of Holy Trinity Church. Turn right and then turn right into another 'Shut', **12. Old Chapel Court**.



At the end of the alleyway turn left and reach 13. The Fox Inn. This old timber building once had a gable projecting over the street. However, it was removed after a passer-by damaged their silk top hat on it! Next door was another pub called the White Horse whose sign in relief remains. During street fighting at the General Election, following the Reform Act of 1832, the horse's leg was broken off and hurled through a window. Nearby is a pillar marking the location of another town gate - New Gate, showing the coat of arms of the Earl of Powis.



Continue along Church Street and reach 15. The Wynnstey Hotel with its grand entrance porch. The hotel was a popular coaching inn. To its rear, the old stables and coach houses can still be seen. Church Street contains many buildings of historical and architectural merit with examples of timber-framed, Georgian, and Victorian shops and houses.

Cross the road and continue to the traffic lights and the black and white building on the corner. 16. The Coach and Dogs was constructed in 1660 by Edward Lloyd of Llanforna for stabling the dog cart that he used to attend church. On the opposite corner is another timber-framed house which was a pub called the Raven and Bellman. This part of the town was once called Pentrepoeth or the 'burnt end'.



Turn right at the traffic lights and walk past the entrance to the churchyard. Take the second right into Oswald's Well Lane and after a few minutes, arrive at **17. Oswald's Well** on the left. This spring is reputedly to be where King Oswald's arm was dropped by a bird (an eagle or a raven). A sculpture of a great bird stands over this tranquil spot.



Return the way you came and 50m before the traffic lights take the alleyway into the churchyard. The lych gate was erected in 1631 and the local name Giddle Gate may be derived from a 'grille' in the doors long since vanished. To your left is **18. The Old School House**, the second oldest free grammar school in the country. Dating from 1407, it once housed Oswestry Grammar School and was founded by David Holbache. The school moved to new premises in 1776, the building becoming a workhouse. Between 1792 and the 1950s, it was used as dwellings.



19. St. Oswald's Church has a long history and a previous name for the town of Blanc Minster suggests earlier churches on the site. The church featured prominently during the Civil War as an observation point and strategic position during the siege of the town by the Parliamentarians. It consequently suffered extensive damage. The medieval church was remodelled and extended several times, notably in the 19th century. The tower is the earliest part remaining, dating to around 1200. Inside is a font presented by Colonel Lloyd of Llanforna in the 17th century as thanksgiving for the restoration of the monarchy. There is also a war memorial designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, as well as a memorial to Hugh Yale whose family founded Yale University in America.



Opposite the Post Office turn left into New Street. **25. The Train Mural** celebrates Oswestry's rich railway history. Don't miss the second mural in the alleyway opposite. At the end of New Street turn left onto Bailey Street and continue up the slope. As you pass the black & white building on your left, have a quick explore of another alleyway under the arch. Back on Bailey Head, take the left turning with **26. Christ Church** and the Tourist Information Centre ahead.



Why not take a break and enjoy Oswestry's café culture?



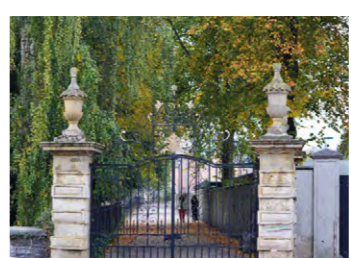
20. The Broadwalk This avenue, bordered by trees, passes through a set of fine iron gates on to Church Street. The gates, which cost £32 in 1738, were made by John and Robert Davies, who also constructed the gates to Chirk Castle. Take a moment to read the plaque remembering Wilfred Owen, the war poet who was born in Oswestry in 1893.



Turn left onto Church Street and pass through the war memorial gates into **21. Cae Glas Park**. The roll of honour lists men from Oswestry who died in the two World Wars. To the left is a bronze angel, a memorial to fallen railway workers, which was transferred to the park when the station closed in the mid 1960s. The award-winning park has exceptional floral displays throughout the year.



Ahead is 22. The Wilfred Owen Sculpture. Installed in 2018 as a remembrance of his death shortly before Armistice day in 1918 at Ors, France. The cast-iron bandstand hosts free Sunday concerts throughout summer. The park was the gardens of Cae Glas Mansion, long since demolished, and was bought in 1908 by the Town Council. A proviso of the sale was that the park be used for recreation, and that continues. There are tennis courts, bowling green, children's play area, crazy golf as well as the open park landscape. Follow the path to the right passing the play area and then the 'sensory garden'. The town walls followed a route close to the gardens running parallel to the path.



Exit via the gates into Welsh Walls, turning right and then right into Willow Street. At the corner, a plaque marks the site of the old Willow Gate. The town walls, which were over a mile long, were constructed around 1220, and demolished around 1660. This is the oldest part of the town, clustered around the bailey below Castle Bank for security. It was in this part of the town that the merchants and traders had their businesses.

Number 55 was the birthplace of 23. Sir Walford Davies, Master of the King's Music (1934-1941). 72 Willow Street is where novelist Barbara Crampton Pym was born in 1913. She has been described as the 20th century's most underrated novelist. Opposite are the offices of Crampton, Pym and Lewis, her father was one of the founding partners of the law firm.



Cross the road and continue past the half-timbered 24. Butchers Arms. This is one of the oldest inns in the town. In 1672 a Royal Licence allowed the use of a room in the pub for worship by members of the dissenting Independent Church of Sweeney. In 1750 they erected the first non-conformist chapel in Oswestry, next door.

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Why not follow Oswald's Trail which will take you on a 12 mile circular walk around the town and includes not only The Hillfort but also The Old Racecourse and a short stretch of Offa's Dyke.

Car Parking is at nearby Gatacre Playing Fields (SY11 1DR), with limited disabled parking at the entrance to the hillfort (SY10 7AA). Note: there is very limited disabled access.

Entrance is free.



Driving to Oswestry Hillfort
Gatacre Car Park = SY11 1DR (5 mins walk)



Walking to Oswestry Hillfort
From Oswestry Tourist Information Centre, SY11 1JR



Old Oswestry Hillfort
Iron Age Hillfort



Why not take a break and enjoy Oswestry's café culture?



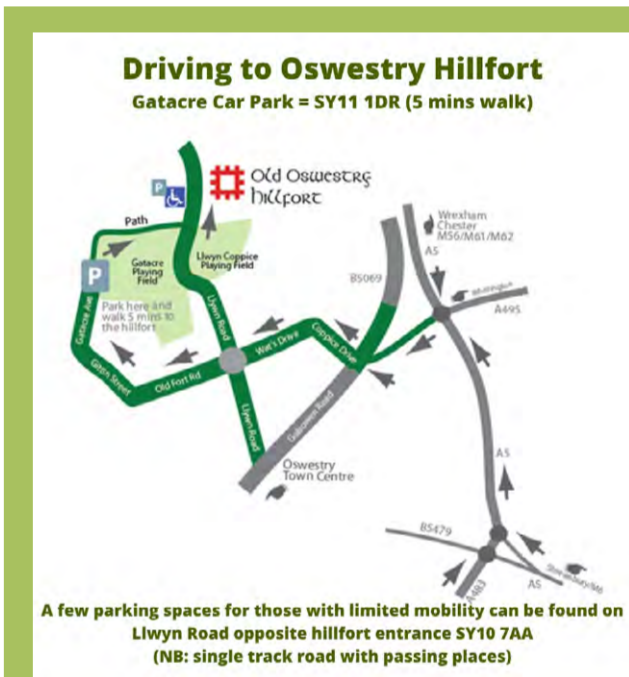
Old Oswestry Hillfort

This 3000 year old hillfort, known as the Stonehenge of the Iron Age is one of the best preserved in Britain and is just a 25 minute walk or 5 minute drive from Oswestry town centre. Could it have been the birthplace of King Arthur's Guinevere? Another name for the hillfort is Caer Ogyrfran and Ogyrfran was her father, a giant, who's fortress was the hillfort. Bring your imagination as you explore this place of legend. It's a haven for wildlife and flora nowadays and a walk to the top will reward you with stunning views over Oswestry town, Shropshire, and Cheshire and to the beginnings of the Welsh hills and Powys.

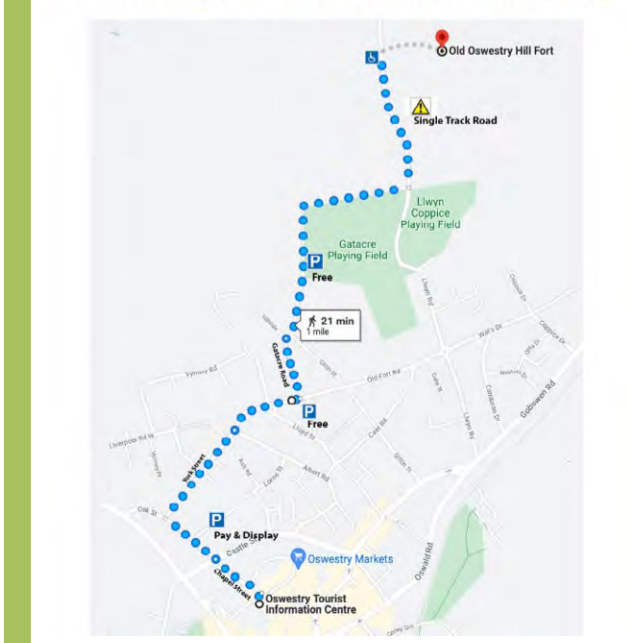
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Walking to Oswestry Hillfort



Online version Childrens Trail Wilfred Owen Trail