

## Things to do and Places to visit nearby

**Worcestershire County Museum - Hartlebury.** The County Museum tells Worcestershire's story from prehistoric to twentieth century and is housed in the magnificent surroundings of Hartlebury Castle. Open February to mid December. Telephone 01299 250416.  
Website [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/museum](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/museum)

**Leapgate Old Railway Line - Stourport-on-Severn A4025.** Walks on disused railway and Hartlebury Common. 200 acres of sandy heath, the most important local nature reserve in the county.  
Website [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside)

**Redstone Marsh Nature Reserve - Riverside meadows and wetlands areas, situated on the west bank of the River Severn, one mile from Stourport-on-Severn.**

**Riverside Meadows - Children's play area, paddling pool, pitch and putt, crazy golf, picnic areas.**

**Riverside Amusements - Set beside the River Basin close to the locks. Lively amusement park for all the family. Includes ten pin bowling, fairground rides and an arcade. Telephone 01299 877377.**

**Boat Cruises on the River Severn - Passenger boat cruises are available from Easter to September from Stourport-on-Severn riverside. Telephone 01299 871177. Website [www.riverboathire.co.uk](http://www.riverboathire.co.uk)**

**Witley Court - Great Witley. A hundred years ago Witley Court was one of England's great country houses, hosting many extravagant parties. Today it is a spectacular ruin, the result of a disastrous fire in 1937. Attached to Witley Court is Great Witley Church which has an amazing Italianate Baroque interior. There is also a tearoom close by and Witley Court has a gift shop. For opening times and prices telephone 01299 896636 or visit their website [www.english-heritage.org.uk/witleycourt](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/witleycourt)**

## General Information

Toilets including facilities for the disabled – Riverside Meadows, Raven Street and Vale Road.

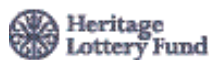
**Eating Out** – Stourport offers an excellent variety of places to eat, pubs with family rooms or beer gardens, restaurants, cafes and take-aways.

**Post Office** in the Co-op Superstore, Lombard Street.

**Public car parking** at Vale Road, Raven Street and Riverside Meadows.

**Website - [www.stourporttown.co.uk](http://www.stourporttown.co.uk)**

This trail was originally produced by Wyre Forest District Council – re-printed by British Waterways, Stourport Forward and the Stourport Civic Society.



Stourport Civic Society

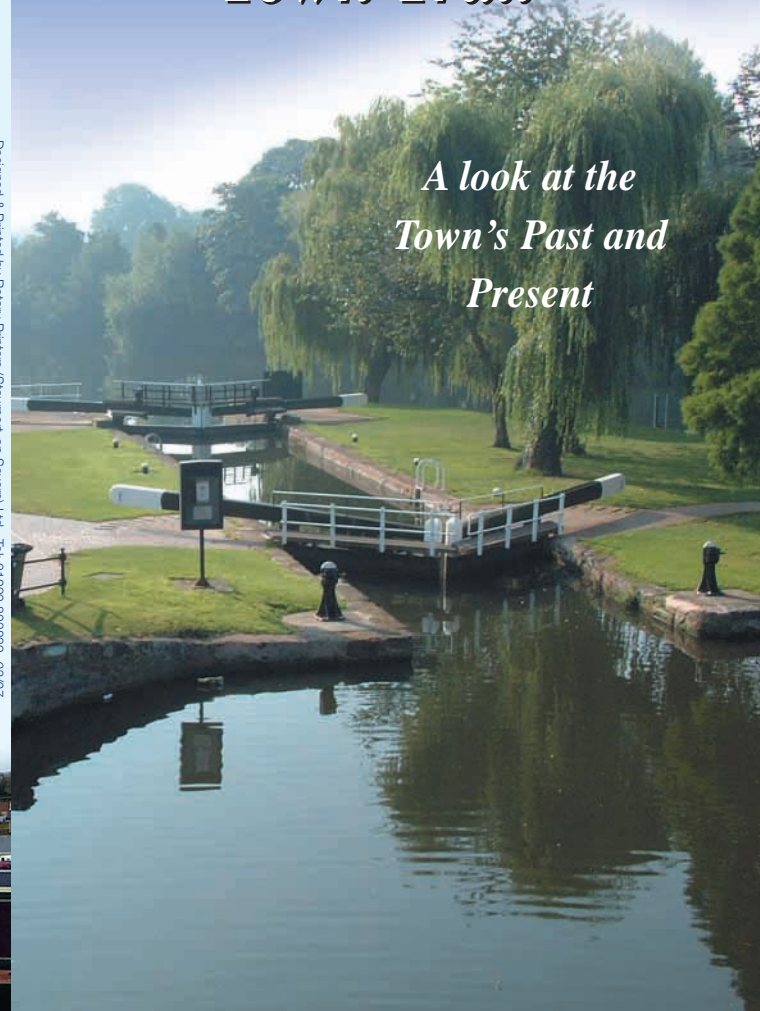


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# Stourport-on-Severn Town Trail

*A look at the  
Town's Past and  
Present*



*Stourport-on-Severn is the only town in Britain built solely as a consequence of the canals. It was here that James Brindley built the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal to link the River Severn with the Trent and Mersey, following the Parliamentary Act of 1766. After Birmingham, Stourport was then the busiest inland port in the Midlands. The town grew rapidly and by 1783 brass and iron foundries, vinegar works, tan yards, worsted spinning mills, carpet manufacturers, barge and boat building yards, wharves, warehouses, shops, houses and inns had sprung up. By 1795 Stourport had two hundred houses and 1,300 inhabitants. Today Stourport has a population of nearly 20,000 people, with many visitors who come to enjoy its riverside setting and canal heritage.*

**To help you enjoy your visit, this small trail will give you a brief insight into the town's past and present. The walk starts from the Riverside Car Park and takes approximately one hour. The route can be joined at any point.**

## Welcome to Stourport-on-Severn a truly unique Georgian town

### KEY DATES IN STOURPORT HISTORY

- 1771 Official opening of Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
- 1773 Opening of The Areley Inn (later renamed The Tontine).
- 1775 First river bridge connecting new community of Stour Port with village of Areley Kings.
- 1798 Vinegar brewery founded. Was to be in continuous production for 200 years.
- 1812 The town clock, made by Samuel Thorpe of Abberley and paid for by public subscription, was erected on the warehouse in the main canal basin.
- 1832 Stourport was joined with Bewdley in the new West Worcestershire Parliamentary Constituency created by the Reform Act of 1832.
- 1862 The Severn Valley Railway line was opened to Shrewsbury. Stourport was linked with main line services at Hartlebury Junction.
- 1866 Gas Works built and developed in Cheapside on the site of the third canal basin. Closed 1949.
- 1870 The new (third) bridge over the river Severn was opened.
- 1923 Stanley Baldwin, M.P. for Stourport and Bewdley, became Prime Minister for the first time.
- 1927 Electric power station opened by Stanley Baldwin for the Shropshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire Electric Power Company. Was to have a major extension in 1948.
- 1947 Stanley Baldwin died at Astley Hall.
- 1949 Coal traffic from Cannock Chase to the Power Station ceased and brought an end to the commercial life of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
- 1951 Holt Abbott started building pleasure craft in Stourport. He was a founder member of the IWA and did much to popularise cabin cruising. His original boatyard was by the Tontine but he later moved to Parkes Quay.
- 1956 Stourport Foundry ceased production. Anglo Enamelware Works ceased production in 1957.
- 1964 Stourport Tannery destroyed by fire.
- 1966 Stourport Civic Centre opened.
- 1969 Derelict Baldwin Foundry demolished.
- 1970 Last passenger train through Stourport.
- 1972 New County Buildings opened.
- 2001 Carpets of Worth ceased production in Stourport.
- 2006 Major restoration work began on Stourport Basins. This work was funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, British Waterways, Stourport Forward Market Towns' Initiative and other funders.

### FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT STOURPORT

Stourport Public Library has an extensive collection of books about Stourport and surrounding area as well as a collection of archive photographs.

Recent books about Stourport include:

- **Images of England: Stourport-on-Severn** by Anna Carter (Tempus Publishing, 2000)
- **Stourport-on-Severn: Pioneer Town of the Canal Age** (English Heritage, 2007)
- **Stourport Pubs** by John Cook (published by Stourport Civic Society, 2004)
- **George Nicholson: Printer at Stourport** (published by Stourport Civic Society, 2001)
- **Stourport-on-Severn: History of the town and local villages** by Anne Bradford (Hunt End Books, 2001)

In addition to the above, Stourport Civic Society is producing four information leaflets about the town:

- **Unlocking Stourport's Pubs**
- **Unlocking York Street**
- **Unlocking Stourport High Street**
- **Unlocking Stourport's Walls**

There are three websites offering further information about Stourport: [www.stourporttown.co.uk](http://www.stourporttown.co.uk) is the official town website giving details of places to go and things to see as well as listing forthcoming events.

<http://members.aol.com/stourportcivic> is the Civic Society website which gives details about the town's history and the Society's activities.

[www.unlocking-stourports-past.co.uk](http://www.unlocking-stourports-past.co.uk) is the website for the Civic Society's Heritage Lottery Project, "Unlocking Stourport's Past" which aims to increase public awareness of Stourport's built environment.