



Other Attractions

The British Motor Museum at Gaydon, battle site at Edgehill and battle of Edgehill Museum at Radway, National Trust Properties of Upton House, Charlecote Park, Farnborough Hall, Canon's Ashby, the Marton Museum of Country Bygones, Chesterton Windmill, Burton Dassett Hills Country Park, Draycote Water, and castles at Warwick and Kenilworth

Compton Verney house is a centre of arts and cultural events. The Dallas Burston Polo Club, Stoneleigh Abbey and the National Agricultural and Exhibition Centre are close by.

There are several country walks near to Southam, and interesting canal walks at Bascote, Long Itchington and Napton, with waterside pubs.

Eat, Drink & Stay

Southam has a large selection of food outlets, several pubs, coffee shops and tea rooms, offering a variety of meals and snacks. Several B&Bs and caravan and campsites are nearby.

Directions

Easy access is gained from the M6, M40, and M1. The town is located at the junction of the A423 between Coventry and Banbury and the A425 Leamington to Daventry.

Southam is ideally situated for discovering Shakespeare's Stratford, castles at Warwick and Kenilworth and Coventry with its impressive cathedral. It is also convenient for the spa town of Royal Leamington Spa with its extensive shopping facilities.

Information

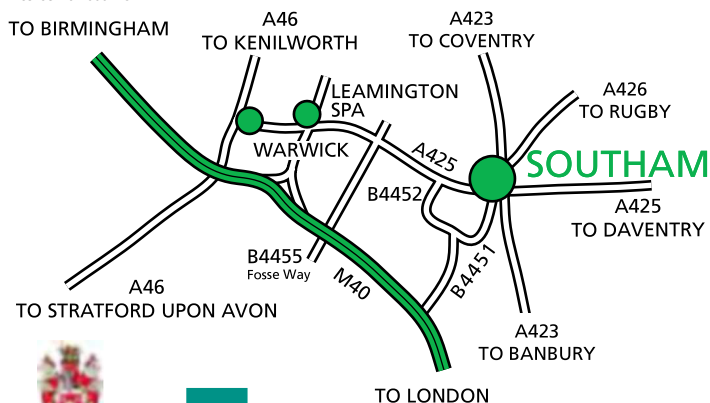
For details of facilities, events, accommodation, the Holy Well Walk and other local walks, please visit the library in High Street (0300 555 8171) or see the town's community website www.southam.co.uk

Other local information can be obtained from the Southam Town Council office at The Grange Hall, Coventry Road, Southam CV47 1QA which is open from 9am to 1pm, Monday to Friday (01926 814004) www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

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Southam
Town Council



Southam

TOWN TRAIL



TOWN TRAIL

A wide range of activities is held in Southam throughout the year to suit all interests.

The town is full of history and this Trail takes you to visit some of the most interesting places, but look out for what else there is to see in between.

Duration -

The trail around Southam takes at least one and a quarter hours.

Car Park -

There is a large public car park in Wood Street, accessed from Daventry Road. This is where the Town Trail starts.

OS Map -

Discover Southam on the Rugby OS map (Explorer Map 222).

Refreshments -

Food & drink can be found at cafes, restaurants and pubs around the town.

17 The Olde Mint

Local trading tokens were once minted here, a few still survive in private collections.



4 The Manor House

In 1642, during the 1st year of the English Civil Wars, King Charles I stayed here.



16 St James' Church

The church has a spire rising to 126 feet and bells dating back to 1552. Look out for the 'Green Men' in the Church.



Merestone Park 21

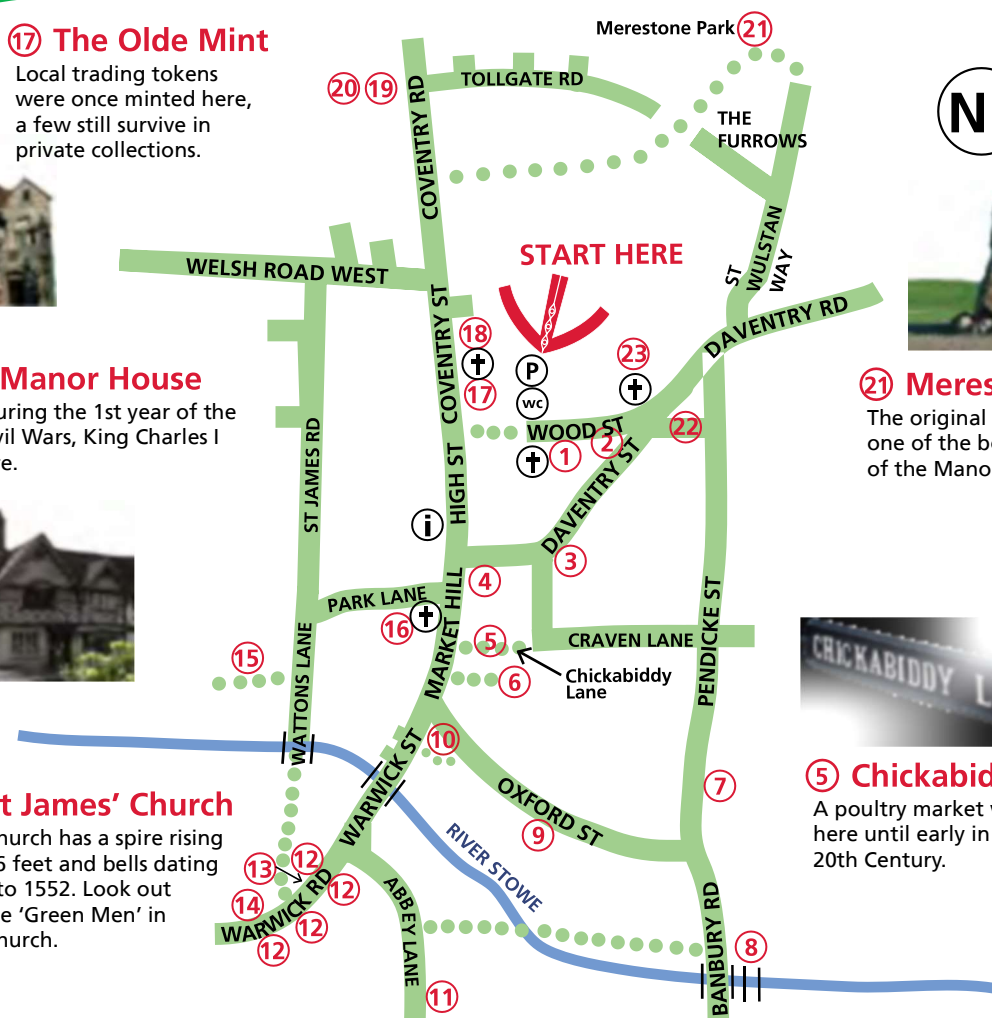
21 Merestone Park

The original Merestone was one of the boundary markers of the Manor of Southam.



5 Chickabiddy Lane

A poultry market was held here until early in the 20th Century.



KEY

Church / Chapel



Parking



Public Toilets



Library & Information



Footpaths




Place of interest




TOWN TRAIL...


SHOPPING ARTS

& HISTORY


 **King Charles I & Southam Cider (1 - 4)**
From Wood Street car park turn left noticing the Congregational Church ① (built 1839) opposite and then right along Daventry Street with the Grade 2 Listed Crown Inn ② on your right. Walk on to the former Bull Inn ③ where the old pig market was held and a cider press set up in the yard every autumn. Continue on bearing right to the junction, with the timber-framed Manor House ④ on your left. This was where King Charles I stayed in 1642 during the first year of the English Civil Wars.

 **Chickabiddy & Craven Arms Hotel (5)**
Turn left down Market Hill. Next to the Florists look down the narrow alley Chickabiddy Lane ⑤ where there used to be a poultry market. Also on your left is what was the Craven Arms Hotel. In the 18th and 19th centuries it was the main coaching inn having stabling for 80 horses.


 **Court House & Saucy Six (6 - 8)**
Up the yard before you reach the modern retail outlet the building glimpsed at the back is the old Court House ⑥ - once a magistrates' court, a cinema and a venue for concerts. Cross the large car park. The row of brick built cottages facing you is known as the Saucy Six ⑦ and was built to house the postillions from the Craven Arms. Take a short detour down Banbury Road to see the 17th century Brown's Bridge ⑧.

 **The 'Pudding Bell' (9 - 11)**
Turn back and walk past the early 19th century houses on Oxford Street ⑨. Look for the timber framed Old Bakery ⑩. Here townsfolk used to bring their Sunday dinners to be roasted. A bell rung at the end of the Church service was known as the 'pudding bell', people then collected their dinners from this and other bakehouses in the town.


Go down the jitty between Vernon House and the Old Bakery into Warwick Street. Turn left and over the bridge, then walk along Abbey Lane where there are more old cottages. Number One Abbey Lane (restored in 2010) dates from c.1600, and Nos 47 and 49 ⑪ are 16th Century.


 **The First Provident Dispensary (12 - 16)**
Return to Warwick Road, bear left and walk up the hill. Along here are several old and imposing houses ⑫. Warwick House with the Lilley Smith memorial urn ⑬ within its railed enclosure, is where Henry Lilley Smith established the first Provident Dispensary in the country in 1823 and a hospital for the treatment of eye and ear diseases in 1818. The white cottages nos. 24 and 26 ⑭ are the oldest cottages in Southam with roof timbers dating back to 1418.

Go down the footpath next to the Lilley Smith Memorial and over the narrow river bridge. To your left here is the start of the Holy Well Walk ⑮ (see separate leaflet - it takes about ten minutes to walk to the Well). Enter the Recreation Ground, walk diagonally across it to the metal kissing gate and go up the path to St James' Church ⑯. The sabre decorated cross on the right hand side near the top of the stepped path marks the grave of Seth Bond, a survivor of the Charge of the Light Brigade who later moved to Southam. If it is open, visit the Church then leave via the lych gate into Park Lane.

 **Money, Meetings & Markets (17 - 20)**
Back at the main street turn left; pass Tithe Place, cross the road and continue to the Olde Mint public house ⑰, reputedly built in the 15th century. Local trading tokens were once minted here and a few still survive.

In the 19th century meetings were held near the Bowling Green Inn ⑱ by Joseph Arch the founder of the National Agricultural Workers' Union. Beyond, on your left, Welsh Road West is part of the old drovers' road where thousands of sheep, cattle, geese etc. passed this way en route from Wales to London. Further up Coventry Road is The Grange ⑲ where wounded soldiers were nursed during the First World War. Behind it The Grange Hall ⑳ contains embroidery pictures showing Southam's history, created by local women and completed in 2003 (ring 01926 813933 to view these).

 **Millions of years ago (21)**
Cross the road and turning towards the town, take the footpath between nos. 10 and 11 Coventry Road. Follow this path, crossing the junction of Tollgate Road and The Furrows at the bollards. When you get to the end, just before the bypass gate turn left into Merestone Park. Walk right up to the Merestone ㉑ for a wonderful view. The original Merestone was one of the boundary markers of Southam - this replacement stone is 360 million years old.

 **Old Schools & The Convent (22 - 23)**
Leave the Park where you came in and take the footpath straight ahead of you, walk down The Furrows and St Wulstan Way and at the bottom turn right. Down School Street you can see very fine brickwork on the old schools ㉒ and on your right is the former Convent ㉓ where in 1876 nuns moved into a building now The Olde House Retreat. They erected extensive Convent buildings some of which have been replaced by flats and they maintained an orphanage and a school partly by selling their exquisite embroidery. Keep to your right and you are back at Wood Street car park.

WELCOME

We invite you to come and enjoy the ancient market town of Southam set in the pleasant countryside of South East Warwickshire. Explore our charming town to find interesting buildings, pubs, cafés and a range of traditional shops.

Strolling along the wide part of Coventry Street, try to imagine vast herds of cattle, sheep or even geese following the Welsh Road passing through the town on the way to London markets.

Southam was a winner of Britain In Bloom in 2009. The oak sculpture 'Southam Stories' at Tithe Place, contains bosses carved by local people, young and old. Here you can sit and relax and watch the world go by or visit Tithe Place where there is a library, café and Heritage museum. At Christmas time there is a magnificent display of festive lights. A wide range of activities is held in Southam during the year including a Carnival and the Mop Fair; there are theatrical productions and concerts mainly in the Grange Hall. The town is full of history and this Town Trail guides you round some of it.

history

Southam was first mentioned in a charter of King Ethelred in 998, but there was an Anglo-Saxon village before this, and Roman coins found here hint at an even earlier foundation. One possible origin of its name is that it was the settlement (ham) in a bend of the river Sowe (currently known as the Stowe).

The Holy Well has been in existence for over a thousand years and was so important that it was excluded from the Enclosure Act 1761 and became the property of the people of Southam. By the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086 the population was about 170. During the next few hundred years Southam prospered as a market town. In the 18th and 19th centuries Southam was a centre on the coaching routes with many inns and hostelries as it was on the main roads from London to Birmingham and the North. The Welsh Road was used by cattle drovers travelling between Wales and London from medieval times until the end of the 19th century.

The Battle of Southam on the 23rd August 1642 was the first official skirmish of the Civil War when the town was visited by both Parliamentary and Royalist troops. King Charles I stayed in the then Manor House on Market Hill during the first year of the Civil War.

Southam suffered several disastrous fires in the 18th century and was rebuilt in the Georgian style, examples of which are to be seen around the town. Southam grew in the 19th century with straw plaiting, spinning, bonnet making, clock making, quarrying and the manufacture of cement. It remained a small town as a result of being by-passed by canals and railways. In 1818 the Southam Infirmary for treating diseases of the eye and ear was opened in the building in Warwick Road, known as Warwick House.

In 1974 Southam inaugurated its first Mayor and town council, and by 2021 the population had reached approximately 8,000.

