

Tonbridge & Malling

Tonbridge is fortunate to lie in an area with a rich cultural heritage and spectacular scenery. There are castles, stately homes, gardens, craft centres, country walks set in beautiful undulating countryside.



Facts about Tonbridge & Malling

Did you know about....??

History

- Tonbridge has been a market town since the Earl of Gloucester was granted the right to hold a weekly market in 1259. Today the borough Tonbridge and Malling stands at a point where the Saxons built a bridge across the River Medway. For much of its existence, the town remained to north of the river, since the land south was subject to extensive flooding.
- The name Tonbridge developed from the word *Tonebrige*, which may indicate a bridge belonging to the estate or manor or alternatively a bridge belonging to Tunna, a common Anglo-Saxon man's name.
- In the late 1800s, the 'Tonbridge' name was actually known as *Tunbridge*. In the late 1890s/early 1900s, this was changed to *Tonbridge* by the Royal Mail as it caused confusion with Tunbridge Wells, a much more recent town, only four miles away.
- Tonbridge Castle was built in the 11th century by Richard Fitz Gilbert, a nobleman in William the Conqueror's invading army. The town was besieged by William Rufus and afterwards taken by King John, where it was besieged again by Prince Edward, son of Henry III. The castle is one of the best examples of a motte and bailey castle in the country.
- The town and Tonbridge Castle were rebuilt after this and in the 13th century became an official residence. The historic core of the town still contains a large number of working buildings dating from the 15th Century.
- In 1740, the River Medway was made navigable to Tonbridge, allowing such materials as hops and timber to be carried down river to Maidstone and London.
- Later, the town and its surrounds became famous for the production of finely inlaid wooden cabinets, boxes and other objects called Tunbridgeware. Another speciality is the production of cricket balls.
- Until 1997 The Hop Farm was known as *The Whitbread Hop Farm* and was owned by the Whitbread brewery. Originally a working farm for hop picking, many of the workers lived in the local area or commuted from London every summer to earn their wage picking the Kentish hops. Today the farm is a popular tourist attraction for families and hosts many large events.

Local Towns & Villages

Hadlow is a historic village which has had settlers since the Stone Age. The village features the ruins of Hadlow castle, and many traditional houses, plus the old watermill, Bourne mill. Today it is best known for the large agricultural college and is still very much a farming village.

Kings Hill is a new town within the Tonbridge and Malling area. The town has a large community which is growing in size. Its local amenities include shops, restaurants, pubs and local farmers markets.

West Malling is a historic market town. The village has a long high street with many shops, pubs and restaurants, which makes it perfect to browse on a day out.

Wrotham village is situated on the Pilgrims' Way, at the foot of the North Downs. The small village hosts quaint little cottages, traditional village pubs and the historic church.

East Peckham made up of nine hamlets and situated about five miles east of Tonbridge on the River Medway. It was the centre for the hop growing industry in Kent and is still home to the 'Hop Farm' which has the world's largest collection of Oast Houses.

Countryside

Tonbridge & Malling has a range of outdoor leisure facilities from tennis and golf to water sports such as canoeing and windsurfing; from country parks and open spaces to lakes and rivers.

- The Tonbridge and Malling Borough falls within part of the Kent Downs, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is for this reason that many visitors are attracted to the area for cycling and walking tours via the Borough's Waymarked trails and Cycle routes.
- The countryside of Tonbridge and Malling offers a varied selection of interesting and challenging walks ranging from 15 miles to a long 142 miles. These include The Eden Valley Walk, The Greensand Way, the Medway Valley Walk, The Wealdway walk and the North Downs Way National Trail.
- The Tonbridge to Penshurst cycle route (Regional Cycle Route 12) between Tonbridge castle and Penshurst Place offers an excellent, almost entirely traffic free ride from the heart of Tonbridge alongside the River Medway, out into the countryside as far as the stunning buildings of Penshurst Place.
- **Trosley Country Park** is spread over 160 acres of the North Downs and boasts some interesting walks and spectacular views across the Weald. Within walking distance of Trosley Park are the Coldrum Stones, the remains of a Neolithic Long Barrow 4000 to 5000 years old.
- **Manor Park Country Park** is situated on the edge of West Malling the park was once part of the landscaped grounds of Douces Manor. It covers an area of 52 acres including parkland with mature trees; a lake and adventure play equipment for children.
- **Leybourne Lakes Country Park** with its idyllic location for water sports and outdoor activities was also used as the setting for the television series Cape Wrath.
- **Tonbridge to Penshurst cycle route** (Regional Cycle Route 12) offers an excellent, almost entirely traffic free ride from the heart of Tonbridge, along the River Medway out into the countryside as far as the stunning buildings of Penshurst Place.

Cycling & walking tours:

Cycle-Ops.co.uk
High Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1BB
Tel: (01732) 500533
Fax: (01732) 500535
Email: mail@cycle-ops.co.uk
Website: <http://www.cycle-ops.co.uk/>

Penshurst Off Road Cycling

Grove Road, Penshurst, Kent, TN11 8DU
Tel: (01892) 870136
Website: www.porc-online.co.uk

Nepicar Farm

Wrotham Heath, Kent, TN15 7SR
Tel: (01732) 883040
www.ramblers.org.uk
www.midkentgroup.co.uk

Places to visit

Farms:

The Hop Farm Country Park

Beltring, Paddock Wood,
Tonbridge,
Kent, TN12 6PY
Tel: (01622) 872068 / 0870 0274166
Fax: (01622) 872630
Email: info@thehopfarm.co.uk
Website: www.thehopfarm.co.uk

Nepicar Farm

Wrotham Heath, Kent, TN15 7SR
Tel: (01732) 883040

Parks & Gardens:

Broadview Gardens & Garden Centre

Hadlow College, Tonbridge Road,
Hadlow, Tonbridge,
Kent, TN11 0AL
Tel: (01732) 853211
Email: enquiries@hadlow.ac.uk
Website: www.hadlow.ac.uk

Downderry Nursery

Pillar Box Lane, Hadlow,
Tonbridge,
Kent, TN11 9SW
Tel: (01732) 810081
Fax: (01732) 811398
Email: orders@downderry-nursery.co.uk
Website: www.downderry-nursery.co.uk

Great Comp Garden

Comp Lane, Platt, Kent, TN15 8QS
Tel: (01732) 886154
Email: greatcomparden@aol.com
Website: www.greatcomp.co.uk

Penshurst Place and Gardens

Penshurst, Kent, TN11 8DG
Tel: (01892) 870307
Fax: (01892) 870866
Email: enquiries@penshurstplace.com
Website: www.penshurstplace.com

Stately Homes & Castles:

Tonbridge Castle

Castle Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN 9 1BG
Tel: (01732) 770929
Fax: (01732) 770449
Website: www.tbmc.gov.uk

Ightham Mote

Ivy Hatch, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0NT
Tel: (01732) 811145
Fax: (01732) 811029
Email: ighthammoat@nationaltrust.org.uk
Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Old Soar Manor

Old Soar Road, Plaxtol
Kent, TN15 0QX
Tel: (01732) 811145
Fax: (01732) 811029
Email: ighthammote@nationaltrust.org.uk
Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Penshurst Place and Gardens

Penshurst, Kent, TN11 8DG
Tel: (01892) 870307
Fax: (01892) 870866
Email: enquiries@penshurstplace.com
Website: www.penshurstplace.com

Museums:

The Hop Farm Country Park

Beltring,
Paddock Wood,
Kent, TN12 6PY
Tel: 0870 0274166
Fax: (01622) 872630
Website: www.thehopfarm.co.uk

Freda Barton Photographic Collection

The Clout Institute
High Street,
West Malling,
Kent, ME19 6QH
Tel: (07961) 536812

Snodland Millennium Museum

Waghorn Road
Snodland
Kent ME6 5BQ
Tel: (01634) 240228

Leisure centres:

The Angel Centre

Angel Lane
Tonbridge
Kent, TN9 1SF
Tel: (01732) 359966
Email: angel.leisurecentre@tmbc.gov.uk
Website: www.angelcentre.co.uk

Larkfield Leisure Centre

New Hythe Lane
Larkfield
Aylesford
Kent, ME20 6RH
Tel: (01622) 719345
Fax: (01622) 710822
Email: larkfield.leisurecentre@tmbc.gov.uk
Website: www.larkfieldleisure.co.uk

Tonbridge Swimming Pool

Tonbridge Pool
The Slade
Tonbridge
Kent, TN9 1HR
Tel: (01732) 367449
Email: tonbridge.swimmingpool@tmbc.gov.uk
Website: www.tonbridgepool.co.uk

Parks & Countryside:

Shopping:

Tonbridge High Street

High Street
Tonbridge
Kent

Farmers Markets:

West Malling High Street

High Street
West Malling
Kent
Tel: (01732) 876077
Email: gill.crebbin@tmbc.gov.uk
Website: www.producedinkent.co.uk

Weekly Farmers' Markets Shipbourne

St Giles Church
Shipbourne
Thursdays from 9am to 11am
Website: www.producedinkent.co.uk

Nepicar Farm

Wrotham Heath, Kent, TN15 7SR
Tel: (01732) 883040

Boating & River Trips:

Brookland Lake

Snodland Town Council,
Brook Street, Snodland
Tel: (01634) 240228

Tonbridge Castle Rowing Boats

Boat Hire, The Big Bridge,
Tonbridge
Kent
Tel: (01732) 360630

Golf:

Poult Wood Golf Centre

Higham Lane,
Tonbridge
Kent TN11 9QR
Email: leisureservices@tmbc.gov.uk
Website: www.poultwoodgolf.co.uk

Churches:

All Saints Church, Tudeley

Tudeley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 0NZ
Tel: (01732) 357648
Website: www.tudeley.org

Haysden Country Park
Lower Haysden Road,
Tonbridge, Kent
Tel: (01732) 876172
Website: www.tmbc.gov.uk

Tudeley Woods RSPB Reserve
Hadlow Place
Tonbridge
TN11 0BW
Tel: (01273) 775333
Website: www.rspb.org.uk

Oldbury Hill
Igtham Common
Tel: (01732) 823570
Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Manor Park Country Park
St Leonard's street
On A228
West Malling
Tel: (01622) 817623
Website: www.kent.gov.uk

Leybourne Lakes Country Park
On the A228 off the Ham Hill Roundabout
Snodland
Tel: (01634) 243397
Email: leisure.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground
The Slade, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HR
www.tmbc.gov.uk

Tonbridge Farm Sportsground
A227 Darenth Avenue, Tonbridge. TN10 3JF
www.tmbc.gov.uk

Trosley Country Park
Waterlow Road Meopham DA13 0SG
01732 823570
www.kent.gov.uk

Tourism Figures: Key headline figures for Tonbridge for 2006

- It is estimated that around 234,976 overnight tourism staying trips were made to Tonbridge in 2006. Of these trips, domestic visitors made 85% of trips (199,144) and overseas visitors made 15% of trips (35,832). £32,192,934 was spent by those staying visitors on their trip.
- It is estimated that around 2.2 million tourism day trips were made to Tonbridge in 2006, generating a further £71,382,505 trip expenditure.
- In total £103,575,439 was spent by all visitors on their trip. In addition, expenditure by friends and relatives on visitors, and visitors spend on second homes (i.e. maintenance) generates a further £8,942,000. With the addition of other expenditure tourism activity generated £112,517,439 expenditure.
- Of this expenditure, £105,470,000 translates into direct income for local business; and a further £31,641,000 of income is generated through indirect and induced effects (a total of £138,111,000 business turnover).
- This income supported 2,095 FTE jobs and 2,865 Actual jobs. Overall it is estimated that tourism expenditure supported 4% of local employment.
- It is estimated that 10% of total trip expenditure went towards the cost of accommodation. Approximately a third of total trip expenditure (33%) was spent in catering establishments and 30% was spent in the retail sector. Approximately 10% of total trip expenditure went on visits to attractions and other entertainment. Finally, the remaining 17% of total trip expenditure was spent in the transport sector.

*Figures from Cambridge Model 2006

Accommodation figures for Tonbridge:

Type of Accommodation	Bedrooms/ Units/Pitches	Bed spaces
Caravan & Camping	215	870
Self catering (Cottages, Barns & Houses)	36	118
Serviced (Hotels, B&B's & Inn's)	523	1,004

*Information sourced by Tourism South East

Population Figures

	Male	Female	Total
Population (Mid 2006)	55,800	58,200	113,900
Population Forecast	-	-	-
2011			113,000
2016			115,200

Source: Population Estimates Unit, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

To find out more visit your local Visitor Information Centre:

Tonbridge Castle Customer Services TIC
Tonbridge Castle,
Castle Street,
Tonbridge,
Kent TN9 1BG
Tel: 01732 876322
Fax: 01732 770449
Email: Tonbridge.castle@tmbc.gov.uk

Useful Tourism Contacts:

**Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Leisure Services Officer (Culture/Tourism)**
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent, ME19 4LZ
Tel: 01732 844522
Fax: 01732 842170
www.tmbc.gov.uk

Visit Kent
Kent County Council
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XX
Tel: +44 (0) 1622 671411
www.visitkent.co.uk
www.visitkent.co.uk/business

