



# RUGBY

## The Official Guide



## Welcome to Rugby

Rugby is known throughout the world as the birthplace of a game played today in more than 70 countries. Players and enthusiasts are drawn to the town as the spiritual home of a great game.

But to the people who live and work in Rugby, the Borough has much more to offer than its unique connection with a ball game. It's a place where businesses grow and prosper, where shopping is a pleasant, relaxed experience and where you're never far from the peace from the beautiful English countryside.



*The home of Rugby football visitor centre*

The Borough of Rugby covers an area of 87,949 acres (35,620 hectares) in Warwickshire, with picturesque villages scattered around the town of Rugby. All around the Borough there are sites, which celebrate its rich 2000-year history, which began when Rugby was an important market centre on the main routes from Leicester to Oxford and from Northampton to Coventry.

Two millennia later, Rugby is still enjoying the benefits of being at the crossroads of England, easily reached by road and rail and attracting investments in exciting new business areas. Rugby people can look forward to new opportunities in business and leisure while looking back on 2000 years of growth. Visitors and residents alike can learn about the past and enjoy the present in a borough, which makes the most of its history and its natural environment.

In the pages of this guide you can read about the many places where you will be welcomed as you explore Rugby. The impressive new Art Gallery and Museum, the James Gilbert Rugby Football Museum, the village where conspirators waited to hear about the Gunpowder Plot, country parks and canal trips.... just a few of the many attractions of this area of great character and interest.

Whether you live in Rugby or you are visiting the Borough, this guide will provide invaluable information to help you find your way around.

For more information or for copies of information leaflets contact the Visitor Centre or the Town Hall, or visit [www.rugby.gov.uk](http://www.rugby.gov.uk).

## Rugby Visitor Centre and Pathway of Fame

The Centre is the Official Tourist Information Centre. It offers information on places to visit and special events, an accommodation booking service, box office, National Express Agency, a great selection of gifts and souvenirs and Rugby Discovered, an entertaining audio-visual introduction to the area and its famous connections. The Visitor Centre is also the starting point for the Rugby Pathway of Fame, a unique way to explore the town combining the heritage of rugby football with local places of interest.

Full details about Rugby and the area are available from 4-5 Lawrence Sheriff Street, Rugby CV22 5EJ, Telephone (01788) 534970.

Email: [visitorcentre@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:visitorcentre@rugby.gov.uk)

---

## Rugby Art Gallery, Museum and Library

Rugby's new Art Gallery, Museum and Library is an historic building of the future. Opened at the start of the new millennium, it is an impressive home for the Tripointium Collection of Roman artefacts, a social history gallery reflecting the Borough's more recent past and Rugby's renowned collection of modern art.

Many visitors enjoy the facilities of the new library in the same stunning building in Little Elborow Street. Call in not just to borrow books but to access the Internet, research family history or read newspapers and magazines.

Art Gallery and Museum: Telephone (01788) 533201.

Email: [rugbyartgalleryandmuseum@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:rugbyartgalleryandmuseum@rugby.gov.uk)

Or visit the web site: [www.rugbygalleryandmuseum.org.uk](http://www.rugbygalleryandmuseum.org.uk)

Rugby Library: Telephone (01788) 533250.

Email: [rugbylibrary@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:rugbylibrary@warwickshire.gov.uk)

## Rugby School Museum

The award-winning museum brings to life the heritage of this famous school, reflecting on its place in the history of rugby football and the lives of its more notable pupils. From the museum, you can join a tour of Rugby School to visit its impressive buildings and learn about its history. Call the museum for details.

Telephone: (01788) 556109.

## The James Gilbert Rugby Football Museum

Visit the museum, which faces Rugby School in St. Matthews Street, to absorb yourself in the history of the game, which started at Rugby School. This is the building where, since 1842, Gilberts have made their world-famous footballs. The museum is a treasure trove of fascinating photographs, documents and artefacts relating to the game of rugby football and its origins in Rugby. The Rugby Experience gives visitors from all over the world a chance to capture the thrill and excitement of the game and buy souvenirs from the Gilbert's Factory Outlet.

Telephone: (01788) 333888.

## Regent Place and the Rupert Brooke statue

At the end of Regent Street, in the town centre, the road widens into a pleasantly landscaped open space, at the centre of which is a bronze statue of Rupert Brooke, the famous English poet. Brooke was born in Rugby and was a pupil at Rugby School. He wrote some of his best-known poetry in the town.

## Guy Fawkes and The Gunpowder Plot

In the attractive village of Dunchurch, with its rows of thatched cottages, you will find a splendid half-timbered house, which it is thought, was once the Lion Inn. In this building, on November 5 1605, a group of conspirators waited to hear whether a plot to blow up Parliament and King James 1 had been successful. But of course the Gunpowder Plot was unsuccessful and the conspirators failed in their attempt to restore the Catholic faith to prominence in England. The building is now known as Guy Fawkes House.

---

## Rugby Radio Station – helping the world keep time

Another of Rugby's landmarks is the Radio Station, to the east of the town. There are 12 masts, each 820 ft high in a 1,600-acre (648 hectare) site. Opened in 1926, it made history as the world's most powerful transmitter. It is now used for the Standard Frequency Service emitted for the National Physical Laboratory. Coded time 'pips' enable remote clocks to be controlled to within an error of one second in 3,000 years.

## Travel and Transport

Rugby is at the heart of England and road travel is excellent with direct access to the M1, M6, M45, M69 motorways and the A5, A45 and A14. There are good rail links, with London less than an hour away and Virgin trains to Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales, Glasgow and other northern destinations. There are also local trains to Birmingham, Northampton and Milton Keynes. There is a fast service to Gatwick Airport via Olympia.

Birmingham International Airport is 30 minutes drive away and the East Midlands International Airport is 40 minutes away. Coventry Airport is 15 minutes away for freight transport. A few miles from the town is DIRFT rail freight terminal to speed products to and from Europe.

## The local economy

Given such excellent communications it is not surprising that industry and commerce in Rugby has grown spectacularly in recent years. There are now 17 industrial estates in the Borough and hundreds of firms of all sizes providing a wide diversity of products and services. Despite all this industry and commercial activity one of the prime industries in rugby is farming. Rugby is, in fact, one of the most important farming areas in Warwickshire, with around 500 farms and small holdings.

## International friendship

### Rugby's Twinning with Evreux

The Twinning between Rugby and a town on the European mainland was the idea of the late Mrs Elizabeth Monck, during her mayoral year, and first contacts were made with Evreux, in Normandy, France in 1958 when the first 'exchange' was a radio broadcast quiz. The following year formal twinning charters were signed by the mayors of the two towns at public ceremonies and since then several thousand townspeople have crossed the Channel for a variety of annual exchanges, including a wide variety of cultural societies, sports organisations, schools (both junior and senior), colleges, individual students, families, police and fire brigade services, and civic groups.

There have also been work placements. Exchanges have been funded on a reciprocal basis but the local authority does make a financial grant to the voluntary Rugby-Evreux Twinning Committee to cover administration expenses, and to a separate Sports Twinning Association. Townspeople interested in exchanges with Evreux should contact the twinning committee's secretary, Mrs Françoise Griffiths, 92 Ashlawn Road, Rugby CV22 5ER.

### Rugby's link with Rüsselsheim

This began in 1977, completing the twinning triangle with Evreux in France. Since then, hundreds of people, including school-children, sports folk, musicians and many more, have enjoyed two-way twinning visits, the lack of the German language in Rugby people being no bar at all to the activity.

Anyone interested in knowing more should call the Twinning Association Chair, Leslie Turner on:  
Telephone: (01926) 633755.

---

## The Armorial Bearings

The arms of Rugby Borough Council were conferred on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1976. They incorporate the arms of the former borough granted in 1932.



The griffins' heads, the red rose and the lions' 'gambs' originate from the arms of Lawrence Sheriff, the founder of Rugby School. He was a wealthy grocer in the time of Elizabeth I. The griffins' heads are a reference to the arms of The Worshipful Company of Grocers.

The gold 'bezant' enclosing the red rose is a reference to his business activities. The thunderbolt on the crest represents the electrical industry, one of the first industries to become established in Rugby at the turn of the century, and the wheel in the centre of the crest represents the mechanical industries of the town. The bear and the ragged staff are from the arms of Warwickshire County Council. The eight 'bezants' on the green border each represent five of the parishes of the former rural district.

For those interested in heraldry, the arms consists of:

Per chevron engrailed Azure and Or in chief a Bezant charged with a Rose Gules barbed and seeded proper between two Griffins' heads erased Or and in base a Bear erect Sable collard and supporting a Ragged Staff Gules all within a Border Vert charged with eight Bezants. On a Wreath of the Colours A Thunderbolt Or the flames proper charged with a wheel sable between two Lions Gambs erased Or each holding a Date branch fructed proper.



*Arnold Street Community Garden*

The motto is

**FLOREAT RUGBEIA MAJOR - MAY GREATER RUGBY FLOURISH**

---

## How the town of Rugby grew

At the time of the Great Domesday Survey, Rugby was known as ‘Rochberie’ – ‘roche’ meaning stone and ‘berie’ an important place. There were only 19 inhabitants at that time. By Elizabethan times the name had changed to ‘Rokeby’. It was not until the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the town became known as Rugby. Rugby was only a large village until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the coming of the railway led to its rapid industrialisation and a corresponding increase in population.

The town once had a castle, built by Sir Henry de Rokeby in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This was in the site where the statue of Rupert Brooke now stands in Regent Place. The castle is believed to have been used as part of King Stephen’s defence system against his cousin, Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I. It did not survive for long and was demolished by order of King Henry II only 20 or so years after it was built.

Henry II granted a market charter for rugby in 1255. The number of market days gradually increased and came to include horse and cattle markets and a Martinmas Cheese Fair.

The public school is still a strong influence on the development of Rugby and its most famous landmark. This was established by a local merchant, Lawrence Sheriff, in 1567 after the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII had left the town’s ‘gentle folk’ with no educational establishment for their offspring. Previously, education had been largely the domain of monks. By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, rugby’s population had increased to almost 17,000. Today it is about 80,000.

Many traces of the old Rugby can still be seen – not only in the attractive buildings of Rugby School but in the many small streets, nooks and crannies, buildings and monuments in the town centre. They exist side by side with modern rugby – a busy, bustling town with good shopping and thriving commerce and industry.

---

## Town Centre

An interesting range of quality shops giving old-fashioned service makes shopping in Rugby town centre a relaxed and rewarding experience. Rugby offers a unique mixture of shops. You don't come here for hectic big-city shopping. You shop in the town because it's easy to park, you enjoy strolling along the mainly traffic-free streets and you appreciate the choice offered by smaller specialist shops trading alongside branches of the national chain stores.

In the summer the town centre is a blaze of colour. Through partnership between traders and the Borough Council, the Borough has won the Britain in Bloom award. Strolling through the parks and streets or lingering in one of the many and varied cafes and restaurants, you will appreciate Rugby's very special ambience.



*Rugby's Oldest Shop*

What makes the town special for you? It may be the way the town's history mingles with the present day, from the William Webb Ellis statue to the splendid new Art Gallery, Museum and Library. It may be the way tourists walking the Pathway of Fame mingle with shoppers in the outdoor market on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays or the farmers' market held on the fourth Thursday of every month. It may be the chance to recapture the joys of shopping in a relaxed and friendly environment where you are never far away from a good cup of coffee or a bite to eat.

Look out for the special events held regularly in the town centre, such as the Continental Market, the Music Live festival or the Christmas events, and ask yourself "Why shop anywhere else?"

## The history of rural Rugby

The Borough of rugby contains some of the most picturesque villages in England. In many of them the visitor will find beautiful old churches, pretty cottages and the still visible signs of hundreds of years of English history. Nearly every one of the Borough's villages has a special tale to tell – of ghosts, or treachery, or famous names in England's past. All are steeped in history and one can trace the steps of famous men of days gone by such as Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Malory, or see the traces left behind by the monarchy, the Church and the Civil War.

### ANSTY – once owned by Lady Godiva

In Saxon times Ansty was one of the villages owned by Lady Godiva. Later it was let to Nicholas Ansty, who gave the village its name.

During the reign of Henry VII it was sold to George, Earl of Shrewsbury, for £352.

The church was rebuilt in 1856 but some of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century masonry of the old church still remains. The 17<sup>th</sup> century Ansty Hall is also of interest.



*Ansty Golf Club*

### BILTON – House of Pugin



*Bilton Green*

The church is built of red sandstone and was restored in 1873. Nearer to Dunchurch than to Bilton is Bilton Grange, now a preparatory school but formerly a country house built by Pugin 1841-46.

### BINLEY WOODS – Monks' Gallows

Referred to as 'Bilne' in early records, the village of Binley had, at the time of the Norman Conquest, woods that were 'half a mile long and a furlong broad'. In the time of Edward I there were two windmills and a watermill. The monks of Coombe Abbey had a gallows here and a court house.

### BIRDINGBURY – Unusual church

This small village is recorded in the Domesday Book as 'Derbinggerie'. It was given to the Benedictine Monks by Leofric, Earl of Mercia, when he founded the Coventry Monastery. Birdinbury Hall is an interesting Jacobean house. And the parish church has a most unusual design – the west front is Georgian but the rest of the building dates from 1873. Its dome is a copy of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. Inside the church there is an 18<sup>th</sup> century inlaid pulpit and box pews. Henry Homer, the accomplished scholar and pioneer of agricultural reform, was born at the Rectory.

---



## **BOURTON AND DRAYCOTE – Reservoir and thatched cottages**

Bourton has several old thatched cottages, at least one of which is 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Gothic-style parish church contains a 14<sup>th</sup> century octagonal font and the oak pulpit is dated 1607. The church was restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the clerestory, north aisle and the porch were added. The register dated from 1560.

Also In this parish is the small hamlet of Draycote and Draycote Water – a one mile square reservoir completed in 1969 which now provides a splendid haven for wildlife, as well as a place of recreation.

## **BRANDON AND BRETTFORD - A castle and a fort**

Brandon, the larger village, still retains the earthworks and fragments of rubble of its 13<sup>th</sup> century castle. The castle was garrisoned in the time of Richard I and overthrown by a force of barons, adherents of Simon De Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who were holding Kenilworth Castle against Henry III.

Bretford, once a market centre, derives its name from the former ‘broad ford’ a few yards east of the bridge over the River Avon (Bretford Bridge was mentioned as early as 1279 and had to be repaired in 1653 after damage in the Civil War).

## **BRINKLOW – Boating centre**

Standing on the Oxford Canal, this village is now a well-known boating centre. The name is Saxon, and is thought to be derived from ‘Brink’, meaning edge and ‘Lowe’ or ‘hlaw’, meaning tumulus or hill. The earthworks of the Norman castle, more than 40ft high and 60ft across, once guarded the Fosse Way.

In the middle ages Brinklow became an important market centre – the charter was granted by King John in 1217. The church was built during the 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The list of rectors and patrons goes back to 1252.

## **BURTON HASTINGS – Perpendicular style**

This village is to the north of the Borough, close to Nuneaton and Hinckley. The name Hastings comes from the Hastings family, which held the Manor in the reign of Henry III. The small church once owned by nearby Nuneaton Monastery, is largely Perpendicular in style and was restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **CHURCH LAWFORD – American connections**

This parish is recorded as ‘Leileford’ in the Domesday Book. The church still retains some 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century features, although it was rebuilt in 1872. The pulpit is Jacobean and there is some handsome 17<sup>th</sup> century panelling in the chancel. The register includes the names of several of the ancestors of J.A. Garfield (1831-81), the second American president to be assassinated in office. Among the other interesting buildings in the village are the Rectory, the public house and the Elizabethan manor house.

## **CHURCHOVER – Roman site**

This village, to the north of Rugby, is in the River Swift valley. The church and the village are on a hill, hence the name.

---

The 12<sup>th</sup> century church was rebuilt in Victorian times. The tower built in 1885, is in Perpendicular style. The font and a sculpture in the south aisle are Norman. There are several 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century monuments and some beautiful stained glass.

The village also contains a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century building – Coton House, now a Post Office Management College, said to be of Samuel Wyatt's design. There was once a village of Coton, presumably destroyed when the original Coton House was built in Elizabethan times. On the eastern boundary of the parish is the site of the Roman settlement of Tripontium. Roman coins and pottery from this site are on display in Rugby Museum, where you can learn about what life was like in Roman Tripontium.

## **CLIFTON-UPON-DUNSMORE – Sold the bible to buy a bear**

The name of this village is derived from the fact that it stands on a hill, or cliff.



*Church Gate, Clifton-upon-Dunsmore*

It is thought that there was a church here before Norman times but the present building is 13<sup>th</sup> century, with a massive 16<sup>th</sup> century tower top. It originally has a spire, but this was pulled down in 1639 to save on repair costs. A bear is sculptured in the west face of the tower.

This was the crest of the Berefoot family and gave rise to the (untrue) story that the people of the parish sold the church Bible to buy a bear!

Oliver Cromwell is said to have been a pupil at Clifton, of the Rev. Samuel Carte, father of Thomas Carte the historian.

## **COMBE FIELDS – Parish with no village**

Although this is one of the largest parishes in the Borough, it has no village! The original settlement, known as Smitham in the Domesday Book, has long since lost its population. The 14<sup>th</sup> century church was converted in the 16<sup>th</sup> century into a house, Peter Hall. To the west is Coombe Abbey, whose large estate is now a regional park.

Originally founded in 1150 by Cistercian Monks, Coombe Abbey became the richest monastic house in Warwickshire during the 13<sup>th</sup> century. After the dissolution of the monasteries the Abbey passed through many hands and was eventually rebuilt by the first Lord Harrington as an Elizabethan house, incorporating three sides of the Abbey cloisters. For 300 years the house was the home of the Earl of Craven and one of the most splendid residences in the county.

## **COPSTON MAGNA – The centre of Roman England**

This is one of the smallest of the Borough's parishes. Its name is derived from 'Copst' the owner of the parish in Saxon times. The village has a small 19<sup>th</sup> century church and a 'High Cross', which is the site of the Roman town of Cleychester – the centre of Roman England.

## **COSFORD – Hamlet with two fords**

This tiny parish is on the banks of the River Swift. The hamlet lies amid fields, close to the river, which has two fords, hence, the name.

---

## DUNCHURCH – Guy Fawkes' house

This lovely village is rich in history. A place of importance since Saxon times, it is one of the largest parishes in the Borough. The church, set in the heart of the village, was built during the 14<sup>th</sup> century by the monks from Pipewell Abbey. It has a splendid 15th century sandstone tower, a Norman font, and 15th century panels in the chancel stalls and one of the oldest parish registers in England.

The Guy Fawkes' House is close to the church. On 5 November 1605, the conspirators of the Gunpowder Plot met here – it was the Lion Inn – to await the news that Westminster has been destroyed. When Guy Fawkes was arrested instead, the plan to seize Princess Elizabeth from Coombe Abbey was abandoned and the conspirators planned the rebellion, which led to their defeat.

There are a great many more interesting buildings in the village – charming rows of thatched cottages, for instance. There is a school house dating from 1707, the White Lodge, a very handsome house with magnificent 18<sup>th</sup> century wrought iron gates, and the Dun Cow Hotel, with its heavy Victorian porch, looking in to the Market Cross and the village stocks.

Dunchurch was granted a market charter in 1608 and this, combined with its monthly cattle fairs, continued until 1660. The Dun Cow was a famous coaching inn where up to 40 pairs of horses could be stabled. Its name is derived from the Dun Cow that was killed by Guy, Earl of Warwick, on Dunsmore Heath. The cow was said to be a giant beast, four yards high and six yards long.

## EASENHALL – Converted chapel



*Easehall*

This is a small and pretty village. It has a chapel, which is about 100 years old, which has been converted into a village community centre.

## FRANKTON – Held by monks

Close to the RIVER Leam, this village was known as 'Francheton' at the time of the Domesday Survey. It was held in part by Roger, Earl of Shrewsbury, but until the dissolution of the monasteries, most of it was held by the monks of Coventry.

The 17<sup>th</sup> century manor house has a 14<sup>th</sup> century door and a fine Georgian staircase, said to have come from the priory at Warwick. The church was largely rebuilt to Scott's design in 1872, but the original tower remains, 13<sup>th</sup> century in its lower storeys and Perpendicular above.

## GRANDBOROUGH – A gift from Leofric

As well as the village of Grandborough, this parish also includes the hamlet of Woolscott. It was one of the 24 'towns' given by Leofric, Earl of Mercia, to the priory of Coventry, when it was founded at the time of Edward the Confessor. The church is mostly Perpendicular, although the spire was added in the 18th century.

---

## **HARBOROUGH MAGNA – Connections with the Bishop of Durham**

The parish includes not only Harborough Magna village, but also the hamlets of Harborough Parva and, on the bank of the Oxford Canal, Cathiron. The present church is mostly 14<sup>th</sup> century with restorations made in 1869. A former headmaster of Rugby School, Dr. Holyoak, was rector here from 1712 to 1731 and a Bishop of Durham, Dr. Lightfoot, was a curate in 1854.

Harborough Parva was at one time owned by the monks of Coombe Abbey and Harborough Parva Hall was the home of Sir Egerton Leigh, a descendant of Henry VIII.

## **HILLMORTON – With the church by the locks**

This used to be formed by two distinct settlements, Hull or Hulle (Hill) or that part of the settlement on the bank and Moor Town or Moreton on the marshy ground by the church. In the Domesday Book the population is shown as 170. The church dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and was endowed by the de Astley family. It is close to Hillmorton Locks in the Oxford Canal. The Locks are still operational.



### **KINGS NEWNHAM – Norman building**

Look out for the isolated and ruined church tower, all the remains of a Norman foundation.

### **LEAMINGTON HASTINGS – Birthplace of a philosopher**

The name of this large parish is derived from the River Leam and from the Hastings family who owned the manor here in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The village was the birthplace of Richard Congreve, the Positive philosopher. The church dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, although it was much altered in 1887. The carved wooden pulpit is 15<sup>th</sup> century, the font is 16<sup>th</sup> century and the oak screen in the north aisle is Jacobean.

The village has almshouses built during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and now converted into flats. The parish also includes the hamlets of Hill and Kites Hardwick and the scattered village of Broadwell.

## **LITTLE LAWFORD – One-armed ghost**

This is the smallest of the three Lawford parishes and one of the tiniest parishes in the Borough. The hamlet has no church and most of the original 17<sup>th</sup> century Hall was pulled down in 1790. The present Hall dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and is said to have been haunted by the ghost of one-handed Boughton, who lost an arm during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, and used to drive a ghostly coach and six across the grounds.

## **LONG LAWFORD – Gothic-style church**

Long Lawford is one of the most highly populated parishes in the Borough. In the Domesday Book it was described as 'Lellevort' or 'Lelleford'. The Gothic style church dates from 1839. There is also a Methodist chapel.

---

## MARTON – Ancient Bridge

Marion derives its name from ‘moortown’, a reference to the marshy land south of the village. The church of St. Esprit was rebuilt in 1871 but the tower and south arcade are from the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The bridge over the Leam retains masonry on its south-west side from the time of Henry V when a ‘fair bridge of lime and stone; was built by John Middleton, a local man who became a wealthy London Mercer. The bridge is now scheduled as an ancient monument. There are some 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings surviving in the village.

## MONKS KIRBY – Home of Benedictine monks

The name comes from the Priory, founded here in 1077 by Geoffrey de Wirce as a cell of the Benedictine Abbey at Angiers in France. The Priory stood on the north side of the present church but very little of it remains. The church, however, is an imposing 14-15<sup>th</sup> century building with a massive vaulted west tower and south porch.

The parish includes the site of the former village of Cestersover, and Newnham, the estate that was the seat of the Earl of Denbigh for five centuries.



*Monks Kirby*

## NEWBOLD-ON-AVON – Disused tunnel

Newbold is on the Oxford Canal and had been part of Rugby since 1931. There are two canalside pubs and next to the churchyard is a disused tunnel of interest to the canal explorer.

## NEWNHAM REGIS – Healing spring water

In the time of Elizabeth I, baths were built alongside the Avon and the waters were thought to provide a cure for gout, rheumatism and dyspepsia. The baths were much in favour during the 17<sup>th</sup> century but little remains of them now. There have been some fascinating archaeological finds in the area – prehistoric animals and signs of habitation by ancient Britons.

## NEWTON AND BIGGIN – Publisher’s birthplace

This parish includes the site only of the village of Biggin which, at the time of William the Conqueror, was known as ‘Home’, meaning island, because it occupied a position between the River Avon and a brook and was often isolated by flood water.

Newton was the birthplace of Edward Cave, an 18<sup>th</sup> century publisher who produced the famous ‘Gentleman’s Magazine’, many of the early works of Dr. Johnson and reports of debates in Parliament 40 years before the start of Hansard.

## **PAILTON – ‘Modern’ village**

The village is more modern than some of its neighbours – no records exist of it before the reign of King Edward III. A manor was owned here by the family of Corbet in 1520. The church, although Norman in style, was built in 1884. There are several 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the village.

## **PRINCETHORPE – Haven from the French Revolution**

Princethorpe is noted for its Roman Catholic boarding and day school, which stands in a 200 acre (81 hectare) estate and incorporates the buildings of the former St Mary's Priory, which came into being in 1832. It was for French Benedictine nuns from Montarquis who had escaped from the Revolution in 1792 and been given asylum by the Prince Regent.

The oldest buildings, dating from 1833-7, are the school, the school enclosure and the old church. The very ornate 'new' church, with its tall tower, was designed by Pugin and consecrated in 1901.

## **RYTON-ON-DUNSMORE – Ancient ceremony**

This is one of the most highly populated villages. Despite much recent industrial and residential development, the village retains features of its historic past, including the parish church, which is one of the oldest in Warwickshire. Built in the 11th century, it has Norman doorways, a 13th century font and a handsome 14th century tower with pinnacles and parapet.

On the Rugby side of Ryton is Knightlow Hill, where the ancient monuments of Knightlow Barrow and Cross stand. Here, before sunrise on November 11th each year, one of the oldest English customs takes place as it has done for 1,000 years. This is the collection of the 'Wroth Silver'. The Lord of Knightlow Hundred was granted his Charter by Charles I, and with it many rights and privileges including the 'Wroth Monies'. Many theories have been suggested as to the origin of the payment. One of the more likely is that it was a charge for the right to graze cattle, or as a payment to the Lord of Knightlow Hundred for the maintenance of various lanes and roads. The ceremony calls for 25 villages to make payment to the Lord of the Hundred, who is the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.

Ryton is now also the home of Ryton Gardens, a national centre for organic gardening.

## **SHILTON – 16<sup>th</sup> century hall**

The village church, heavily restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1865, retains a 15th century tower and early English lancet windows in the chancel. The parish extends north and west and includes the hamlet of Barnacle, which has a 16th century hall richly endowed with internal timber work.

## **STRETTON – ON- DUNSMORE – Elaborate monument**

There are several half-timbered 16th and 17th century houses in the village, including the Manor House and Moor Farmhouse. The 18th century 'Shoulder of Mutton Inn' is one of the few inns to retain its own Friendly Society, which was founded in 1776.

The church was rebuilt in 1835-37. It is a handsome building with several interesting features, including the west gallery, the 17th century stained glass and an elaborate monument to William Clark, who was incumbent here in the early 19th century.

---

## **STRETTON BASKERVILLE – Deserted village**

The name of this parish originated with the Baskervilles, who held the manor in the time of Henry I. During this time it was held by Thomas Twyford and later by Henry Smith who, between them, it is said, caused its decay and depopulation. There is no village here today, only the site which is registered as a deserted village in the list of Ancient Monuments.

## **STRETTON-UNDER-FOSSE – Connection with Thomas Malory**

The village consists of a short street of 15th, 16th, 18th and 19th century cottages, many of which are half-timbered, and an 18th century Congregational Chapel. On the eastern side of the parish is the extensive park of Newbold Revell, named after the family of Revell who once held it as lords of the manor. Built in 1716 for Sir Fulwar Shipwith of Warwick, the building has a beautifully symmetrical facade topped by ornamental balustrading and urns. The rooms contain several Adam fireplaces as well as overmantels carved in the Grinling Gibbons tradition.

Thomas Malory was once Lord of Newbold Revel and an M.P. for Warwickshire. He was arrested in 1451 for his part in the Wars of the Roses. He is famous for his 'Morte d'Arthur', which he wrote in prison, where he died in 1470.



*Thurlaston*

## **THURLASTON – 18th Century windmill**

Thurlaston was referred to as 'Torlavestone' in the Domesday Book, probably after one of its Saxon possessors. It still has the old stocks and an 18th century windmill, which is now without its sails. The church was built to Butterfield's design in 1849 as the village school, with the tower used as the headmaster's house. It was used as a church on Sundays only.

## **WIBTOFT – Roman town**

This parish has a tiny village whose name is thought to be Danish in origin. The church retains some medieval stonework. High Cross, site of the Roman 'Venonae' is nearby and, together with the neighbouring parish of Copston Magna, lies on the site of the old Roman town of Cleychester. Wibtoft was written 'Wibetot' in the Domesday Book and was held by the Earl of Mellent. Before this it belonged to Ulfric Spot, the founder of Burton Abbey.

## **WILLEY – Annual Fair**

This is another village with a small population. It became important when, with a charter granted by Henry III, it started having an annual fair and weekly market. The 14th century church was largely rebuilt in the 1860s.

---

## **WILLOUGHBY – Willow trees**

The name of this village is said to be derived from the willow trees that once grew here by the brook. The church has a fine decorated tower that is otherwise of the Perpendicular style. The pulpit is 17th century and the font is Norman and hewn from a single block of sandstone.

## **WITHYBROOK – Easter sepulchre**

Withybrook takes its name from witheys, or willows, that grow by the brook. The parish includes the site of Hopsford, a former village and now an Ancient Monument. The church is mostly Perpendicular and has a very elaborate Easter sepulchre in the chancel.

## **WOLSTON & MARSTON – Secret press**

The south part of the main street of Wolston is very pretty, with a stream flowing through it and the houses on either side approached by way of small bridges.

Wolston Priory, a Tudor house with a fine mullion windowed front, stands on the site of a Benedictine Priory that was established in the 11th century as a cell of the Abbey at Dinan in France. Here, on a secret press the pamphlets were printed, attacking the church, which led to the execution in 1593 of John Perry, their author. He was known as the father of Welsh non-conformity.

The parish church is a mixture of styles. It has a central tower and other interesting features include 17th century communion rails and an octagonal font.

## **WOLFHAMPCOTE – Derelict church**

Although there is no longer a village here this is an extensive parish. It was once known as 'Ulfmescote' after a Saxon possessor. Traces of the foundations of the old village can be seen near the abandoned and derelict 13th century church.

## **WOLVEY – Twenty seven windmills**

Called 'Ulveia' in the Domesday Book after 'Ulf' or 'Wulf', a Saxon possessor, Wolvey covers the largest area of all the parishes in the Borough. At its centre is the parish church, which has a beautifully carved Norman south doorway, a Victorian chancel and a 14th century font.

In the Middle Ages, there were many knitters and millers in Wolvey and at one time there were 27 windmills. Wolvey Hall was built in 1889 but it contains an old staircase dating from 1677.

---



## Places of Special Interest

### Rugby School – historic seat of learning and home of Rugby football

Rugby School is one of the most famous public schools in the country. As well as being known throughout the world as the birthplace of the game of Rugby, the school has a long line of distinguished former pupils and headmasters. They include Dr Thomas Arnold, Matthew Arnold, Lewis Carroll, Rupert Brooke and, more recently, Salmon Rushdie.

The school was founded by a local merchant, Lawrence Sheriff, in 1567. He left land and money, which enabled the school to be created. Some of that money derived from an estate in London, part of which is still held and administered by the school. The oldest school buildings, Tudor in style, have a fine frontage to Lawrence Sheriff Street with two tower gateways, the most splendid of which leads to The Close, a 17-acre (7 hectare) sports ground. Parts of the building, including the Headmaster's house and the Quadrangle, were built between 1808 and 1820. An extension scheme was begun at the time of the Tercentenary and this included the construction of the new Quadrangle.

In 1872 the original Chapel was rebuilt by William Butterfield and given a tower 105 feet high. This is the most conspicuous feature of the school buildings today. The interior of the Chapel was restored in 1960 to its original state of rich decoration. One of its many stained glass windows, the gift of Dr Thomas Arnold, was brought from a monastery in Flanders and is believed to be the work of Albrecht Durer. Several other stained glass windows are from the Netherlands and date back to the 16th century. There are also monumental effigies, or portrait medallions, of former headmasters and former old boys, including Dr Temple, Dr Benson, Dean Stanley, Arthur Hugh Clough and Walter Savage Landor.

Adjoining the Chapel is a beautiful stone building with remarkable windows, which are part of the School's memorial to the 684 Old Rugbeians who fell in the Great War of 1914-18. The other part of the memorial is a lantern cross outside the new Big School. The building also incorporates a memorial to the 350 Rugbeians who died in the 1939-45 war.

The Temple Reading Room and Library is a striking building, standing in its own grounds, with a statue on the front lawn by Brock of Judge Thomas Hughes, the author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays." The Speech Room was opened by King Edward VII in 1909 and The Close was opened by The Queen on a visit she made with Prince Philip in 1967 to celebrate the School's Quartercentenary.

The famous 'Island', an old moated tumulus, is on the south-eastern side of The Close and is scheduled as an ancient monument. A granite slab on the 'Doctor's Wall' commemorates the sporting exploits of William Webb Ellis.

Rugby School has had some very distinguished members of staff. Two masters became Bishops, three became Archbishops of Canterbury and the great headmaster, Dr Thomas Arnold, changed the face of education in the public schools of England.

### Rugby Museum

The award-winning museum brings to life the heritage of this famous school, reflecting on its place in the history of rugby football and the lives of its more notable pupils. From the museum, you can join a tour of Rugby School to visit its impressive buildings and learn about its history. Call the museum for details. Telephone: (01788) 556109.

---

## The James Gilbert Rugby Football Museum

Visit the museum, which faces Rugby School in St Matthews Street, to absorb yourself in the history of the game, which started at Rugby School. This is the building where, since 1842, Gilberts have made its world-famous footballs. The museum is a treasure trove of fascinating photographs, documents and artefacts relating to the game of rugby football and its origins in Rugby. The Rugby Experience gives visitors from all over the world a chance to capture the thrill and excitement of the game and buy souvenirs from the Gilbert's Factory Outlet.

Telephone: (01788) 333889.

## The William Webb Ellis statue

Standing opposite the Gilbert Rugby Football Museum is the statue of William Webb Ellis. He was the Rugby schoolboy who in 1823 with a fine disregard for the rules of football picked up the ball and ran with it. The statue is by the Yorkshire-based sculptor, Graham Ibbeson and was created thanks to financial donations from around the world.

## Regent Place and the Rupert Brooke statue

At the end of Regent Street, in the town centre, the road widens into a pleasantly landscaped open space, at the centre of which is a bronze statue of Rupert Brooke, one of England's most famous poets. Brooke was born in Rugby and was a pupil at Rugby School. He wrote some of his best-known poetry in the town. The statue, erected in 1988, stands on an area of land where Rugby's castle stood in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The castle was built on the orders of King Stephen as part of his fortifications against the Empress Matilda, his cousin. It was demolished a mere 20 or 30 years later, by order of Henry II.

## Clock Tower

One of Rugby's best-known landmarks is the Clock Tower, which stands in the centre of the town at Market Place. The tower is 43ft high and was built in 1888 - at a cost of £500 - to mark the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria the previous year. At the crossroads of two important routes across the Midlands, the site became the centre of activity some 2000 years ago and remains so today.

## Rugby Theatre

The Rugby Theatre, in Henry Street, is run by the Rugby Theatre Society, which regularly performs plays and musicals. Other amateur theatre groups also use the premises from time to time. Full length feature films are shown here regularly. For details of forthcoming events, pick up a programme from the Visitor Centre, look in local press or;

Telephone: (01788) 534970.

Or visit [www.uktw.co.uk/clubs/rt.htm](http://www.uktw.co.uk/clubs/rt.htm)

Email: [rugby.theatre@btinternet.com](mailto:rugby.theatre@btinternet.com)

## Percival Guildhouse

An independent centre for adult education and the arts, Percival Guildhouse was built in 1842 by Matthew Bloxham. It was bought in 1925 as a memorial to Dr Percival, a pioneer of adult education and a former headmaster of Rugby School. The Centre is governed by a Guild Council. It runs a variety of courses and is the local centre for the Open University.

---

The Percival Guildhouse is next to Rugby Library.

Telephone: (01788) 542467.

Or visit: [www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk](http://www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk)

## Rugby Visitor centre and Pathway of Fame

The Centre is the Official Tourist Information Centre. It offers information on places to visit and special events, an accommodation booking service, box office, National Express Agency, a great selection of gifts and souvenirs and Rugby Discovered, an entertaining audio-visual introduction to the area and its famous connections. The Visitor Centre is also the starting point for the Rugby Pathway of Fame, a unique way to explore the town, combining the heritage of rugby football with local places of interest. Full details about Rugby and the area are available from 4-5 Lawrence Sheriff Street, CV22 5EJ.

Telephone: (01788) 534970.

Email: [visitorcentre@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:visitorcentre@rugby.gov.uk)

## Rugby Art Gallery, Museum and Library

Rugby's new Art Gallery, Museum and Library is an historic building of the future. Opened at the start of the new millennium, it is an impressive home for the Tripontium Collection of Roman artefacts, a social history gallery reflecting the Borough's more recent past and Rugby's renowned collection of modern art.

Many visitors enjoy the facilities of the new library in the same stunning building in Little Elborow Street. Call in not just to borrow books but to access the Internet, research family history or read newspapers and magazines. The Library is open for seven days of the week.

Telephone: Art Gallery and Museum (01788) 533201

Or visit [www.rugbygalleryandmuseum.org.uk](http://www.rugbygalleryandmuseum.org.uk)

Email: [rugbyartgallery&museum@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:rugbyartgallery&museum@rugby.gov.uk)

Telephone: Rugby Library (01788) 533250

Email: [rugbylibrary@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:rugbylibrary@warwickshire.gov.uk)

## Rugby Town Hall and Benn Hall

These splendid buildings were opened in 1961 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. The Town Hall is the home of the Borough Council. It is linked with the Benn Hall, which commemorates George Charles Benn, who died in 1895 leaving to the Local Board property and £6,000 to “be used to erect a building likely to be useful to the town of Rugby.” Benn Buildings were built in 1900 and used as municipal offices until 1936.

## Exploring attractions in and around Rugby

Whether you live in the Borough of Rugby or you are paying a visit, it is worth taking time to learn about its more famous residents and its architectural and natural heritage. Many places are open every day throughout the year, but some are not, so it is best to call to check times when you are planning a visit.

---

## **Around the town – people and places**

There are some fine 19th century houses scattered around the town. Several were designed by William Butterfield, the Victorian architect. There is also a late Georgian inn, the Three Horse Shoes in Sheep Street and an even older half-timbered house in Chapel Street, probably the oldest building in Rugby and thought to be more than 600 years old. The Elborow's Almshouses in St John Street are dated 1707. The almshouses in Stephen Street date back to 1858.

At the corner of Hillmorton Road and Church Walk is the house where the famous poet Rupert Brooke was born. At 28 Bilton Road a plaque commemorates the residence of Dr D Gabor, the inventor of holography.

Rugby is noted for its fine church architecture, including the Anglican Parish Church of St Andrew in the heart of the town. Designed by William Butterfield, it is full of character with some 14th and 15th century masonry retained from an earlier building. St Marie's Roman Catholic Church, on Dunchurch Road, was designed by Pugin and the Church of St George in St John's Avenue; Hillmorton was built in the early 1960s and is one of the best modern churches in Warwickshire.

Close to the church at Bilton is Bilton Hall, built in the early 17th century by Edward Boughton of Lawford. It has mullioned windows and a porch dated 1623. Later sections date from the 18th century. Not far away and dating from around 1600 is Long Barn, a timbered house that probably began life as a barn.

Brownsover Hall is another noteworthy building of the 19th century. Designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, this house, now a hotel is built of red and blue brick, with an excellent porch tower that ends in a steep roof with, beside it, the spire of the polygonal stair turret.

## **Guy Fawkes and the gunpowder plot**

In the attractive village of Dunchurch, with its rows of thatched cottages, you will find a splendid half-timbered house, which it is thought, was once the Lion Inn. In this building, on November 5th 1605, a group of conspirators waited to hear whether a plot to blow up Parliament and King James I had been successful. But of course the Gunpowder Plot was unsuccessful and the conspirators failed in their attempt to restore the Catholic faith to prominence in England. The building is now known as Guy Fawkes House, and is privately owned.

## **Rugby Radio Station – helping the world keep time**

Another of Rugby's landmarks is the Radio Station to the east of the town. There are 12 masts, each 820ft high on a 1,600-acre (648 hectare) site. Opened in 1926, it made history as the world's most powerful transmitter. It is now used for the Standard Frequency Service emitted for the National Physical Laboratory. Coded time 'pips' enable remote clocks to be controlled to within an error of one second in 3,000 years.

## **Organic gardening at Ryton Gardens**

Ryton Gardens, between the villages of Wolston and Ryton-on-Dunsmore, is the head office of the Henry Doubleday Research Association, Europe's largest organic gardening organisation. There are more than 32 beautifully themed gardens, a fascinating place to visit at any time of the year.

---

Ryton Gardens has the national organic education and exhibition centre, a shop and a restaurant serving organic food.

Telephone: (02476) 303517

Or visit [www.hdra.org.uk/ryton](http://www.hdra.org.uk/ryton)

Email: [enquiry@hdra.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@hdra.org.uk)

## Coombe Abbey – fun in an historic setting



*Coombe Abbey*

Coombe Abbey Country Park welcomes visitors throughout the year to almost 400 acres (162 hectares) of pathways, woods and lakes in the grounds of Coombe Abbey, landscaped by Capability Brown. There are trails, guided walks, a children's adventure playground and a programme of outdoor events.

You can relax in the restaurant and learn more in the visitor centre. Telephone: (02476) 453720 for details of special events.

Although only a few parts of the original monastery remain, its history goes back to 1150 when the land was given to the Cistercian monks by Roger de Mowbray. Over the years the Abbey has been associated with the War of the Roses, Lady Jane Grey, the Gunpowder Plot and the English Civil War. The monastery was dissolved in 1539 and sold to the Craven family who owned it until 1922. The Abbey is now a luxury hotel and conference centre.

Telephone: (024) 7645 0450

Or visit [www.coombeabbey.com](http://www.coombeabbey.com)

## Museum of country bygones

Visit the village of Marton, not far from Coombe Abbey, to see a wide range of exhibits reflecting rural agriculture from the 19th century.

Telephone: (01926) 633361

## HM Prison Services Museum

How would you feel if your children were publicly flogged for playing football in the street? Did you know that William Jarvis was sentenced to six hours in Rugby town Stocks for drunkenness in 1870? Visit HM Prison Service Museum to find out about punishment and imprisonment from medieval times to the present day. Admission is free.

---

Open Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm. Saturday and evening opening available by special request. Guided tours and group bookings by prior appointment.

Telephone: (01788) 834168

### **Rainsbrook Valley Railway**

Open to visitors on the third Sunday of the month from April to October. Share the enthusiasm of members of the Rugby Model Engineering Society as miniature locomotives go around the half mile-long track. The railway is in Onley Lane about a mile south of Rugby Town Centre.

## Enjoying Leisure Opportunities

A tour around Rugby, the countryside beckons, tempting you to walk, cycle, fish, take to the canal in a boat or join in any number of sports. The town is especially lucky to have a multi-facility leisure centre and athletics track. Draycote Water is one of the most popular places for sailing in the Midlands.

### Sport On the Rivers and Canals

Anglers will find good fishing at various locations on the rivers Avon and Swift, where chub, dace, roach, pike and perch abound. There is coarse fishing at Stanford Reservoir and trout fishing at Draycote Water, which is also popular with walkers and birdwatchers.

For those who prefer being on the water, the Oxford Canal offers excellent cruising facilities. Sailing and windsurfing are popular at Draycote Water, where championships and races are held frequently by the Sailing Club.

### Sports with balls of all shapes and sizes

Rugby is, of course, the home of Rugby football, so it is not surprising that the Rugby Football Club, known as The Lions, is one of the oldest in the country. It was formed in 1873.



*Rugby Lions Football Club*

The club is based at the Webb Ellis Sports Ground and many famous players have worn its colours, including H T S Gedge, L J Percival, G S. Conway and S J Purdy. Other clubs in the Borough include Rugby Welsh, AEI, St Andrews, Newbold and Old Laurentians.

Those inclined to quieter sports may enjoy a game of bowls. There are bowling greens throughout the Borough, including Caldecott Park. There is a modern indoor bowls centre with eight rinks next to the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre and the Rugby Thornfield Indoor Bowls has an outdoor green.

Cricket is popular throughout the Borough. The town's premier team is based at the Webb Ellis Sports Ground and cricket can also be watched at Rugby School.

The 18-hole course at Rugby Golf Club is on the road to Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, close to the Oxford Canal, and at Brandon is the 18-hole Coventry Municipal course (Telephone 024 765 43141). Ansty provides an 18-hole "Pay as you Play" course. There is also a private course at Whitefields Hotel and Golf Complex at Thurlaston. Football is also well supported within the Borough, with many thriving adult and junior clubs.

Hockey is a popular sport in Rugby, with teams fielded by Rugby Hockey Club and GEC/AEI Rugby in the Midland League. There are public tennis courts at Caldecott Park and several private clubs throughout the Borough.

---

## Ken Marriott Leisure Centre



*Ken Marriott Leisure Centre*

This modern indoor sports centre offers a heated indoor swimming pool, leisure pool, an aquaslide, large and small halls, squash courts, sauna/team room, two fitness training studios, changing facilities, a cafeteria, bar and crèche. There is an all-weather athletics track and there are facilities for disabled people. Among the activities that can be enjoyed here are athletics, badminton, basketball, climbing, five-a-side, judo, keep-fit, sub-aqua, swimming, squash, table-tennis, trampolining, volleyball and weight training. For full details of activities at the center call (01788) 550303.

## Taking to the country

There are riding stables at Brandon and Bretford. You can also explore the countryside on foot or on a bicycle, following routes described in leaflets published by Rugby Borough Council.

Look out for local wildlife in the Borough's three nature reserves, at Cock Robin Wood, Newbold Quarry park and the nature corridor, which runs for more than four miles through the center of Rugby, known as Great Central Walk.

## On two wheels

Several clubs are involved in improving motorcycling standards and organising competitions and other events. They include the Rugby Motorcycle Club (and the Blue Coats, a junior display team), the Rugby Junior Motorcycle Club and the Pennant Club. The Auto Cycle Union has its headquarters in Rugby. There are two cycling clubs - the Rugby Racing Cycling Club and the Rugby Velo Club, which organises rides from The Paddocks Corner, Hillmorton Road. For information on any of the clubs or activities mentioned, contact the Visitor Centre on (01788) 534970 or ask for a Sports Directory from the Library, Town Hall or Visitor Centre.

---



## Travel

Being at the centre of the country, Rugby's communications are excellent. Rugby's Railway Station was once the largest in Europe and it is still an extremely important one, not only to nostalgic railway enthusiasts but also to modern commuters! There is a high-speed electrified route to London, which means that travellers can reach the Capital in less than one hour.

Day-time trains to London are approximately hourly (with additional trains for commuters) while local trains to Birmingham, Northampton, Milton Keynes and other principal stations in the regions are also approximately hourly. There are also Virgin West Coast Mainline trains to Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales, Glasgow and other northern destinations. There is a fast service to Gatwick Airport via Olympia.



General train enquiries telephone 08457 48 49 50.

Or visit: [www.railtrack.co.uk](http://www.railtrack.co.uk)

Bus services in and around Rugby are provided by Stagecoach Midland Red and by some other bus companies. There are frequent services throughout the town and regular buses further a field to places such as Coventry, Leicester, Daventry and Northampton. Call Traveline on 0870 608 2608.



Many of the villages in the Borough have a regular shopping service to and from Rugby. There are direct coach services to many destinations including Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool and Plymouth.

Birmingham International Airport is about half-an-hour's drive away and East Midlands International Airport is 40 minutes.

Road travel to and from Rugby is excellent with direct access to the M 1, M6, M45, M69, A5, A45 and A14.

---

## Rugby Borough Canals

The canals within Rugby's boundaries pass through beautiful countryside and provide opportunities for many leisure pursuits such as boating, walking and fishing. The canals are part of a 2,000-mile, 200-year-old network of canals and rivers across the country managed by British Waterways, whose local office is at the historic Stop house at Braunston.



*The Oxford Canal*

At Atherstone, the Coventry Canal passes through a series of locks, linking Coventry northwards to the River Trent, the Potteries and other points in the West Midlands. From its connection with the Coventry Canal at Hawkesbury Junction, the Oxford Canal runs south and east through attractive rural farmland, close to the settlements of Ansty, Brinklow and Newbold. At Hillmorton the Oxford Canal rises by 20 feet with the aid of three pairs of locks and continues south east to join the Grand Union Canal at Braunston, eight miles away. From there, it is possible to reach London, Leicester, Oxford and Warwick.

Closer to Rugby there are facilities for boaters at Hillmorton Locks. Newly built is a development of eleven craft units, in an attractive courtyard setting, adjacent to the locks. The lock-side is also home to British Waterways' national planning, design and landscape offices and the operational base for the maintenance of the northern section of the Oxford Canal.

For those who want to experience the delights of the inland waterways, water boats can be hired from a number of places in the Borough. At Stretton-under-Fosse, Rose Narrowboats operates a canal shop and boat hire base. Near to the centre of Rugby, Willow Wren operates from Rugby Wharf and at Clifton Wharf, Clifton Cruisers provides hire craft and boat repair facilities. For those wanting to moor their boat in Rugby there is a thirty-berth marina at Hillmorton Wharf.

It is also possible to enjoy the canals from the towpath. The Oxford Canal Walk, a National Waterway Walk established in 1995, links Oxford and Coventry. The 83 miles of stunning countryside and fascinating historical towns are popular to all visitors to the canal corridor. With its own unique canal features, Rugby is a significant focus of the walk. A number of circular walks incorporating the canal have recently been established and a copy of this guide can be purchased from the Stop House and Rugby Visitor Centre.

Close to Rugby is the site of a national boat show. Crick Marina, next to the village of Crick and two minutes from junction 18 of the M1, hosts the three-day Crick Boat Show. This friendly event held over the late May Bank Holiday combines a three-day waterside festival with a trade show for all things inland waterway.

---

For further information about the many aspects of the local waterways and how to enjoy them, contact Customer Services, British Waterways, The Stop House, Braunston, Northants, NN11 7JQ.

Telephone: (01788) 890666.

Or visit: [www.britishwaterways.co.uk](http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk)

[www.crickboatshow.com](http://www.crickboatshow.com)

---

## Departments at Rugby Borough Council



*Town Hall, Rugby*

Local government services are provided in the Borough by Rugby Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and parish councils. Police services are provided by Warwickshire Police Authority and health services through Warwickshire Health Authority and Rugby Primary Care Group. Severn Trent Ltd provides water and sewerage services.

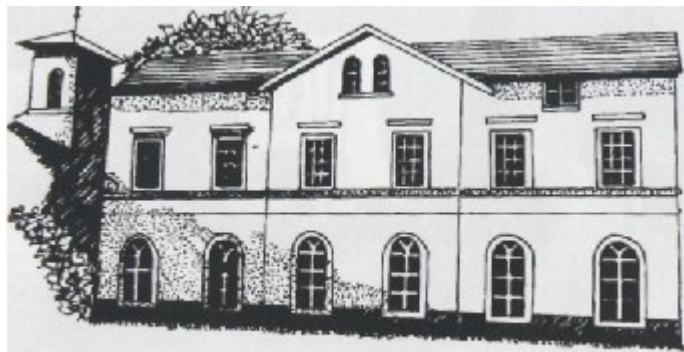
### Rugby Borough Council

Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby CV21 2LB  
Telephone: (01788) 533533. [www.rugby.gov.uk](http://www.rugby.gov.uk)

The Borough Council provides essential services such as housing, planning, environmental health, refuse collection and leisure services. The Borough Council carries out highway functions as the agent of the County Council.

All the Borough Council's departments are at the Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby, with the exception of the Housing and Environmental Health Department, which is at The Retreat, Newbold Road, Rugby.

Meetings of the Council and its committees are organised on a ten-weekly cycle, although the Planning Committee meets more frequently to consider planning applications. The Council has 48 elected members representing 22 wards.



*The Retreat*

Council, Cabinet, Committee and Panel meetings are held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall and generally start at 5.30pm, with the exception of the full Council meetings, which start at 7pm. The annual meeting of the Council starts at 11 am.

Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings, although they are allowed to participate only in special circumstances. Papers relating to the meetings and details of councillors can be obtained from the Member Services section at the Town Hall on (01788) 533521.

### Chief Executive's Office

The Chief Executive is responsible for the corporate management of the Council and is its principal adviser on matters of policy. She is responsible for corporate planning - reviewing and monitoring the Council's objectives and plans in all areas of the Council's activities for example housing investment programmes, publication of performance indicators and other significant projects.

The Chief Executive is the Electoral Registration Officer and acts as the Returning Officer for local and parliamentary elections. The Chief Executive's Office undertakes the Council's personnel, training and industrial relations work, Mayoral services and emergency planning.

---

It is also responsible for the administration of committees, civic events and the registration of licences. Media and communications, audit services, electoral registration and the organisation of local and parliamentary elections are also undertaken by the Office.

## Corporate Services Department

The Department is responsible for providing all the financial services for the Council, including collecting Council Tax and administering benefits. It also provides legal, administrative services and information technology services for the Council.

## Department of Housing and Environmental Health

The Department deals with all aspects of housing in the Borough, environmental services, economic development and tourism. Environmental health covers a wide range of issues, including food safety and hygiene, the control of pollution, health and safety of workers and the dog warden service.

## Technical Services Department



*Rugby Art Gallery, Museum and Library*

The Department is responsible for building control, engineering, (including highway maintenance), street cleansing, markets, refuse collection and waste recycling. It is also responsible for the Council's planning function, including the preparation of the Local Plan and the control of development together with environmental projects, leisure services, arts and cultural facilities.

## Works Services Unit

The Council has a Works Services Unit based at 94 Newbold Road, Rugby. This carries out work for Council departments.

## Warwickshire County Council

Warwickshire County Council is responsible for services such as education, social services, libraries and the fire service. Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RA.

Telephone (01926) 410410 [www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

## Rugby Social Services Office

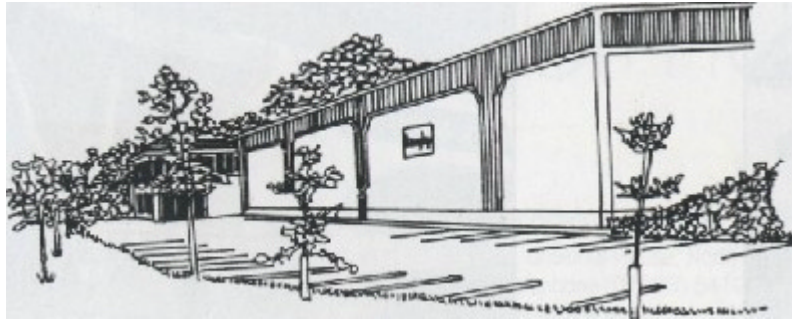
Services may be provided by the Social Services Department or arranged by them with another agency such as a voluntary organization. Services can include home care, meals-on-wheels, residential and nursing care, day centres, aids and adaptations for people with disabilities, specialist child care support, fostering and adoption, registration and inspection of play groups, child minders and residential homes. Contact the Rugby Social Services Office, Oakfield Park, 32 Bilton Road, Rugby, CV22 7AL.

Telephone: Rugby (01788) 541333.

---

## Industry & Commerce

Rugby is at the heart of England – and at the heart of the Country's motorway and rail networks. It is therefore an ideal centre for industry and commerce.



Road travel to and from Rugby is excellent with direct access to the M1, M6, M45, M69 motorways and the A5, A45 and A14.

There are good rail links, with London less than an hour away and Virgin trains to Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales, Glasgow and other northern destinations. There are also local trains to Birmingham, Northampton and Milton Keynes. There is a fast service to Gatwick Airport via Olympia. Birmingham International Airport is 30 minutes' drive away and the East Midlands International Airport is 40 minutes away. Coventry Airport is 15 minutes away for freight transport. A few miles from the town is the DIRFT rail freight terminal to speed products to and from Europe.

Given such excellent communications it is not surprising that industry and commerce in Rugby has grown spectacularly in recent years. There are now 17 industrial estates in the Borough and hundreds of firms of all sizes providing a wide diversity of products and services.

Despite all this industrial and commercial activity one of the prime industries in Rugby is farming. Rugby is, in fact, one of the most important farming areas in Warwickshire, with around 500 farms and small holdings. There are extensive cereal crops, good grassland and fine cattle. As far as industry and commerce is concerned, some of the country's best known names have bases here - Alstom, Rolls Royce, Peugeot, Gap and Volvo, for example. Alstom and its predecessors have a long tradition of manufacturing in Rugby, dating back to the turn of the 20th century. The present Alstom companies in Rugby continue to uphold this tradition, adapting and evolving to meet the challenges of new technology while continuously developing and improving established engineering skills.

Another national giant with an important base in the Borough is Rolls Royce, whose gas turbine business is based at Ansty. The 311 acre (126 hectare) site has an interesting history - in 1935 Sir John Siddeley, head of the Armstrong Siddeley Company, set up a flying school here. Today apart from the production of gas turbines, it is also the centre for aero engine overhaul and repair. Next to the Rolls Royce site is where the telecommunications giant Marconi is building its 21st century research and development headquarters.

Another 'giant' in Rugby is the Ryton plant of the Peugeot Talbot Motor Company at Ryton. Although frequently described as being situated in Coventry, the Ryton plant is, in fact, in the Borough of Rugby, from where it attracts many of its workers.

Rugby is the long-established home of Rugby Cement, now the UK Cement Division of the RMC Group Plc, a world player in the market place. There has been a cement producing plant in the locality since the 1820s. As trade increased and new production methods improved efficiency, Rugby Cement prospered, enabling it to expand and acquire a number of companies in the industry. Rugby now has the most advanced cement production factory in the world following a major investment by Rugby Cement.

Rugby is fast becoming renowned, too, for its high-technology industries. Take, for example, Lumonics, whose products are based on the technology of pulsed solid-state laser systems.

---

This company, based on Rugby's Swift Valley Industrial Estate, makes lasers for photochemistry, photophysics & spectroscopy and holographic ruby lasers for the testing of engineering components, commercial holography and portraiture. It also makes lasers for the specialist applications, such as the measurement of plasma temperature and density of nuclear physics studies.

Industrial uses for Lumonics lasers include spot and seam welding, precision hole drilling and cutting - laser technology is helping the manufacturing industry to improve productivity and reduce production costs.



*Swift Valley Industrial Estate*

Given its central location and excellent communications it is hardly surprising that Rugby has a variety of distribution companies. Volvo Parts, which is responsible for servicing the country for truck and bus parts, is located in Rugby.

Gap, Alba Plc and Britvic also have major distribution centres.

It is not all 'giants' in Rugby, of course. There is a great diversity of companies of all sizes, which ensures all the back-up services one could need. There are many examples of companies that have grown from very small beginnings. The classic example in Rugby is that of James Gilbert's rugby footballs. In 1842, soon after William Webb Ellis first invented the game of rugby football at Rugby School, an enterprising young man by the name of James Gilbert turned his hand from making saddles to making rugby footballs. Nearly 150 years later, Gilberts rugby balls, recognised as among the best in the world, are still being made by hand in a small workshop a stone's throw from the place where the game first began.

There are also a number of commercial and other organisations with their headquarters based here, such as Relate, the Institution of Chemical Engineers, the Post Office Management Training Centre, the Institution of Public Lighting Engineers, the Auto Cycle Union, Outward Bound and Intermediate Technology.

The Rugby Chamber of Commerce, now part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, represents a wide cross-section of the business interests of the local community. It is actively involved in all aspects of local business affairs and maintains close relations with the Council. The Chamber offers a comprehensive range of specific services as well as providing a source of general information on local, regional, national and international matters.

## **Advice and Assistance to Business**

Rugby Borough Council is actively encouraging the development of the local economy. The Council is committed to working in partnership with a range of organisations such as the Small Business Service for Coventry and Warwickshire, the Learning and Skills Council, Rugby Tourism, the Rugby Partnership, the Town Centre Partnership, the County Council and District Councils and many more.

---

The Council has co-funded the establishment of a Brussels office for the West Midlands area to ensure that the many benefits of membership of the European Union can be fully exploited by local businesses.

For further information and a copy of the Industrial and Commercial Handbook please contact the Economic Development Manager, Rugby Borough Council, Newbold Road, Rugby CV21 2LG. Telephone: Rugby (01788) 533512.