

**Farnham is a town with Georgian buildings, courtyards and both narrow and wide streets. There is a Castle, Parish Church and Museum to visit, as well as the ruins of the first Cistercian monastery in England, at nearby Waverley Abbey. The town still benefits from the fact that it is a meeting place of major roads bringing, as they have done for centuries, people from far and near.**

**Did you know....**

The first traffic offence to warrant a fine, took place in Castle Street on October 17th 1895. Both the vehicle's owner John Henry Knight, and its driver, Mr Pullinger had to pay half-a-crown (12p)



**Did you know....**

At the Castle, the red brick tower visible from the town, built about 1470, was one of the first brick buildings in England.



**Did you know....**

Vernon House carries a roundel telling visitors that King Charles I stayed as a prisoner, for a night in December 1648 before going to London, and his execution there a month later.



**To find out more...**

- **Heritage Trail**  
Pick up a heritage leaflet from a Visitor Information Point and follow the trail to learn more around the heritage and history of Farnham.
- **Guided Walk**  
Take an official guided walk on the 1st Sunday of each month from Wagon Yard Car Park at 3pm April to October and 11am November to March
- **Farnham Castle**  
To learn more about Farnham Castle visit the Castle for a Guided tour on Wednesday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm or Fridays during April to August.
- **Farnham Castle Keep**  
The Castle Keep is open for audio tours between 12noon to 5pm mid March and end September.
- **Museum of Farnham**  
The award-winning Museum of Farnham (38 West Street) has a fabulous insight into Farnham's past with imaginative exhibitions beautifully set out. Open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 5pm
- **Farnham—Your Guide**  
Pick up your guide from a Visitor Information Point which gives a wealth of information on Farnham today



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An old English market town with narrow streets lined with some of the finest Georgian architecture in the south of England, Farnham has a parish church and castle dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century.

## *History of Farnham*



Read through this leaflet to discover how Farnham has evolved through the years...

There is evidence that people of the Old Stone Age or Palaeolithic Age - some 400,000 years ago - made their way along the gravel ridge above the present town. Mammoth tusks have been found within the local area and are on display at the Museum of Farnham.

Later came the Mesolithic folk and the place we now call Farnham found itself at the junction of trackways (ancient roads) from the north, south, east and west. Occupation continued around Farnham during the Bronze and Iron Ages.



Farnham Pottery as it looks today

During the Roman period, the district became a pottery manufacturing centre. There is no evidence for a Roman town at Farnham although there were many individual potteries in the area and also in the adjoining Alice Holt Forest. Some of the pottery produced was exported to London and possibly further afield.

After the Romans left, the Saxons arrived and the district gained its name 'Fearnhamme' as mentioned in the Charter of 688 AD. Fearn refers to the fern and bracken of the land and Hamme to the water meadows.

In the Charter of 668 AD, the West Saxon King Caedwalla gave the district around Farnham to the Church, in particular the Bishop of Winchester. A Saxon community grew up in the valley by the river and what traffic there was passed through on the converging roads.

The Normans arrived in Britain in 1066 and the Domesday Book records that the Bishop of Winchester held Farnham. The town is midway between



Farnham Castle as it looks today

Winchester and London and in 1138 AD Henry Blois started building the Castle. It provided a fortification at this meeting of the highways and also hospitable accommodation for the Bishop in his frequent journeying between his cathedral and the capital. The Diocese of Winchester was second only to York in importance and Kings and Queens through the centuries stayed at the Castle on the hill.

In 1128 Waverley Abbey was founded and was the first Cistercian Monastery in this country, the remains of which are still evident today and can be visited.



St Andrew's Parish Church

By 1207 the road known as The Borough was in existence and the history of medieval Farnham reveals increasing independence with the townspeople winning charters from the Bishops to increase their share of self government and take profits from markets and tolls.

In the mid 12th century the Parish Church, known as St Andrew's was largely rebuilt and has, over the years, undergone substantial alterations and extensions.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Farnham grew into one of the greatest corn markets in southern England. Soon afterwards the rich land of the Farnham valley became famous for the quality of hops grown there.

It was Farnham market, and its development from corn through wool and wheat to hops, which helped the growth of the town and the gradual rise of prosperity. As soon as one trade declined another took its place.



Pottery on view at the Museum

The railway line from London came to Farnham in 1849 and this link ensured its gradual development as a residential district. Farnham is proud of its literary heritage. William Cobbett, founder of 'Hansard' and one of the greatest writers in the English language, was born here in 1763 in what is now a public house called the 'William Cobbett'. He died in 1835 and his tombstone can be visited in St Andrew's churchyard.

Farnham is famous for the green pottery it produced and some of these items are now on display at the Museum and the oldest wood fired kiln in the Country can now be viewed at Farnham Pottery

The works of George Sturt (1863-1926), describe life in Farnham and the villages in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. His classics are 'Change in the Village', written under the name George Bourne, 'The Wheelwright's Shop', and 'A Small Boy in the Sixties'.

In 1845 the Farnham Maltings, which was once a Tannery, was purchased for £1400 by John Barrett a brewer.

In 1854, the neighbouring village of Aldershot became the "Home of the British Army". This had a significant effect on Farnham. The Army brought thousands to



The Farnham Maltings as it looks today

Aldershot just three miles away and officers found houses in the Farnham area. Another camp was based at Bordon, six miles from Farnham, and the town became a civilian oasis between the two military centres. With the arrival of the army, John Barrett seized the opportunity to enlarge his brewery and open many new pubs in Farnham.

In 1890 the Farnham Maltings was bought by George Trimmer, owner of the Lion Brewery and it became part of the Farnham United Breweries. In 1920 Courage bought the building and they operated it as a Maltings until 1956. The Maltings was then left empty for 12 years until demolition was proposed and the building was offered to the town for £30,000. A public committee was formed with the idea of creating a cultural and recreational centre. £28,000 was raised in 6 weeks and the Farnham Maltings was purchased by the residents. Today the Maltings is a thriving community arts centre with a range of activities and entertainment for all.

In 1928 Farnham Park was bought from the Church and today is a haven for wildlife and offers beautiful views over Farnham



Farnham Park

Farnham became typical of many country towns of the last 100 years with a weekly cattle market, a varied selection of shops, a bustling church life and many social activities. Small industries flourished from time to time but farming was the chief occupation of the surrounding countryside. This remained the employment situation until the Second World War.

Since 1945 Farnham has expanded, from a population of about 20,000 to the present 37,000. This has meant that more houses and shops have been required and, instead of breweries, small factory units and offices have given employment to many.