

Discover the secrets of The Old Town!

Did you know - that the Douglas Garden gets its name from the murder of the Earl of Douglas by King James II? Apparently his body was thrown into this area from a window above the garden!

Can you imagine - what life inside the Castle must have been like whenever King David I made Stirling one of the first royal burghs in Scotland? It was back in 1124, when he decided to give special favours to merchants and craftsmen who could supply the Castle with everything they needed from candles to cooking pots, and of course fine food and wine.

“Improved in temper and cleanliness” was how The Inspector of Prisons for Scotland described the convicts when he visited Stirling on 9th May 1849. He also noted that “a number of them have made a marked improvement in reading, writing, and arithmetic”, and he recorded that the chief employments were “Weaving, Net-making, Teazing oakum, and Shoe-making”.



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come and take a walk around history...

Useful Telephone Numbers

Stirling Castle: (01786) 450000

Church of The Holy Rude: (01786) 475275

Argyll's Lodging: (01786) 450000

Stirling Old Town Jail: (01786) 450050

The Smith Art Gallery & Museum: (01786) 471917

Visitor Information

Call: 08707 200 600

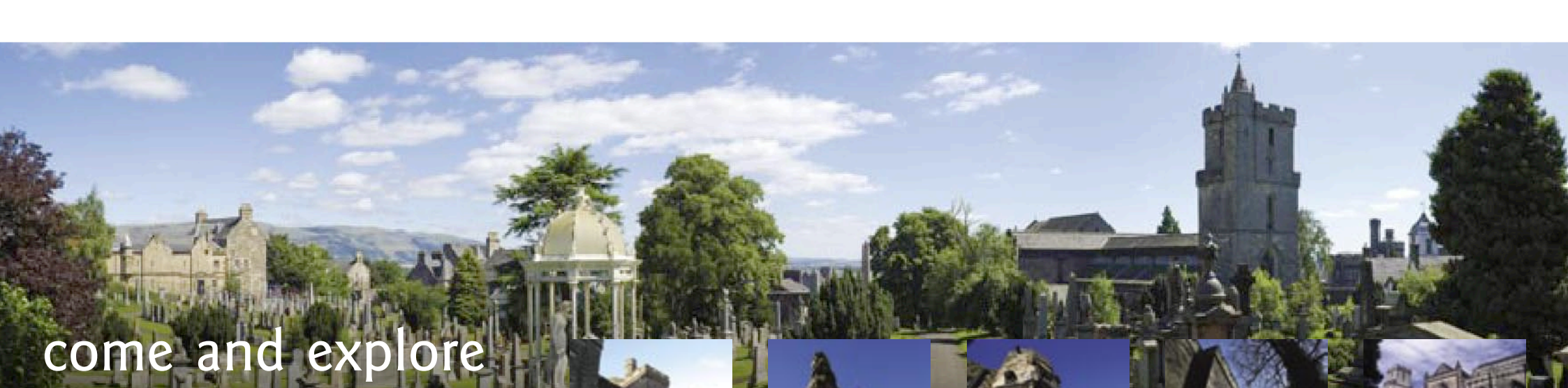
www.visitstirling.org

www.visitscotland.com

For travel information

National Traveline: Call 0871 200 22 33

or visit www.travelinescotland.com



come and explore the real heart of Stirling

History is very much alive in the cobbled streets of Stirling's Old Town. Here on this rocky outcrop, prehistoric settlers who ventured up the valley of the River Forth found a safe, dry place to live, protected by sheer cliffs on three sides.

Today, Stirling's Old Town boasts the finest concentration of historic buildings in Scotland - beautifully preserved mediaeval and Renaissance churches and mansions clustered around Stirling Castle.

For centuries the nation's Kings and Queens delighted in Stirling's fabulous location, and used the Castle as a meeting place for the royal court. Beneath its ramparts are many of the city's most fascinating buildings and monuments, from the Star Pyramid in the grounds of the Church of the Holy Rude, to the dark confines of the Old Town Jail, and the 17th Century splendour of Argyll's Lodging.

Discover the timeless treasures
of Stirling's Old Town



Stirling Castle - It's easy to see why the Stewart Kings and Queens loved Stirling Castle. As a court it was impressive, and as a residence it was sumptuous. Its great defensive walls protect some of the finest examples of Renaissance architecture in Europe. The Great Hall is the largest ever built in Scotland, and The Chapel Royal is built on the site where Mary Queen of Scots was crowned in September 1543, and where her son James was baptised in 1566 with a gold font borrowed from England's Queen Elizabeth I. The magnificent Palace was the vision of James V, and built for his bride Mary of Guise. Everywhere in the Castle there are places to explore, from the battlements to the kitchens, each with its own story to tell about this magnificent building.

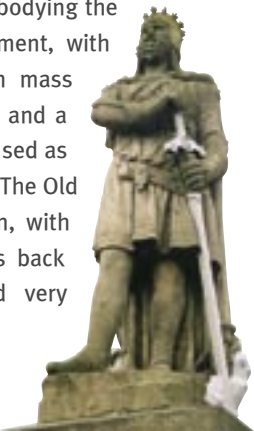
Argyll's Lodging - Scotland's most splendid example of a 17th Century townhouse. Situated on the upper approaches to Stirling Castle, its fine architecture distinguishes it as a property intended for a great nobleman to serve the royal court.

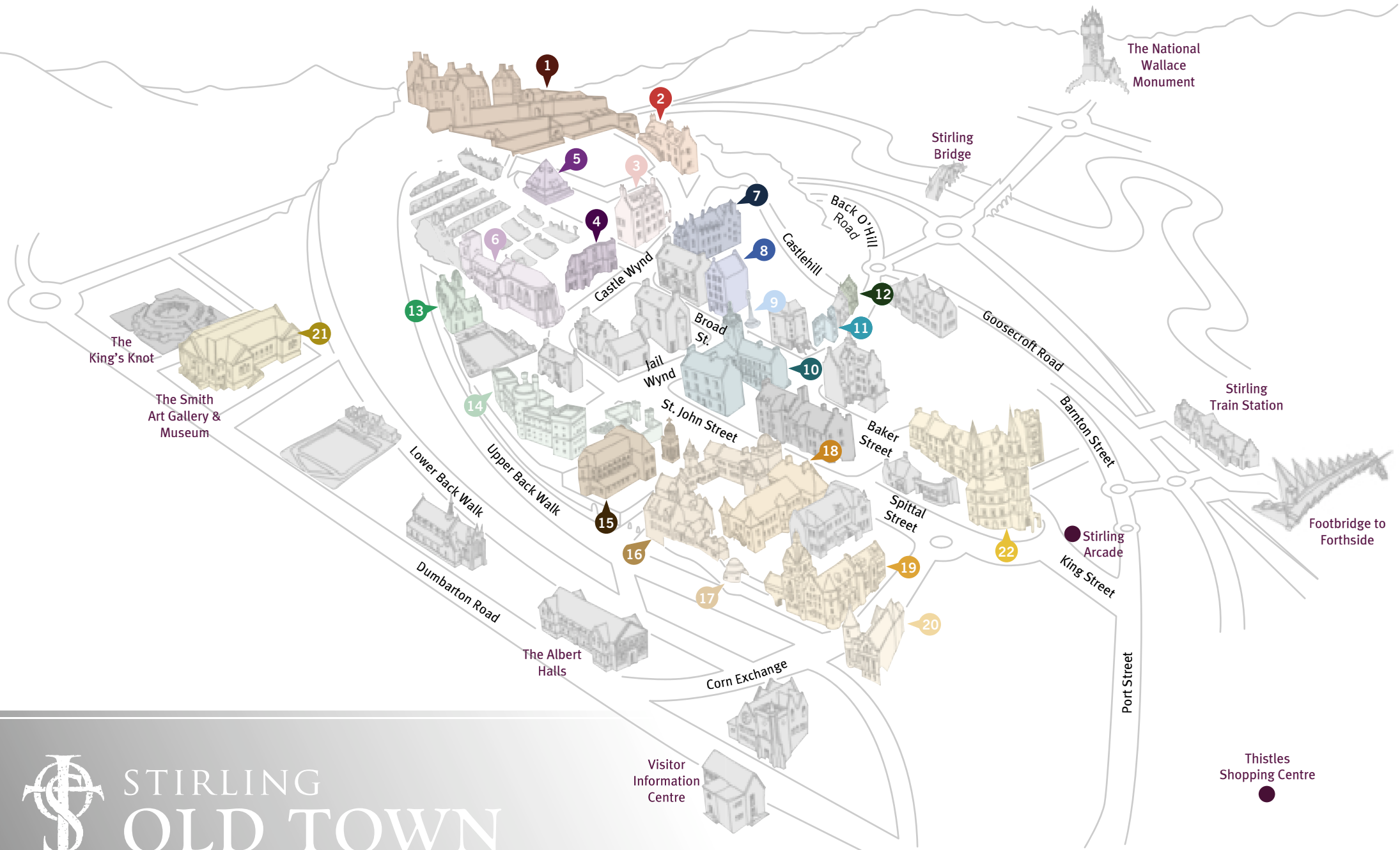
The Church of The Holy Rude - The second oldest building in Stirling after the Castle, and established in 1129 as the parish church of Stirling. After Robert II (1371 - 1390) founded an altar to the Holy Rude, the church became known as

the Parish Church of The Holy Rude of the Burgh of Stirling. "Holy Rude" means Holy Cross - giving it the same origin as Holyrood in Edinburgh. A catastrophic fire destroyed the original church in 1405, and the new church with its Gothic arches and oak-timbered roof was completed about 1414.

This was where the infant King James VI was crowned in 1567, the only church in the United Kingdom other than Westminster Abbey to have held a coronation and still be a living church today.

Stirling Old Town Jail - Opened on 11 November 1847, this was a model Victorian prison, embodying the precepts of the prison reform movement, with an emphasis on solitary rather than mass confinement, a hygienic environment, and a humane emphasis on rehabilitation. Used as a Military Prison from 1888 until 1935, The Old Town Jail is now a fascinating attraction, with live prison tours transporting visitors back to a time when justice was dispensed very differently.





STIRLING OLD TOWN

Thistles
Shopping Centre

- 1 Stirling Castle**
See The Great Hall, Chapel Royal, Great Kitchens, Outer Defences and Grand Battery, and the magnificent recreated 'Hunt of the Unicorn' tapestries. Visit the fascinating Regimental Museum of The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders. From Spring 2011 the newly restored, magnificent Renaissance Palace will be open to visitors, with the stories of the Castle and the Royal Court brought to life by costumed characters.
Tel. (01786) 450 000 www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk
- 2 Stirling Castle Clan Shop & Ticket Centre**
Entrance tickets for Stirling Castle, Scottish souvenir and Gift Shop.
Tel. (01786) 450 000 www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk
- 3 The Portcullis Hotel**
Built in 1787 as a school for boys, on the site of the previous school where King James VI was educated. Used as a Military Store by The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders before opening as a hotel.
Tel. (01786) 472290 www.theportcullishotel.com
- 4 Mar's Wark**
A remarkable Renaissance mansion built in 1570 by The Earl of Mar, Regent for James VI. The Earl of Mar lived in the building until the end of the 17th Century, and it was later repaired to house soldiers. In the 1730s the town council made plans to convert it into a workhouse, hence the name Mar's Wark.
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk
- 5 The Star Pyramid**
Located in the restored Valley Cemetery, the fascinating Star Pyramid commemorates all those who were martyred seeking religious freedom. A local eccentric is said to be interned inside the pyramid, seated at a feasting table.
www.oldtowncemetery.co.uk
- 6 The Church of The Holy Rude**
One of Scotland's finest mediaeval parish churches, which escaped destruction during the Reformation. Begun in the early 15th century and still with its original oak roof beams.
Tel. (01786) 475275 www.holyrude.org
- 7 Argyll's Lodging**
A magnificent townhouse (built in the 17th Century for The Earl of Stirling), and subsequently used as a military hospital and youth hostel. Now fully restored, in the care of Historic Scotland. Access by guided tour leaving from Stirling Castle.
Tel. (01786) 450 000 www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk
- 8 Norrie's House**
A 17th Century merchant's house, which was the home of the Town Clerk, James Norrie.

- 9 The Mercat Cross**
Once the focus of Stirling's trading activity, this marks the spot where markets would have been held. The unicorn figure at the top is known locally as "The Puggy".
- 10 The Tolbooth**
The work of the architect Sir William Bruce, responsible for Hopetoun House in West Lothian, and The Palace of Holyrood House in Edinburgh, The Tolbooth has served as a jail, as a courthouse, and has even hosted a parliament during the reign of James VI. Restored and re-opened in 2002, The Tolbooth is now an arts centre and live music venue. Café Bar.
Tel. (01786) 274000 www.stirling.gov.uk/tolbooth
- 11 John Cowane's House**
Now a ruin, this was the birthplace (1570) and home of John Cowane. He served as Stirling's MP from 1625 until 1632, and when he died in 1633 he left a considerable fortune, used to build Cowane's Hospital.
- 12 The Settle Inn**
Stirling's oldest alehouse, dating back to the 1700s.
Tel. (01786) 474609
- 13 Cowane's Hospital**
Built between 1637 and 1649 as an Almshouse for "Decayed members of the Guild of Merchants". Used as a Guildhall, schoolhouse, and hospital, it now offers facilities for tracing ancestral history. The bowling green is one of Scotland's oldest.
Tel. (01786) 472247
- 14 Stirling Old Town Jail**
An authentic Victorian jail, fully restored, with fascinating live prison tours. Meet the warden, the convict desperate to escape, and even the hangman. Rooftop Viewpoint with a wonderful view of the old city of Stirling, Exhibition, Souvenir and Gift Shop.
Tel. (01786) 450050 www.oldtownjail.com
- 15 The Erskine Church (Stirling Youth Hostel)**
Stirling Youth Hostel stands behind the preserved façade of the Erskine Marykirk, built in 1824 on the site of the original church constructed around 1740 by Ebenezer Erskine.
Tel. (0870) 004 1149 www.stirlinghostel.co.uk
- 16 The Old High School (The Stirling Highland Hotel)**
The old High School of Stirling, dating back to 1854, is now the Stirling Highland Hotel. Many of the original school house features have been retained, including a fully working observatory at the top of the building.
Tel. (01786) 272727 www.barcelo-hotels.co.uk

- 17 The Watchtower**
A circular watchtower which once formed part of Stirling's outer defences.
- 18 The Royal Infirmary**
Originally a bank and subsequently an infirmary, and now a contemporary city-centre hotel.
www.hotelcolessio.com
- 19 The Municipal Building**
Opened in 1918, with a distinctive tower. The building has an impressive stained glass window in the main staircase.
Tel. (0845) 277 7000 www.stirling.gov.uk
- 20 The Central Reference Library, Corn Exchange Road**
Andrew Carnegie, the philanthropist and billionaire, funded the construction of this building, opened in February 1904 by Provost Thomson.
Tel. (01786) 432106 www.stirling.gov.uk
- 21 The Smith Art Gallery and Museum**
A treasure house of Stirling's history, art and artefacts, and well worth a visit.
Tel. (01786) 471917 www.smithartgallery.demon.co.uk
- 22 The Athenaeum**
Constructed to the design of the architect William Stirling, the Athenaeum was originally a reading room. The foundation stone was laid on 21st June 1815, and in 1859 the statue of William Wallace was added by Rev. Charles Rogers, a driving force behind the construction of the National Wallace Monument.

