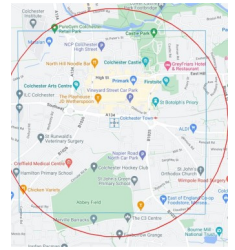




HISTORY ON OUR DOOR-STEP... ONE SQUARE MILE.



Colchester Castle

Did you Know?

- Colchester Castle is a Norman castle and dates from the second half of the eleventh century.
- The keep of the castle is mostly intact and is the largest example of its kind anywhere in Europe, due to its being built on the foundations of the Roman Temple of Claudius, Colchester.
- The keep bears a striking similarity to the Tower of London's White Tower. Colchester has the same basic rectangular design with an apsidal projection on its south east wall.
- The keep uses the foundations from the ancient Roman temple as a base and its structure incorporates Roman bricks and clays from the town as well as local stone.
- Colchester Castle has only been besieged once in its history. In 1215 a number of barons rebelled against the unpopular King John I of England. They invited Prince Louis of France (later King Louis VIII) to take the English throne. In 1216 Colchester was held by Louis' supporters and King John was forced to besiege and capture it.
- The castle remained in royal hands, but by the 13th Century it had become a county gaol.
- The castle also boasts the largest stone spiral staircase in Europe, built for ceremonial purposes.
- One of the most striking aspects of the Castle is its imposing keep, said to be the largest example of a Norman keep Britain.
- Colchester Castle was also the site of the interrogation and jailing of 'witches' in 1645 by the self-proclaimed Witchfinder General Matthew Hopkins.

