

# Saffron Walden



[www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk](http://www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk)

FOR VISITORS | FOR LOCALS | FOR YOU



#saffronwalden

# A town full of history

**Saffron Walden is a delightful medieval market town located in north-west Essex.** The name Saffron Walden comes from the valuable *Crocus sativus* crop which was cultivated here between the 15th and 18th centuries and was used for dye, cooking and medicine. Farming continued to be important into the 19th century but the saffron industry was superseded as the town's main source of prosperity by the malting and brewing industries. In recent years, saffron has been grown again in the kitchen garden area of Bridge End Garden. The crocus flowers in the autumn.

The town has long-established links with the Quakers and it was one of its wealthiest Quaker families, the Gibsons, who became great benefactors, founding the museum, library, the former bank at 12 Market Place, and the hospital, now home to the District Council offices.

A decorative moulded plasterwork, known as pargeting, is typical of this part of the country and can be seen all over the town. The Old Sun Inn in Church Street has a particularly fine example. Tours of the building may be available on selected dates.

The Old Sun Inn



## The award-winning market

A market has been held here since 1141 and market days are Tuesdays and Saturdays. Shoppers can browse and buy goods from a wide range of market stalls including fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh fish, deli foods, cheeses, health foods, bread and cakes, clothes, plants and flowers, household items, jewellery, footwear, hats, fabrics, street food and whole foods.

## Shopping

In and around Market Place, there are many independent shops and eating places. Many small business premises are located in the Rows, which were the town's shopping centre from medieval times onwards. The town is also well known for its art galleries. Food tours may be available on selected dates, enquire at the Tourist Information Centre.

## Mazes

Saffron Walden has several mazes: a hedge maze in Bridge End Garden, a turf maze on the common, a maze at Swan Meadow car park, a maze floor in the Jubilee Garden bandstand and Michael Ayrton's Sun Maze sculpture which is on intermittent display in the Fry Art Gallery.







# Places to visit

Audley End House

## Audley End House

Audley End House, including its service wing, stable block and gardens, is one of the most spectacular Jacobean houses in the country, set in an outstanding Capability Brown landscaped parkland.

Audley End House is approximately 1 mile from Saffron Walden and hosts numerous events during the summer.

[www.english-heritage.org.uk/audley](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/audley)

## Audley End Miniature Railway

Take one of our steam or diesel engines through the beautiful Audley End estate woodland, designed by Capability Brown. Boasting hundreds of majestic trees and home to a wide variety of wildlife, be sure to keep your eyes peeled as you travel around the private 1.5 mile track.

Also discover the Fairy and Elf Walk, adventure play area, nature corner, woodland café, and the gift shop. [www.audley-end-railway.co.uk](http://www.audley-end-railway.co.uk)

## Bridge End Garden

A beautifully restored Victorian garden which includes a wonderful yew hedge maze, kitchen garden, sunken Dutch garden, and visitor centre. Located 5 minutes' walk from the town centre.



Bridge End Garden



Courtney Pine  
at Saffron Hall



Fry Art Gallery

## Fry Art Gallery

Opened in 1987, the Fry houses an impressive number of works by artists of the 20th century and the present day, in particular those who settled in Great Bardfield from the 1930's onwards, such as Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious. Seasonal opening times, check website for details.

[www.fryartgallery.org](http://www.fryartgallery.org)

## One Minet Skatepark

Voted one of the top five skateparks in Europe, this park opened in June 2007 and is located to the rear of the Lord Butler Leisure Centre in Peaslands Road. The main skate park has three deep bowls and a street section. The mini skate park is suitable for beginners and younger users. [www.oneminetpark.co.uk](http://www.oneminetpark.co.uk)

## Saffron Hall

Saffron Hall is an award-winning, 740 seat performance space within the grounds of Saffron Walden County High School. This world-class venue hosts an ongoing programme of concerts and events featuring local, national and international artists. [www.saffronhall.com](http://www.saffronhall.com)

## The Old Sun Inn

The Old Sun Inn is an enchanting and much-cherished Grade I-listed historic building in Saffron Walden, displaying some of the best pargeting (external decorative plasterwork) in England. Originally medieval houses, then later an inn, the property has subsequently been in mixed commercial and domestic use. Tours of the building may be available on selected dates. [www.oldsuninn.com](http://www.oldsuninn.com)



## Saffron Screen

Saffron Walden's independent (not for profit) cinema is open every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday as well as for additional screenings during the school holidays. The cinema shows a selection of mainstream, independent, art-house and children's films as well as a wide range of special live-streamed events.

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

## Saffron Walden Museum

Displays of local history, archaeology, geology, natural history, costume and needlework, dolls and toys, ceramics, glass and 'Worlds of Man'. Next to the museum is a 'Listening Bench' which explores memories of the town from current and former residents. The museum is closed on Mondays, although the grounds remain open.

Walden Castle is located next to the museum and was built by Geoffrey de Mandeville, 3rd Earl of Essex, in the 1130s or 40s. The grade 1 listed flint and mortar ruins of the keep are all that remain today.

[www.saffronwaldenmuseum.org](http://www.saffronwaldenmuseum.org)

## St Mary's Church

St Mary's Church is the largest parish church in Essex. The earliest parts of the church date from 1250 with the majority being rebuilt between 1470 and 1525. The spire was added in 1832. St Mary's is also the venue for various local music concerts.

[www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org](http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org)



Turf Maze



St Mary's Church

## Turf Maze

Located on the Common, the turf maze (or labyrinth) is of great importance and antiquity; it is thought to be around 800 years old and is regarded as Europe's largest surviving turf labyrinth.

## Bandstand

Find the bandstand, with its maze-patterned floor, in the pleasant surroundings of Jubilee Garden in Hill Street. Also home to the Jubilee Hub, a centre for community activities.

# What can we do for you?

## Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre

Find us at 1 Market Place, beside the Town Hall.

### General information

- Tourist information, including maps and information on attractions, events and accommodation.
- Travel/public transport information
- Local business information
- Information packs for new or prospective residents
- Information on guided tours
- Accommodation booking service
- Local clubs, organisations and societies information
- Office services: photocopying, printing, scanning and laminating

### Events and tickets

- Event information including an online **What's On** calendar
- Box office for Saffron Screen, Saffron Hall and numerous other local events

### Gifts and Souvenirs

- Souvenirs, including prints, publications, local food including Essex saffron, honey, Cole's cakes and puddings, saffron crocus bulbs (seasonal), calendars, ceramics, jigsaws, jewellery, postcards and greetings cards



## Getting here

Saffron Walden is easily reached from London and Cambridge by road and rail.

For more details on rail and bus routes please visit our website **[www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk](http://www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk)** or scan the QR code.



## Get in touch




For further information about how to get here, places to visit, where to stay, local events or activities, contact;


Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre  
1 Market Place, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1HR.


**Tel** 01799 524002

**Email** [tourism@saffronwalden.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@saffronwalden.gov.uk)

**Website** [www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk](http://www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk)

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 [@saffronwaldentouristinform3216](https://www.youtube.com/@saffronwaldentouristinform3216)

 Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre

**what3words** [composed.tracking.recorders](https://www.what3words.com/composed/tracking/recorders)

### Opening hours

Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 5pm (all year)

Bank Holidays 10.30am to 1pm (Easter to August only)



SAFFRON WALDEN  
TOWN COUNCIL

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