

Presteigne has had a turbulent history, starting with its capture by the Mercians from the Welsh, which accounts for its unexpected location on the English side of Offa's Dyke. Besieged by Prince Llywelyn in 1262 and pillaged by Owain Glyndŵr early in the 15th century, by Tudor times it had recovered and was granted a weekly market. From then until the mid-19th century it hosted five annual fairs. Its position on the mail coaching road from London, Cheltenham and Gloucester to Aberystwyth made it a town of considerable importance. From the 16th century, the County Assizes were held in Presteigne, which eventually became the county town of Radnorshire. This status was lost in 1884 due to the rapid expansion of Llandrindod Wells. The town trail is intended to give the visitor a taste of this historical and architectural heritage which still exists largely intact, and to introduce the quiet character of this unspoilt and picturesque town.

13 14

St David's Street houses the **Manor House** (13), which once served as the judge's lodgings and was formerly the residence of the Bradshaws, an important merchant family. The 19th century stone front hides 16th century timber-framing. On the opposite side of the street, most of the houses date from the 18th century and were built to replace those destroyed by the great fire of 1681. At the corner with the High Street is **The Bull Hotel** (14), formerly The Old Bull, but rebuilt in the 1820s and extended over the site of the old market square adjacent.



15

The Radnorshire Arms (15), an outstanding timber framed building, is dated 1616 over the doorway. Originally the house, or an earlier one standing on the same site, belonged to Sir Christopher Hatton, one of Elizabeth I's courtiers. It passed into the hands of the Bradshaws, becoming an inn in 1792. It was soon the best known hostelry in the area, and the venue for many important social and political functions in the county. The present bar is noted for its 17th century panelling and elaborate moulded beams.

16 17

The High Street, known as The King's Highway in the 16th century, still offers a wide range of traditional shops. The 18th and 19th century shopfronts, with ornately carved brackets are a rare and precious survival. As elsewhere in Presteigne these fronts conceal much older buildings. The Georgian front of the electrical store hides the **Mansion House** (16), the oldest house in the town, originally a large 15th century hall house built gable end on to the street, a feature of the long narrow medieval plots known as burgages. Number 47 displays a fine carving of **The Green Man** (17).



18 19 20 21

The Post Office (18) occupies the site of the Old Shire Hall, while the double-jettied construction of the shop opposite (19) is a reminder of the 16th century origins of this commercial area. **The Radnor Buildings** (20) displays Arts and Craft style applied timbers with ornate plasterwork and mosaic. **Harford House** (21) was the birthplace of Sir Harford-Jones-Brydges, the East India Company nabob and one time British ambassador to Persia, where he did much to circumvent Bonaparte's intrigues in the Middle East.



22

The Assembly Rooms (22) dominate the crossroads and were built in Italianate Gothic style in 1869. The arcades at ground level, now the library, originally housed the market, while the elegant room above still caters for gatherings, concerts and exhibitions.

Bus Stop & Recycling Centre



9 10 11 12

St Andrew's Church (9) is a fine parish church. Mainly 14th century, it still contains vestiges of the original Saxon and Norman churches. It owns an outstanding 16th century Flemish tapestry. The tower, originally separate from the church itself, contains eight bells, dated 1707. Unusually, the curfew bell is still rung each evening, a practice dating from 1565, when a wealthy cloth merchant, John Beddoes, made its ringing a condition for the continuation of the Grammar School which he founded in the town in a small building (11) on the edge of the graveyard. **Garrison House** (12) was the former headquarters of the Radnor Militia and then the Royal Radnor Rifles. **The Church Hall** was formerly a school (10).



Stapleton Castle - 1/2 mile

6

Lugg Bridge spans the River Lugg, the border between England and Wales and dates from the 17th century. House names such as Tan House (tannery) and Old Laundry reflect the former industrial past of this area. The jettied building, **Bridge Inn** (6), was originally The Old Bridge Inn.



2 3 4 5

Broad Street, formerly Great Street, dates from the 13th century and connects the early settlement near the river and the Church to the High Street. Many of the buildings are medieval in origin, but most were refronted in the late 18th century. Notable classical detailing can be seen on **Clarence House** (2), **Harley House** (3) and on **Roseland** (5), home of 19th century artist J M Ince. **Well House** (4) has a spring in the cellar, the water from which emerges into a bucket further down the street!



START HERE

1

The Judge's Lodging (1), formerly The Shire Hall, was opened in 1829 on the site of the former County Gaol. Designed by Edward Haycock, it was not only the judicial centre for the County, but also home to the Radnorshire Constabulary. In 1970 the last judge donned his wig here and it now houses an award-winning museum.

23 24 25

Newells Ironmongery Shop (23) in Broad Street was established in 1770 and survived for over 200 years until 1974, when the Museum of Welsh Life purchased its extraordinary collection of over 3000 stock items, much dating from the 19th century and in mint condition (some of which are on show in The Judge's Lodging). **The Dukes Arms** (24), named after the Duke of Chandos, is the oldest inn in town and was home to the last (and longest routed) mail coach in the UK. **The Red House** (25) was once the home of Rear Admiral Puget, after whom Puget Sound on Vancouver Island was named.

East Radnor Leisure Centre
John Beddoes School

Leominster
Hereford

