Welcome to Croft Castle

Toilets (including accessible toilet and baby-change) and tea-room (10am to 4pm. Last orders 3.30pm).

- second-hand bookshop open 10am to 4pm
- closed

Wheelchair accessible entrance to walled garden.

Walking in the parkland?

Please keep dogs on leads and under control as there are sheep and cattle grazing. Please close all gates behind you.

Please be aware that there are pools of water in the parkland.

Don't forget to visit the newly recreated natural play area (follow the brown walk).

Castle open, 11am to 4pm, last entry 3.30pm.

Second-hand bookshop Open 10am to 4pm

Please help us look after Croft and put litter in bins provided or take it home with you. Dog waste bins can be found in the car park.

Please be aware that the site closes at 4pm and gates will close shortly after. Garden gate in arch locked at 3.30pm.

Car park and welcome point

Key:
- Car park
- Designated Parking
- Visitor Reception & Information
- WC
- Accessible WC
- Café
- Shop - second-hand bookshop open
- Plant Sales - closed 10am to 4pm
- Play area
- Buggy Pickup Point
- Picnic area
Walks at Croft Castle and parkland

Croft is an ancient and secluded estate set amidst rolling hills in the Welsh Marches. The locality has been occupied for at least 2,500 years. Iron Age farmers lived on the Croft Ambrey hillfort and since then, around 30 generations of the Croft family have resided here for almost 1000 years.

Highlights of the walks
Here are some of the features to look for as you walk around the estate. The numbers relate to those on the map.

Fishpool Dingle Walk
A pleasant route through the ‘Picturesque’ wooded valley, following forest paths and some newly restored natural tracks. Follow the pumphouse way-makers. Distance: 1½ miles - Time: Max. 1 hour, Easy-Medium. Mostly flat, some slopes and steps, muddy in places - please wear suitable footwear. Parts of the valley are grazed, so remember to keep dogs on leads.

Fishpool Dingle Walk
Here are some of the features to look for as you walk around the estate. The numbers relate to those on the map.

Dogs welcome
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FOR ORANGE WALK, PLEASE FOLLOW ORANGE WAY-MARKERS AND PUMPHOUSE SYMBOLS.

For green walks, please follow the bird symbols.

Highwood Walk
Explore some of the lost carriage rides and restored historic paths through Fishpool Valley. Follow the bird way-markers. Distance: 3 miles - Time: Max. 2 hours. Medium. Steep slopes and steps, woodland valley. Challenging terrain. Parts of the valley are grazed, so please wear suitable footwear. Parts of the valley are grazed, so remember to keep dogs on leads.

For purple walk, please follow the bird symbols.

Natural Play Area
Made using natural, renewable and recycled materials. Distance: ¾ mile - Time: Max ½ hour, Easy. The play area is regularly assessed for safety by the council but please be advised to make your own assessment of the play equipment before your child uses it - thank you and enjoy. Dogs welcome on leads only. Children must be supervised at all times.

Ancient Tree Walk
Take in the magnificent ancient oak chestnut and beech trees as well as the stunning views of the castle and surrounding countryside. Distance: 1½ miles - Time: Max. 1 hour, Easy. Some flat surfaced paths and parkland suitable for all terrain pushchairs.

Quarry Oak
- Thought to be the most ancient oak at Croft and up to 1000 years old with a girth of between 9-12 metres.

Chesnut Avenue
- This was the original formal approach to the castle. A story says sweet chestnuts were taken from captured Spanish vessels and planted at Croft between 1850 and 1860 to represent the formal battle plan of the ships at the Armada.

Hawthorns
- These old Hawthorns are planted as though within an orchard. One explanation is that they were the stockist plants for a mediaeval orchard and when they died the stockist took over.

Chesnut
- Looking to your left you can see a 100 year old chestnut tree and also newly planted ones grown from their seeds.

William Oak
- A 500 year old oak tree named after Sir William Croft who supposedly died under this tree after being shot in the civil war.

For purple walk, please follow the bird symbols.

Croft Ambrey Walk
A longer circuit exploring ancient trees and the spectacular ramparts of the Croft Ambrey Iron Age hillfort. Distance: 3 miles – Time: Max. 2 hours. Medium. Farm and forestry tracks, field paths and pasture, long but gentle slopes, muddy in places. Unsuitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

Main southwest gate
- In winter, ice from the pools would have been stored here.

Remains of charcoal burning platform
- There were seven charcoal burning platforms in the valley. Charcoal was required to fire the limekiln.

Gothic pumphouse
- Estimated to have been built sometime after 1800. Built in the ‘Gothic’ style, it was used to pump piped spring water up to the castle. You can now step inside and explore the inner workings of this structure.

For orange walk, please follow orange way-markers and pumphouse symbols.

Polehouse Wood Walk
Along a woodland walk for experienced walkers. Some challenging terrain offering the chance to see SSSI River Lugg, woodland restoration and the old bridge - part of the original formal approach to the castle. Distance: 5½ miles - Time: Max. 3 hours, Hard. Challenging terrain, muddy in places with steps leading down to the river.

Bluebell wood
- An area rich with wildflowers associated with ancient woodland particularly bluebells.

Wood restoration
- This was a PAWS (Plantation on Ancient Woodland Stems). We restored the woodland in 2009 by felling the conifers and replanting with native broadleaves mainly ash and oak.

Riverside Inn pub
- Why not take a short detour through the gate, following the public footpath? Turn left when you reach the road where you will find the Riverside Inn.

SSSI River Lugg
- Part of the woodland falls into the River Lugg floodplain and so has SSSI status.

Lime kilns
- Lime stone quarried on the estate was burned in these wood-fed kilns to produce quicklime which was used as a building mortar.

Old bridge
- The remains of the bridge was once part of the original formal approach to the castle.

Oak wood pasture
- This area of wood pasture remains in the field but was once part of a much larger area extending up to the Croft Ambrey hillfort.

Terrain
- All of our walks are natural pathways with mixed terrain and can be muddy and slippery, so please wear appropriate footwear. Some sections are steep too.