



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



Colchester Roman Wall

Did you Know?

- Colchester's Town Wall is the earliest and one of the most complete town wall circuits surviving from Roman Britain, dated to c.AD 65-80.
- The Wall was constructed in a calcareous mudstone, septaria, imported from an outcrop near Harwich, supplemented by courses of brick.
- It was built to defend Colchester after the Boudican rebellion in AD60 and includes Balkerne Gate, the original main entrance to the town
- Nearly two thirds of the wall circuit still exists with the remainder surviving as buried archaeological remains; originally the Wall formed a circuit 2.8km long and 2.4m thick, and enclosed a rectangular area of 48ha.
- The original height is not known and the highest surviving part is 2.6m above modern ground level but it is thought the original height may have been over six metres.
- Six gates were built in the Wall and internal rectangular towers were constructed on the inside of the Wall; today, there are the upstanding remains of only two gates, the Balkerne Gate and Duncan's Gate.
- A large defensive ditch, over 5m wide and 3m deep, was dug around the outer foot of the Wall, around the same time as the construction of the Wall. This ditch was subsequently recut and enlarged in c.AD 275. An interior rampart was also added to the Wall in the mid-2nd century AD.
- An extensive programme of repairs was carried out in the 14th century and eight bastions were added along the south-east circuit. One of the best preserved bastions, Bastion 5, is today situated in Priory Street car park. The Civil War was the last military action seen by the Town Wall.
- It is one of the most important historic features and visual reminders of the Roman town, as most of the Roman evidence is buried deep underground.

