



HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

CASTLES OF KENT - WEEKEND: 13TH – 16TH MAY 2016

Hotel: We will be staying at The Mercure Maidstone Great Danes, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent. ME17 1RE. Telephone: 0844 8159045

Day 1: Leave Huntingdon at approx. 9.00am (8am from Dews)

Penshurst Castle (am): Arrive 11am



Built in 1341, and described as the 'Grandest and most perfectly preserved example of a fortified Manor house in all of England.' Take a tour of the 10 rooms open to the public including the Medieval Baron's Hall. The House, once the property of King Henry VIII, was left to his son King Edward VI and granted to Sir William Sidney in 1552.

<http://www.penshurstplace.com>

Time for morning visit and Lunch Depart 1.30pm

Leeds Castle (pm): Arrive 2.30pm

Visitors never forget their first breath-taking vision of Leeds Castle in Kent, rising majestically from the moat as it has done for over 900 years. With 500 acres of beautiful parkland and formal gardens, daily activities, free flying falconry displays, special events and year round attractions, Leeds Castle is one of the best days out in Kent, you will want to come back time and again! Open all year, there is something new for everyone to discover every day. Your admission ticket allows you to visit as many times as you like across a whole year.



<http://www.leeds-castle.com/home>

Time for tea before departing at 5.30pm for our hotel - Mercure Maidstone Great Danes

Day 2: Depart hotel at 8:45 am

Dover Castle All Day (English Heritage). Arrive Dover 9.45am



For over nine centuries this most iconic of all English fortresses commanded the gateway to the realm. Climb the Great Tower, meet the characters and immerse yourself in vivid medieval interiors. Then delve deep within Dover's White Cliffs to witness the drama in the Secret Wartime Tunnels. Roam through centuries of history at Dover Castle, from the Romans to the Cold War, in an action-packed day out. (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle>)

There is a lot to do here and it is on a hilly site, so please take time for coffee, tea and lunch!

Depart 4.30pm for our hotel - Mercure Maidstone Great Danes.

Day 3. Depart hotel at 9:30am

Dover Museum and Bronze Age Boat Gallery Arrive at 10.30am

The Dover Museum is privileged to host its famous Bronze Age Boat in the acclaimed Bronze Age Boat Gallery.

This wooden prehistoric boat, discovered in September 1992, is thought to be some 3,000 years old. The boat's excavation was an internationally important archaeological discovery. After seven years of research and conservation, the Dover Boat is back in Dover and proudly on display at the Dover Museum.



Time for Coffee/ lunch. Depart 1.30pm

Walmer Castle (English Heritage) Arrive 2.00pm



Open the door to this charming Tudor castle by the sea. Explore eight acres of magnificent gardens, woodland, and sea views now home to the Lord Warden. Come and see the original Wellington Boots in this 200th anniversary year of Waterloo. It is time to take a fresh look at the castle and see new displays, hear previously untold stories, and discover a new side to its famous residents.

(<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/walmer-castle-and-gardens>)

Time for tea Depart 5.00pm for our hotel - Mercure Maidstone Great Danes.

Day 4: Depart hotel at 9:15am

Ightham Mote (am): (National Trust) Arrive 10.00am

Outstanding 14th-century moated manor house. Lose yourself in this romantic moated manor house, described by David Starkey as 'one of the most beautiful and interesting of English country houses'. Built nearly 700 years ago, this house has seen many changes and been owned by Medieval knights, courtiers to Henry VIII and high society Victorians. The house is surrounded by peaceful gardens with an orchard, water features, lakes and woodland walks.



[\(http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ightham-mote/\)](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ightham-mote/)

Time for lunch. Depart 1.00pm

Hever Castle (pm) Arrive 1.45pm



Experience 700 years of history at the romantic double-moated castle once the childhood home of Anne Boleyn. The splendid rooms contain fine furniture, tapestries, antiques, an important collection of Tudor paintings and two prayer books inscribed and signed by Anne Boleyn herself.

Discover magnificent award-winning gardens set in 125 acres of glorious grounds. No matter what time of year you visit you are guaranteed a breath-taking display.

We have a Cream Tea booked for 4.00pm

Depart 5:00pm Return to Huntingdon

Notes:

Leeds Castle. Entry to the Castle is through the cellars. There are steps and stairs, but these are in good repair with handrails! If you are unable to climb stairs, the castle can be accessed through the front door and a video of the upstairs room played in one of the downstairs rooms. There is a train from the car park to the house costing 50p each way (not included).

Penshurst. Parts of the 'Wolf Hall' Series was filmed here.

Dover Castle. Dover castle is built on a hill and the paths are steep in places. There is a train which goes around the site for free – you can get on and off as you wish. There is a lot to do and see, so please plan your visit carefully, and allow plenty of time to return to the coach. There are 2 electric scooter which can be hired – you must have previous experience of driving one. Early Booking for this is essential, so please let me know if you want to use one.

Walmer Castle. There is a short walk from the car park, but we may be able to park outside the visitor centre. Good exhibitions on the life of Wellington.

If you have any questions, please contact me on 01480 350127. Rosemary Smith