

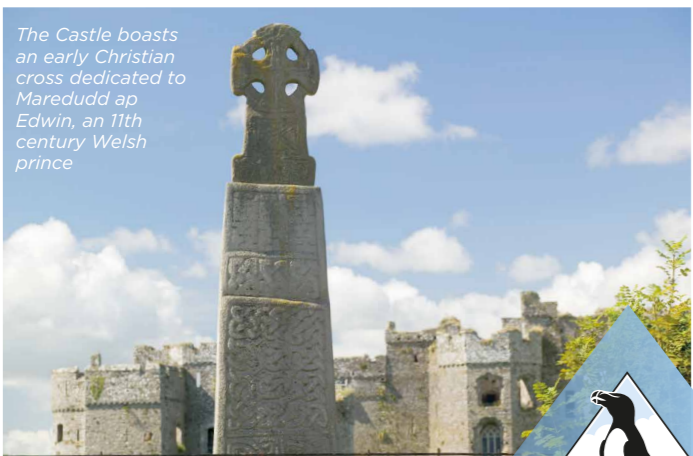


Carew Castle's history spans over 2,000 years. Use this guide to explore the Castle and discover its story.

Our guides will be happy to answer any questions. Ask about the scheduled guided tours and events, or pick up our guidebook from the gift shop.

Carew Castle and Tidal Mill are leased and managed by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. Our aim is to conserve this Scheduled Ancient Monument, Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest and Listed Building, while helping visitors to enjoy it.

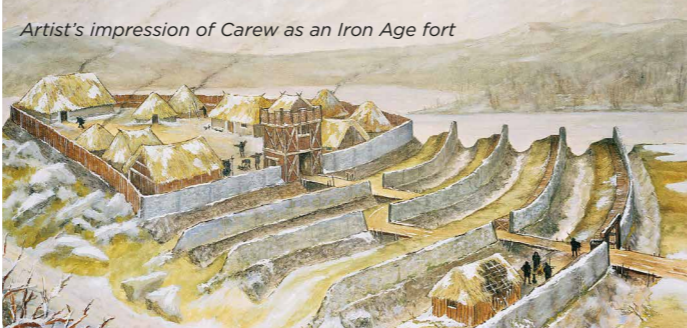
The Castle boasts an early Christian cross dedicated to Maredudd ap Edwin, an 11th century Welsh prince



Get to know the National Park online...
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Artist's impression of Carew as an Iron Age fort



1 Ancient stronghold

Carew has been an important site for thousands of years. Its location on a low hill, beside a navigable river made it popular as far back as the Iron Age.

Look for the remains of Iron Age defensive ditches in the Castle green as you stand and look towards Carew Cross.

2 Norman power

The Normans came to Pembrokeshire in the 11th century and set about 'subduing' the locals. Gerald de Windsor, the King of England's official representative, flattened the old defences and built his own castle. His power in the area was increased by his marriage to local beauty Princess Nest, daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr, the last Celtic king of Deheubarth.

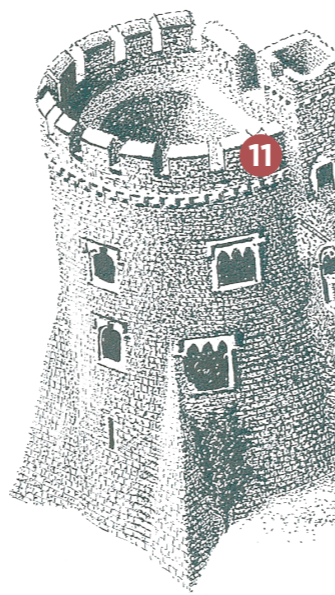
Can you spot arrow slits in the walls?

3 Escape down the toilet!

This alcove in the Inner Gatehouse is the toilet (or garderobe) for the Old Tower. The tale goes that Gerald escaped down this toilet shaft when Welsh prince, Owain, ambushed the Castle and captured Princess Nest. Nest, it seems, was a willing victim and she and Owain lived together long enough to have two children, before returning to her husband.



South West Tower



Look up to see the 'murder holes' that were used by guards to throw horrible things down on attackers. What do you think they threw?

Can you see where the portcullis (the gate that dropped down) would have been?



While held hostage at William II's court, Nest became the lover of Prince Henry (later Henry I) and together they had a son. Nest's ghost is said to haunt the Castle at night.

The Old Tower

North West Tower



WEST RANGE

Great Hall

The Long Gallery

Old Tower

EAST RANGE

Tudor Gatehouse

South East Tower

4 Medieval makeover

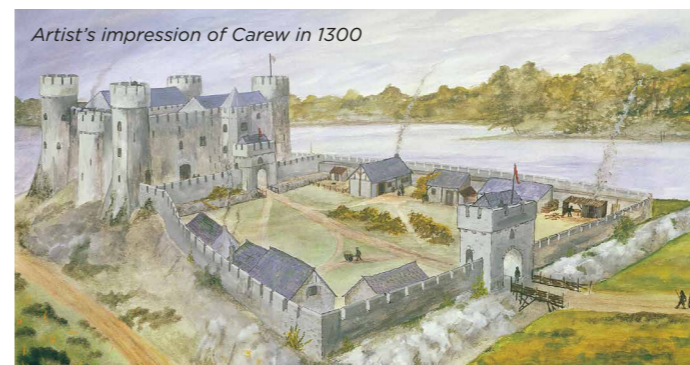
The Castle was 'modernised' during the 13th century by Sir Nicholas de Carew who added drum towers, guardwalks, arrow slits, battlements and a portcullis.

Try to imagine the Castle as it was - not a ruin, but a busy, noisy, smelly and dark place full of people and animals.

5 A home within a Castle

Go through the arch into the Undercroft.

The East Wing is where Sir Nicholas de Carew and his family lived. The Undercroft was used to store food, beer and wine.



Artist's impression of Carew in 1300

In the Undercroft find some illustrated panels telling you all about Carew Castle.

Through the next arch is the Kitchen. Recent discoveries suggest that fish, sheep and peahen were all on the menu.

The Stewards' Room next door has its own en-suite latrine!

This is an historic site and has uneven surfaces, low doorways and dark areas. Please take care and keep children under supervision.

Key:

- 1** Ground level
- 6** Upstairs
- Something to see
- Something to do

Look at the fireplace and imagine doing all the cooking for the Castle there - boiling pots, meat roasting on a spit, bread and cakes cooking on a flat griddle.

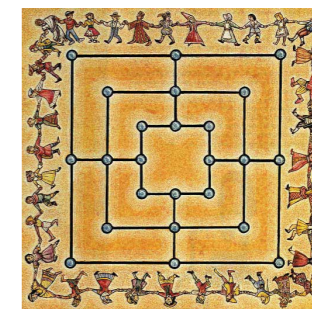
6 Religion and superstition

Up the stairs is the Chapel which has a vaulted ceiling and would have originally

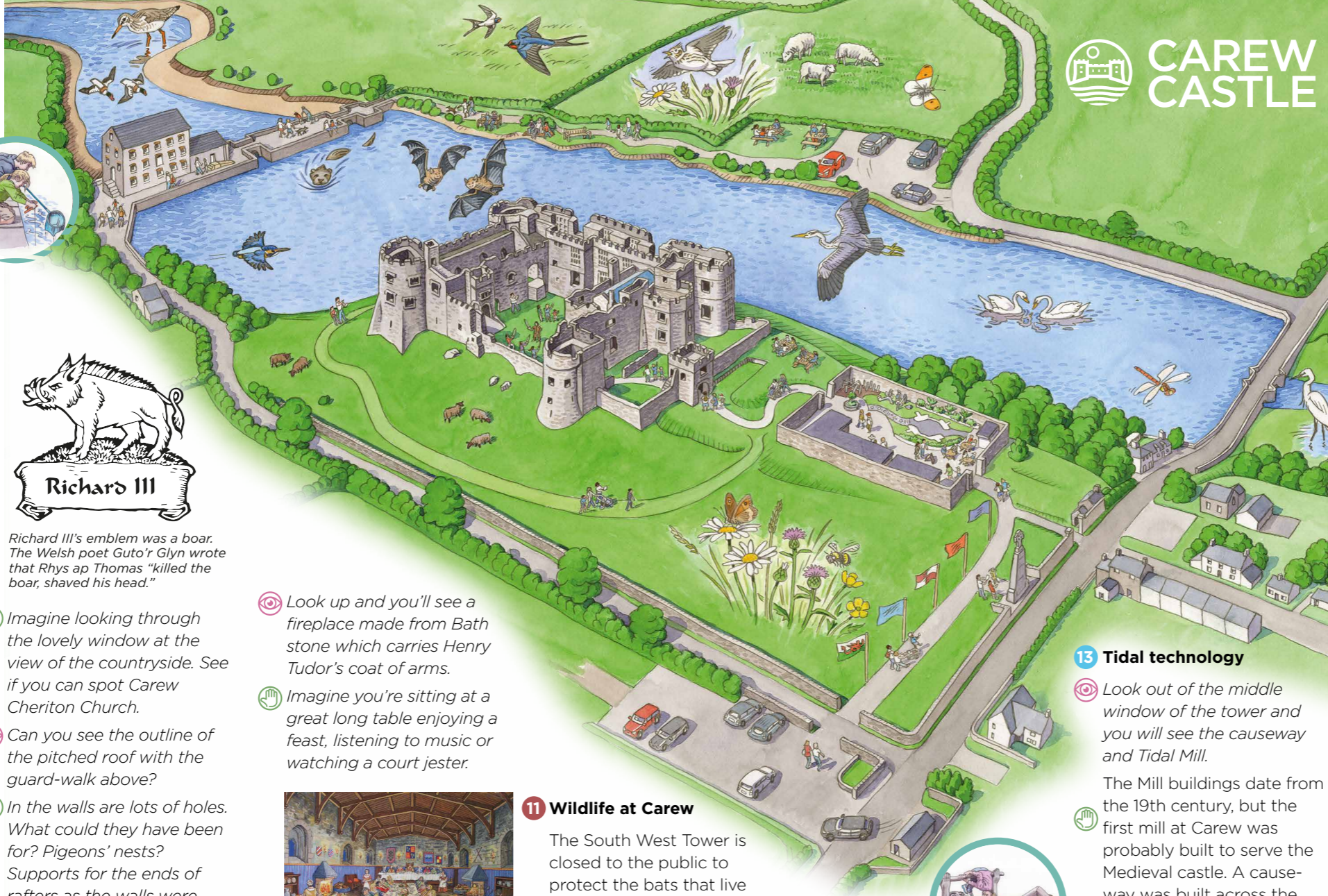
been painted in bright colours of red, blue and gold. You can still see the stoup for holding holy water, the aumbry for storing holy vessels and the piscina for pouring away the water.

Beyond the Chapel is the Priest's Room and garde-robe.

Can you find the faint lines of a Nine Men's Morris board scratched into the plaster next to the north window of the chapel? This may have been a symbol to ward off evil spirits.



Nine Men's Morris board



Perrot's Long Gallery which ran the length of the North Range

- Look up at the Chapel roof and see its vaulted arches.
- See if you can find the place where the holy water was kept; it's a small alcove called a stoup.

7 The stairs outside the Chapel take you to the Solar, where the Lord and his family would have lived and slept. Above the Solar are battlements and a guard walk.

- Look for the corbels (stone brackets) that would have carried the timbers for the roof.

Imagine the tramp of the soldiers' boots as they kept watch from the walkway above.

8 Sir Rhys ap Thomas, Kingmaker

Go back down the stairs, past the Lesser Hall door and straight up the steps through several rooms to the platform above the inner gatehouse, which looks out over the Courtyard towards the Great Hall.

Can you see three shields containing coats of arms above the entrance?

The Great Porch, entrance to the Great Hall, was built by Sir Rhys ap Thomas who became a royal favourite after helping Henry Tudor to victory at the Battle of Bosworth. Rhys, the man who is said to have killed Richard III, was knighted on the battlefield. The coats of arms belonged to Henry VII (or Henry Tudor), his eldest son Prince Arthur and his wife Catherine of Aragon, who later married Arthur's brother, Henry VIII.

Carry on into the South East Tower and the Ladies' Solar.



Richard III's emblem was a boar. The Welsh poet Guto'r Glyn wrote that Rhys ap Thomas "killed the boar, shaved his head."

- Imagine looking through the lovely window at the view of the countryside. See if you can spot Carew Cheriton Church.

- Can you see the outline of the pitched roof with the guard-walk above?

- In the walls are lots of holes. What could they have been for? Pigeons' nests? Supports for the ends of rafters as the walls were built - a sort of scaffolding system? Hidey holes?

9 A room fit for a king

Make your way back to the Lesser Hall.

Sir Rhys ap Thomas renovated the upper floor of the Lesser Hall, creating a royal bed chamber fit for a king. The walls would have been wood-panelled in the Tudor style with tapestries on the walls.

- Look up and you'll see a fireplace made from Bath stone which carries Henry Tudor's coat of arms.

- Imagine you're sitting at a great long table enjoying a feast, listening to music or watching a court jester.



An artist's impression of a feast in the Great Hall

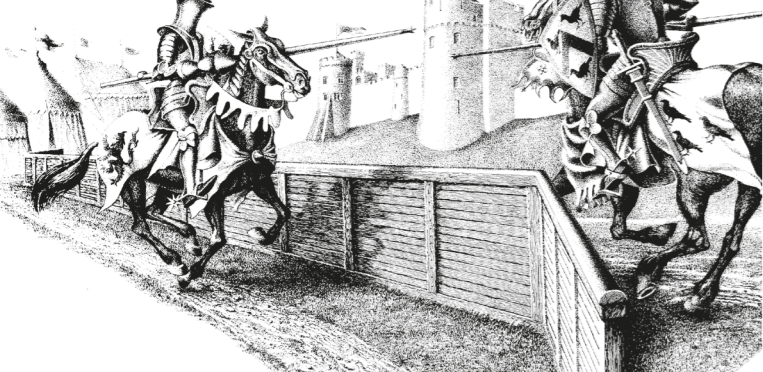
10 The Great Tournament

Go outside and across the courtyard to the Great Hall.

In 1507 Sir Rhys invited 600 noblemen and women to Carew for The Great Tournament to celebrate being made a Knight of the Garter. The last great Medieval feast in Wales, this five-day event included jousting and banqueting.

- You are standing in the Undercroft for the Great Hall. Look up - can you see the huge fireplaces?

- Later, at home, try colouring in the drawing of the jousting knights.



Jousting knights

11 Wildlife at Carew

The South West Tower is closed to the public to protect the bats that live there. More than half of all the species of bats found in Britain - including the rare greater horseshoe bat - have been recorded here. Owls nest in the Castle ruins as well. At twilight you can sometimes see a barn owl hunting around the Castle.

- What do you think bats and owls like to eat? On your way in to the Castle you passed a sign hanging on the fence that answers this question. Look for it on the way out.



12 The Ghostly Ape

The battlements above the North West Tower are said to be haunted by a ghostly ape, which murdered its master, bad-tempered Sir Roland Rhys, one of Carew's most eccentric tenants.

- Close your eyes and imagine the wind whistling around the Castle and through it comes the sound of a whimpering ape!



13 Tidal technology

- Look out of the middle window of the tower and you will see the causeway and Tidal Mill.

The Mill buildings date from the 19th century, but the first mill at Carew was probably built to serve the Medieval castle. A causeway was built across the River Carew to create the Millpond. The tidal energy that powered the Mill was cheap, clean and renewable.

What do you think was milled there? After you've been round the Castle, walk down to the Mill and you'll find out.

14 An Elizabethan extension

Go back down the stairs out into the Courtyard and turn left. This leads you into the Elizabethan Wing (or North Range).

This three-storey extension was added by the flamboyant Sir John Perrot, said to be the illegitimate son of Henry VIII.

The huge windows overlooking the Millpond changed the character of the Castle from Medieval fortress to fashionable country house.

15 A room with a view

Imagine the scene from the Long Gallery in Medieval times, as people and animals toiled in the fields to produce their food. John Perrot wanted to make sure that the views were in keeping with his fashionable new windows so he re-routed roads, moved the village and evicted tenants whose farms spoiled his view!

- At home you could colour in the picture of people in the Long Gallery.

- As you leave the Elizabethan Wing can you spot the Castle's only 'gargoyle'? (Hint - look up!)

16 Civil War

Carew was the scene of many clashes between Royalists and Parliamentarians. In 1648 the Parliamentarians finally destroyed the south wall and kitchens to prevent Royalist troops from re-occupying the Castle. Archaeologists have found musket balls, probably made out of lead taken from the Castle's roofs, windows and pipes.

- As you go back through the Inner Gatehouse can you find the draw holes for the bars that kept the massive doors of the Tudor Gatehouse shut?

17 Guardroom

Don't miss visiting the Guardroom tucked away in the South East Tower!

- When you're in the guardroom, look for the hidden room. What might this have been used for?

18 Romantic ruin

From 1686 the Castle was abandoned to ruin. Stone was taken and re-used in local houses and farm buildings. Limekilns turned the limestone into white-wash and fertiliser. The romantic ruin was immortalised by painters such as JMW Turner.

Lots of other things to see and do at Carew...

Walk down Castle Lane to Wales's only restored Tidal Mill.

Take the path either side of the Castle to walk around the outside of the Castle walls.

Crab catching on the causeway.

One-mile circular wheelchair accessible walk around the Millpond.

JMW Turner's romantic vision of Carew Castle (courtesy Manchester City Art Gallery)

