

The Arts Society Beckenham

Shropshire and Borders



Sunday 11 - Thursday 15 September 2022

With its rolling green hills, elegant country estates and abundance of local museums, Shropshire is perhaps the most enchanting of all the English counties. Thanks to its largely unspoiled countryside and charming medieval market towns, it stands out in modern Britain as a predominantly rural haven. Yet beyond its natural beauty, Shropshire boasts an impressive and intriguing history and cultural heritage. Of England's 186 castles, 32 are found in Shropshire, its prominence in the Industrial Revolution has spawned numerous museums and its collections of Worcester porcelain are second to none.

Our tour will highlight the very best of what Shropshire, and its vicinity, has to offer. From Weston Park to the historic town of Shrewsbury, we will discover the wealth of history and natural beauty in this enticing area.

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2022

We will depart from our local pick up point and travel to Moreton-in-Marsh for a **private guided visit** to **Chastleton House** (National Trust) (subject to availability). Built in the early 1600's for Walter Jones, a wealthy wool merchant Chastleton House is considered one of England's finest Jacobean country houses and is built of Cotswold stone and set around a courtyard. It has been owned by the National Trust since 1991 and today offers the visitor a mixture of rare and everyday objects, furniture and textiles collected over the years by one family in continuous occupation.

Following the visit we will drive the short distance to Moreton-in-Marsh, one of the principal market towns in the northern Cotswolds where there will be free time for lunch.

This afternoon we will travel by coach to **Bewdley** where we will board the **Severn Valley Railway**, a heritage railway line which runs along the Severn Valley and crosses the Shropshire Worcestershire border. We will travel by steam train to Bridgnorth where we will re-join our coach and continue our journey to **Shrewsbury**, where we will check into the 4 star **Prince Rupert Hotel** for 4 nights' dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation. Shrewsbury is the county town of Shropshire and has a wealth of timber framed and Georgian houses, steep narrow streets and little alleys gathered for protection within a great loop of the River Severn. After some time to freshen up, **dinner** will be taken in the hotel restaurant.



MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2022

After breakfast at the hotel we will meet a Blue Badge guide for a **walking tour** of Shrewsbury. Our tour will include Shrewsbury's principal buildings and provide an overview of this historical town.

Following our walking tour we will travel by coach to the nearby village of Atcham, where we will visit **Attingham Park** (National Trust). Attingham Park is an elegant neo-classical house dating from 1785 when the present house designed by George Stuart largely replaced the earlier Tern Hall. It was built for the first Lord Berwick and is a fine setting for French and Italian furniture, an extensive picture collection and the Ambassadorial silver used by members of the Berwick family serving in Italy. The house is set in a 250-acre deer park landscaped by Repton. This will be a free-flow visit, and there will be free time for lunch.

This afternoon we will continue by coach to **Weston Park** for a **guided visit** led by the **Head of Curatorial, Gareth Williams**. Weston Park has passed by family descent from the first owners in the medieval period, through to 1986 when the 7th and present Earl of Bradford gifted the house, collections and 1000 acres of Capability Brown parkland to the nation in lieu of tax. The house is now administered by the Weston Park Foundation. The house boasts a remarkable collection of paintings including works by van Dyck, Gainsborough, Reynolds, Constable and Stubbs. Its decorative art collections are of equal measure to its paintings with Chippendale furniture, outstanding silver from the 17th to the 20th centuries, Oriental and European ceramics and Gobelin tapestries.

We will return to our hotel by coach and this evening **dinner** will be taken in the hotel restaurant.

TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

This morning, after breakfast at the hotel, we will travel by coach to **Ironbridge Gorge**. The Gorge was one of the most important centres of the Industrial Revolution and also one of the world's great iron-making centres. Industrial decline in the 20th century led to the decay of the Gorge, although today it has been restored as a complex of industrial archaeology, with several museums along the wooded banks of the River Severn. We will be met by a **resident guide** and we will begin with a visit to the **Museum of the Gorge**, which will include a short introductory film. We will continue with our guide on a short scenic walk along the wharfage to the **Iron Bridge**, which stands as one of the greatest symbols of the Industrial Revolution. This morning we will also visit the **Coalport China Museum**, home to a collection of intricate treasures, including Victorian tea sets, statuesque vases and hand-painted miniatures.

There will be free time for lunch which may be taken at **Blists Hill Victorian Town**, a recreation of a late 19th century town with many cafés, restaurants and tea rooms.

This afternoon we will visit the **Jackfield Tile Museum**. The village was once one of the largest tile manufacturing areas in the world and the museum's collection consists of some of the very best examples displayed in galleries and recreated rooms including a pub, tube station and church. At the end of the afternoon we will return to the hotel for **dinner** and overnight accommodation.

WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

After breakfast at the hotel we will travel by coach to **Welshpool** for a free-flow visit of **Powis Castle and Gardens** (National Trust). Room stewards are available in each room to answer your questions. Perched on a rock above the late 17th century garden terraces, this medieval castle contains the finest country house collections in Wales. It was built at the beginning of the 13th century by Welsh princes and has been owned and altered by successive generations of Herberts and Clives for 400 years. The castle is furnished with a wealth of fine paintings and furniture, and the Clive Museum displays a beautiful collection of treasures from India. The world famous gardens, laid out under the influence of Italian and

French styles, are of the highest horticultural and historic importance. Late morning we will visit the lovely market town of **Ludlow** which is located above the River Teme in South Shropshire. There will be some time at leisure to explore the town and take lunch.

This afternoon we will visit **Stokesay Court**. The present house dates from the late 1800s and was built for a wealthy Victorian merchant by the name of John-Derby-Allcroft. At the time of its construction it was at the cutting edge of technology and boasted modern amenities such as underfloor heating and internal electric lighting. During the First World War it was used as an auxiliary hospital for convalescing soldiers. Sadly the house fell into a state of decline and was eventually sold in 1992 following the death of the last member of the Allcroft line. In 2006 it was featured in the film 'Atonement', which has greatly helped its revival. We will enjoy a **private guided tour** of the house followed by **tea/coffee and cake**.

We will return to our hotel for **dinner** and overnight accommodation.

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2022

We will check out of the hotel after breakfast and travel to **Wolverhampton** for a visit to **Wightwick Manor and Gardens** (National Trust) (subject to availability).

This Victorian manor house, located on Wightwick Bank, is one of only a few surviving examples of a house built and furnished under the Arts and Crafts Movement. Acquired by the National Trust in 1937, the house now contains a wonderful collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings by Rossetti, Burne-Jones and their followers. This will be a free-flow visit and there will be free time for lunch.

Following the visit we will re-join our coach for the onward journey to our original pick up point, arriving in the evening.

Please note as this tour has been planned many months in advance, and due to the various Covid-19 related measures and restrictions that may be in place at the time of your visit, the final itinerary may vary slightly from the above.

The Arts Society Beckenham

TOUR PRICE

£895 per person sharing a twin/double room

£60 single room supplement

PRICE INCLUDES

Executive coach travel throughout
4 nights' dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation
Travel on the Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley to Bridgnorth
Private guided tour of Chastleton House
(subject to availability)
Walking tour of Shrewsbury with a local Blue Badge Guide
Guided visit of Weston Park with curator, Gareth Williams
Services of a resident guide at Ironbridge for an
introductory talk
Private guided tour of Stokesay Court with
tea/coffee and cake
All entrance charges and fees
(excluding National Trust properties)
Porterage

Please note charges to National Trust properties are not included as these are free of charge to National Trust members upon production of a valid membership card.

HOTEL DETAILS

4 nights' dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation at:

Prince Rupert Hotel (4 star)

Butcher Row
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY1 1UQ

For further details please visit their website:

www.princeruprhotel.co.uk

MINIMUM NUMBERS

The price of the tour is based on a minimum of 25 paying participants.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

ABTOT provides protection for your booking as set out in the Financial Protection clause of our Booking Conditions.

OPTIONAL TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a condition of booking that each tour participant carries full travel insurance and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have adequate insurance for this tour. We have arranged a scheme with specialists Brokersure Limited who are fully authorised and regulated by the FCA (firm reference number 501719) full details of which can be found on the FCA website www.fca.org.uk. Please call Brokersure on 0330 880 3625 for a quote. *Please note that although insurance is not mandatory for UK travel we strongly recommend that you take insurance to safeguard the cost of the holiday. Please ensure that any policy has adequate cover for COVID related issues.*

PAYMENT DETAILS

A deposit of **£250** per person is due **as soon as possible** and no later than **Monday 28 February 2022**. Please note that as places on the tour are limited, bookings will be accepted on a 'first come, first served' basis. The final balance will be due by **Friday 01 July 2022**.

BOOKING & FINAL TRAVEL DETAILS

To reserve your place on the tour, please send your completed booking form and deposit to Heritage Group Travel. You will receive a confirmation of your booking combined with an invoice for the final balance. The final travel details (itinerary, hotel details and luggage label) will be available approximately 10-14 days prior to travel.



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