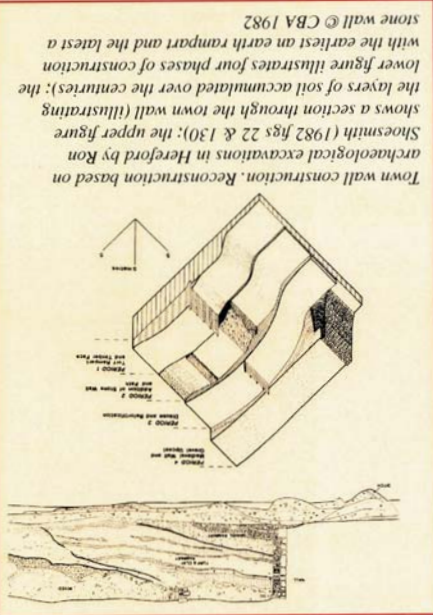


First constructed as an earth bank using soil dug to create a defensive ditch. Probably reinforced by a timber face. In the 13th Century the rampart was enclosed by a rubble stone wall built using local stone. This was predominantly siltstone from the Whitecliff Beds (as used for the initial construction of the castle), but quantities of sandstone from the Downton Castle formation were used along the eastern side where this material outcrops.

## What were the medieval walls built off?



## How were the medieval walls built?

## Where did the funds and manpower come from?

The murage (a medieval tax) raised locally paid for the materials and manpower required for initial construction and later maintenance.

## Other walls

Ludlow has many other walls of historical interest. Many of the older ones are made of stone, some utilising blocks recovered from the castle following its demise, others using stone quarried locally (e.g. Whitecliff, Ludford and Whitbatch). Recent repairs have utilised stone of similar geological age from Diddlebury in Corvedale and Gladestry near Kington. The brick too is local, dug and fired in the vicinity of where the railway station now stands.

## How are the medieval walls now maintained?

The Ludlow Town Walls Trust now oversees the maintenance of the walls, raising funds to assist repairs and conservation work by the local authority and landowners.



The stone entrance to St Leonard's churchyard, off Corve Street north of the town centre, constructed in the 19th Century utilising stone from the demolition of a Carmelite Monastery which once occupied the site.



The medieval town walls on the east side of Mill Street, together with their natural stone foundations.

The first wall were built for the defence of the Norman castle, in the late 11th C. Walls to encircle the town, partly for defence and partly to control entry (and raise funds through tolls) were constructed in the medieval period, probably initially as earth mounds supporting a wooden fence but later strengthened by use of stone, in the mid 13th C. After the castle was abandoned, on the closure of the Council of the Marches in the late 17th C, the structure fell into dereliction. This provided a source of recycled stone for Georgian development in the town, not for houses (since fashion now favoured brick) but for enclosing gardens and orchards (notably along Linney and Corve Street).

## When were the medieval walls built?



The principal components of the medieval wall were in place by 1270. It is unclear if an earlier defensive work protected the town; for instance there is indication of an earlier ditch called Christcroft (which would have protected the early settlement around Dinham immediately south of the then new castle), and this accords with archaeological evidence for the town walls at nearby Hereford (Shoemith, 1982). Train (1999) postulates an earthen rampart and ditch established by the mid 12th C. Of broadly rectangular outline, with the late 11th Century castle on the strongest (northwest) corner, the defensive wall of Ludlow are believed to be of 12th and 13th Century origin. They incorporate one twin tower gate (Broad Gate), one round tower (within the garden of Maryvale House) and two square towers (on the eastern side); much of the wall remains. At a time when attacks from Wales were a significant threat, murage (a tax paid for building or repairing the walls of a fortified town) was granted in 1233 and renewed every few years for the next two centuries. Feasible enabled the town to operate a successful market and to control entry of trades, thereby raising taxes on goods brought and sold.

## Why build the walls?

Archival evidence indicates that a wall was built enclosing Medieval Ludlow for defense of the town against marauders. However, it only had to withstand one siege, during the Civil War (1646).

# Ludlow's Medieval TOWN WALLS

TRAIL

## Sources of further information

[www.discovershropshire.org.uk](http://www.discovershropshire.org.uk)  
for a pictorial map of Ludlow in 1768

[www.ludlowhistory.co.uk](http://www.ludlowhistory.co.uk)  
for more information about the Ludlow Historical Research Group.

This leaflet has been inspired by the book published in 1999 by the late Chris Train CB, supplemented by contributions from colleagues in the Ludlow Historical Research Group, in particular:

- Lloyd, D.J. (1999). *The concise history of Ludlow*. Merlin Unwin Books, Ludlow, 174 pp.
- Rosenbaum, M.S. (2007). The building stones of Ludlow: a walk through the town. *Proceedings of the Shropshire Geological Society*, 12, 5-38.
- Shoemith, R. (1982). *Hereford City Excavations - Vol 2: Excavations on and close to the Defences*. CBA Research Report No.46.
- Train, C.J. (1999). The walls and gates of Ludlow; their origins and early days. *Ludlow Research Papers New Series No.1*. Ludlow Historical Research Group, 64 pp.

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design [www.thinkgraphic.co.uk](http://www.thinkgraphic.co.uk)

# Ludlow's Medieval TOWN WALLS

TRAIL

This trail takes about one hour to complete with a number of slopes and steps to manage. Ordinary walking shoes should be sufficient.



## The Medieval Gate House of Broad Gate, looking north up Broad Street.

The arch is within the medieval gate but the large extension to the left is later (mid Georgian) and the Wheatsheaf public house (right) was constructed outside the defensive walls.

Prepared by the Ludlow Historical Research Group on behalf of the Ludlow Town Walls Trust