

# Welcome to Caister on Sea's Heritage Trail

Every year visitors are drawn to our delightful Norfolk coastal village, sampling the wide, sandy and unspoilt beaches and grassy dunes along our shore.

Very few visitors can imagine the rich heritage this 2000-year-old village has to offer beyond these wonderful beaches - with items from the neolithic age through to the late bronze age being found around the village! The first evidence of settlement occurred when the Romans arrived in around 200 AD.

With the name deriving from the Latin word for 'fortress', Caister was built as a 'Saxon Shore' fort designed to counter the threat of sea-borne raiders. Following the Roman departure in 410 AD, the area became a focus of activity during the Anglo-Saxon occupation. A settlement was built near the centre of the fort and a large Saxon cemetery has been excavated to the south.

The village of 'Caste' appears in The Domesday Book of 1086. Two manor houses, forty-five salt-houses and a variety of animals were recorded, although much further development did not occur until the fourteenth century, when our Holy Trinity Church was built, possibly on the site of an older, earlier Saxon church.

During the medieval period much of the marshlands of the 'Great Estuary' to the south of Caister was reclaimed for use as floodplain meadows or for grazing.

Several significant Grade II listed buildings were erected during the 17th to 19th centuries. Caister House, situated in the village centre, is a fine example.

The railway arrived in Caister in 1877, with a further station added in 1933 to serve the growing visitors to the holiday camps.

Caister had its first lifeboat in 1791. This was used to salvage ships wrecked on the sand banks. Between 1856 and 1969 lifeboats were operated by the RNLI. In the 1901 Caister lifeboat disaster, nine crew were lost whilst attempting a rescue during heavy seas. A memorial stands in the cemetery in their honour and the famous saying 'Caister men never turn back' is derived from this disaster.

Today, Caister is home to Caister Lifeboat, a proudly independent coastal rescue crew.



- Legend:**
- English Heritage site
  - Car Park
  - Public Toilets
  - Café
  - Licensed premises
  - Food available
  - Heritage Trail

**1 The Never Turn Back**  
Designed, built and completed in 1957 by AW Ecclestone, this is the only pub in the country bearing this name. Due to its Art Deco and Streamline Moderne style, and its historic community association, the building has been granted Grade II listed status.




**2 Lifeboat Station**  
The Lifeboat Station & Caister Lifeboat Experience are open to the public every Wednesday and Sunday from 10am - 3pm, including Bank Holidays, from April to the end of October. Caister is one of only three independent offshore stations in the UK. The current boat is to be replaced by a new all weather lifeboat in the late autumn of 2022. See reverse for more details.




**3 The Ship Inn**  
This local establishment is recorded as being the oldest pub in Caister! Originally a Beerhouse dated about 1815, it was the first permanent building on the 'Beach Village'. Named as the 'Ship' from 1900, the present premises were built by Lacons in 1905.



**4 Council Hall**  
Built as the Unionist Hall in 1912, the Parish Council purchased the hall in 1927 for £1230 and renamed it the Council Hall. It continues today as a community hub for many groups and organisations as well as still being home to the Parish Council.



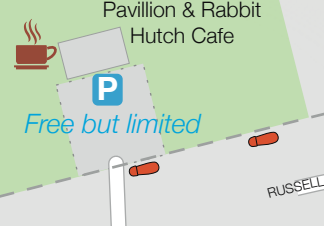
**5 The Gate**  
The first Licensee is recorded as being Josiah Harvey when 1863 when it was known as the Green Gate Hotel. The Yarmouth to Caister tram terminus was situated opposite these premises with horse drawn trams later being replaced by electric trams in 1907.



**6 Marconi Radio Station**  
Caister Radio was established in 1901. Its original purpose was to communicate with ships in the North Sea and the Cross Sands lightship. The station was in a house called Pretoria Villa, now a private residence.




**7 Sarah Martin Cottage**  
Sarah Martin (b.1791 d.1843) was both a philanthropist and activist for prison reform. She worked with inmates of the Tolhouse Goal in Great Yarmouth, teaching them trade skills so that when released they would have both money and skills. Sarah is buried at Trinity Church, Caister. This former home of Sarah's is a private residence.



**8 Caister Community Centre**  
Many residents fondly remember this building being the village school. Built in 1876, the facility became the Community Centre in the 1980's and today is home to a vibrant social club and community charity.




**9 Caister's first Post Office**  
The first Post Office in Caister opened in 1846. Later Post Master John Thomas Blyth placed a plaque on the wall facing the High Street with the date 1887 and his initials on it. The Post Office closed in 1912 and is now a private residence.



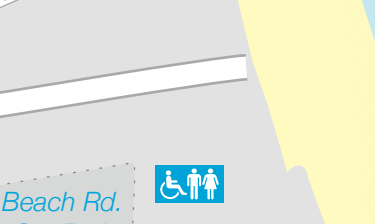
**10 The King's Arms**  
A pub has been on this site since 1780. The present building, dating from 1935, was damaged by enemy action during WWII.




**11 Caister House**  
Dating from 1819, this Grade II listed building has served as a private residence, rectory, and surgery - latterly during which time Dr. Michael Rossage completed a long period of restoration. Today it is once again a private residence.



**12 The Old Hall Hotel**  
Formally a residence with a range of malshouses belonging to the Branford family, this 18th century building was also the centre for a caravan camp. It is now a spa, hotel and restaurant.




**13 Caister War Memorial**  
Following strong representation from residents requesting that the village should have a memorial to remember the fallen of Caister, our schools, parishioners and community groups came together to make this possible. The memorial was erected in 2019.



**14 Caister Lifeboat Memorial**  
During the night of the 'Great Storm' of 13th November 1901, nine crew members of the lifeboat 'Beauchamp' lost their lives whilst attempting to respond to a vessel in trouble on the Barber Sands. Such were the sea conditions, the boat was forced back towards the beach and struck bow first. The heavy sea then hit the starboard side and she capsized. Nine crew members trapped beneath her were lost. Only three crew survived. In 1902 plans began for a memorial to be erected, donations were received from around the country and abroad, the memorial was unveiled on 4th July 1903. On 29th May 2020 the memorial became protected by Historic England with Grade II listed status.



**15 Holy Trinity Church**  
Originally a 14th century church, rebuilt in the Georgian period. There is an impressive 15th century font brought from Eye, Suffolk and some vividly coloured stain glass windows. Memorials to lifeboat personnel and those who lost their lives at sea can be found both inside and outside.



**16 Roman Fort**  
At the time of its construction, the fort would have been on the north side of an estuary, with a pebbled street from the fort's south gate leading a short distance to a harbour or docks. The fort was probably known as *Gariannonum*, although the single reference to it could also refer to the Roman site across the estuary at Burgh Castle. Today the remains of the fort are open free of charge to the public by English Heritage.

