

## Chester

<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&om=1&msa=0&msid=113287257593950695468.00043613cdfc5b18400cb&ll=53.187728,-2.888761&spn=0.012369,0.040169&t=h&z=15>

### The City:

- Dates back to 70AD, which makes the city almost 2,000 years old
- The current city stands on the ancient Roman fortress of Deva (pronounced 'dee-wah')
- Deva was named after the goddess of the River Dee which brought prosperity and health to the city
- It achieved great wealth as a port city, trading with Europe, particularly Dublin
- The name Chester was derived from the Latin for 'camp' which is *castra*
- The modern population is around 120,000

### Cathedral:

- The site has been a place of worship for over 1,000 years
- It was originally the 10<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Werburgh
- It then became a Norman Benedictine Monastery
- Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries led to the site becoming a cathedral

### Eastgate Clock:

- The Eastgate was the main entrance to the city and fortress
- The original tower dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century
- The clock was built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee
- A tram system ran through the gate on the street below until 1930

### Roman Amphitheatre

- The largest Roman amphitheatre in the UK
- Would have held 7,000 people
- Only half excavated due to Grade II listed building over other half
- Shows, gladiator fights and public gatherings were held here

### River Dee

- Fortress Deva was named after the goddess of the river. Deva translates as 'Divine'
- Runs for 70miles from its source in the Welsh hills

### Chester Castle

- A *Motte & Bailey* fortress
- Only a fraction of the original fortress remains – the rest was leveled to make way for the County Court house and car park
- The remaining buildings date to the 12<sup>th</sup> century

### Chester Racecourse

- The oldest racecourse in England
- Stands on land reclaimed from the river
- Before the land was reclaimed, it was the main Roman quay for the largest ships
- Locally known as the 'Roodee'. 'Roo' is Anglo-saxon for *cross*, as a stone cross stood in the middle of the original island (the stone base can still be seen in the center of the course)
- Roman burials have been discovered on the course, with a 90AD tomb containing 2 skeletons and one gold ring
- In 1533, Henry Gee banned football in the area, and began horse racing in 1540, which is where the local term "Gee gees", meaning horses, comes from

### The Cross

- Lies at the center of the four main Roman roads, Eastgate St, Northgate St, Bridge St and Watergate St
- The cross itself is so called after the cross on the ball at the top of the plinth
- The plinth is 15<sup>th</sup> century carved sandstone
- The Town Crier traditionally speaks from the cross with the days news