

Cheshire, UK

[www.allwaystraveller.com](http://www.allwaystraveller.com)



# Rural delights in Cheshire

Cheshire is a predominantly rural English county, in the north-west of the country.

It offers visitors a mix of rolling countryside, historic towns and villages, stately homes and a rich industrial heritage.

The Cheshire Peak District and the medieval woodlands of Delamere Forest fall within the county.

The county 'town' is the bustling Roman city of Chester and there are interesting market towns including Nantwich and Knutsford.

Cheshire's major attractions include Chester itself and its zoo, Beeston Castle, Tatton Hall, the truly unique Anderton Boat Lift and the National Waterways Museum.

During the spring and summer season visitors can enjoy traditional country gatherings including the Cheshire and Nantwich agricultural shows.

**Ashley Gibbins**  
Commissioning Editor  
**AllWays traveller**



# Cheshire comes to life in the spring and summer

By Ashley Gibbins

**Cheshire is one of England's traditional shire counties and, as such has an historical lineage that stretches right back.**

Chester itself was one of the country's biggest and most important Roman settlements with much evidence of this surviving in the city.

And from the Norman times through the middle ages and into the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries the landed gentry owned large swathes of land in the county.

Although a rural county, Cheshire's proximity to the industrial powerhouses of Liverpool and Manchester saw an influx of wealthy industrialists between the 1760s and 1800s.

## A great short break

This 'old' and 'new' money ensured that Cheshire remained an affluent county with its agricultural infrastructure preserved and its country towns and villages flourishing.

While ensuring a fine quality of life for the residents of Cheshire it also offers the traveller a range of excellent short break opportunities - particularly those that take advantage of country and outdoor life.

And planning a trip around one or more of the annual events in the Cheshire calendar will be especially rewarding.

## The county town

Chester, the Cheshire county 'town' is one Britain's great heritage cities with a history spanning 2000 years.

It was founded as a "castrum" or Roman fort in 79 AD by the Roman Legio II Adiutrix during the reign of the Emperor Vespasian.

Today Chester offers visitors the most complete city walls, the largest Roman amphitheatre and the two-tier *Chester Rows* galleries dating from the Middle Ages.

Its 1,000 year old Cathedral has some of the Europe's finest mediaeval carvings.

A host of festivals and events including *Plays in the Park* and traditional parades give Chester an extra special atmosphere.



The oldest rowing regatta in the world takes place annually each June on the River Dee, which runs through the city.

[www.chesterregatta.org](http://www.chesterregatta.org)  
[www.visitchester.com](http://www.visitchester.com)

## The cathedral

There has been a church on the site of Chester Cathedral for 1,000 years.

Originally a Saxon Minster, it was rebuilt as the magnificent Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Chester in 1541.

It is an historic architectural mix of Norman arches, gothic columns and fourteenth century woodcarvings.

The Cloisters and Church form one of the most complete medieval monastic complexes in the country.

[www.chestercathedral.com](http://www.chestercathedral.com)



## The best showjumping in beautiful surroundings

By Ann Mealor

**Set in the heart of the beautiful Cheshire countryside with the Barbour family's historic castle as the backdrop, Bolesworth International is a high spot in the UK's showjumping calendar.**

The standard of competition here is first class and there is everything to please the equine enthusiast.

However, the event also caters for families and those looking for an entertaining day out in beautiful, rural surroundings.

The amphitheatre style main arena has set new standards in the showjumping world, attracting competitors at the top of their profession and putting Bolesworth firmly on the global stage.

### The International Grand Prix

The four day event features a mix of exciting showjumping including the *Bolesworth International Grand Prix* with a prize fund of £60,000 and a thrilling Puissance (an equestrian high jump competition), that features a dominant, giant, red wall that is raised in height after each round.

The speed classes against the clock are fast and furious, and the Fancy Dress Mini Major Challenge where the kids pair up with the pros is great fun.

Top National Hunt jockeys also get to compete against showjumpers and the crowd really get behind their favourite riders, cheering them on and shouting encouragement - the atmosphere is tremendous.

### Activities across the showground

Para showjumping also made its first impressive appearance at the 2016 show.

In addition to the international show jumping classes, there are displays and activities across the showground for all the family.

These include camel racing, which just has to be seen; bird of prey displays – it is such a privilege to see these magnificent creatures in flight and close-up; scurry driving; a colourful funfair; extreme Mountain Biking and a world champion jet ski show on the Bolesworth lake.

There is so much going on, you need four days to see everything. Live music concerts take place on the Friday and Saturday evenings, and in 2016, boy band 5ive and Atomic Kitten performed.

The shopping is great here too, and with over 30 trade stands, and not just for the equine enthusiast like me.



As well as being able to buy anything you might need for your horse at the high-end equestrian outlets, there are also many stalls selling exclusive fashion wear, artisan gifts and beautiful items for the home and garden.

There is also a host of food and drink stands catering for every taste and budget, including a Champagne Bar, Mexican street food, coffee and doughnuts, hog roasts and a vintage tea room.

Bolesworth International is an event the whole family will enjoy as well as the equestrian enthusiast.

Take advantage of the opportunity to view top class showjumping and entertainment in the surroundings of a stunning Cheshire estate on 15 to 18 June 2017.

[www.bolesworthinternational.com](http://www.bolesworthinternational.com)



## A day out at the Cheshire and Nantwich agricultural shows

The two-day Cheshire County Show, in June, is one of the most popular gatherings in the Cheshire country calendar.

It is a premier event in the chain of agricultural shows held throughout the UK during the late spring and summer months

### Livestock galore

A highlight of 'the Cheshire' is always the display of livestock and other animals with local and regional farmers showing their finest animals.

Many breeds of cattle can be seen on show days along with sheep, goats, pigs and rare breed livestock.

The show's poultry section has pigeons, rabbits and cavies and its dog show attracts over 2000 entries and all sorts of breeds.

There are marquees ablaze with flower displays, arts and crafts and others offering local produce.

The tractors and other farming equipment is always of interest - even to city dwellers like us.

Finally all of these activities and attractions are clustered around the main arena which offers a programme of show jumping, displays and parades of farm animals, heavy horses and vintage vehicles.

[www.cheshirecountyshow.org.uk](http://www.cheshirecountyshow.org.uk)

### The world's finest cheeses on display – and for sale

For those who miss the Cheshire Show, or want a second slice of country life, there is the Nantwich Show at Dorfold Park.

This is a wonderful, one day agricultural shows, which also incorporates the International Cheese Awards - the largest cheese show in the world.

The Cheese Marquee displays over four thousand cheeses from some 26 countries, with celebrity chefs creating cheese based dishes.

Most of these are available for tasting – and for purchase at knockdown prices at the end of the show.

Other attractions at both shows include cattle, horses, sheep and poultry.

[www.nantwichshow.co.uk](http://www.nantwichshow.co.uk)  
[www.internationalcheesewards.co.uk](http://www.internationalcheesewards.co.uk)



## While in Cheshire



[www.chester-races.co.uk](http://www.chester-races.co.uk)

## Chester Races

Chester Racecourse, the oldest racecourse in Britain, with the first recorded race at the 'Roodee Fields' held in February 1539, in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

The race was given the consent Chester's Lord Mayor, Henry Gee (whose surname gave rise to the 'gee-gees' nick name for racehorses).

Racing begins annually with the three-day May Festival followed by daytime and evening 'meets' throughout the summer.

[www.chester-races.co.uk](http://www.chester-races.co.uk)

## Chester Zoo



Chester Zoo is undoubtedly one of the world's finest.

Its 110 acres of zoological gardens is home to 11,000 animals from 400 different species - half of which are endangered.

There are daily animal talks, children's play areas, themed gardens and the Zoofari monorail.

Through its charitable work, the zoo supports some 150 field projects for conservation and education in more than 50 countries worldwide.

[www.chesterzoo.org](http://www.chesterzoo.org)  
[www.actforwildlife.org.uk](http://www.actforwildlife.org.uk)



[www.chesterzoo.org](http://www.chesterzoo.org)

## The Anderton Boat Lift

The three-storey-high iron Anderton Boat Lift was built by Edwin Clark in 1875 to lift cargo boats the 50 feet from the River Weaver to the Trent & Mersey Canal.

Two huge water tanks, each with watertight sealable doors carry boats up and down. The original counter-balanced system was replaced in 1908 by electric operation, but the lift now works hydraulically again.

The lift worked until 1983 when serious deterioration of the structure was discovered. Some £7m was raised to fund the restoration, which was completed in 2002.

From April to October there are boat trips through the lift and along the River Weaver.

[www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/Anderton-boat-lift](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/Anderton-boat-lift)

## Beeston Castle



Beeston Castle, near to the delightful small country town of Tarporley, is one of the major visitor attractions in Cheshire.

There was a Bronze Age hill fort here some 4,000 years ago, as was a medieval fortress and an important English Civil War stronghold.

The woodland walks around Beeston are rich in wildlife with a host of birds and small mammals.

[www.english-heritage.org.uk/dayout/properties/beeston-castle-and-woodland-park](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/dayout/properties/beeston-castle-and-woodland-park)



[www.tattonpark.org.uk](http://www.tattonpark.org.uk)

## Cholmondeley Castle

In 1801, George James, 4th Earl of Cholmondeley built a small 'gothic villa', which is now known as Cholmondeley Castle.

The castle is surrounded by sweeping lawns and a variety of mature trees, including Cedars of Lebanon, Oak, and Chestnut.

The gardens surrounding the castle provide walks around the lake and there is also a nature trail.

[www.cholmondeleycastle.com](http://www.cholmondeleycastle.com)

## Tatton Park



Tatton Park is regarded as one of Britain's most complete historic estates.

In 1598 Tatton was acquired by Sir Thomas Egerton, later Lord Chancellor of England, and owned by the Egertons until the death of Maurice, 4th and last Baron Egerton of Tatton, in 1958.

The estate was then left to the National Trust and now attracts over 800,000 people annually.

Tatton's splendid 19th century Mansion with grand staterooms and fascinating servants quarters, is open to the public, as are its grand parkland and gardens design.

Tatton Park hosts over 100 events annually, from outdoor theatre and food festivals to childrens' family fun at its Home Farm.

[www.tattonpark.org.uk](http://www.tattonpark.org.uk)



[www.chetcathedral.com](http://www.chetcathedral.com)





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