

**Hever Castle** is located in the village of Hever, Kent, near Edenbridge, 30 miles (48 km) south-east of London, England. It began as a country house, built in the 13th century. From 1462 to 1539, it was the seat of the Boleyn (originally 'Bullen') family.<sup>[1]</sup>

# Contents

## External links

There have been three main periods in the construction of this historic castle. The oldest part of the castle dates to 1270 and consisted of the gatehouse and a walled bailey. The second period was when the castle, then in need of repair, was converted into a manor in 1462 by Geoffrey Boleyn, younger brother of Thomas Bolyen, Master of Gonville Hall, Cambridge. He added a Tudor dwelling within the walls. The third period of repair and renovation was in the 20th century, when it was acquired by William Waldorf Astor.<sup>[2]</sup>

The property came into the possession of Henry VIII after the death of Anne's father, Thomas Boleyn, in 1539. He bestowed it upon Anne of Cleves in 1540 as part of the settlement following the annulment of their marriage. Hever Castle still has one of Henry VIII's private locks, taken with him on his various visits to noblemen's houses and fitted to every door for his security<sup>[4]</sup>

The bedroom of Henry VIII at Hever Castle

Hever, Edenbridge, Kent



Hever Castle in 2014



<b>Coordinates</b>	51°11′14"N 0°6′51"E
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<b>Grid</b>	grid reference
<b>reference</b>	TQ478452

Type	Castle
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<b>Owner</b>	Broadland Properties Limited
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Open to the public	Yes
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Condition	Intact
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The bedroom of Henry VIII at Hever Castle

The property subsequently passed through various owners, including the Waldegrave family from 1557 to 1715, the Humfreys family to 1749 and the Meade Waldo family from 1749 to 1903. During this latter period of ownership, the castle fell into a poor state of repair, during which time it was leased to various private tenants<sup>[5]</sup>

In 1903, it was acquired and restored by the American millionaire William Waldorf Astor, who used it as a family residence.<sup>[6]</sup> He added the Italian Garden to display his collection of statuary and ornaments.<sup>[7]</sup> In 1983, the Astor family sold the castle to Broadland Properties Limited, which is run by the Guthrie family<sup>[8]</sup>

## Attractions for tourists

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Hever Castle is now a tourist attraction, drawing on its links to Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII, its mazes, gardens and lake. There is an annual events programme with assorted events, including jousting tournaments and archery displays in the summer months and an annual patchwork and quilting exhibition in September. The castle has also become the venue for triathlon.<sup>[9]</sup>

The castle offers three floors containing antique furniture, Anne Boleyn's prayer books, instruments of torture, and a large collection of Tudor paintings. There is also a museum of the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry.<sup>[10]</sup>

The remains of the original country house timbers can still be seen within the stone walls of the fortification, while the gatehouse is the only original part of the castle. It has the oldest working original portcullis in England.<sup>[11]</sup>

The grounds of the castle include a yew maze, planted in 1904. There is also a water maze, opened in 1999, the object of which is to get to the folly at the centre without getting wet, while in the children's adventure playground there is a tower maze (currently undergoing reconstruction). The castle gardens contain a wide range of features, including an Italianate garden (including Fernery), rose gardens, herb garden, and topiary.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Gallery

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Hever Castle



Hever Castle - side view



The water maze



A bridge over the moat



One of the rose gardens



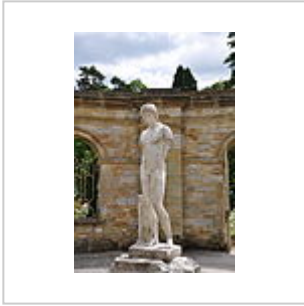
Statue in the castle grounds



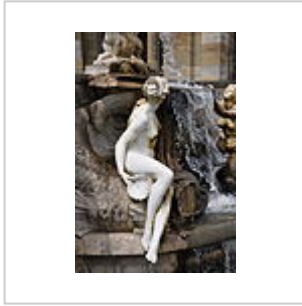
Another statue in the castle grounds



Cottages near the castle



Italian Gardens



Loggia with fountain

## See also

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- Castles in Great Britain and Ireland
- List of castles in England#Kent

## References

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## External links

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- Hever Castle official website.*

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