

= Wellington , Somerset =

Wellington is a small industrial town in rural Somerset , England , situated 7 miles (11 km) south west of Taunton in the Taunton Deane district , near the border with Devon , which runs along the Blackdown Hills to the south of the town . The town has a population of 14 @, @ 549 , which includes the residents of the parish of Wellington Without , and the villages of Tone and Tonedale .

Known as Weolingtun in the Anglo @-@ Saxon period , its name had changed to Walintone by the time of the Domesday Book of 1086 . Wellington became a town under a royal charter of 1215 and during the Middle Ages it grew as a centre for trade on the road from Bristol to Exeter . Major rebuilding took place following a fire in the town in 1731 , after which it became a centre for cloth @-@ making . Wellington gave its name to the first Duke of Wellington , Arthur Wellesley , who is commemorated by the nearby Wellington Monument . The Grand Western Canal reached the town in 1835 and then the Bristol and Exeter Railway in 1843 . The town 's own railway station survived until 1964 . Wellington was home of Fox , Fowler and Company , which was the last commercial bank permitted to print their own sterling banknotes in England and Wales . In the 20th century closer links with Taunton meant that many of the residents of Wellington commuted there for work , and the M5 motorway enabled car journeys to be made more easily .

Local industries , which now include an aerosol factory and bed manufacturers , are celebrated at the Wellington Museum in Fore street . Wellington is home to the independent Wellington School , and state @-@ funded Court Fields School . It is also home to a range of cultural , sporting and religious sites including the 15th century Church of St John the Baptist . The capital city of New Zealand is named after Arthur Wellesley , 1st Duke of Wellington , thus his title comes from the town of Wellington , Somerset , England .

= = History = =

In a grant of between 899 and 909 , Edward the Elder , gave the land then known as Weolingtun , which means " from the wealthy estate " , along with West Buckland and Bishops Lydeard to Bishop Asser . This was in exchange for the monastery of Plympton in Devon . An alternative explanation for the origin of the name is ? the settlement in the temple clearing ? . By the time of the Domesday Book of 1086 , the name had changed to Walintone , and the estate was owned by Gisa (Bishop of Wells) . The parish of Wellington was part of the Kilmersdon Hundred ,

A site at Longforth Farm near Tonedale has been identified as having Bronze Age occupation and , during excavations prior to the building of new homes , found to have been occupied by a 12th @-@ 14th century building with decorated floor tiles covering 0 @. @ 4 hectares (0 @. @ 99 acres) .

A royal charter of 1215 gave Wellington its status as a town , and during the medieval period it grew as a centre for trade on the road from Bristol to Exeter , being laid out , with the church at the east end of town , in a similar manner to other towns of this era . In 1548 , the manor was sold to Edward Seymour , 1st Duke of Somerset , but reverted to the control of the bishops after his execution . By the end of the 16th century it had come under the protection of John Popham (Lord Chief Justice) and his descendants who built a manor house which was destroyed during the English Civil War .

Major rebuilding took place in the town following a fire in 1731 . After this the town 's importance grew as it became a centre for clothmaking across Somerset and Devon , its importance as trade centre enhanced by fires in Taunton and Tiverton . By the 1831 census , 258 people were recorded as cloth workers in Wellington .

Wellington gave its name to the first Duke of Wellington , Arthur Wellesley . Nearby Wellington Hill boasts a large , spotlit obelisk to his honour , the Wellington Monument . The Wellington Monument is a floodlit 175 feet (53 m) high triangular tower designated by English Heritage as a grade II * listed building . It was erected to celebrate the Duke of Wellington 's victory at the Battle of Waterloo . The foundation stone was laid in 1817 , on land belonging to the Duke , but the monument was not completed until 1854 . It is now owned by the National Trust , who announced plans to reclad the monument at a cost of £ 4 million in 2009 .

In the 18th century turnpikes arrived in the area and then in the 19th communications improved with

the building of the Grand Western Canal , which reached the town in 1835 , and then the Bristol and Exeter Railway . Wellington station was opened when the line reached the town on 1 May 1843 . It was a typical Brunel design but was rebuilt in 1932 when two loop lines were put in . This entailed the platforms being moved back to accommodate the widened lines . These platforms are clearly visible and a goods shed still stands on the east side of the line at the Taunton end of the station , although the station closed on 5 October 1964 . Wellington was an important station as it stood at the foot of a steep incline . Banking locomotives were kept here , ready to assist heavy westbound trains up to Whiteball Tunnel .

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= = Fox Fowler & Co . Bank = =

Thomas Fox started the Fox , Fowler and Company bank in Wellington which rapidly expanded and ran successfully , until it merged with Lloyds Bank in 1927 . It was the last private bank in England to issue its own notes and they were legal tender until 1964 . There are nine notes left in circulation . The British Museum have another example on display . The bank established its Head Office at the old family house in Fore Street , Wellington (today the Lloyds Bank branch) - they opened branches at Taunton , Bridgwater , Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare , Torrington , Bideford , Barnstaple , Ilfracombe and South Molton .

The original £ 5 Note is on display at Tone Dale House - one of the last nine and possible the only one left uncanceled .

= = Governance = =

Wellington has three tiers of local government at parish , district and county level . The present system dates from 1 April 1974 when the Local Government Act 1972 came into effect .

The lowest tier is Wellington Town Council , formed as a successor parish to Wellington Urban District Council in 1974 . The town council has 15 councillors , and is headed by a town mayor . For elections of town councillors , the town is divided into four wards : Wellington East (returning 4 councillors) , Wellington North (4) , Rockwell Green (3) and Wellington West (4) . The political composition of the council in November 2009 was Liberal Democrats 7 , Conservative Party 5 and Labour Party 3 . The town council provides purely local services . An area to the south of the town falls within the civil parish of Wellington Without .

The middle , or district , tier of administration is the borough of Taunton Deane . The borough council is based in Taunton , and consists of 56 councillors . Seven borough councillors are elected from wards in Wellington : 5 are Liberal Democrats and one each belong to the Conservative and Labour parties .

There are three electoral wards in Wellington (North , South and West) .

The upper tier is Somerset County Council . Also based in Taunton , the council has 58 councillors , each elected for a single @-@ member electoral division . Most of the town comprises the Wellington electoral division , with part falling in the mainly rural division of Blackdown & Wellington East . They are represented by one Labour and one Liberal Democrat councillor . Somerset County Council is responsible for running the largest and most expensive local services such as education , social services , the library , roads , public transport , trading standards , waste disposal and strategic planning , although fire , police and ambulance services are provided jointly with other authorities through the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service , Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the South Western Ambulance Service .

For elections to the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom , Wellington forms part of the Taunton Deane constituency . The constituency elects one Member of Parliament (MP) by the first past the post system of election . Following the review of parliamentary representation in Somerset , the Boundary Commission for England has created a modified Taunton constituency

with the name change Taunton Deane , to reflect the district name For European Parliament elections , the town is included in the South West England constituency which elects six MEPs using the d'Hondt method of party @-@ list proportional representation .

= = Geography = =

The town has many dependent villages including West Buckland , Langford Budville , Nyngham , Sampford Arundel and Sampford Moor . The formerly independent village of Rockwell Green , to the west of the town , has been incorporated into the town however there is still a green wedge of land in between them . Wellington Park was a gift from the Quaker Fox family to the town in 1903 as a memorial to the coronation of King Edward VII . The 4 @.@ 9 acres (2 @.@ 0 ha) gardens were laid out by F.W. Meyer , who included a rock garden which used 80 tons of limestone from Westleigh quarry near Burlescombe . It is Grade II listed on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England . It was restored at a cost of £ 412 @, @ 827 which included a grant of £ 296 @, @ 500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund Public Parks Initiative .

There are Local Nature Reserves at Wellington Basins on the western fringe of the town . It includes a small pond and boardwalk with a variety of wildlife habitats . The grassland , hedges and woodland are home to a varied flora and fauna including birds such as the grey wagtail , dipper and reed bunting . Five separate bat species have been recorded at the site . Swains Pond in the south of Wellington is another Local Nature Reserve , which used to be the site of orchards . It now includes a pond which provides a home for amphibians including the great crested newt , palmate newt and toads .

= = = Climate = = =

Wellington has an oceanic climate (Köppen climate classification Cfb) .

Along with the rest of South West England , Wellington has a temperate climate which is generally wetter and milder than the rest of the country . The annual mean temperature is approximately 10 ° C (50 @.@ 0 ° F) . Seasonal temperature variation is less extreme than most of the United Kingdom because of the adjacent sea temperatures . The summer months of July and August are the warmest with mean daily maxima of approximately 21 ° C (69 @.@ 8 ° F) . In winter mean minimum temperatures of 1 ° C (33 @.@ 8 ° F) or 2 ° C (35 @.@ 6 ° F) are common . In the summer the Azores high pressure affects the south @-@ west of England , however convective cloud sometimes forms inland , reducing the number of hours of sunshine . Annual sunshine rates are slightly less than the regional average of 1 @, @ 600 hours . In December 1998 there were 20 days without sun recorded at Yeovilton . Most the rainfall in the south @-@ west is caused by Atlantic depressions or by convection . Most of the rainfall in autumn and winter is caused by the Atlantic depressions , which is when they are most active . In summer , a large proportion of the rainfall is caused by sun heating the ground leading to convection and to showers and thunderstorms . Average rainfall is around 700 mm (28 in) . About 8 ? 15 days of snowfall is typical . November to March have the highest mean wind speeds , and June to August have the lightest winds . The predominant wind direction is from the south @-@ west .

= = Demography = =

The town has a population of 13 @, @ 696 . Large growth occurred during the 1970s when housing developments were built on the south side of the town . These were largely prompted by Wellington 's proximity to Junction 26 of the M5 motorway .

= = Economy = =

Wellington 's main industry was wool @-@ making and in November 2009 , Deborah Meaden , best known from Dragons ' Den a BBC television programme , invested in the Fox Brothers ' Mill which

produces wool cloth for Savile Row , designers and clients around the world . The Fox family established the mill in 1772 . The Tonedale mill complex includes two listed buildings , some of which were still being used until 2000 . The Prince 's Regeneration Trust have been supporting the Tone Mill Regeneration Partnership in attempting to preserve and regenerate the area with a mixed development for commercial and residential use . It is included in the Heritage at Risk Register produced by English Heritage .

The last Fox family house in Wellington Tone Dale House is still owned by Ben and Victoria Fox , Ben is the Great @-@ Great @-@ Great @-@ Great @-@ Grandson of Thomas Fox . Tone Dale House (since 1996) is also now run as a thriving events and hire venue , for house parties , anniversaries , weddings and corporate events , through their company The Big House Co .

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The town is still largely dependent on industry , notably its aerosol factory . Swallowfield plc benefited from the growth of own @-@ brand products during the 1970s and now produces aerosol , cosmetic and toiletry products . It was founded in 1876 as Walter Gregory & Co Ltd who manufactured animal husbandry products . The company diversified and in 1950 produced the first commercial aerosols in the UK which were basically farm products , air fresheners and insecticides .

Bed manufacturers Relyon employ some 400 people . The company started in 1858 as a wool merchant , Price Brothers and Co . , but the business soon moved into manufacturing beds and in 1935 changed its name to Relyon Ltd . In 2001 it was acquired by Steinhoff International Holdings Ltd . , a quoted South African group .

= = Transport = =

The town was served by Wellington railway station on the Bristol and Exeter Railway from 1 May 1843 until 5 October 1964 . It was here that extra locomotives were attached to heavy trains to help them up the incline to Whiteball Tunnel on their way south . The railway from Penzance to London , and also to Bristol and the North , continue to pass through the town , but no trains stop . The nearest railway stations are Taunton and Tiverton Parkway . A campaign was started to reopen the railway station in 2009 .

The town is close to junction 26 of the M5 motorway , which spent a year in the 1970s as a temporary terminal junction , whilst the motorway between junctions 26 and 27 was finished . The A38 is also still a very important link to Taunton .

= = Education = =

Wellington is home to a public school , Wellington School . It was founded in 1837 as an all @-@ boys school . A solitary day girl was allowed to join the Sixth Form in 1972 and the following year Wellington became co @-@ educational . The school opened a new junior school in 2000 , having previously only catered for pupils aged 10 and over . In December 2007 , the school commissioned its new multi @-@ purpose examination hall and English Department adjacent to its Sports Centre . Notable alumni of Wellington School include actor David Suchet , chef Keith Floyd and peer Lord Archer .

The main secondary school in the town is Court Fields School . The 11 ? 16 school includes a sports complex , completed in early 2008 .

= = Religious sites = =

Despite its small size , Wellington has historically been notable for its profusion of churches of many different denominations , including a Quaker meeting house , the Grade I listed , 15th century Church of St John the Baptist , which includes a monument to John Popham , and the Roman

Catholic Church of St John Fisher which was built in 1606 as Popham 's Almshouses and converted into a Roman Catholic church 1936 . Also there was a Presbyterian Independent Church .

= = Culture = =

Wellington has its own amateur dramatic group , formed in the 1960s , called Wellington Arts Association , which holds productions both at Wellington Arts Centre and at the Wellesley Theatre . It includes the Genesis Youth Theatre Group , Operatic Society , Pantomime Group , Civic Players , Arcadians and the Spectrum Arts And Crafts . The Wellesley Cinema was built in 1937 , in the traditional Art Deco style of that period . The auditorium seats 400 people on two levels and is run as an independent cinema .

Wellington and District Camera Club meets in the New Science Block , Wellington School . The club is affiliated to the Western Counties Photographic Federation (W.C.P.F.) and also to Wellington Arts Association , (W.A.A.) .

The town also has its own weekly newspaper , the Wellington Weekly News , which was first published in 1860 . There is also a community website providing news and views about the town , Around Wellington . Wellington is twinned to the town of Immenstadt in Germany , the town of Lillebonne in France and Torres Vedras in Portugal .

The town is home to Wellington Silver Band , a fourth section brass band . The band can trace its origins to 1887 , when it was formed from the volunteer band of the 2nd Battalion , Prince Albert 's Somersetshire Light Infantry .

= = Sport = =

Wellington Cricket Club have a ground off Courtland Road , and have two teams in the Somerset Cricket League . Wellington A.F.C. football Club was formed in 1892 and now play in the Western Football League .

Wellington Bowmen is an archery club formed in 2001 . It uses facilities at the rugby club and at Court Fields Community School . The Rugby club itself was founded in 1874 . The first team plays in the Cornwall and Devon League .

The Grand National winning horse , Miinnehoma was prepared for his victory in the 1994 race by Martin Pipe at his Pond House Stables in the town .