- A Timeless Blend

Bishop's Castle is both timeless and buzzing. Once England's smallest borough, it retains its 12th century layout and strong sense of its history yet it impresses visitors as a lively, vibrant community with a fresh and friendly outlook with music and festivals at its heart. It has a long and proud history of brewing.

At the top of the steep High Street, gradient 1 in 61 is the 18th century Grade 11* listed Town Hall with its clock which rings every 15 minutes. The Town Hall hosts the visitor information centre and tells the story of this historic town. This is a 'must visit' on your tour of the Town. At The Town Hall they also hold markets, art exhibitions, local art and crafts for sale, workshops, events and you can even get married there.

www.bishopscastletownhall.co.uk

Next to the hall, on the ancient Cottles, is the House on the Crutches which houses the Local History Museum. Twice weekly guided tours and the Town Trail tell the town's history through its buildings. Continuing up the town is the Market Square with its shops and to the right, the Old Market Place with the Powis Coat of Arms at one end. The site of the castle, which gave the town its name, is even further up, beyond the Castle Hotel's lovely garden. Only a length of wall remains but it is a picnic area with great views.

Putting back the Clock

Whilst a stroll through the town will reveal its bright and modern influences, Bishop's Castle still retains its sense of timelessness. For 500 years the Welsh drovers brought livestock along the Kerry Ridgeway to markets here and further afield. It has always been a small, working country market town. Regular livestock auctions are still held and store cattle sales are some of the largest in the country.

Although only 1,700 people live in the town itself, it is the hub of a large, very rural area where England meets Wales. Shops and services here supply every daily need and cater for a wide variety of tastes and incomes.

Bishop's Castle is still home to generations of local families. Traditional and quirky independent shops line the main street and friendly faces with time to stop and chat are all around.

Perhaps the relaxed pace of life is influenced by the clock on St. John's Church, for it is one of the few remaining one-handed clocks in the country.

Free car parking and the absence of traffic wardens gives residents and visitors time to browse and meet with friends. Bishop's Castle has a surprisingly large collection of unusual shops and galleries selling vintage and new clothing, textiles, handbags, boots & shoes, jewellery, ceramics, kitchenware, antiques, furniture, books, flowers, plants and vegetables, objets d'art, local meat and cheese and delicatessen items.

There are regular exhibitions of original art and crafts in the town from some of the best local designer-makers. The beauty and tranquility of the ancient landscape have been an inspiration to many. The town is the home of many artisans and an Arts Festival is held every February half-term week.

Music plays an important part in the life of Bishop's Castle with local orchestras, choirs and bands. There are open mic sessions and concerts/gigs at local pubs and many of our festivals are music based – “Party in the Park” which features local bands, the Real Ale Trail and the Moor & Gumbo Festivals at the Vaults. Michaelmas Fair in September boasts a town centre stage for musicians.