



Princes Street Fountain

Dorchester

Acknowledgements

This Fountain was conceived, designed and made by Peter Osborne of Trudoxhill, Somerset. It is inspired by Roman themes but it does not pretend to be a slavish reproduction of a Roman original. It was commissioned in 2003.

The work was financed by Saxon Homes, Wessex Water and West Dorset District Council.

The fountain is maintained by Dorchester Town Council.

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This fountain lies close to the spot where the aqueduct of Durnovaria (Roman Dorchester) delivered its water into the castellum divisiorum, the public pool from which the water mains distributed supplies to the baths and other properties around the town.

The aqueduct was first built in the late 40s AD by the Roman army for their fort south of the town. When the army moved away to Wales and the north in about 75AD, the aqueduct was diverted to serve Durnovaria, the new Roman style capital of the Durotriges, the native Iron Age people of Dorset.

The source of the water was a stream at Littlewood Farm, Frampton. The channel was buried underground and was made of wood, as were the water mains in the town. The line of the aqueduct entered the town along the Poundbury Road, and the overflow ran north from the castellum past County Hall to the River Frome. A water main has been excavated running along Princes Street to the Roman baths in Icen Way.

Soon after 150AD the aqueduct was derelict, following an unsuccessful attempt to reconstruct it in stone. After that the town had to rely on wells for its water.