

# profile | flint





*Main pic: cycling at Flint. Facing pics (left to right): riverside walk, Town Hall, the "Footplate" sculpture, Flint Castle.*

This is where it all began. In 1277 medieval Europe's most ambitious building project started here at Flint.

King Edward I was known as Longshanks because he was so tall. The Welsh probably had a few other names for him when he began a campaign to crush their independence with an "iron ring" of castles along the North Wales coast.

It included the World Heritage Sites at Conwy, Caernarfon, Harlech and Beaumaris. But Flint Castle was the first.

It took 2,300 men just seven years to build. And it's still there, brooding spectacularly beside the Dee Estuary.

Brian Fell's sculpture entitled "Footplate" may not have quite the same gravitas. But it generated a little shock and awe of its own when it was installed in 1999 at the nearby railway station.

As you'd expect from a steel foot that's 11-foot high. A bike chain protruding from its hollow ankle, it celebrates Flint's vital place in the National Cycling Network. From one Longshanks to another, you might say.