

Last week Cardigan Castle, famed as the birthplace of the Welsh National Eisteddfod, opened its doors to the local community that fought for more than 15 years to save it.

A four-year, £12million restoration project has sensitively transformed the 900 year-old site into a new heritage attraction, complete with luxury accommodation, riverside restaurant and summer events programme.

Despite its name, Cardigan Castle has seen many developments since its medieval beginnings, so is no longer a typical ‘castle’. Visitors to the site today will see a wide-range of architecture and experience many different historic eras, from its fortified walls to its Regency-style gardens, and Victorian plant species to its stunning Georgian mansion

The Castle Green House within the Castle grounds will host three permanent exhibitions telling the story of the Castle and the people that lived there. The Eisteddfod Exhibition will celebrate the Castle’s claim to fame as the birthplace of the Eisteddfod. Visitors can learn about the iconic tradition of Eisteddfodau in Wales and why the Castle’s owner, Lord Rhys, a Prince of Wales, hosted the first event in 1176.

The Barbara Wood Exhibition will pay homage to the remarkable story of the last private owner and her struggles to remain in the Castle she loved.

While the Cardigan Castle Story, narrated by Welsh actor and Hollywood star, Matthew Rhys, will take visitors from the Castle’s origins to present day.

Hundreds of local volunteers have also played their part in protecting the much-loved site, contributing more than £200,000 to the £6m awarded by us

Sue Lewis, from Cardigan Castle, said: “The whole community is of course ecstatic to see Cardigan Castle returned to its former glory. We’re hoping to attract thousands of visitors throughout the summer months and to establish Cardigan Castle as one of west Wales’ leading tourist attractions.”