Weoley Castle facelift completed

14/10/2010

Weoley Castle Ruins is one of ten scheduled monuments in Birmingham, Grade II listed, and currently on English Heritage's 'At Risk' register.

The two-year project safeguards the future of the ruins, which date back to 1270, and work completed includes:

Consolidation of the ruins
The fragile stone remains have been cleaned and consolidated, certain features are now more evident such as the drawbridge abutment and the gate house entrance walls repaired.

New education centre
The new building houses toilets, classroom and a small kitchen. It has been used for schools sessions, the AGM of the Council for British Archaeology and a summer craft event.

New CCTV system
Security is now centrally monitored with an observational camera on the ruins themselves. Work with the police to minimise vandalism is ongoing.

New viewing area
In addition to the work carried out, a committed team of volunteer Castle Keepers has now been established. The dedicated volunteers contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of the site and carry out guided tours of the site. They meet on a monthly basis and help at open days and events. Access to the ruins is by guided tour only but the ruins can be viewed from the platform.

Cllr Martin Mullaney, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture, said: "The Weoley Castle Ruins are one of Birmingham's hidden gems and I'm delighted that we've been able to work with partners for this vital work.

"As ever, Birmingham City Council is grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage for their continued support. Now hopefully more Birmingham residents can enjoy this terrific community museum."

Anne Jenkins, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the West Midlands, said: "We are delighted to see this project come to fruition. The conservation work will protect the ruins from further risk, and enable visitors to experience a long and fascinating history that has something to offer all age groups of local and visiting communities alike."

Ian George, English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments, said: "Weoley Castle has been on the Heritage at Risk Register for a number of years. English Heritage came together with the Heritage Lottery Fund and the City Council to stop the Castle from being at risk and to ensure its future for local people and visitors alike.

"We are delighted to have succeeded - Weoley Castle is once again a focal point for the local community, just as it should be."

Barbican Archaeology are currently working on a reassessment of the archaeology of the site and analysing the pottery and other finds from the site.

Notes to editors

The ruins at Weoley Castle are over 700 years old and are the remains of the moated medieval manor house that once stood here. The site has been inhabited from the 12th century and, according to the Doomsday Book, was part of the estates of William Fitz Ansculf.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 33,900 projects, allocating over £4.4billion across the UK, including £319million to projects in the West Midlands alone.

English Heritage exists to make sure the best of the past is kept to enrich our lives today and in the future.

For further information

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