Learning the castle! Norwich’s medieval keep gets



School children enjoying a 'Life in a Castle' Key Stage 1 activity session at Norwich Castle

Norfolk Museums Service has received HLF support of £9.2million, including a development grant of £462,400, to transform Norwich Castle’s keep into one of the region’s premier heritage attractions.

In the medieval period Norwich Castle was one of the most important buildings across the whole of Europe and, architecturally, one of the most elaborate of the great Romanesque keeps. It remains to this day a visually striking building on the city’s skyline.

Recreating King Henry I's lavish lifestyle

Following an extensive programme of work, visitors will be able to immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of King Henry I’s lavish castle by exploring the recreated Great Hall, complete with a banqueting table, minstrels’ gallery, King’s chamber and chapel. Newly-exposed Norman archaeology and architecture will tell previously untold stories of the castle’s past and a unique battlements experience will offer dramatic views of medieval and present-day Norwich.

British Museum gets on board

For the first time, a partnership with the British Museum will bring national medieval treasures to Norfolk, displayed alongside artefacts from Norwich Castle's own collection, in a new British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period.

[quote=Dr Jonathan Williams, Deputy Director of the British Museum]"The British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period will be the first permanent gallery presence for the British Museum in the East of England."[/quote]

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: "We recognise Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England potential by funding a range of plans to enhance the museum's existing displays and creating a complementary British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period. We've earmarked £9.2m towards the project and will be working closely with Norfolk Museums Service over the coming months to help them produce a first-class visitor attraction. Whilst it's early days, it's never too soon to also express our gratitude to National Lottery players for making this work possible."

Dr Jonathan Williams, Deputy Director of the British Museum, added: "Our partnership with Norfolk Museums Service is one of our most valued relationships. The British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period will be the first permanent gallery presence for the British Museum in the East of England."

Looking to the future

The revitalised keep, displayed and interpreted as a Norman royal palace, is expected to open to the public by 2020.