



April 2016



Welcome to April news

Nottingham Castle Transformation newsletter

Here's what the project team has been up to in the past month:



Chat'bout visit - This month the Project Team was excited to host a visit from Nottingham youth group Chat'bout. We were keen to pick their brains regarding potential activities for young people at the Castle, and get their opinion on some of our ideas for the transformation project. Following a tour of the site, a workshop was held resulting in some great ideas for events and activities at the Castle, many of which will help to shape our activity plan which will be completed in the next few weeks.



Games development workshop - Members of the project content team thoroughly enjoyed a workshop, hosted by Preloaded Games Studio. This was an opportunity to be as creative as possible, as ideas were brainstormed for the creation of a Robin Hood themed interactive game to feature in the new Robin Hood Gallery. Over the next few months these ideas will be honed down to form a brief for the commissioning of this exciting element of one of our new galleries.



Project in the media - With the release of visuals for both the Visitor Centre and the gallery design this month, came considerable interest from local media. The project team hosted two days of press tours at the Castle, which gave us a fantastic opportunity to promote the transformation project and explain all of the proposed changes in detail. We were delighted with the level of interest and extremely positive responses which we received.

Meeting the public - On the weekend of the 16 and 17 April we held two major public consultations on the transformation project. On the Saturday we were in the Old Market Square and on the Sunday we were at the Castle during the Big Day Out. We would like to say a massive thank you to all of those who attended and came along to talk to us. Hearing your views on project proposals is so important, and in this instance comes at a time crucial to project development.



Transformation plans and designs revealed - a message from Robin Hood...

The plans for the transformation were well received by the public and press. Thank you so much to everybody that came to visit us and that gave their opinions.

We asked Robin Hood himself what he made of it all... Can you guess which bit he was keenest on?

You Tube film - [The transformation from Robin's perspective](#)

Archaeological excavations at Nottingham Castle

Those visiting Nottingham Castle in the last few weeks will have seen evidence of archaeologists at work. As well as supervising a required drainage survey, Trent and Peak Archaeology has also been conducting investigative work, in the form of test pits in different locations around the site.



Paul Johnson PhD, Project Manager from Trent & Peak Archaeology explains what has been found...

"In the Outer Bailey, test pits dug to determine the depth of deposits overlying the bedrock have confirmed the presence of archaeological layers relating to the use of

the site as allotments in the 19th century, formal gardens in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the presence of as-yet uninvestigated layers, potentially dating to the Medieval period below these.

Further investigations appear to have revealed the edge of the Medieval ditch separating the Middle Bailey Green and the Inner Bailey, and evidence for the architectural history of the current museum/gallery building."



Nottingham Art Map Weekender 14 & 15 May

A great chance to visit Nottingham Castle and a host of other arts venues for FREE all weekend.

Have a look at the website to see which exhibitions are happening and where - The Castle is currently showing Gordon Cheung - Here Be Dragons. There will be free drop in workshops on the exhibition over this special weekend.

To get free castle entry and to take advantage of a £2 event return ticket on Nottingham trams, [you just need to print off a voucher](#). You'll need one for every person attending. [Read more about the Nottingham Art Map Weekender](#)



Piecing together the past - Quick survey for a new project title

We're going to be doing a lot of work to bring in images for this project over the next month and we thought perhaps a new name would help to inspire members of the public to come forward with their Nottingham Castle images and/or film from the past.

[The project](#) will help map former uses of the Castle site, to archive and preserve images from the public and to allow Nottingham's people to reminisce and share their memories from the site in past times.

You can help us by [completing this short survey](#) to choose a new name for the project or to suggest one of your own.

Please [check the website](#) for further details on the project and on how to submit your images.



Scott's facts and findings

Welcome to Scott's fourth column. In this edition, he explores an alternative legend for Mortimer's Hole...

"Since the 1960s, there have been suggestions that the cave known as Mortimer's Hole was not the actual passage used by Edward III when capturing Roger Mortimer in 1330.



Instead, it is thought a relatively little known cave was used.

The cave in question is known as the Northwest Passage, but also has the curious name of Davy Scot's Hole. 19th and 20th century historians assumed the name derived from David, King of Scotland, and this myth continues to be repeated.

A little known fact is that in the 17th and 18th centuries the cave was known as James Scot's Hole, so the current name is a more recent invention. Who James Scot was is a mystery.

If the core of the legend of Mortimer's capture is true, then Edward and his men entered the castle via a little known passage. Mortimer's Hole is very visible and could never have been regarded as a secret. The Northwest Passage, which has been blocked at the castle end since the 1720s, will have been little known.

A probable Medieval document adds weight to the belief. According to the document the constable of the castle told Edward...

'I know another weye by an alet [alley] that stretchith oute of the ward under the earthe into the castell that gooth into the west ...'

The Northwest Passage certainly extends from what was known as the ward of the Castle, out to the west.

The passage was first investigated in 1936 by George Campion and was laser scanned in 2010. We will never know for sure if it was used in 1330 but it seems quite likely. Secret passages are referred to as having been used during a siege of the castle during the Civil War in 1643 and we can be certain the Northwest Passage was used at that time."