



May 2016

Welcome to May news

Nottingham Castle Transformation newsletter

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

Cave surveys: Earlier this month ecologists RammSanderson conducted initial bat surveys within our cave systems. No evidence of bats was found during these investigations, although there is some (albeit low) potential for roosting. Over the next few months static monitoring devices will be positioned discreetly within some of the caves in order to detect any activity. This will also be complemented by a suite of dusk to dawn surveys on site during June.

Tourism course visit: The Project Team were delighted to host a visit by staff from Central College's Tourism course this month. A site tour was followed by a presentation on the transformation project and a discussion to develop potential links to course areas for both current and prospective students. This meeting was very successful and the development of a partnership programme for the duration of the transformation project is now underway.

Key meetings: Further site meetings with Historic England and NCC Planning have taken place this month. Prior to formal planning applications and applications for SMC (Scheduled Monument Consent) and LBC (Listed Building Consent), walk rounds have been scheduled to go through any outstanding issues and explain the intricacies of working on such a complicated and important site.

Thank you: Lastly, we'd like to thank everybody who attended our Stakeholder event on the 12th May (details below). It was great to see so many people there. We were delighted to be able to explain plans for the Castle in some depth, and also happy to answer questions and take suggestions on the night. Look out for more consultation events as the project progresses!



Stakeholder event - Thursday 12 May

Over 80 local businesses and organisations came to this event at the Castle to hear about the plans for the transformation, to meet some of the team working on various aspects of the project and to look over the artist's impressions.

There were presentations from project leads - from Casson Mann (Exhibition design), from Purcell (Architects) and from DBA (Activity planning) and then stakeholders were invited to feed back and to ask any questions.



Piecing together the past - Survey results for renaming

Thanks to everybody that voted to rename our photo archive project. These were the results

- Nottingham Castle - A History in Pictures (30.43%)
- A Lens Through Time (17.39%)
- The Castle in Focus (21.74%)
- Snapshots Through Time/Castle photocall (0.0%)

Other suggestions included:

- Capturing Memories
- Nottingham Castle - The People's Photos
- Nottingham Castle then and now
- Nottingham Castle - Memory Montage
- Nottingham Castle in focus
- Nottingham Castle - through the keyhole
- Viewfinder - Nottingham Castle in Pictures
- Nottingham Castle through the ages

The panel really loved the 'Viewfinder' idea so the project will now be known as **Viewfinder - Nottingham Castle's history in pictures** - the 'Viewfinder project' for short!

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

What is Piecing Together the Past/Viewfinder?

Here's project officer Faye Sadler with a bit more information...

Thank you to **Eve Gatheshill** of Nottingham Trent University who created the film and gave us permission to use it.



You Tube film - [Castle photo archive project](#)



Great volunteer role at the Castle

Where: Nottingham Castle, Project Lab - Over Land and Out to Sea.

When: Saturdays, Sundays and School Holidays, 10.30 – 4.30pm

From: 28 May to 17 July 2016.

Plus a training session 2-4 Thursday 26 May (negotiable)

Commitment: We are flexible about how much time you give us, but ideally you will be able to offer at least 4 full days over the 8 weeks.

Role summary:

We need enthusiastic friendly faces to welcome visitors to Project lab and encourage them to get involved. The project lab is a space to trial and develop new ideas for interactive visitor resources to inform the castle development plan. The first of 4 themes this Project lab gallery will be based on a 'views and vistas' theme called 'Over land and out to sea'.

Containing some works from NCMG fine art collections, the project lab aims to encourage visitors to interact in the space; draw on the chalkboard painted walls which have horizon line but otherwise offer a blank sheet; draw landscapes in gold frames on wallpaper; try out floor-based children's activity and reading area (landscape-themed).

This is an excellent opportunity for those looking to gain experience of working with visitors. Over the period of 12 months, the project lab themes will change, so there is the opportunity to continue to volunteer and to play a part in the ideas development of activities for the new themes.

Find out more at the [Nottingham City Museums and Galleries volunteering website](#)



Bookstart - Under the sea fun at Nottingham Castle

National Bookstart Week (6 - 12 June) is fast approaching.

Join the big celebration family fun day at Nottingham Castle on 9 June 10:30am-2:30pm

How to get your entry voucher - In order to get into the castle for free, families need to visit either a city library or the Tourist Information Centre with a valid Citycard and get a voucher. If they don't have a Citycard, families can go to the library and sign up for one and get their voucher at the same time.

Activities on offer include:

Every child gets a **free copy** of 'Hole at the Bottom of the Sea' and accompanying rhyme sheet

Under the sea crafts and activities including making a shark mask, sea creatures and buckets, spades etc. in the sand pit

Reading area with under the sea themed books

Trail of Bookstart bear's paw prints running from the Castle down to Central library. If you follow the trail all the way you will get a free Bookstart Bear teddy from the library

Quite remarkable productions - you might need an umbrella!. Join Geoffrey Jumper and Mandy in their show - children can make their own **shadow puppet** afterwards.



Scott's facts and findings

Welcome to Scott's fifth column.

Following the Royal Geographical Society's recent recognition of Nottingham Castle's caves as part of one of the best tourist trails in the country, he explores why this should come as no surprise to anyone who has visited these unique and special caves.

"The caves at Nottingham Castle attract approximately 25,000 visitors each year. The chambers and passages, some of which may date to the 12th century, are unique and allow visitors to walk through the history. Expertly carved into the sandstone these caves have served many purposes over the centuries including communication passages, dungeons, storage chambers and air raid shelters.

They were used in times of peace to transport men and goods from the base of the castle rock to the castle itself. They have been the settings of sieges, and, according to legend, the capture of Roger Mortimer by Edward III and the dungeon where King David of Scotland was held prisoner. In short they are an important part of the nation's history.



Mortimer's Hole with inlaid site cave map

The Royal Geographical Society considers Nottingham Castle's caves, along with six other cave systems in the city, to form one of the top trails in the country, enabling people to learn more about the city's heritage. The trail can be found on the Society's new website www.discoveringbritain.org

The trail is the latest to be created for the city's caves but a [smartphone app \(Nottingham Cave Trail\)](#) provides a trail of ten of the caves and allows users to view laser scanned flythroughs of caves which allows users to go on virtual tours of parts of the caves at the castle as well as some other caves in the city, on their mobile device.

Nottingham City Museums and Galleries, along with partner organisations, helped develop the app, which is free to download. There are plans to increase the number of caves on the app later this year but already it is proving to be a very popular way to explore these ancient features with modern technology.

There is, however, no substitute to experiencing the atmosphere of the caves in person, by delving deep inside the castle rock on one of the many tours, some of which are even led by Robin Hood or Friar Tuck.

Looking towards 2020...there are exciting plans, as part of the Nottingham Castle Transformation Project, to hold tours of caves which have never been open to the public as well as reopening caves which have not seen public tours in decades.

We are also learning a great deal about the caves, as part of research programmes which will feature in a future column, and recent investigation of underground tunnels dug in the 1950s by amateur archaeologists have suggested there may be even more caves at the castle yet to be discovered."
