

Child-friendly Information Pack – What’s happening to the Castle Keep?

Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England

The *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project is going to change the inside of the Castle Keep and make it look like it was when it was first built, 900 years ago. It was a palace for King Henry I, and became a prison nearly 700 years ago. The floor, balcony and the big stone arches in the Castle Keep now were built 130 years ago when the Victorians made the prison into a museum.

Our new work is just beginning, so it is hard to say exactly when different parts of the museum will be closed, but we want to re-open in 2021.

2017

The Prison Stories display downstairs in the Keep closed, and the objects were removed. This let us do surveys to tell us more about how the Castle was built. It also helped us to work out how long it will take us to do the new building work.

Here are Wayne and Dave taking an old prison window off display. It is now being stored in a special warehouse to keep it in good condition, along with lots of the other objects from downstairs.



2018

We did more surveys to give us more information about the building.

2019

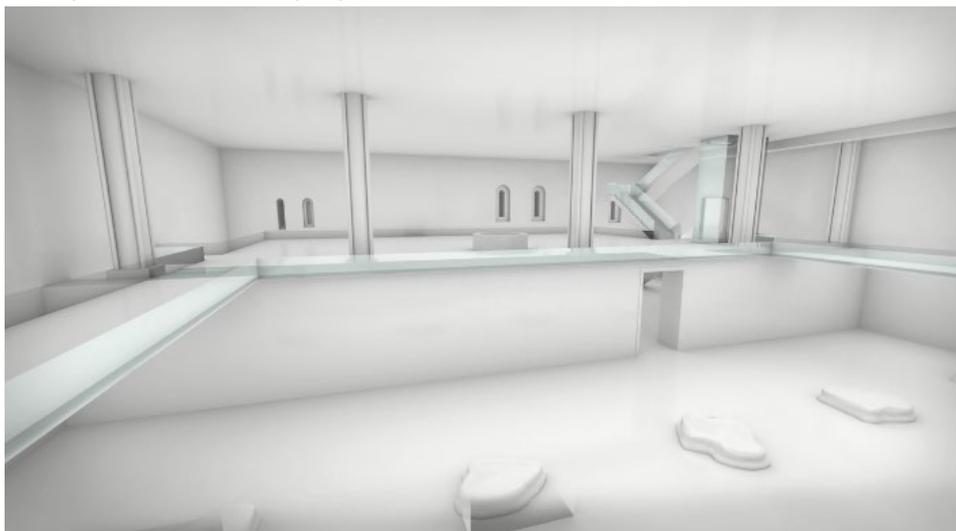
The Castle Keep will close for the building work in autumn 2019 until 2021. The Keep will be completely closed for safety. Here is a simple picture of the Castle Keep now.



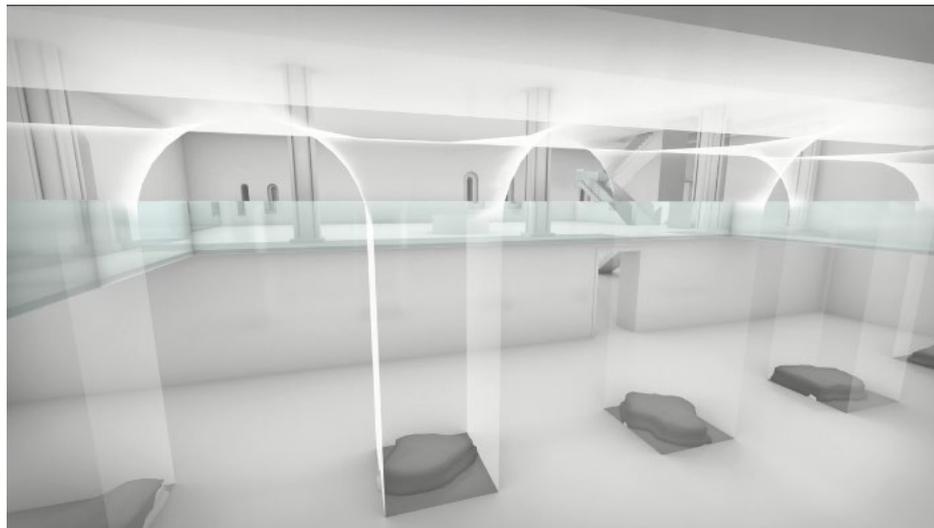
The new building work will make a lot of changes. Instead of a balcony there will be a brand new floor with different rooms like a medieval palace, including a Great Hall, a kitchen, the King's Chamber and a chapel. The big arches will be blocked up. Here is a simple picture of what the new Great Hall will look like, with the big arches blocked up. The King's Chamber will be on the other side of the wall.



Below this, the wooden floor will be taken out and a shiny new exhibition gallery will be built. It will only take up half of the space. Here is a simple picture of what it will look like.

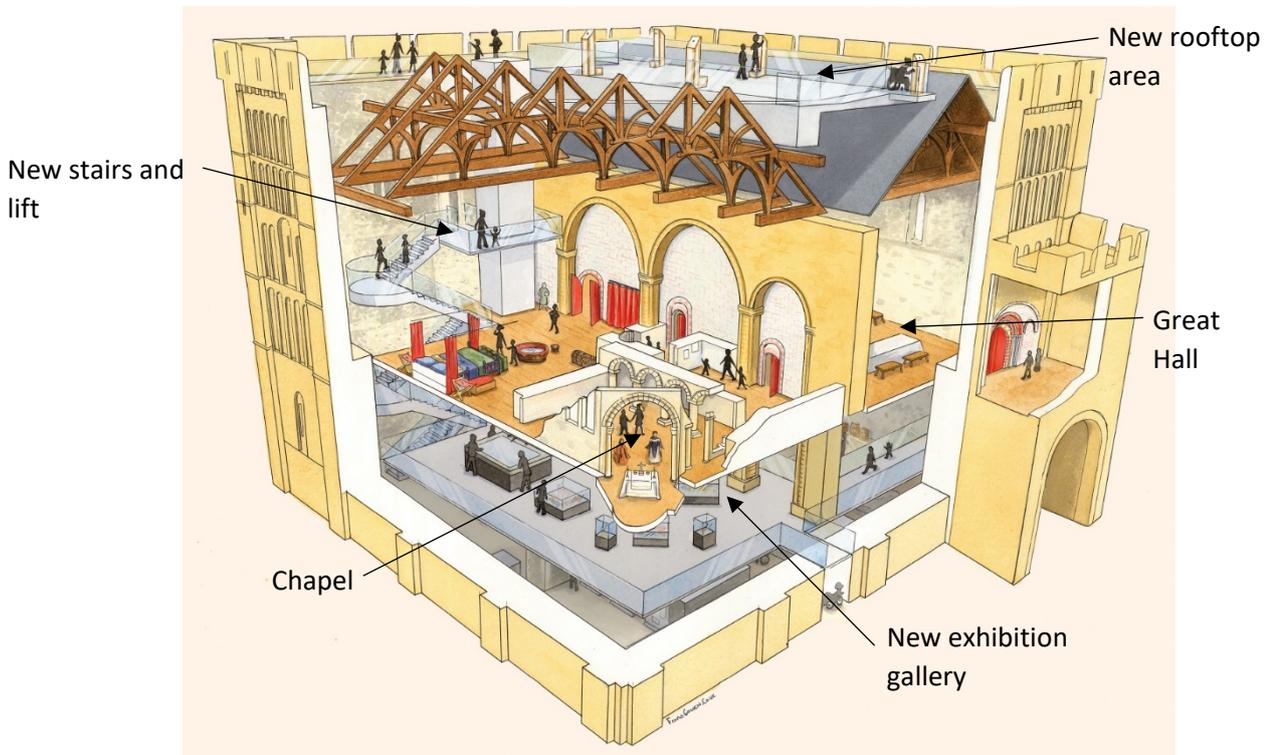


The other half will have huge columns rising from the basement all the way to the floor of the new Great Hall. Here is a simple picture of the new columns. They will be made of a mesh or net, not solid stone.



This is what we hope the whole finished Castle Keep will look like on the inside. The outside isn't being changed.

New stairs and a lift will let you go from the basement to the rooftop, and all the floors in between.



The wooden floor and balcony that are being removed are still a very important part of the museum's history. They will be taken apart carefully and kept in a special warehouse to protect them.

The reception area, shop and café are also being moved and changed. Each of these areas will be closed at different times. We will try our best to make sure the rest of the museum stays open, even if it means getting in through a different door.

We'll post information on our website about what is happening and when, so that visitors are prepared for changes when they come to the museum.

2021

We'll be decorating the new rooms to make them look like a palace, and we'll be putting medieval objects back in the shiny new exhibition gallery.

Here are some pictures of what we hope the rooms will look like.

The Great Hall:

(There probably won't be a fire in the middle of the floor, for safety).



The kitchen:



The King's Chamber:



The chapel:

