

Historic wall at Lydney Harbour revealed as part of restoration work

The Environment Agency has been working with the Forest of Dean District Council to carry out improvements at the site. Among the works was the removal of vegetation along a canal basin bank where the historic stonework was uncovered.

The harbour, which has Scheduled Ancient Monument status, is already a popular destination for walkers, runners, and families since the recent addition of a cafe, new toilet facilities and an art installation inspired by the harbour's historical lookout tower.

Martin Quine, Environment Agency Assets and Waterways Manager for the West Midlands, said:

Lydney Harbour is an important historic site and one of just two harbours that the Environment Agency manages. We have been carrying out a number of improvements at the site to prevent further deterioration which includes the removal of vegetation growth and debris from the south side of the inner basin, revealing the original harbour stonework.

We didn't realise it was there, so it was a surprise to see it unveiled when the soil was removed. It's wonderful to see the wall and restore it to its former glory. We hope that these improvements to the site will make it safer and more enjoyable for people to visit.

Lydney Harbour has a rich history dating back to the Roman times and was a busy working port during the industrial revolution as a gateway from the South West to the rest of the world.

Its canal and basin were built between 1810 and 1813, with the outer harbour completed in 1821. In its heyday, more than 2,000 vessels would enter the harbour annually, exporting 300,000 tonnes of coal.

In 1985 the harbour was designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument by Historic England and is now a popular recreational site. However, it had fallen into a state of neglect in recent years and the Environment Agency, which owns the site has been carrying out improvement works to prevent further deterioration.

Further works are planned in the coming weeks including the removal and repair of the outer sea gates, which will be followed by the reinstatement of the historic bypass sluice.