

'Our Welsh Princes should be more widely celebrated' says Culture Minister

Speaking at Castell y Bere, the Minister explained why these sites reserved a special place in Welsh history and what more was being done to ensure they were as accessible and informative as possible.

Lord Elis-Thomas said:

"From Caerphilly to Caernarfon, Conwy to Castell Coch, we are a country blessed with some of the most magnificent, imposing castles in the world, attracting record visitor numbers and boosting the economies of many of our towns and cities.

"But there are a whole host of castles on our doorsteps that are, perhaps, less well known but both individually and as a collective serve as precious physical reminders of our history and our heritage.

"These, to me, are the true Welsh castles – those built or inhabited by distinguished Welshmen of the past – by Llywelyn, Lord Rhys and Glyndwr amongst others. Welsh Princes who fought for and over Wales and helped shape the Wales and Welshness we recognise today. I've been determined to better promote and signpost these castles and their significance to our history and culture.

"The booklet gives a general introduction to the castles closely associated with the Welsh Lords and Princes. They include castles in Cadw's care as well as castles owned by local authorities or which are in private hands, but offer public access.

"Cadw have made great strides over recent years to improve accessibility to a number of sites across Wales. This, in conjunction with some fantastic work in making the information at our sites clearer and more interactive means that more people can now enjoy these physical reminders of our past. But there is more to come, starting with here in Castell y Bere, where we will soon be making improvements to the visitor experience to better convey its historical significance.

"Each of these castles has its own history, its own story and its own character. I hope that, through the material launched today as well as through future improvements, we can help encourage as many people as possible to explore and enjoy these Welsh castles and their significance to the Wales we live in today."

The new booklet, which features 24 castles alongside abbeys and other historical sites, will be available for free at all Cadw sites, with further information also available online.