

# HYDE ABBEY - REDISCOVERING THE LOST MINSTER OF ALFRED THE GREAT

## What has been achieved so far, and what is next?

### Hyde900 - Aims, Achievements And Ambitions

Hyde900 was established to mark in 2010 the 900th anniversary of the founding of Hyde Abbey, the final resting place of Alfred the Great, and to celebrate the rich heritage, community and environment of the area.

Hyde Abbey had been one of the most important monastic institutions in England until its dissolution and destruction in 1538. Since that time the abbey has been "airbrushed" out of existence. More generally Hyde had been overlooked as a key part of Winchester's astonishing history going back to Roman times.

Since 2010 Hyde900 has become a major community group, having mounted a wide

variety of cultural, sporting and social activities inspired by the achievements of King Alfred and the legacy of the abbey but also celebrating the experiences of Hyde residents in peace and war from the middle ages up to the present day.

The group has generated a high level of involvement with the local community, as evidenced by the large, and often sell-out, audiences. Hyde900 is now working with its partners in proposing a Heritage Lottery Fund application to develop an infrastructure of information and displays (both concrete and digital) around the Hyde area, in order to interpret, explain and bring to life the lost abbey of Alfred the Great.



In search of King Alfred



The 2011 Winchester to Wantage Bike ride



The 2010 medieval procession



Concerts in St Bartholomew's church

## What exists of Hyde Abbey?

The only fragments of the abbey remain standing at Hyde are the 14-15C gatehouse, two bridges over the mill stream, and part of the north wall of the abbots lodging. However much of the material used to build the abbey is still in existence. This can be found in the Hyde area and further afield where largely stone from the abbey has been reused since the time of the dissolution. There are also numerous finds from past excavations in Winchester Museum and the stores of the Hampshire Cultural Trust.



Stone from the abbey in the wall adjoining Hyde Gate



The abbots bridge over the mill stream



The 14-15C Hyde Abbey gatehouse



Micheldever church tower built from stone from the abbey

## Research carried out so far

- Through the efforts of Hyde900 members and the local community, much reused stone from the abbey has been found.
- Many individual stone mouldings in the Hyde, Headbourne Worthy and Micheldever areas have been located, photographed, recorded.
- Stone found during the past excavations of the abbey site and stored at the Hampshire Cultural Trust store has been

similarly photographed, analysed and recorded.

- The type of stone has been identified, and the likely quarry source and method of transportation proposed.
- A start has been made in analysing finds of other materials from the abbey
- Two pieces of timber potentially from the abbey have been located.
- The medieval encaustic floor tile fragments from the abbey have begun to be analysed.



This 12th century Romanesque billet mould type stone found in 1955



Stained glass fragment found in Hyde in 2000's



Possible screen fragment from the abbey reused in the roof of Old Hyde House



Tile fragments found in 2012 in Alswitha Terrace

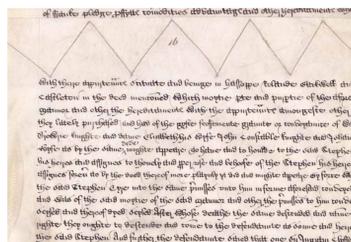
## Bringing the abbey back to life - What has been achieved

- The stone, whether reused, or existing individually, has been analysed and in many cases a drawing made by a master mason of the architectural feature relating the shape of the moulding. The photographs, drawings and analysis has been made accessible to the community via a Google map on the Hyde900 website.
- Research into Benedictine abbeys and the history of Hyde Abbey has provided much detail on the design, life and times of the abbey.

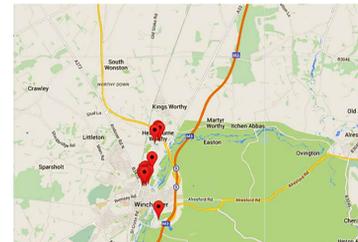
- Digital reconstructions of the design of the abbey, the quarrying and transportation of the stone and the manner in which specific mouldings formed part of the architecture.
- Video presentations on the story of the abbey and the reuse of some of the abbey stones.
- A game for children challenging them to reconstruct King Alfred's skeleton



The sketch showing a stone as part of a column in the reveal of a building



Courts of Chancery record of case involving stone from the abbey



Google map on Hyde900 website showing finds of materials from the abbey



3D image of the abbey church

## Bringing the abbey back to life - The next steps

- Supporting the application for the grant for the HAKA Visitor Information Area project
- Continuing the desk research into the story of the abbey and the reuse of the materials of construction
- Continuing the search for materials to understand better the design and construction of the abbey.
- Continuing the analysis of finds of stones, timber, floor tiles and glass

- Enhancing and widening the scope of digital recreations of the abbey complex.
- Developing re-enactments of key events of the abbey,
- Developing displays to bring to life the life of the abbots, monks and laystaff, and their interaction with the outside world.

If you would like to participate in any of these activities please do contact us!

www.hyde900.org.uk

