

CASE STUDY – *Cowdray & Midhurst Heritage*

- **Client:**

The Cowdray Heritage Trust

- **Project Manager:**

Osprey Mott MacDonald

- **Architect:**

Martin Ashley Architects

- **Quantity Surveyor:**

Dearle & Henderson

- **Principal Contractor:**

Stonewest Ltd

- **Conservation Specialists:**

St Blaise Ltd

- **Value:** £2.4million

- **Date:** 2005-2007

- **Structural Engineer:**

SFK Consulting

- **Planning Supervisor:**

Dearle & Henderson

- **Services Engineer:**

Philip Allen

- **Archaeology:**

Oxford Archaeology



Description

Stonewest, working with their sister company St. Blaise, won the contract to carry out the works to the remains of the Tudor Palace known as The Cowdray Ruins. The Palace, built in the 16th century was used as a stately home until destroyed by fire in 1793. The area has “Schedule Ancient Monument Status”.

The works involved:

- The stabilisation and conservation of the remains of Cowdray House. This involved the installation of stainless steel anchors to strengthen and stabilise key areas of the structure. Replacement of the failing concrete lintols, installed to replace the charred timber around 1900 and extensive grouting and repointing. Where possible, the existing stone was conserved as were the remains of the windows and other ferramenta. Local materials are used where available for replacements. The remains of the Italian plasterwork in the Chapel were of specific interest as it dates from the 1600s.
- The upgrading of the two habitable areas of the ruins for use as display areas – The Tudor kitchen and cellar.
- The conversion of the adjacent stables into a Visitor Centre.
- Internal landscaping, introduction of new pathways and establishment of the original railings.
- The conservation and upgrading of the Causeway, a raised pathway that connects the town of Midhurst with the ruins across a flood plane. This included the conservation of two masonry bridges.
- Conservation of the adjacent HaHa, a hidden masonry wall invisible from the ruins designed to keep livestock out of the Palace grounds.
- Refurbishment and upgrading of the Conduit House, a two story octagonal building of a similar date to the ruins.
- Because of the historical importance of the site, an Archaeological Survey was carried out once the scaffold was erected and English Heritage were heavily involved in all aspects of the work to the ruins.