

# New town house brings a taste of Roman life to Wroxeter Roman City

Submitted by: Footprint Impression Management Limited

Tuesday, 15 February 2011

---

Opens to the public Saturday 19 February 2011

Its construction has been documented by the Channel Four programme "Rome Wasn't Built in a Day", and on Saturday 19 February, visitors will be able to walk around the newest 'Roman' house in the world, as Wroxeter Roman City's new Town House opens its doors to the public!

The town house was built by a team of contemporary tradesmen using traditional Roman tools, techniques and materials to a design created by archaeologist, Professor Dai Morgan Evans over a period of six months. The design recreates the look of a typical property that would have stood at Wroxeter Roman City during its heyday in the second century.

"For English Heritage, the opportunity for visitors to be able to see a complete Roman property alongside the ruins of real second century homes was something that we could not afford to miss, especially when it was to be created using the same tools and techniques as were used 1800 years ago," says Head of Visitor Operations for the West Midlands, Mark Badger.

"Unlike so many recreations that you can see in museums around the country, this is not made of modern materials such as fibreglass to recreate the appearance of a Roman property, but exactly the same materials and techniques that would have been used by the Romans, and this makes it a living property which requires on-going maintenance, just like the properties occupied by Wroxeter's Roman settlers," adds Mark.

There are many areas that visitors will find familiar from homes today as they walk around the property – including a bathroom complete with under-floor heating – but also areas that they might find surprising, including a shop that is open to the street and a tiny space allocated for slave living quarters.

"You can't get away from the continental 'villa' feel to this property, with all the rooms connected by a covered corridor which is open to a central garden, but the structure does give you an impression of which parts of the house were considered most important," explains Mark.

Indeed, the visual highlight of the property is the reception room, which would also have served as a dining room. Frescos on the walls and an elaborate mosaic on the floor show the importance this room would have on depicting the family's social status. Similarly, an under-floor heating system – a hypocaust system – is a luxurious installation in the family's private bathing space – which includes a cold plunge pool, a warm room and a hot room.

One room in the house has been left unfinished, so that visitors can more clearly see the different techniques and materials used in building the property. "We want visitors to this town house to understand just how sophisticated Roman properties were, so in this room, you can see a combination of the bare stonework that forms the lower part of the wall, the way wooden posts are joined and the wattling that was used to fill in the frame and give a solid wall.

The Roman Town House opens on Saturday 19 February at 10.00am. Visits to the property are included in the admission price for Wroxeter Roman City, which is £4.40 for adults, £3.70 for concessions and £2.20 for children, or £11.00 for a family ticket (two adults and up to three children). Wroxeter Roman City and the Town House are open daily from 19 February from 10.00am to 4.00pm (until 5.00pm from 1 March).

For more information, please call 01743 761330 or visit [www.english-heritage.org.uk/wroxeter](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/wroxeter)

ENDS

For further media information, please contact:

Jay Commins  
PRO – English Heritage  
Tel: 0113 251 5698  
Mob: 07810 546567  
Email: [jay@fim.org.uk](mailto:jay@fim.org.uk)

