

Corinium Museum, Gloucestershire

Cirencester was one of the most important centres of mosaic production in Roman Britain. The museum in the town had become very tired and the visitor experience had deteriorated considerably. I, acting on behalf of Cliveden Conservation Workshop, was asked to advise on the condition of mosaics and stonework at the museum and to provide a report and budget costs to allow a first stage Heritage Lottery Fund bid to be made. The bid was successful and, based on my specification and prices, I took on the role of project manager for the various conservation works.

This was a project lasting well over two years and saw large challenges overcome in protecting, moving and conserving large mosaics while the building around them was demolished and replaced.

Also involved were elements of new stone carving and stone conservation to important artefacts. Despite the major degree of intervention at the museum, there was no damage to any historic object at the end of the project.



Day one—trials to establish how safe the mosaic would be when the gallery was demolished around it.

Rob Thomson, September 2006



The Hare mosaic, reinstalled in the entrance gallery, greets visitors as they enter the museum.

A vital role, as well as managing the conservation works, was to act as liaison between the main contractor—a building company with no experience of museum conservation—an architect with little experience of this type of work and museum staff who had little experience of how robust the contractor might be in the vicinity of their precious artefacts.



The same mosaic as shown to the left, following relocation to the gallery wall.