The place you are visiting has been at the heart of Scotland's life for over a thousand years. Well defended on its rocky crag, it has been occupied since prehistoric times. By the medieval era it was an important royal residence, and the tiny growing-up around it became the nation's capital.

Over many centuries, Edinburgh Castle has remained a royal residence, royal burgh, fortress, medieval parliament, last stronghold for the Scottish national cause, residence for exiled monarchs, and the site of major conflicts. It has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The castle is also home to important national symbols, such as the Honours of Scotland (the crown jewels), the Stone of Destiny, and the historic weapons of war. Mons Meg, the largest English medieval siege cannon, was captured in 1460 by the Scots and played a significant role in the Battle of Flodden in 1513. It is now on display at the castle.

In more recent times, Edinburgh Castle has been used as a military base, and is currently the site of the Scottish National War Memorial. It continues to be used for state occasions and is recognised in the National War Museum, three regimental museums, and the Scottish National War Memorial.

Half-Moon Battery

The castle's defences include a series of gun emplacements, such as the Half-Moon Battery, which was built in the late 18th century to protect the castle from enemy ships. Its long military use and sombrely handsome Scottish National War Memorial, it continues, and is recognised in the National War Museum, three regimental museums, and the Scottish National War Memorial.

There are four ways you can obtain more information or start your membership:

1. In person
2. Online
3. By post
4. Over the phone

Capture Edinburgh Castle map - coordinates practice!

We have labelled defensive features and some other important locations:

A battery is a place where there are guns.

#LearningWithHES