

# DUDLEY: PROUD OF THE PAST, POSITIVE FOR THE FUTURE

## St James's Priory

The imaginative reconstruction of the Priory in the 1530s, just before it was closed by Henry VIII, is based on the surviving ruins, which are made up of several periods of building, representing the patronage of successive Lords of Dudley.

**The Priory was founded in the mid 12th century by Gervase Paganel Lord of Dudley “for the good of his fathers soul chiefly” but also his own and his families. As well as an act of piety this was an expression of lordly power complemented by the refortification of Dudley Castle and the laying out of Dudley as a planned town.**

The later history of the Priory is reflected in these 18th century engravings. After closure the monastic buildings became ruinous, although part of the church was patched up as a tanners dwelling, whilst the rest of the site was used for industrial purposes. The pools were drained when Priory Hall was built in 1825.

Clearance and restoration in the 1930s brought the ruins to their present appearance.

