

SVM Associates rings in the changes at Elizabeth Tower

An engineering consultancy has been ringing in a successful project after designing the new custom lift for Elizabeth Tower in London. The tower has been undergoing restoration works in recent years and Birmingham-based SVM Associates was tasked with improving safety and accessibility.

The bespoke lift project forms part of the wider works undertaken by Sir Robert McAlpine, the appointed main contractor to the renovation of the iconic 162-year-old tower. The lift is now in operational use for the project team and will see its final handover completed before the end of this year.

Before the lift was created, the only way to reach the Belfry where the famous Big Ben bell hangs was a 334-step stairway. Partnering with independent lift specialist Stannah for the project, Edgbaston-based SVM Associates engineered an alternative way for maintenance teams to climb and evacuate the 315-foot landmark safely and efficiently without stairs.

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The project team also had to ensure the machinery noise would not affect the ringing of Big Ben. SVM Associates director John Newbold said: "We are delighted to be Parliament's Design

Authority's official lift consultant and were thrilled to be tasked with designing the first ever lift for the Elizabeth Tower.

"The passenger lift is an essential modernisation of the overall restoration project and will ensure improved access for maintenance crews for years to come. This was a fantastic project to engineer and we're looking forward to continuing to work in partnership with Parliament on upcoming projects."

Richard Suart, property director at Calthorpe Estates where the consultancy is based, added: "Creating the lift for Big Ben is an impressive achievement and we are thrilled that SVM Associates is showcasing the talent we have in Birmingham."

SVM Associates' other previous projects in the capital include supporting the management of lifts and escalators in London's second tallest building 22 Bishopsgate and providing technical management assistance for British Land at Broadgate and Regent's Place.

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