

NEWS

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Welcome to our first Inspiring Art and Music Newsletter, bringing you up-to-date with progress towards the major redevelopment of the Aberdeen Art Gallery, Cowdray Hall and War Memorial complex. Newsletters will be published regularly throughout the project to give you the latest information.

We are delighted to announce that the funding bid for £10 million to the Heritage Lottery Fund has been successful, meaning that our exciting proposals to rejuvenate and transform the Art Gallery complex are set to go ahead. The buildings will close to the public in March 2015 and open again in Winter 2017.

The vision is to create a world class cultural centre for Aberdeen and the North East. A centre which celebrates art and music, allows more of the city's magnificent collections to be displayed and provides a better experience for people, whether they are visiting or live and work here.

Visitors can look forward to 21 Collections gallery spaces in place of the existing 11, a new rooftop gallery to showcase

international-quality exhibitions, two new education suites and a community gallery. The project will see a sensitive upgrading of the Cowdray Hall and integrate it more effectively with the gallery, creating new opportunities for visitors to engage in both art and music. The Hall of Remembrance will be carefully treated to reflect its role as a space for quiet contemplation.

The development has been designed by award winning Scottish architectural practice Gareth Hoskins Architects. The fabulous new Collections galleries are being produced in conjunction with Edinburgh-based company Studioarc Design Consultants.

All design work on the buildings has been developed after detailed research into the history and construction on the site.

You may have noticed several enclosures going up throughout the building in recent months – not the latest temporary art installations, but rather to protect the spaces whilst trial pits are dug and structural investigations undertaken. All the information gathered helps the Design Team and Structural Engineers to plan the redevelopment.

The popular granite columns will be preserved whilst the marble cladding and treads from front staircase will be used elsewhere on site, where possible. New laylights and LED lights will replicate the shape and size of current laylights in the galleries and the distinctive dome above the Hall of Remembrance will continue to be the highest visible point of the building.



Focus on Gallery Development

The City's exceptional treasures and the stories they tell will be celebrated and shared more widely through the new and rejuvenated gallery displays. Digital technology will be used throughout to enhance the visitor experience and all exhibition areas within the Art Gallery will have new themes and content. Following consultation with the public we are currently developing the following ideas:

- 'Paradise Lost', featuring insights into art during 20th century war and interwar years and the following reconnection with nature
- 'Shoreline', featuring artists' responses to the edge of the sea
- 'French Impressions', exploring French Impressionism and its links with contemporary British art
- 'Portrait to Selfie', highlighting the Gallery's outstanding collection of portraits through the ages
- 'Politics and Petticoats', exploring women's contribution to art
- 'Balmoral Phenomenon', investigating the rise of Scottish identity and Queen Victoria's affection for Scottish culture and tradition

Look out for our New Programme

During the building work we're looking forward to welcoming visitors to a continuing programme of art and music at our two museum venues, The Tolbooth Museum and Aberdeen Maritime Museum. Collections will also be seen at other venues in the city and shire and on loan to other organisations in the UK and abroad.

Our new programme of History and Art exhibitions can be seen at Aberdeen Maritime Museum, complemented by a series of expert talks. The Cowdray Hall's popular weekly Lunchbreak Concerts will have a new temporary home at the Aberdeen Citadel with several concerts also taking place at St Andrew's Cathedral.

We are pleased to be working with the National Trust for Scotland to show work from the Collections in a new specially created gallery at Drum Castle. Staff have also been working with the local business community to take contemporary art works to an even wider audience within retail outlets in the city.

Looking further afield curators are involved in an exciting programme which will see works from the Collections on display at home and abroad including the Stanley Spencer Gallery, Cookham, The Fleming Collection, London and Drents Museum in the Netherlands.

Important Changes to the Opening Hours 2015

Our opening hours have changed to allow staff to prepare for the complicated programme of moving Collections and offices as we vacate the Art Gallery and Cowdray Hall building.

Art Gallery OPEN: Thursday, Friday, Saturday: 10am – 5pm and Sunday 1-4pm
CLOSED: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
Cowdray Hall open as usual

From Monday 2 March

both the Art Gallery and Cowdray Hall will close to visitors until Winter 2017

Special Events

Please join us at one of our Special Events to celebrate and mark the end of this period of the building's history.

Saturday 28 February, 1-3pm
Celebrating Music at the Cowdray Hall
Admission Free

Friday 27 March, 6.30-10pm
After Hours: Extreme Makeover
Admission Free, over 18s only

Saturday 28 March, 2-6.45pm
Breaking the Rules
Admission Free, all ages welcome

To find out more visit www.aagm.co.uk

Want to find out more?

Visit www.aagm.co.uk or our Tumblr site dedicated to the redevelopment: inspiringartandmusic.tumblr.com, which will be regularly updated with blogs throughout the closure period. This site also explores FAQs and provides details on how you can give feedback and comments to the Project Team.