

## Battersea Arts Centre and Wandsworth Museum unite to create a brand new home for culture and heritage in South West London

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Battersea Arts Centre and Wandsworth Museum have announced today that they plan to unite as one organisation offering an integrated programme of culture and heritage. It is proposed that from March 2015, Wandsworth Museum's staff team will be based at Battersea Arts Centre's home in the Grade II\* listed former town hall on Lavender Hill. This initial transition would be followed by a year of exploring and testing exciting new ideas for interpreting the Museum's collection before the two organisations operate as one from spring 2016.

In 2013 more than 100,000 people attended events at Battersea Arts Centre where over 400 artists created performances across the year. The building is now in the final phase of a £13.3m capital project of restoration and redevelopment in collaboration with RIBA Stirling Award-winning architects Haworth Tompkins. This has been primarily supported by Arts Council England, Big Lottery and Heritage Lottery Funds, as well as donations from hundreds of generous individuals, and has been made possible through a 20-year rent-free period granted by Wandsworth Council.

**David Jubb, Artistic Director and CEO of Battersea Arts Centre:** *"Innovation and resilience are at the heart of what we do at Battersea Arts Centre. Recent projects like The Good Neighbour have brought together performance, heritage and our community to explore our shared values. The possibilities for a new partnership with Wandsworth Museum are enticing and boundless, together we will be inspired by the past to help shape a better future".*

Wandsworth Museum delivered more than two hundred schools' workshops to over 5,000 pupils in the 2013/14 academic year, and reached an overall audience of over 9,000 visitors through formal learning sessions, outreach, early years' and youth projects. The Museum has maintained the Borough Collection and mounted exhibitions and events drawing on its eclectic mix of local artefacts and paintings.

**Sue Walker, Director of Wandsworth Museum:** *"We are delighted to have found with Battersea Arts Centre the opportunity to develop a transformative, creative and sustainable way of further developing the Museum and securing its long-term future. In partnership, we can reach more people than we could do separately; engage them in our historical collections in unexpected and imaginative ways. We hope that this new collaborative model will be able to proceed and inspire other arts and heritage institutions across the country."*

The reach of both Battersea Arts Centre and Wandsworth Museum would grow through the new partnership, with the capital project expected to increase the number of people coming through the doors each year to 200,000 by 2018. The former town hall creates an inspiring backdrop for the display and interpretation of local artefacts that embody the rich social, political and geographic history of the Borough. Together, the two organisations would bring this history to life by telling stories inspired by the Museum's collection, with offers shaped by educators, artists, musicians and theatre-makers working alongside museum and heritage experts.

Battersea Arts Centre and Wandsworth Museum are extremely grateful for the Hintze Family Charitable Foundation's support, donations and pledges of £3.18m that have enabled the museum to achieve a sustainable future for the benefit of the local community. Of this total sum, £295k is pledged to Battersea Arts Centre.

**Joyce Wilson, Area Director, London, Arts Council England:** *"This is an exciting development and illustrates the benefits of arts organisations and museums working in partnership. It would enable these two organisations to reach new audiences and opens the door to new possibilities, both in terms of programming and further partnerships."*

The proposed partnership awaits the approval of Wandsworth Council, who own the Museum's collection of exhibits and artefacts. Councillors will meet to decide upon the new arrangements in February.

**Cllr Jonathan Cook, Wandsworth Borough Council's spokesman on arts and culture:** *"The proposed marriage of Battersea Arts Centre and Wandsworth Museum has great potential to offer our residents a fantastic new service in the heart of Battersea. The borough's elected representatives will need to give these arrangements their backing, but I can certainly see the benefits of this union."*

## BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE

Housed in a beautiful Grade II\* listed former town hall, Battersea Arts Centre offers a wide mixture of shows and discussions, installations and exhibitions, home-made food and drink, weddings and dances, family fun and creative learning.

Battersea Arts Centre is a place where everyone plays a role in inventing the future of theatre. We invite you to experience unfinished shows, to offer ideas and feedback. We call this SCRATCH. Finished shows are then performed throughout the building and often go on to stages across London, the UK and the world.

We aim to use creativity to tackle challenges in our community: engaging people of all ages and backgrounds in a variety of projects. Artists live in the building all year round, as part of our creative community and we are open daily for everyone to use and explore.

[bac.org.uk](http://bac.org.uk) | [@battersea\\_arts](https://twitter.com/battersea_arts)

*Battersea Arts Centre is a registered charity (no: 282857)*

## WANDSWORTH MUSEUM

Wandsworth Museum looks after Wandsworth Borough Council's collection of historic local artefacts which tell the story of those who have settled, lived and worked in Wandsworth. Amongst the collection are archaeological finds, twentieth century technologies, heritage archives containing diaries, posters, letters and photographs, as well as over 300 watercolours and 100 oil paintings, featuring people and scenes connected with Wandsworth, often painted by local artists.

Our formal and informal Learning Programme, exhibitions and events both explore and celebrate the Borough's political, social, built and natural environment, tracing the evolution of all things Wandsworth. We aim to engage a wide audience from our local community by making fully accessible a collection which is an important microcosm of life lived across six millennia.

[wandsworthmuseum.co.uk](http://wandsworthmuseum.co.uk)

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