Uncovering the hidden potential of Swindon



Project volunteer working on the collections at Swindon Museum and Art Gallery

This project will rediscover Swindon Museum and Art Gallery's diverse collections, many of which are in long-term storage, and share them with the communities of Swindon, starting in May 2014 and lasting for two years.

The project will re-catalogue and photograph objects in Swindon Borough Council's offsite stores, create temporary exhibitions and stage a series of fun and engaging community activities. It will be easy for people to stay up-to-date with the project through social media, where the team will share their weird and wonderful discoveries, successes and future plans. The project will be led by a new Museum Collections Project Manager and a new team of volunteers with support from the Volunteer Centre and SEQOL.

The partnership will allow the museum and art gallery to broaden its volunteer team and work with adults with additional needs.

Cllr Garry Perkins, Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Culture, said: "We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Swindon Museum and Art Gallery has a collection of over 100,000 objects including everything from a Victorian fire engine to Roman pottery, modern art and stuffed animals.

“As Swindon moves towards a new museum and art gallery in the town centre, we now have an opportunity to rediscover our stored collections. Working with volunteers and local people the team will use these objects to unlock the stories of Swindon and hopefully shape the displays in the new museum and art gallery. The team will ensure objects in our collection are properly documented and cared for, and will identify a long-term central store for Swindon’s collections with better access, security and conditions.”

Commenting on the grant award, Head of HLF South West, Nerys Watts, said: “We are delighted to be able to support Swindon Museum and Art Gallery to carry out this important project. By documenting and opening up these significant and diverse stored collections, the project will enable a much wider audience to appreciate, understand and become actively engaged with the rich variety of their heritage,”

Notes to editors

Swindon Museum and Art Gallery is an Accredited Museum under the 2011 Arts Council England Museum Accreditation Scheme. It holds around 100,000 objects relating to the history of Swindon, including archaeology, social history, natural history, photography and local art collections, as well as a significant collection of 20th century British art and studio ceramics.

The museum is open to the public throughout the year and is free to enter. Regular activities include interactive trails, school visits, temporary exhibitions, workshops, guided tours and Friends talks.

Further information

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