

Heritage Lottery Fund welcomes the opening of The Hepworth Wakefield

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The gallery site has been developed at a cost of £35million as part of the £100m regeneration of Waterfront Wakefield. It includes the restoration of former mill and warehouse buildings, the development of new residential, office and leisure facilities, and outdoor landscaping with a new pedestrian bridge.

The project had been funded through an investment partnership between Wakefield Council and Arts Council England with major funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Yorkshire Forward, Homes and Communities Agency, and the European Regional Development Fund.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said: "Barbara Hepworth's sculptures have left a legacy of artistic genius which continues to inspire us well into the 21st century. The opening of this much-anticipated gallery, funded with a £5m Heritage Lottery Fund grant, will be a fitting celebration of Hepworth's life and work as well as putting her home town of Wakefield on the cultural tourist map."

Antony Gormley, artist, said: "The Hepworth Wakefield will become a place of pilgrimage for all lovers of sculpture and now with the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds and Yorkshire Sculpture Park in West Bretton, Yorkshire will be a place of inspiration for all."

Named after Barbara Hepworth, who was born in Wakefield in 1903 and lived there with her family until the age of 18, with 5000sq metres of gallery space, The Hepworth Wakefield, is the largest purpose-built art gallery to open in Britain since the Hayward on London's Southbank in 1968, and provides a permanent public legacy for the artist in her home city.

The highlight of The Hepworth Wakefield's permanent collection is a group of over forty works given by her family that provides a unique insight into Barbara Hepworth's working methods and creativity. The majority are original plasters on which Hepworth worked with her own hands. Shown alongside the plasters will be tools and materials from Hepworth's studio. The installation, spread over two dedicated gallery spaces, includes the full-size prototype made by Hepworth of perhaps one of her best-known sculptures, *Winged Figure*, commissioned for the John Lewis Partnership building in Oxford Street London and installed in 1963.

The city's own collection, including over 6,000 works, built up over 80 years, includes important works by Barbara Hepworth and Yorkshire's other internationally celebrated artist, Henry Moore. The opening displays concentrate on Barbara Hepworth, placing her work in a local, national and international context.

Notes to editors

The new gallery is funded by Founding Partners; Wakefield Council and The Hepworth Estate; Major Funders:, Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund with additional funding from European Regional Development Fund, Homes and Communities Agency and Yorkshire Forward.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.5billion across the UK.

Further information

Contact Hollie Latham on 01924 247 391 / 07850 782 644 or hollielatham@hepworthwakefield.org.