

5 things you might not have known about Battersea Arts Centre

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Battersea Arts Centre used to function as a Town Hall Battersea Arts Centre
After a rocky journey, full of drama, character and community spirit, the main hall at London's Battersea Arts Centre is starting its reopening countdown today.

[The arts and community space](#) in South London suffered a fire in 2015, a matter of months after capital works began on [a major redevelopment project](#), made possible with a £3.4million Heritage Lottery Fund grant, among other National Lottery funding.

For many, especially the local people who helped them in their hour of need, it makes the upcoming re-opening in September all the sweeter.

To celebrate, here are five things you might not have known about the venue:

1. Emmeline Pankhurst chaired meetings in the building when it was used as a Town Hall.

Battersea was a focal point for the Campaign for Women's Suffrage in the early 20th century. Other members of the movement to preside over meetings there included Charlotte Despard and Emmeline's daughter Christabel.

2. The name of Battersea Arts Centre's forthcoming 'Phoenix Season' was inspired by writer and theatre maker Stella Duffy

Shortly after the fire began at Battersea Arts Centre, Stella Duffy created the hashtag [#BACPhoenix](#) to start talking about how the centre would rise from the ashes. It caught on fast, and [the reopening season](#), starting later in the year, is named after it.

3. Many of the bricks, doors and windows demolished in the fire are being reused in the new building.

It's part of the centre's plan to reduce their carbon footprint by 50% by 2020.

4. 12 fire engines were sent to tackle the 2015 blaze.

80 firefighters attended the fire, which caused the Grand Hall's ceiling to collapse

5. The company whose show was running in the theatre when the fire broke out will be the first show of the new Phoenix Season.

[Gecko](#) lost all their set and equipment in the blaze.

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