

Bonn Square to reopen as part of Oxford's Winter Light celebration

Bonn Square will be reopened to the public on Friday 28th November 2008 as part of Oxford's Winter Light celebration.

The people's opening ceremony will mark the beginning of a new chapter for Bonn Square, as well as kick-starting the Winter Light festivities. The space has been redesigned to encourage activity and a sense of vibrancy, offering exciting opportunities for public art, performance and events; Winter Light will showcase how the new area can and will be used in the future.

Oxford City Council's £2m redevelopment of Bonn Square, from a neglected and run-down area to a welcoming, modern and flexible public space, is an important step forward for the West End Renaissance. New features will include bronze seating, landmark structural lighting and seven semi-mature trees.

Councillor Colin Cook, City Development Board Member for Oxford City Council, believes that Bonn Square's transformation will give the city centre a new lease of life. "Bonn Square will become a pleasant and attractive public space where people can meet friends, socialise and relax. This area of the city centre has been lacking a high quality public space for some years, so the regeneration of the Square is great news for Oxford."

Peter Sloman, Chief Executive, Oxford City Council, said, "We hope that people will enjoy the new space and feel proud that Oxford is changing for the better. The West End Renaissance will help Oxford city centre move into the 21st century in terms of culture, tourism, design, the economy, transport and environmental responsibility."

Councillor Keith Mitchell, the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said, "The regeneration of Bonn Square will enhance Oxfordshire's reputation as an attractive and pleasant place to be. We are working hard alongside our colleagues from the city council to improve Oxford's already high profile. We want a welcoming, safe city that is an exceptional place to live, work, learn and visit. The new Bonn Square will make a significant contribution to that and we must continue to make similar improvements across the West End of the city."

The end of Bonn Square's construction ties in with Oxford's Winter Light event, which is being organised by Oxford Inspires in partnership with Oxford City Council and the West End Partnership. The people's opening of Bonn Square will mark the beginning of the evening's celebrations, when it will be unveiled to the public for the first time.

Bonn Square will host an exciting programme of activity including a procession of lanterns made by local schoolchildren, an opening extravaganza of music and dance and evening entertainment. A full schedule of events for the evening will be released nearer the time. There will be an

official civic opening of the square, involving representatives from the city of Bonn, in May 2009.

For further information about the people's opening of Bonn Square visit the events page at www.oxfordwestend.co.uk

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NOTE TO EDITORS

The West End Renaissance is an exciting long-term regeneration programme that is set to transform a currently under-used area of Oxford into a modern, vibrant and stylish city quarter. Shops, restaurants and offices will be located alongside new homes, public squares and educational and leisure facilities.