

Tuesday 18 October 2011

Museum of Oxford to get new home in Town Hall

An ambitious project to relocate the Museum of Oxford from its existing site into new galleries within the Town Hall is making good progress.

The museum, which is the only one that tells the story of the city of Oxford and its people, will close in its current site on Saturday 29 October.

The new galleries in the Town Hall will be very different in style and feel and city residents are being encouraged to take this final opportunity to visit the old museum to take a look around the current exhibits and artefacts before the site closes.

Councillor Bob Price, Leader of Oxford City Council, says: "The Museum of Oxford has changed very little since it was opened in 1975, and it has a really unique old fashioned charm about it – so it's well worth a final visit.

"The new galleries will be far more accessible and modern and will make the presentation of our history far more exciting for the people of the city and of course our many visitors."

The Town Hall Galleries will initially be concentrated in large rooms on the ground floor of the Town Hall and the entrance to the museum will be relocated from the corner of Blue Boar Street to the Town Hall lobby.

The Museum of Oxford recently received £48,628 in grant funding from Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd (WREN) which will contribute to the project. It has also been awarded a Your Heritage grant of £43,600 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The funding will be partly spent on hiring an interpretation planner to work with community groups on creating displays within new galleries, giving residents the chance to tell their own Oxford stories.

It will also be used for display boards and a new guide booklet to the Town Hall and the refurbished museum when it opens in spring 2012.

The new galleries are part of a larger development programme that includes changes to the café, shop and education space, and is the result of several years of consultation with visitors, residents, museum staff, volunteers from the Civic Society and heritage specialists.

Tony Joyce, Vice-President of the Oxford Civic Society says: It is really encouraging that in these difficult times, a way has been found to give the museum an exciting new life, which will be closely linked to a more user-friendly Town Hall.

"I recommend a last visit to this gem of a museum before its relocation."

The museum is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10am until 5pm. For more information about the museum, special events and exhibitions call 01865 252761 or visit the website at www.oxford.gov.uk/museumofoxford.

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