

Story Museum finds new home in West End

Rochester House, a Victorian building on Pembroke Street in the heart of Oxford's West End, is to be the new home of the Story Museum.

The museum has existed online for the past four years, holding events across Oxfordshire and running storytelling programmes in schools, however a £2.5m donation from an anonymous private benefactor means it can now take the first steps towards establishing a permanent home.

The Pembroke Street site offers 20,000 sq ft of usable space that will accommodate galleries, a cafe, shop and education rooms alongside a storytellers' studio, children's play house and offices for the museum's team.

Story Museum patron, Philip Pullman, said: "We are absolutely delighted to have a real home at last.

"The Story Museum will be a wonderful gift from Oxford, where so many stories have begun, to the whole world. The very idea of having a museum devoted to story is itself such a fantastical notion. No other city in the world could have given birth to it."

The project has been welcomed by Oxford West End Renaissance and is part of its regeneration plans for the city centre.

The museum's team is currently conducting a publicity campaign to raise the £11m needed to create the facility, which will aim to attract 100,000 visitors a year when it opens in 2014.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

Founded in 2003, the **Story Museum** is a non-profit company and registered charity devoted to celebrating children's stories and sharing enjoyable ways for young people to learn through stories as they grow.

The **Oxford West End Partnership** was established in 2005 as the driving force behind the West End Renaissance, a long-term regeneration programme set to transform the currently under-exploited central western area of Oxford into a vibrant and stylish city quarter.