

Tunbridge Wells Cultural & Learning Hub

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is the Tunbridge Wells Cultural & Learning Hub?**

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council are working together to create a new Cultural & Learning Hub for Tunbridge Wells.

The aim is to create a space to engage with art, culture, the heritage of Tunbridge Wells, learn new skills, socialise and be inspired.

- **What services are going to be available in the Hub?**

This exciting redevelopment will bring together in one conserved and modernised set of buildings the Museum, Art Gallery, Library, Registration & Archives services, Adult Education, Visitor Information and Gateway services. There will be more space for the museum and local studies collections and all services will benefit from being in better more modern surroundings.

The aim is that this building will offer a seamless and integrated visitor experience.

- **Why are services like the Gateway, Library and Tourist Information going into the Hub?**

The Tunbridge Wells Cultural & Learning Hub will be a space for the entire community of Tunbridge Wells. There are already examples of co-located libraries with museums (Beaney, Canterbury), Gateway with Libraries (Swanley Link) and Museums with Tourist Information Centres (Maidstone Museum). There is a synergy between the users of all of these services and we are setting out to create one building for all their needs.

- **Who is paying for this?**

We have received stage 1 passes and secured development stage funding from both Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England. Round 2 applications will be submitted in 2017. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council will jointly contribute the remaining costs.

- **Who will be designing this?**

Purcell, an award-winning firm of architects and historic building consultants, were announced as lead architects for the project following a competitive process.

www.purcelluk.com

Interpretation Designers Metaphor have been appointed to work with Purcell and bring the proposed new hub to life - ensuring that the building tells the 'stories' of Tunbridge Wells, and has the right flow, look and feel.

www.metaphoreu.org



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- **What do you mean by 'interpretation scheme'?**

Metaphor, the project Interpretation Designers, are coming up with the interpretation scheme for the Hub. This means they will be designing the different galleries that tell the stories of Tunbridge Wells through the museum collections. They will also be designing how the inside of the building looks, such as furniture and colour.

- **Will there be more display space for collections?**

Yes and better storage for collections too.

- **Will there still be library, registration & archives services?**

Yes in better, more comfortable surroundings.

- **What facilities will be available? Will there be a shop/café?**

We are currently working with consultants to identify the types of facilities that might be available in the Hub. More information will follow but a shop and café will certainly be investigated.

- **Will everything be shut during the creation of the Hub?**

All services will be maintained during the development; however, some disruption is to be expected and the project is exploring the best way to provide services throughout the building and refurbishment works.

- **What will happen to the buildings?**

The Museum & Library building and the Adult Education Building will be conserved and modernised. We are currently procuring the Architects for the project. Once appointed in the autumn 2016, designs will be drawn up and we will then be looking to engage with the public in order to shape what the hub will look like and the services it provides.

- **Who's going to run the Hub in the future?**

Both authorities are committed to one vision, one building and one integrated service. The project team are still developing what the final operating structure will be. The Hub and the services operated out of it will continue to be supported by both TWBC and KCC.

- **How many visitors do you foresee in the future?**

We anticipate 440,000 visitors per year, and seeing this number grow in the future.



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- **How can I get involved?**

Sign up to the C&LH mailing list <http://www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org/cultural-hub> to receive monthly updates about the project. You can also visit the web page and have access to the latest updates as well as information about how to get involved (questionnaires and volunteer opportunities) The web page will be updated regularly with new information and opportunities.

- **When is this all expected to happen?**

We are currently working towards submitting HLF and ACE 2nd stage funding applications in the second half of 2017. We anticipate that subject to funding, work will commence onsite in 2018. The build and refurbishment will take approximately two years.

- **How will this affect me?**

It is hoped that the development will provide modern facilities for the museum, library and learning service and a more visible tourist attraction for the town.

- **Will there be any opportunities for me?**

There will be volunteering opportunities throughout the project and more once the Hub opens to the public.

