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AUTUMN AT THE BOWES MUSEUM: FAMILY FUN & EXCLUSIVE EXHIBITIONS

This Autumn, The Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle invites visitors of all ages to experience a vibrant mix of free activities and creative hands-on workshops inspired by the Museum's collection, alongside exclusive exhibitions, all included with admission.

Daily activities for all ages:

Visitors can unleash their creativity and make their own artwork, objects and treasures in a self-guided activity every day in the Create Space. This activity is perfect for families wanting to make memories together.

If they'd prefer to head outside, Explorer Bags can be collected from Reception and include a guide and magnifying glasses to help identify the birds, plants and insects that call the parkland their home and see how the landscape changes in autumn.

Inside the Museum, the daily 11:00 Spotlight Tours offer a friendly and interesting 30-minute introduction to an exhibition, collection, object, or the building itself.

Autumn Half Term (26 October – 3 November)

Families can get involved in something different every day during Autumn Half Term (26th October - 3rd November).

The popular **Artist Maker** sessions happen every Saturday, and Wednesday during school holidays, from 1:00 to 3:00. These fun drop-in workshops are great for families with children aged 5 and up. Together, you can create something beautiful, inspired by nature, the Museum collections and the changing seasons.

We're Going on a Plant Hunt is a new activity for young children under 5. On Monday, 28 October, from 1:00 to 2:00 they can connect with nature by listening to stories, singing songs, and exploring as they search the galleries to find objects inspired by plants, flowers, and animals.

Hedgehog Houses provide a safe place for the Museum's friendly parkland friends to call home as they hibernate for the Autumn. All ages can get hands on outdoors in two drop-in sessions as they help to build habitats and play their part in protecting nature on Tuesday 29 October and Thursday 31 October, 1.00 – 3.00. Sessions will also take place later in the year on Saturday 9 November and Saturday 7 December, 1.00 – 3.00.

Family Story Tour returns this Autumn on Friday 1 November at 11.00 and 1.00 where visitors can join a fun and interactive hour-long tour that has been created with families in mind. The tour will take them on a journey through the galleries to highlight the interesting stories and fascinating facts behind some of the objects in the collection.

Creative Workshops:

Visitors (8+) can join a ***Needlework Bags*** taster session on Saturday 19 October from 1.00 – 3.00. Participants of all abilities can learn different stitching styles from the experts at Take a Stitch 2 Durham, inspired by the *Stories in Stitch* exhibition. Book via the Museum's website <https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/needlework-bags>.

Visitors inspired by the *Kith & Kinship* exhibition can join a **Charcoal Workshop** with artist Zoe Allen on 30 October, 1.00 – 3.00. The group will discuss the artists' work and choice of materials, learning mark making techniques to create their own piece using charcoal. Recommended for those aged 15+, book online <https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/charcoal-workshop/>.

Talks:

For those looking for something to do on chilly Autumn weekends, a series of exclusive talks on artists Norman Cornish and L. S. Lowry will take place on Saturday 5 and 26 October and 16 and 30 November 2.30 – 3.30. This series is perfect for anyone interested in the artist's work, stories and heritage. To find out more details about the talks and to book a spot, visit the Museum's website <https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/>.

Heather Birkett from National Trust property Acorn Bank will talk about poisonous plants, their history and uses in **From Murder to Medicine and Midsummer Mayhem** on 31 October, 1:00 - 2:30. Bookings can be made online at <https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/>.

Exhibitions:

The *Kith & Kinship: Norman Cornish and L. S. Lowry* exhibition runs until 19th January 2025. It features over 50 paintings, drawings and sketchbooks by these artists, depicting scenes from their communities and the north of England. More than half of the artworks are from public galleries and private collections, with 35 pieces being shown to the public for the first time.

It's the last chance for visitors to see *Stories in Stitch* in the Fashion & Textiles Gallery before it closes on 29 September. This special display shows an eclectic collection of rarely seen samplers and embroidered pictures dating from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Exploring the development and popularity of domestic embroidery in Britain, this is a must-see display for lovers of textiles and history.

In October, The Bowes Museum presents an exciting new exhibition *Framing Fashion: Art and Inspiration from a Private Collection of Vivienne Westwood* (19 October 2024 – 2 March 2025). Fashion and art collide with a new selection of pieces from Peter Smithson's private collection, showcasing some of Vivienne Westwood's most iconic creations from the mid-80s to the mid-90s. Items from the Museum's collection will be displayed alongside Westwood's pieces, highlighting how the iconic designer was inspired by art and historic fashion.

The world-famous Silver Swan automaton will play twice daily at 11.45 and 2.00 throughout the school holidays. Visitors can enjoy a brief overview of the history of this one-of-a-kind automaton and watch its magical performance. Please note that the Silver Swan will not be running 1 – 4 October due to a service that must be carried out three times every year. Visitors are invited to watch the Cumbria Clock Company carrying out this fascinating conservation work in the 19th Century (Blue) Picture Gallery.

Autumn Treats Featuring Local Suppliers

Visitors can also treat themselves to a bite to eat at the Museum's award-winning 'Café of the Year'. This month, the new seasonal menu will launch filled with fresh autumnal produce from local suppliers.

There are always new experiences to enjoy with family or friends at The Bowes Museum.

Note to editors:

The Bowes Museum is a charity managing a Grade 1 listed accredited Museum and Grade 2 listed parkland in Barnard Castle. Founded by Joséphine & John Bowes 150+ years ago, this purpose-built Museum brings together an extraordinary, Designated collection of European fine and decorative art as a cultural resource for the people of Northern England, where today we celebrate artists, designers and makers.

The Bowes Museum receives funding from Durham County Council and, as a National Portfolio Organisation, receives support from Arts Council England. Arts Council England is the national development body for arts and culture across England, working to enrich people's lives.
www.artscouncil.org.uk

The Bowes Museum is a member of the Discover Durham partnership of attractions, whose commitment is to promote Durham as an exciting and vibrant group travel destination and to provide the travel trade with a professional and knowledgeable service. discoverdurham.co.uk

Admission to The Bowes Museum is £16.00 for local members (residents of County Durham and Darlington), £18.00 for members (residents elsewhere), £19.00 for a day ticket, £20.90 for a day ticket including gift aid. Under 18s, full time students and carers are free.

As a registered charity (number 1079639) The Bowes Museum needs to generate more than half of its income each year to care for the historic collection, buildings and parkland. Your donations are vital to that work. Visit <https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/support/> for more information.