



A SUMMER OF DISCOVERY AT THE BOWES MUSEUM

Saturday, 19 July 2025 – Sunday, 31 August 2025

Make this summer one to remember with a great value day out at The Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle.

With daily self-led creative activities and trails, friendly and engaging talks and tours offering new perspectives on the collections, and guided activities inside and out between Saturday 19 July and Sunday 31 August, the whole family can spend quality time together, get creative and feel inspired.

Every day, visitors can unleash their creativity with the self-led **Museum Make** activity in the Create Space, and the ever-popular **Spotlight Tours** at 11am, and 2:30pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, offer a bitesize introduction to an exhibition, collection item or the building for up to 30 minutes.

The world-famous 252-year-old **Silver Swan** automaton will perform twice daily at 11:45am and 2pm throughout the holidays. Visitors can learn about its history in a brief talk by one of the museum's knowledgeable staff before witnessing its mesmerising performance.

Brand new activities this summer include **Arty STEAM** on Mondays, **Bug Hunt** on Tuesdays, **Teddy Bear's Picnic** and **The Mini Museum** on Thursdays, and **Bird Habitats** on Fridays, offering creative and fun learning experiences suitable for various ages and abilities, inspired by the collections, nature and legacy of museum co-founder, Joséphine Bowes, in what would have been her 200th year. Familiar favourites, **Stay and Play** on Thursdays and **Artist Maker Workshops** on Saturdays continue throughout.

22 acres of beautiful parkland offer an opportunity to soak up the summer sun and connect with nature. There's a children's play area, woodland walk and inspiring large-scale installations by **Nathan Coley**, **Martin Smith** and **Claire A Baker**. Bring a picnic or enjoy freshly-made and locally-sourced food and drinks from **Café Bowes** using the new outdoor seating area which offers the perfect spot to survey the stunning landscape.

Opening 26 July, ***Pippa Hale: Pet Project*** sees the museum's exhibition space transformed into a vibrant and interactive experience for all ages. Expect to find cute and quirky animal ceramics re-imagined into 2.5m tall soft recreations that can be played with, alongside 50 ceramic animal figurines from the museum's collection, a display of pet-themed ceramics contributed by the community and creative space with hands-on activities, inviting visitors to explore, play and create.

Art and history enthusiasts have plenty to look forward to as **The Curator Series** continues in July and August with three, hour-long conversations led by the museum's knowledgeable curators. The ***Not Just Nude*** display in the Blue Picture Gallery is a must-see, co-produced with Be You at The Bowes, the museum's LGBTQIA+ working group. This bold pop-up intervention challenges traditional assumptions and offers fresh, thought-provoking perspectives on the nude form in the museum's collection.

There's plenty more to see and do throughout the summer break, and with membership starting from just £17.70, you can visit as many times as you like while staying connected to the museum and supporting a registered local charity. Most activities are included with Membership or day admission, and don't forget, under 18's always go free!

The Bowes Museum, Café Bowes and the Shop is open daily 10am – 5pm. Visit www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk/summerholiday to see the full summer programme and plan your visit, some activities may require booking and additional charges may occur.

-ENDS-

Note to editors:

Download high-resolution images of A Summer of Discovery at The Bowes Museum [here](#). Please credit © The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle. Photography by Claire Collinson.

For more information about the summer programme, please contact our Marketing & Communications Coordinators:

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About The Bowes Museum

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. 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. thisisdurham.com/discover-durham

Admission to The Bowes Museum is £17.70 for local members (residents of County Durham and Darlington), £20.00 for members (residents elsewhere), £19.50 for a day ticket, £21.45 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 thebowesmuseum.org.uk/support for more information.



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