

Media release  
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## **Exhibitions, Trails and Activities: October Half-Term at The Bowes Museum**



The Hive © The Bowes Museum, County Durham. Photography by Claire Collinson.

**The Bowes Museum is the perfect place for a day out this [October half-term](#), 25 October – 2 November 2025.** From daily self-guided trails and hands-on art activities to interactive exhibitions and an intimate live concert, there is something fun for the whole family, and best of all, under 18s go free. Whether exploring the museum's stunning galleries or wandering through its vibrant autumn grounds, there are lots of ways to discover quality time together this October half-term.

### ***Pippa Hale Pet Project:***

[Pippa Hale: Pet Project](#) is the perfect blend of education and play, learn about the history of ceramics and experience them like never before by cuddling and climbing on giant, squishy versions of the pieces.

Inspired by the exhibition, the museum's half-term programme offers creative activities for all ages. On 25 October and 1 November, families can join [Bisque Pottery](#) workshops Mud & More to paint their own cat or dog figurine, taking inspiration the museum's collection. The [Purr-fect Story Tour](#) on 29 and 31 October invites families to take part in an interactive tour that explores pets across the collection. For young people and adults, the [Regal Beasts](#) workshop with artist Maddie Agnew on 27 October offers a playful chance to create a Victorian-style pet portrait on canvas, from dashing dogs in uniform to sassy cats in ruffles.

### **Activities for Children:**

Bats are synonymous with the autumn season, and on 28 and 30 October, children can make and decorate their own [bat box](#) in the museum's outdoor classroom (weather permitting.)

[Artist Maker](#) sessions throughout the week are reflecting textiles and paintings in the museum's collection, including the Blackborne Lace Collection, Canaletto's paintings and hidden histories waiting to be uncovered.

A [Stay and Play](#) session on 30 October in the Conversation gallery allows the museum's youngest visitors to investigate materials and be creative in this self-led, free-play session.

### **Chris Difford In Concert:**

[Chris Difford: A Little Stand-Up and A Little Sit-Down](#), is at the museum during half-term, on 1 November, and promises an evening of storytelling and music spanning his celebrated career. This event is part of the wider *In Concert* series continuing into the winter months, offering visitors the chance to enjoy live music in a beautiful heritage setting.

### **Exhibitions:**

October is also a great time to catch the newly opened exhibition, [Dressed for Departure: Fashion in the Age of Rail](#), which explores the impact of railway travel on fashion and culture. Also, in the Fashion & Textiles Gallery, [Joséphine: A Woman of Taste and Fashion](#) showcases rare pieces from her personal wardrobe alongside archival materials and textiles she and her husband, John Bowes, collected throughout their lives. Elsewhere, [Not Just Nude](#) continues to provoke thought in the Blue Picture gallery, questioning the role of nudity in art.

### **Trails and Outdoor Artworks:**

[The Great Swan Heist](#) and [LGBTQIA+ Object](#) trails allow visitors to explore the museum through different lenses. Figure out solve the mystery of who is planning to steal our silver swan or uncover hidden LGBTQIA+ narratives in the collection.

As visitors wander the colourful grounds, they can look up to see Nathan Coley's [You Create What You Will](#) (2014), Claire A. Baker's [In Progress and Process](#) flags (2025), and Martin Smith's [Kinetic Arboretum](#) (2018). As the days grow shorter, watch Coley's illuminated words light up the sky, and see how Baker's and Smith's works respond gently to the autumn breeze.

### **Café Bowes and Shop:**

Visitors can round off their visit with a warm drink and a sweet treat in Café Bowes and stop by the shop to take home a memento of their day, perhaps one of the brand-new Silver Swan toys.

Visit the [October Half-Term page](#) to learn more, please note that booking is required for some activities.

-ENDS-

### **Note to editors:**

Pictures associated with the exhibitions and events described can be found [here](#).

For film and photography requests and more information, please contact Marketing & Communications Coordinator:

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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](https://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](https://www.discoverdurham.co.uk)

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/](https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/support/) for more information.



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