

FRIENDS OF THE WILSON NEWS UPDATE



In this issue...

- **Thursday 29 January.** All Friends are invited to a Private View of The Wilson's next major exhibition, **Paula Rego : Visions of English Life** - see below to register to visit on the night.
- **Thursday 24 February.** Join us at 11.00 for a free curated talk on the Paula Rego exhibition. Please email events@friendsofthewilson.org.uk to save a place.
- **Save the date - Wednesday 1 April.** Please book now for a curated wine tasting at The Grape Escape, Cheltenham.
- **Study tour to Northumberland Sunday 26 to Wednesday 29 April 2026.** We are delighted that the minimum number of participants required has been reached. The booking forms have been sent to Harry Shaw Travel who will be in touch direct in due course.



Sunday 11 January 3pm: a wonderful afternoon of improvisational piano music – bring a small treasured item!

[Book now](#)



Tuesday 20 January 2pm: we welcome Tim Brain to talk on The Life and Works of Edward Elgar.

[Book now](#)



Wednesday 11 February 2pm: Lucy Abel Smith's talk on the Fresh Air Sculpture Show at St Matthew's Church.

[Book now](#)



Wednesday 18 March 2pm: Talk: Living in a work of art: the domestic architecture of C. R. Mackintosh with Fiona James.

[Book now](#)



Wednesday 1 April 5:30pm for 6pm: An evening of Wine Tasting and Art Appreciation: A timeless fusion.

[Book now](#)



26-29 April : Northumberland Study Tour
The brochure with booking form is on our website.

[Click for full details](#)

News from the Trustees

Happy 2026 from the Trustees

We hope that you had a Happy Christmas. Best wishes for 2026. Our new team of Trustees has tried very hard to deliver an interesting programme of lectures and events. Please encourage your friends to join FoTW and come along and support us.

Your money is making a difference. You'll see that there are new audio guides at the Wilson funded by the FoTW. These allow for 5 tours which will enhance the visitor experience and accessibility across our collections and exhibitions galleries. We have also provided financial support for exhibitions, digital storytelling artist residency and the

launch of the new website. The number of digital records increased from 5,000 to 25,000 since 2024.

These initiatives have had a positive effect on visitor numbers, 7,000 visited in the first two months of the 'Material Worlds' exhibition's opening. Over the past 6 months our Instagram content interactions have increased by 263.5% with 9,400 people interacting with our Instagram posts. Facebook followers are up by 22.9% over the past 6 months.

We will be holding our Annual Strategy Day at the end of January. If any Friends have ideas on how to boost membership please let us know.

News from The Wilson

Exhibition : Meeting Points

13 December 2025 until 22 February 2026

We Are Creators artists in residence present to you Meeting Points, a group exhibition celebrating the end of their year-long studio residency here at The Wilson. Meeting Points refers to the communal space of the studio, as well as the many crossovers and intersections of a wide range of practices and perspectives.

Exhibition : Paula Rego: Visions of English Literature

30 January until 10 May 2026

Private View : Thursday 29 January Paulo Rego at 17.30 with speeches at 18.30
You are warmly invited to the private view of a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition. This compelling exhibition brings together three of Paula Rego's most ambitious and poignant print series – Nursery Rhymes, Peter Pan and Jane Eyre. A selection of personal items from Rego's studio offers intimate insight into her creative process and the narrative impulses that shaped her imagery. Rego's work invites viewers into a universe where innocence and cruelty, fantasy and reality coexist in vivid tension.

Please reserve your place at this [link](#) by Monday 26 January.

Thursday 24 February. Join us at 11.00 for a free curated talk on the Paula Rego exhibition. Please email events@friendsofthewilson.org.uk to save a place.

Exhibition : Cheltenham's BIG Museum Project: Test Space

Until July 2026

In 2020 the museum wing closed for refurbishment. With renovation work almost complete there will be four large modern collection galleries which will become the new museum. These will be shaped by the community. Phase One – Community Consultations - a broad range of consultations both at The Wilson and out in our communities which have been used to inform phase two of the project. Phase Two – Testing Ideas with the Communities to include an exciting interactive exhibition and extensive community outreach programme. Phase Three – Reopening the Museum.

Best wishes

The Trustees

Friends of The Wilson

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