

FRIENDS OF THE WILSON NEWS UPDATE



In this issue...

- Some notes from Lisa Edgar's talk at our recent AGM with a forward look to the reopening on Friday 23 October 2026.
 - **A full programme of exciting FoTW events up until the end of November.** Whilst most talks are in the daytime we have on Wednesday September 2 an evening talk at St Luke's Hall, Cheltenham at 19.15.
 - ***We have two special events coming up — full details to follow soon - A celebratory FoTW dinner marking the opening of our new museum project plus a talk on the Golden Valley cyber park development***
 - The latest exhibition at the Wilson - **The Art of Looking: from Dutch Masters to Modern Britain.**
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Wednesday 15 July 2pm. Talk: Freddie Gick:
Cheltenham's newest and smallest World War I
museum.

[**Book now**](#)



Wednesday 2 September 7:15pm Evening talk
From Birmingham to Byzantium to the Cotswolds:
stories of Ernest and Sidney Barnsley with Kirsty
Hartsiotis.

[**Book now**](#)



Proposed Visit to Museum & Art Swindon

We had saved the date of 11 August but feel that
Friends would have a more comfortable journey to
Swindon in September. As soon as a date is confirmed
details will be on our website.

[**Further details**](#)



Wednesday 23 September 2pm Talk: Ornament unbound: print, transfer and ceramic surface with Lisa Sheppy.

Book now



Wednesday 28 October 2pm Talk: Street Art in Cheltenham: the art of our time? with Adrian Barlow.

Book now



Wednesday 25 November 2pm Talk: Still Life and Beyond with Sara Hayward.

Book now

News from the Trustees

Our AGM

Due to very hot weather our AGM was rescheduled from June 25 to July 6. Around 30 people attended including PJ Crook our President, and the Mayor of Cheltenham. Please find attached [notes from Lisa Edgar's talk](#). Lisa acknowledged the importance of the Friends in providing funding and volunteers. She described the new gallery layout with a reopening date of Friday 23 October 2026. We are all eager to see the new offer!

Recent talk by Lucy Abel Smith

Our programme of talks continues. The recent talk by Lucy Abel Smith on the history of the Fresh Air Sculpture Show since its opening in 1992, was particularly well supported. Sadly this year's show was the last. Lucy, however, remains committed to supporting young artists through bursaries.



Membership renewals

While many members updated their standing orders at the time, our records show that around half are still set at the previous rate. We kindly ask all members to check their standing orders and update them to reflect the current membership fees :

Joint membership is £40, Single membership is £25 and Under 25s is £20.

News from The Wilson

Cheltenham's BIG Museum Project: Test Space

Until July 2026

With renovation work almost complete The Wilson will have four large modern collection galleries which will become your new museum. In this exhibition, you will find different temporary museum displays designed to spark conversations with our communities.

The Art of Looking: from Dutch Masters to Modern Britain

Until 3 January 2027

This exhibition, in two spaces, celebrates the richness of The Wilson's collection from the forty-three paintings gifted to Cheltenham in 1898 of the de Ferrières collection, through to 20th century artists including Stanley Spencer, Graham Sutherland, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, and Lynn Chadwick.

The Wilson's de Ferrières Collection, is a rare and focused group of European artworks which span the mid-17th to the mid-19th century. In contrast, a second exhibition space highlights modern painters and sculptors. Rather than simply recording what they saw, they experimented with perception, memory, and metaphor. Together, the two periods form a conversation about attention. Whether rendered with meticulous detail or bold stylisation, each artwork asks us to pause, to look again, and to discover how much more becomes visible when we take the time to truly see.

A major refurbishment of the Arts and Crafts Gallery

There is a temporary closure of the Arts and Crafts gallery for much needed repair and refurbishment. Key objects from the collection will be displayed in other areas of the museum. The ambition is to present a major exhibition on the Arts and Craft Movement in

June 2027, including items from other collections. The Wilson aims to reopen the permanent Arts and Crafts gallery in 2028.

Volunteering at The Wilson - is it for you ?

Volunteering at The Wilson Art Gallery & Museum offers a rich and rewarding experience that goes far beyond simply giving your time, it is also an excellent way to expand personal knowledge and develop new interests.

Please see further information at [Volunteer - The Wilson Museum](#)

Best wishes

The Trustees

Friends of The Wilson

www.friendsofthewilson.org.uk

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