

COUNCIL: 25 NOVEMBER 2021

CULTURE & LEISURE STATEMENT

Christmas 2021 Programme of Events

There is no mistaking that Cardiff is very much open for Christmas this year. I am grateful to all our partners, venues and staff in the city who have worked so hard to ensure that we are able to offer a safe and magical opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy. Full details can be found at www.visitcardiff.com/christmas

Norwegian Church

I am pleased to confirm that, following consideration by Cabinet on 18 November 2021, the Council, as the current Sole Trustee, will transfer the Norwegian Church, including the current lease, to a new charitable body led by the Welsh Norwegian Society. This will see the new body investing in the building and taking control of the day-to-day running of the church, securing the future of one of the city's much-loved heritage buildings.

Old Library

The Museum of Cardiff will soon be welcoming a new and very welcome neighbour to the Old Library in the city centre following the Cabinet's decision on 18 November 2021 to transfer the building to the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, which will be responsible for the full running and maintenance cost of the building going forward.

I have been very impressed with the College's plans to return the Old Library to its original educational function, whilst also continuing to restore the listed building and showcase its original features. The College plans to introduce a series of performance, exhibition and rehearsal spaces into the existing rooms and develop public access to a 'city living room' with café/creative workspace.

This will be a huge boost for the performing arts in the city and perfectly complements the existing Museum of Cardiff, which is such an integral part of the building. These new proposals also reflect the extensive work that the Council has been undertaking on the city's Music Strategy, as it will create a key cultural quarter within the city centre, along with Cardiff Castle, the College's campus at Bute Park and the Museum of Cardiff.

Wheelchair Rugby

Cardiff looks forward to welcoming world-class wheelchair rugby to the Principality Stadium in 2023. The eight-team event, which will be held on 3-7 May 2023, will act as a qualifier for the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris, with the top two teams qualifying automatically. We are really looking forward to working with our local communities and partners to develop greater understanding of this exciting sport and to inspire the next generation of athletes in Wales. This is just one of the events that the Council is working closely with the Welsh Government's Major Events Unit on, as we seek to re-develop our event portfolio that has been so extensively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Queen's Green Canopy

The Queen's Green Canopy is a unique tree planting initiative that has been created to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 and invites people from across the UK to 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee'. I am pleased to confirm that Cardiff has been successful in achieving Champion City status as part of The Queen's Green Canopy initiative, along with the other UK cities of Belfast, Manchester, Bradford, Leicester, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Southampton, Preston, York, Glasgow, Swansea and Chester. The Champion Cities initiative aims to highlight the leadership, dynamism and influence of some of the UK's outstanding cities, which have trees and woodland as a central part of their plans for green spaces. The award of Champion City status to Cardiff also recognises the quality of the Council's tree stock, its importance to our city and supports our ambitious plan for tree canopy expansion as part of the Coed Caerdydd project.

Refurbishment of Playground Facilities

The Council has recently opened refurbished playground facilities across the city, including at Peppermint Park and Lascelles Drive open space in the Pontprennau & Old St Mellons ward; Glenmount Way in the Llanishen ward, and Adamscroft and Tharsis Close in the Adamsdown ward. The investment programme, which supports the Child Friendly City agenda, will provide enhanced opportunities for children and young people, and I anticipate that a further tranche of schemes will be completed early in the New Year.

**Councillor Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure
18 November 2021**