

Press release

Wedgwood Collection saved as Art Fund public appeal raises £2.74m in one month

The Wedgwood Collection – one of the most important industrial archives in the world and a unique record of over 250 years of British art and history – has been saved thanks to the generosity of thousands of individuals, several businesses, and a number of grant-making foundations. The Art Fund’s campaign has raised a total of £15.75m – the final £2.74m of which has been raised through a public appeal - meeting its target within just 31 days of launch. The Art Fund plans to gift the Collection to the V&A and for it to remain on display in the museum at the Wedgwood factory site in Barlaston, near Stoke.

Stephen Deuchar, director of the Art Fund: “This amazing show of public support for the Wedgwood Collection has made this the fastest fundraising campaign in the Art Fund’s 111 year history. It demonstrates nothing less than a national passion for Wedgwood - its history, its quality, its brand, its continuity - bringing about a potent combination of donations big and small, ranging from £10 gifts via text to six-figure cheques. Britain united to save this Collection. Huge thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and their ticket buyers too. Together we've ensured that one of the most important collections in the world can continue to be enjoyed by all.”

The Save Wedgwood public appeal was launched by the Art Fund on 1 September. With £13m of the £15.75m total already raised through significant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Art Fund and a small number of private trusts and foundations, the remaining target of £2.74m was the subject of a major public appeal that attracted huge public interest.

Within the first two weeks the campaign raised £700,000, contributed by 4,000 members of the public whose individual donations were matched pound for pound by a private charitable trust. A few days later, the campaign had reached £1m from the general public and a further £1m of support had been received from a series of major donors and grant-making foundations, propelling the total raised through the appeal to £2m.

In the last week the match fund was extended and public donations continued to flood in. The appeal surged towards its final target with the help of donations in the last few days from two regional sources: £250,000 from the bet365 Foundation, led by Denise Coates CBE, and £100,000 from Staffordshire County Council.

The Collection contains over 80,000 works of art, ceramics, manuscripts and letters, pattern books and photographs covering the 250-year history of Wedgwood. The Art Fund will now purchase the Collection

which will then be gifted to the V&A, the national museum of art and design. The V&A has agreed in principle to take on the responsibility for the Collection in order to safeguard it in perpetuity, and intend to keep it at Barlaston on long-term loan to the Wedgwood Museum. Plans are on course to be finalised by 30 November: the original fundraising deadline and the date by which the Collection must be purchased by the Art Fund, gifted to the V&A and loaned to the Wedgwood Museum. The Collection will lie at the heart of a major new visitor experience as part of Waterford Wedgwood Royal Doulton's (WWRD) £34m redevelopment of the site – set for completion in spring 2015.

Tim Reeve, Chief Operating Officer of the V&A: “We are delighted to be helping in this great national effort to save the Wedgwood collection, and to keep it on display at Barlaston. We look forward to working closely with the Art Fund, the HLF, WWRD and the local community of stakeholders who have been so instrumental in the success of the campaign.”

Anthony Jones, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of WWRD: “Next year sees the launch of the World of Wedgwood, a new attraction that will allow visitors to explore the Wedgwood brand, its products and its history, as part of a unique and truly memorable experience. The Collection is a key element of the Wedgwood story, bringing to life its rich heritage and craftsmanship. We are delighted its future is secure for the nation and are honoured to contribute to that future through being responsible for the operation of the Wedgwood Museum. Our focus now turns to ensuring the Museum continues to deliver the high standards of collections care and public benefit for which it has been internationally recognised in recent years.”

Regional Support

The Midlands community has provided an extraordinary level of support to the Wedgwood appeal. Local members of the public alongside organisations and foundations from the Midlands area have contributed almost 30% of the £2.74m raised.

Tristram Hunt, MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central, Labour: “I’m delighted that the people of Stoke-on-Trent have offered such passionate support and have made such a vital contribution to the fundraising total. The Wedgwood Collection provides perhaps the most compelling account of British industrial, social and design history anywhere in the world. I’m extremely pleased that this treasure trove will now remain intact, in Staffordshire and on display to the public as Wedgwood himself would have wanted.”

This week the bet365 Foundation, led by Denise Coates CBE, contributed £250,000 alongside a £100,000 donation from the Staffordshire County Council. Last week the Bamford Charitable Foundation – the charitable giving arm of JCB - pledged £100,000.

Denise Coates CBE, bet365 Foundation: “We’re delighted that the bet365 Foundation has been able to support such a worthwhile campaign so close to home. Having supported causes around the world, it’s particularly rewarding that we’ve been able to support a Collection that has such significant support from the local community.”

Philip Atkins, Leader of Staffordshire County Council: "The Wedgwood Collection is very much a testament to the historic and cultural past of Staffordshire and as a county we couldn't just stand by and let these treasured masterpieces be lost forever for the nation to view, enjoy and learn from. We are

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Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. HLF has supported 36,000 projects with £6bn across the UK.

www.hlf.org.uk @heritagelottery.

V&A

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. It was established to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, the V&A's collections, which span over 5000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform.

www.vam.ac.uk