Climate change, evolution, young curators and a spectacular ceiling projection – Horniman Museum and Gardens' new Nature Gallery to open in February 2027

DATE FOR THE DIARY:

- **Nature Gallery opens to public from Friday 5 February 2027**

London. The much-loved Horniman Museum and Gardens in south east London has today announced its Natural History Gallery will reopen as the **Nature Gallery** on Friday 5 February 2027.

The Gallery has been fully refurbished and the displays reimagined to celebrate the amazing variety of life on earth and explore humankind's place within, and impact on, nature. The opening is the final part of the ambitious £12.5m Nature + Love transformation project, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and marks the end of the Horniman's 125th anniversary year.

Nature Gallery at the Horniman Museum and Gardens visualisation by StudioMB

Bringing together familiar favourites – including the famous walrus – with over 2,300 objects from the Horniman's collection, artist commissions and multisensory interactives, the Nature Gallery will explore our connection to and reliance on nature, stories of extinction and climate change, and ideas for how we can all positively shape the future of the planet.

Highlights will include a dramatic new ceiling projection, including footage from the Horniman's own Gardens, showcasing the wonder of life on the planet. A display on plastic pollution by young curators from Addey & Stanhope School in Deptford is one of many co-produced contributions by local schools and community groups.

Adjacent to the Gallery will be a new hands-on Nature Discovery Den focused on local wildlife that has been developed with and for families with young children to inspire a lifelong love of nature.

Nature Discovery Den at the Horniman Museum and Gardens visualisation by StudioMB

The Grade II listed historic gallery space, originally built in 1901, has also undergone extensive renovation to future-proof it for decades to come, while preserving many of the historic display cases and architectural features.

The opening of the Nature Gallery is one of a number of exciting new developments at the Horniman as part of its ambitious Nature + Love project, supported by the Heritage Fund, which aims to inspire a greater understanding of and appreciation for the world we all share. In spring 2026 the Horniman opened Kusuma Nature Play featuring a free permanent outdoor play area, Animals Everywhere! – a free augmented reality trail across the Gardens, a family-friendly Gardens Cafe, and improved access to the historic Nature Trail, as well as a new Gardens Nursery facility and Community Garden.

The Horniman is currently running a crowdfunding campaign, asking supporters to raise funds towards the reopening of the Nature Gallery – with exciting rewards on offer to bring you closer to the Horniman, from behind-the-scenes tours to limited edition prints. Inspiring Nature (crowdfunder.co.uk/inspiring-nature) runs until 29 October 2026 and aims to raise £30,000 to support the redevelopment of the new gallery. In addition, between 1 and 21 October a prize draw is offering ticket holders the chance to win a return trip for two in a luxury cabin on the Caledonian Sleeper with an overnight stay, as well as many other incredible prizes.

Arts Minister Ruth Mackenzie said: '*I am delighted we have been able to support the Horniman Museum and Gardens with £1.4 million of infrastructure funding to help deliver its Nature + Love project. As the Horniman celebrates its 125th anniversary, this project will give children, young people and families fresh ways to explore nature, culture and the world around them.'*

Michael Salter-Church MBE, Chair of the Horniman, said: *'Opening these wonderful new spaces marks the end of the Horniman's extraordinary 125th anniversary year, and the culmination of our transformational Nature + Love project. Our thanks go to our generous funders and to the expert partners, both local and global, who worked with us to shape these bold new experiences. They also go to our dedicated and visionary staff, our volunteers and Trustees who have guided this project, and to the community groups and visitors who have shaped it. These new spaces will inspire visitors for years to come.'*

Gordon Seabright, Chief Executive at the Horniman, said: *'Humankind's impact on the planet has never been more obvious. We hope that through our ambitious Nature + Love project and the opening of the Nature Gallery we can help to foster a love of the living world and a sense that we can all play our parts in protecting it. We can't wait for these new spaces to be open so we can welcome everyone to share the wonder and beauty of nature through fun and inspiring encounters here at the Horniman.'*

Stuart McLeod, Director of London and South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: *'The Horniman Museum and Gardens has long inspired people to explore and better understand our natural heritage. Thanks to National Lottery players, we are proud to support their ambitious Nature + Love project, which is transforming the Nature Gallery and bringing collections, stories and experiences together in innovative ways. It will help people of all ages connect with nature, understand the challenges it faces today and be inspired to play their part in protecting it. This project will leave a lasting legacy, ensuring that the Horniman's natural heritage continues to be valued, cared for and shared for many years to come.'*

The Horniman's Nature + Love project has been made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players. The project is supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Public Bodies Infrastructure Fund (PBIF), the Wolfson Foundation, Kusuma Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, the Foyle Foundation and many other generous donors.

More details about the new Nature Gallery will be revealed in the coming months.

- Ends -

Press pack, including images, available here: Press Pack

For more information about the Horniman's Nature + Love transformation project, please contact:

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Notes to Editors

About the Horniman Museum and Gardens
The Horniman Museum and Gardens is a welcoming, inspiring, family-friendly, free attraction in south east London's Forest Hill. Marking its 125th anniversary in 2026, the Horniman connects visitors with global cultures and the natural environment.

Set among 16 acres of beautiful, award-winning Gardens, the Horniman has a collection of 350,000 objects, specimens and artefacts from around the world. The Horniman was Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022, the world's largest museum prize.

In 2019 the Horniman declared an ecological and climate emergency, pledging to place carbon reduction and environmental issues at the heart of its work.

The Horniman Museum and Gardens is governed by an independent charitable trust; it is core-funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and also relies on income from ticket sales, memberships, the shop and the cafe to help care for the Gardens, animals and Aquarium residents, to run events and to look after the collections.

The Horniman Museum and Gardens first opened in 1901 as a gift to the people in perpetuity from tea trader and philanthropist Frederick John Horniman, to 'bring the world to Forest Hill'.

The Horniman's 125th anniversary in 2026 is centred around the completion of the Nature + Love project while looking forward to the next 125 years.
horniman.ac.uk

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund
Our vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future. That's why as the largest funder for the UK's heritage we are dedicated to supporting

projects that connect people and communities to heritage, as set out in our strategic plan, Heritage 2033. Heritage can be anything from the past that people value and want to pass on to future generations. We believe in the power of heritage to ignite the imagination, offer joy and inspiration, and to build pride in place and connection to the past.
By 2033 we aim to invest £3.6billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players to make a decisive difference for people, places and communities.
heritagefund.org.uk

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About the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Public Bodies Infrastructure Fund (PBIF)
DCMS's Public Bodies Infrastructure Fund supports the Department's arts and cultural public bodies in addressing urgent and critical estates maintenance challenges.

About the Wolfson Foundation
The Wolfson Foundation is an independent grant-making charity with a focus on research and education. Its aim is to contribute to civil society by supporting high-quality projects in science, health, heritage, humanities and the arts.

Since it was established in 1955, the Wolfson Foundation has awarded over £1 billion (£2 billion in real terms) to around 14,000 projects throughout the UK, all on the basis of expert review.
wolfson.org.uk

About Garfield Weston Foundation
The Garfield Weston Foundation is a family founded grant-maker that gives money to support charities across the UK. The Foundation supports charities operating in a wide variety of sectors that make a positive difference within their communities. The Foundation was established by W. Garfield Weston in 1958, through an endowment of shares in Wittington Investments – which holds a majority stake in Associated British Foods. This successful business model exists to this day. Each year the sum the Foundation has given away has grown: in the most recent financial year 2024-2025 the Foundation gave away almost £130 million to 2,967 charities. Since its establishment, the Foundation has generated funds of nearly £1.7 billion, which have been donated to UK charities.
garfieldweston.org

About the Foyle Foundation
The Foyle Foundation was established in 2000 as an independent grant making trust to distribute grants to U.K. based charities (primarily arts and learning) and schools. The Foundation's long planned spend down and closure took place in December 2025. Over this time, it distributed over £185M in total to almost 7,500 charities and state schools across the UK.
Foylefoundation.org.uk

About Kusuma Trust
Kusuma Trust UK is a family led philanthropic trust established in 2010. The Trust gives grants to organisations based on shared values and mutual interests in the UK, Gibraltar and India. Since inception, Kusuma Trust has made significant contributions in the areas of health, education and culture through capital, programme and research grants.
kusumatrust.org