

David Livingstone Birthplace re-opens

28/07/2021



The birthplace of one of Scotland's most famous explorers has re-opened following a £6.86million National Lottery grant.



New play area at the David Livingstone Birthplace

David Livingstone Birthplace, which has just completed a four year redevelopment project, is welcoming visitors again from today (28 July).

Located in Blantyre, Scotland, on the site of the former Blantyre Works Mill, it includes a brand new exhibition, as well as a newly refurbished shop and café, children's play park and 11 hectares of free-to-access parkland.

The project, led by the David Livingstone Trust, received over £6.86m thanks to National Lottery players. The funding has helped them transform the small independent museum into a world-class visitor attraction.

This important museum will inspire and inform visitors across Scotland and around the world.

Caroline Clarke, Director of Scotland at The National Lottery Heritage Fund



Who was David Livingstone?

Livingstone (1813-1873) was a Scottish physician and Christian missionary with the London Missionary Society.

From his humble beginnings working at the Blantyre Mill Works, he became a life-long anti-slavery campaigner, abolitionist and well-respected explorer in Southern and Central Africa.

His contribution to science, exploration, faith and humanitarianism is considered to be of great international importance. And his geographic, technical, medical and social discoveries provided a complex body of knowledge that is still being studied today.

Opening up Livingstone's story

For the first time, fifty objects of African origin – selected by experts – will be on display, allowing visitors to explore Livingstone's story and learn about his impact and legacy. The objects depict both Southern and Central African culture as well as colonial history.

Displays will also tell the story of the people who were instrumental to Livingstone's expeditions. These include his wife, Mary Moffat, Botswanan ruler, Sechele I, and former expedition employee, Abdullah Susi.

Visitors will also be able to view a new video series produced in partnership with the Scotland Malawi Partnership. The series examines Livingstone's ongoing legacy and how it relates to faith, anti-racism, the story of Africa and his impact on colonialism.



A selection of Southern and Central African objects on display in the museum. Photo: Kat Gollock

Education and outreach

David Livingstone Birthplace now includes a redesigned education and workshop space which will support a programme of community engagement.

A schools programme will address contemporary issues, placing Livingstone's legacy central to today's discussions around Black history, cross-cultural understanding and anti-racism.

A world-class visitor attraction

Caroline Clark, Director of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Scotland, said: “With the help of National Lottery players this important museum will inspire and inform visitors across Scotland and around the world.

“The tenacity and resilience of the Trust in driving this world-class heritage project through the challenges of the pandemic should be applauded, and we are delighted the Birthplace is now open.”



Livingstone and Lion sculpture depicting a lion attack Livingstone experienced in Southern Africa. Photo: Walnut Wasp

Looking for places to visit this summer?

It has been great to see heritage venues beginning to reopen this summer. Keep up to date with [the latest openings in your area](#).

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