

Press Release – 24 November 2015

SIMON WALLIS, DIRECTOR OF THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD
RECEIVES OBE FOR SERVICES TO THE ARTS

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield received his OBE for services to the arts at Buckingham Palace on Thursday 19 November.

The award, presented by HRH The Prince of Wales, recognises the contribution made by The Hepworth Wakefield to the visual arts over the past seven years. Simon was joined at the Palace by his wife Dr. Deborah Marks and two children Maya aged 13 and Joseph aged 11 to attend the investiture.

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield said: "I was delighted to be able to share this memorable experience with my family. However the credit for the OBE is shared by the wonderful team at The Hepworth Wakefield, colleagues at Wakefield Council and the Arts Council, as well as my Trustees, friends and family, who have tirelessly supported me in developing and realising our ongoing ambitions for the gallery. David Chipperfield's world-class design and the Hepworth Family Gift have also been essential to our success."

He added: "I'm looking forward hugely to our 5th anniversary at the gallery next year. We have our most ambitious programme of exhibitions, projects and events to date as we continue to put Wakefield and Yorkshire on the national and international map by bringing the best visual art to a wide and engaged audience."

Since July 2008, Simon has overseen the development of The Hepworth Wakefield, which opened to the public on 21 May 2011. As the gallery's first employee, his initial years in Wakefield were spent developing the vision, business plan, new gallery team and programme, while advocating for the project regionally and nationally. He worked closely with David Chipperfield architects to ensure that the building would fulfil the needs of its audiences and key exhibits: the Hepworth Family Gift, the Wakefield Permanent Art Collection and a changing programme of ambitious contemporary art. Alongside this an award-winning integrated learning programme was developed by the team.

Simon provided the artistic vision and leadership for the organisation as it expanded and moved into the new gallery and oversaw its transition and transfer to become an independent charitable trust in close partnership with Wakefield Council. Most recently he led an ambitious project to re-purpose and re-invigorate Caddies Wainwright Mill, a 19th century former textiles mill on the River Calder adjacent to the gallery. Begun in spring 2013, the 600 square metre ground floor of this historic building opened to the public as The Calder in August 2013, an art and events space that extends The Hepworth Wakefield's existing offer.

Simon is a founding member of the Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle that comprises The Hepworth Wakefield and near neighbours, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, The Henry Moore Institute and Leeds Art Gallery. He plays an active role on the steering committee of the Plus Tate Partnership network and is also a founding member of a new initiative for cultural leaders in the West Yorkshire region called The Culture Club.

Simon Wallis was appointed Director of The Hepworth Wakefield in July 2008, which opened to the public in May 2011. He was previously Director of Chisenhale Gallery in East London, Senior Exhibitions Organiser at the ICA, London; Curator at Tate Liverpool; and Curator at Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge. He studied fine art at Chelsea School of Art and subsequently at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA and gained an MA in Art Gallery and Museum Studies at the University of Manchester.

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

The Hepworth Wakefield takes its name from the internationally acclaimed sculptor, Barbara Hepworth, who was born in Wakefield in 1903. At 5,000 square metres, The Hepworth Wakefield is one of largest contemporary art spaces outside London.

The gallery showcases Wakefield's nationally important collection, which includes major works by Barbara Hepworth and her contemporary Henry Moore, born nearby in Castleford in 1898. The Wakefield Permanent Art Collection also holds key works by other leading British artists including Ben Nicholson, Jacob Epstein, Ivon Hitchens, Graham Sutherland, John Piper, Paul Nash, Patrick Heron, L.S. Lowry and Lucie Rie. The displays are enhanced by loans from the collections of Tate, the Arts Council, the British Council and private lenders.

The Hepworth Wakefield's temporary exhibition programme features the world's leading contemporary artists. Past shows have included Eva Rothschild, Franz West, Philip-Lorca diCorcia and Haroon Mirza.

The gallery is a major cultural asset for Yorkshire, enhancing the region's reputation as one of the world's leading centres for the exhibition and appreciation of sculpture and is at the heart of Wakefield's regeneration. In 2013, Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle was established by partner venues, The Hepworth Wakefield, the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds Art Gallery and Yorkshire Sculpture Park as an umbrella brand to celebrate this heritage and to promote contemporary and modern sculpture in Yorkshire.

Designed by the internationally acclaimed practice, David Chipperfield Architects, The Hepworth Wakefield is the UK's largest purpose-built gallery since The Hayward in London was built in 1968. It acts as a catalyst for tourism and has attracted in excess of £350 million inward investment. The on-going development in Wakefield city centre includes a new retail project Trinity Walk, a £140 million transformation of Wakefield Merchant Gate, which has created a new

business quarter for Wakefield, and an £8 million development of Wakefield Westgate train station. The ambition is to further develop the historically important Waterfront area of the city, with its listed mills and warehouses.

The Hepworth Wakefield is funded by Wakefield Council and Arts Council England and an increasing number of charitable trusts, private individuals, Patrons and Members. The gallery opened on 21 May 2011 and welcomed its millionth visitor on 5 December 2013.

The Hepworth Wakefield, Gallery Walk, Wakefield WF1 5AW
Tuesday – Sunday 10am – 5pm
Closed Mondays (except Bank and local school holidays)
Late night opening - third Thursday of every month, 10am – 9pm.
Admission to the gallery is free
Twitter: @HepworthGallery
Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheHepworthWakefield
Instagram: [hepworthwakefield](https://www.instagram.com/hepworthwakefield)

THE CALDER

The Calder is The Hepworth Wakefield's new contemporary art space which opened to the public on 30 August 2013. Located on the ground floor of a 19th century former textiles mill, the new contemporary art space is situated adjacent to the main gallery site, on the banks of the River Calder. The Calder adds 600 square metres of exhibition and event space to the existing 10 gallery spaces within The Hepworth Wakefield and presents a mixed programme of art, music and events that runs in parallel to the visitor offer at the main gallery.

The Calder, Gallery Walk, West Yorkshire, WF1 5AW
Free admission (except for ticketed events)
Open Tuesday – Sunday, 12 – 4.30pm
Open Third Thursday of every month, 12 – 8.30pm, as part of After Hours late nights
Open for the Wakefield Art on Wednesdays every other month, 12 - 8.30pm
Closed Mondays (except for Bank Holidays and school holidays)
www.hepworthwakefield.org
01924 247360
Twitter: @HepworthGallery #TheCalder
Instagram: [instagram.com/thecalder](https://www.instagram.com/thecalder)

YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE TRIANGLE

The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Henry Moore Institute and Leeds Art Gallery are four of the UK's leading visual art organisations, situated within 30 minutes' drive or train ride from one another. They build on West Yorkshire's unique artistic legacy as the birthplace of two of the most important 20th Century artists, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore. This long-term partnership works to promote contemporary art and sculpture in inspirational settings to grow visitor numbers for all four institutions and to raise the profile of West Yorkshire as a major centre for the appreciation and study of sculpture.

For details on Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle:
Visit www.ysculpture.com
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