# Giving The Civic Back to the People Campaign Launched

**Friday 5 May, 2017**

**Giving The Civic Back to the People Campaign Launched**

Sir Michael Parkinson has backed a major £5m fundraising campaign to renovate The Civic, Barnsley to become a world-class destination for the arts by 2023.

The Civic is a much loved Grade II listed building that has been part of the town since 1877.

A modern extension was opened in 2009, but a third of the historic building is unoccupied with its traditional front entrance and foyer on Eldon Street disconnected from the rest of the building.

Helen Ball, CEO of The Civic, an independent arts charity, said: “The Civic represents the heart of Barnsley. Our vision is to reinstate the historic main entrance and re-connect it to the town and its people, returning The Civic to its rightful former glory. It’s about giving The Civic back to the people, and ensuring Barnsley’s future as a significant cultural destination.”

The front of the building is currently used as council office space, with historic access points blocked off. The renovation will include an Eldon Street box office and café, the refurbishment of three un-used floors, and a new theatre space.

Sir Michael Parkinson said: “The arts are an integral part of what it means to be human. They contribute to our spirit and enrich our lives. Barnsley can be proud of the contribution it has made to the world of literature, theatre, radio, television, music and sport. That is why this campaign is important and why I am proud to be a Patron of The Civic. Please support us.”

Alongside a year-round arts programme, The Civic offers educational and engagement activities with schools and local community groups, such as Cross the Sky, a theatre company for adults with learning disabilities.

The renovation will extend its range of quality cultural and community events. The campaign aims to engage with businesses, philanthropists and the general public.

Steve Wragg, Chair of The Civic, said: “I first went to the theatre at aged ten and I became forever stage struck. As Chair of The Civic I am keen to urge the Barnsley community, business leaders and funders to support our 2023 capital appeal so that future generations can engage with a world-class arts programme right here on our doorstep, helping to open the doors of opportunity for our young people and generations to come.”

Helen added: “It’s a fantastic opportunity for Barnsley, as the Arts Council has agreed to match every £1 donated with a £1, so any kind donation will make a real difference. We’re really keen to hear from anyone who wants to join in the campaign, or become advocates for the arts and help us build this exciting future.”

To donate, or find out more, go to www.barnsleycivic.co.uk

*For more media info, photo or interview requests, please contact clair@causeuk.com*

**EDITORS NOTES**

**PICTURES SHOW: Michael Parkinson Patron of the Civic; An artist interpretation of the Eldon Street entrance.**

The Civic is a contemporary arts centre positioned in the heart of South Yorkshire. As a charity, the organisation exists to bring extraordinary experience of the arts to the local community and beyond.

The Civic prides itself on providing an engaging and diverse artistic programme across a range of genres. Registered Charity No, **1129765**

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