

**EMBARGOED FOR TUESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER, 10.30AM**

# barbican

## **Abigail Pogson announced as new Barbican Centre CEO**

- **City of London Corporation appoints respected arts leader to steer Barbican Centre through transformative period**

Chief Executive of The Glasshouse International Centre for Music, Abigail Pogson, has been announced as the new CEO of the Barbican Centre, following a competitive international recruitment process. She will take up the role on Monday 5 January 2026.

Abigail brings a wealth of experience, passion, and a deep commitment to nurturing community and artistic excellence.

Her appointment comes at a pivotal moment as the Barbican enters an exciting new chapter with an ambitious Renewal programme to restore and revitalise the iconic Grade II listed buildings for future generations. This coincides with a renewed artistic vision that includes seasonal, cross-arts programming and an enhanced civic focus.

Abigail's values-led leadership and proven dedication to broadening access to the arts sits at the heart of the Centre's vision, and will drive its work further, helping shape an inclusive, sustainable, and globally relevant Barbican.

### **Speaking about her new role, Abigail said:**

*"The Barbican is one of the world's most iconic cultural destinations, and I'm beyond delighted to be joining at such a critical and exciting time in its history."*

*"I believe deeply in the power of art and creativity to enrich lives and communities, and I look forward to working with the talented team at the Barbican and its many fabulous partners to bring exceptional, relevant, and joyful cultural experiences to as many people as possible."*

Abigail's appointment underscores the City Corporation's goal of making the Square Mile a cultural powerhouse, and reaffirms the Barbican's role as a global arts leader, grounded in its communities, and committed to creativity, innovation, and access to all.

The City Corporation is the owner, founder, and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

### **City of London Corporation Policy Chairman, Chris Hayward, said:**

*"We are thrilled to welcome Abigail to the Barbican. Her track record of dynamic, inclusive leadership makes her the ideal person to lead the Centre through this new chapter and beyond."*

*"Her arrival comes as the Barbican Renewal programme drives forward – a landmark £191 million investment by the City Corporation to secure the Centre's future."*

*"This transformation will support our Destination City ambitions by attracting new and diverse audiences to the Square Mile and reinforcing London's reputation as a global cultural capital."*

**Sir William Russell, Chair of the City Corporation's Barbican Centre Board, added:**

*"Abigail's appointment marks another big moment for the Barbican. She brings both strategic vision and a real passion for supporting artistic talent and the audiences who engage with it. I know she will lead this organisation with skill and imagination as we continue to evolve and connect."*

*"I give my deepest thanks to David Farnsworth, Managing Director of the City Bridge Foundation, who has served as Interim CEO of the Barbican for the past year on secondment. His inspiring leadership, warmth and tireless commitment during a period of transition have been invaluable. David has played a crucial role in strengthening the organisation and laying important foundations for its future."*

This announcement follows the submission of applications this summer for planning permission and listed building consent for Phase 1 of Barbican Renewal. Earlier this year the proposals for the Centre's foyers, lakeside, catering block and conservatory received over 90% approval in public consultations. In addition to the initial investment from the City Corporation, the Centre is undertaking extensive fundraising to complete Phase 1 and beyond.

The Programme is one of several transformative projects being delivered by the City Corporation, including the Salisbury Square Development, which will house the new City of London Police HQ and multi-courts complex, and the new London Museum at Smithfield.

The City Corporation is one of the largest funders of heritage and cultural activities in the UK, investing over £130m every year. It manages a range of world-class cultural and heritage institutions, including Tower Bridge, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Guildhall Art Gallery and London's Roman Amphitheatre, The London Archives, and Keats House.

It also supports the new London Museum and is the principal funder of the London Symphony Orchestra, based at the Barbican Centre.

**ENDS**

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

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**Images available [here](#).**

### **About the City of London Corporation**

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile, dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally successful UK. [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk).

### **Abigail Pogson Biography**

For the past decade Abigail has been CEO of The Glasshouse International Centre for Music. Prior to that she was CEO of Spitalfields Music based in East London. She was born and brought up in Yorkshire, read languages at university before an MA in Arts Administration. She is a member of Arts Council England's National Council, a board member of North East Chamber of Commerce and recently served as Chair of Sunderland

Empire Board and on the Boards of V&A Dundee and European Concert Halls Organisation.

She has always believed passionately in the role which the arts can play in wider society, the positive contribution it can make to a place and its people and in particular making sure as many young people as possible can access the arts.

### **Barbican press room**

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our website at [www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room](http://www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room)

### **About the Barbican**

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), our Resident Orchestra, and a London base for the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our Artistic Associates the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Darbar Arts](#), [Cultural and Heritage Trust](#), and [Serious](#), who produce the [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), alongside other associates and partners including [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), and [Trafalgar Theatre Productions](#).

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