

PRESS INFORMATION

THE NEW ST VIGEANS MUSEUM

Historic Scotland has made major improvements to St Vigeans museum which houses one of Scotland's most important collection of Pictish sculpture. It was a once-in-a-generation opportunity to modernise their presentation so visitors can appreciate them to the full. The project allowed information about the collection to be updated – making use of the latest research into their origins.

The old museum

The 38 stones were on display in the small cottage at 3, Kirkstyle. The adjoining cottage at number 4, also owned by Historic Scotland was used as a store. The presentation meant parts of many stones were not visible. Access was only possible by collecting the museum keys from Arbroath Abbey. As the site was not staffed there was no one to provide visitors with help or information.

The new-look museum

The museum has been expanded by opening up both cottages to create a display area that is larger and better lit. The latest presentation techniques have been used, so visitors can see all the details of carved figures and decoration on each stone. The museum is now staffed in order to offer help and information. Other innovations include a touch screen presentation with the latest research about the stones. Much of the research is also contained in a new CD Rom and booklet.

Specialist interest

As one of the most important groups of Pictish carved stones in existence, the St Vigeans collection is of great interest to scholars. The new presentation make it far easier for experts to study them and add to our knowledge. As carved stones are one of the relatively few sources of information that archaeologists and historians have about the Picts, they are vital in helping advance our knowledge of this immensely important aspect of our past. The museum will be staffed all year round, with reduced opening hours from November to March.

Community consultation

Before the museum was modernised a community consultation evening was held to give local residents and other interested groups the chance to find out more about the proposals and provide feedback and suggestions on the scheme.

- ENDS -