



Central Library Redevelopment

When Central Library, one of only a few remaining original Carnegie buildings, was first built in 1911 it followed Andrew Carnegie's belief that libraries should be places of cultural enlightenment. Above the door, engraved in the stone, are the words "let there be light" which has been the ethos behind the new designs for the library created by architect Bisset Adams.

Although the existing exterior facade will not be substantially changed, the emphasis has been on re-designing the interior of the library to adapt it to modern learning techniques. It will see improved facilities, group areas, a café and, since this is Blackpool, light displays. Lighting and visual artist Nick Robertson is part of the design team, and will be creating an exciting, ever-changing light installation. Robertson's lighting has previously been used at the Sydney Opera House by the artist Brian Eno. Also in the team is the conservation architect Richard Griffiths Architects, who have a reputation for work of the highest quality in the design of new buildings in historic contexts and in the conservation of historic buildings.

The designs also include an extension to the building that will house new community use areas for group workshops and allow for more technology. This new build has been included to fit in with the original Carnegie designs which were never completed when the library was first built. Nearly 2,000 people were consulted in the early stages of the designs taking on board how they think libraries should modernise to help promote new ways of learning and to create a building that the community can make use of.

An online Blog of the progress of work has been set up and can be followed at <http://blackpoolcentrallibrary.wordpress.com>

People that use the library have been informed about alternative libraries and services that they can access during the 12 month closure. Revoe, Layton and Palatine Libraries are the nearest alternatives to Central and will remain open longer during the day from 06 September to allow people that normally use Central more time to make use of those instead.

The library will be reopened in September 2011 in time for its centenary celebration.

The redesign of the library is being funded with £2 million from the Big Lottery Community Libraries Fund and £1 million from Blackpool Council.