

South West Museums Sustainability Programme

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The South West Museums Sustainability Programme

- Overview of the programme
- The sustainability framework
- The role of the Sustainability Mentor
- Feedback on the impact of the Sustainability Mentors
- Next steps for the programme

South West Museum Development Programme



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Museum Development

Welcome to the South West Museum Development Programme. Our mission is to support museums in the region to achieve sustainable improvements and maximise their benefits to audiences and communities.

South West
Museum Development
Programme
Annual Report

2013/14



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Why a South West Museums Sustainability Programme?

- To enable museums to explore and implement ideas and practices around sustainability.
- To support museums to become stronger, resilient and robust.
- To support the museum's workforce to develop skills and knowledge around sustainability.
- To build a sustainable museum sector in the South West.

The Participants

Pilot Programme 2013-2014:

- Athelstan Museum, Malmesbury
- Bradford-on-Avon Museum
- Portland Museum
- The Priest's House Museum, Wimborne Minster

2014-2015 Programme:

- The Berkshire and Wiltshire Rifles Museum, Salisbury
- Ifracombe Museum
- Museum of Bath at Work
- Richard Jefferies Museum, Swindon
- Wells and Mendip Museum
- Weston-super-Mare Museum



Sustainability Framework



Stages of the process

- **Pre self-assessment.**
- **Stage one, self-assessment:** a comprehensive review of how the museum operates in the current climate. Facilitated by the Museum Development Officer (MDO).

Stages of the process

1. Leadership
2. Focus on the needs and expectations of your community
3. Governance and management system
4. Focus on outcomes
5. Forward planning
6. Workforce management
7. Collaborative working
8. Financial management
9. Improvement and innovation

Self-Assessment

Characteristic Two: Awareness of community needs and expectations:

Sustainable museums understand the needs and expectations of the community and keep these at the heart of all they do

Ref	Criteria	☑ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation 2011 Standard	What practices do we currently have in place? (include reference to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4		
2.1	Understanding the needs and service expectations of users and non users through consultation & research.						3.1	
2.2	Developing and delivering services which provide a high quality and stimulating experience reflecting the needs and expectations of users and non-users.						3.1	
2.3	Ensuring that the facilities are accessible for everyone.						3.2	
2.4	Working with users and non-users to develop the museum services.						3.1.3	
2.5	Communicating and marketing the museum service and its benefits to all parts of the community, linking with the tourism sector and other cultural services where appropriate.						3.2	

Self-Assessment Rating

Rating	Definitions
0	<i>Time for action!</i> – nothing has been planned so far.
1	<i>On the Starting Blocks</i> – we already know we need to improve in this area and have had some initial ideas, but there's been little tangible progress to date.
2	<i>Some Steps taken</i> – we have made some improvements in this area, but there's plenty more that could be done.
3	<i>A Solid Performance</i> – we have been actively making improvements in this area and our performance is generally strong, although some further work may be necessary.
4	<i>A role model...are we really that good?</i> – we have fully and systematically implemented ways of doing this; the effectiveness and efficiency of our approaches is measured, reviewed and improved; there is evidence that they have worked!

Self-Assessment Experience

Individually work through
characteristic two:

**Sustainable museums understand the
needs and expectations of their
community and keep these at the heart
of all they do**

Use your museum or one you know

Reviewing the Self-Assessment

- Museum Development (MDO)
- Sustainability Mentor
- A Museum Peer

The Sustainability Mentor

To provide support and advice to the Museum during the peer review, improvement plan development and delivery

To act as 'critical friend', to help explore options

To give positive and open feedback

To be objective and fair

To empower the museums to drive their own sustainability

The Sustainability Mentor

To maintain constructive dialogue with all parties involved

To promote overall ownership of the framework with each museum

To maintain the relationship with the museum, ensuring agreed mentoring sessions are kept

To record the information discussed during the mentoring session and to share this with the museum lead within a week of the session

The Sustainability Mentor

In groups of two or three swap your self-assessment forms

Take two minutes to mentor each other based on the self-assessment.

What questions would you ask based on the self-assessment?

The Sustainability Mentor

Feedback

Stages of the process

- **Pre self-assessment.**
- **Stage one, self-assessment:** a comprehensive review of how the museum operates in the current climate. Facilitated by the MDO.
- **Stage two, peer review:** a review by the MDO, Sustainability Mentor and peer(s) based on the self-assessment.
- **Stage three, improvement plan:** Stages 1 and 2 will result in the creation of a plan which focuses on how the museum will achieve sustainable outcomes. Facilitated by the MDO, supported by the Sustainability Mentor
- **Stage four, delivery of the improvement plan:** The improvement plan is reviewed every six months to monitor achievements and changes. Supported by the Sustainability Mentor.

Mentoring - a personal perspective

Mentoring is an opportunity to contribute something to the sector that has provided me with two decades of stimulating and creative employment (paid and voluntary). There is something personally satisfying about sharing and giving something to others.



Steph Gillett, South West Museums Sustainability Mentor

The Sustainability Mentor Role

There is the questioning and checking ... helping to ensure that there is clarity of thinking, that actions can actually deliver intended outcomes, asking the things that individuals and organisations are sometimes reluctant to ask of themselves.

Steph Gillett, South West Museums Sustainability Mentor

Mentoring - a personal perspective

My recent experiences of mentoring, and of previous work as a freelance consultant, are that it can also be a very enjoyable process for all involved; justifiable as real work but slightly outside the regular day-to-day routine.

Steph Gillett, South West Museums Sustainability Mentor

A Museum's Reflection

The process of selection of a mentor and initial meetings were clear and our MDO guided us through the process through patience explanation.

Stuart Burroughs, Director of Museum of Bath at Work, January 2015



Our MDO and mentor were sympathetic to requirements and understanding of the particular circumstances here.

What the museums said

The external perspective brought by the Sustainability Mentor had enabled museums to look differently at their situation and in some cases to re-order their priorities.

Evaluation report April 2014, Emma King Consultancy

The museums appreciated the external input, clarity and a friendly but constructive level of challenge.

Evaluation report April 2014, Emma King Consultancy

A Museum's Reflection

We are now at the stage of working directly with our mentor during 2015 to develop our Improvement Plan based on our self-assessment. An entirely worthwhile exercise that every small museum, given the opportunity, should consider.

Stuart Burroughs, Director of Museum of Bath at Work, January 2015

Next Steps 2015 - 2018

- The South West Museums Sustainability framework will be open to museums who want to build a sustainable future
- To explore further links with the Accreditation scheme looking at adding a section around collections management to the self-assessment
- To explore the opportunity for the programme to work closely with other mentors

Comments and Questions

Programme Contact Information

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