



South West Museum Development

# Annual Review

# 2022/23

south west  
museum  
development



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# £820.763

has been invested in museums through our programme

# 201

museum and heritage sites have benefitted from our support during the year

# £147,600

has been invested by local authority partners to enhance museum support through our programme

We have awarded

# £140.136

in grants to support museum projects

# 112

museums received support to improve collections care

# 529

delegates attended our Museum Skills training

# 37

museums have been supported to develop their digital engagement

# 24

museums received in depth support to develop their audiences

# 50

museums were helped with volunteering development





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*Placodium coccineum.*  
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# Reflecting on 2022/2023

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Recent years have provided important lessons and learning opportunities that we have sought to put into practice in the ongoing recovery and rebuilding of the sector. During this time, new challenges emerged, including the new energy and cost of living crisis. However, as we have learnt from the pandemic, with challenges come opportunities. In response to the new challenges facing the sector, we adapted and diversified the development services we provided.

This year we were delighted to see the return of in-person training sessions as part of our SW Museum Skills programme, including Sharing your Collections in the Community, and Collections Care Advanced.

The environmental crisis is a concern shared by museums and their communities, and this felt like the year when many were looking to act and join the growing call for change. Our own Green Grant recipients set out on a wide range of projects to engage communities and change their own practices. Alongside our own Green Grants, we distributed Art Fund's small grant element of The Wild Escape. These grants enabled museums to work with children to explore wildlife in their collections, exhibitions, and spaces.

Continuing our focus on biodiversity, we embarked on a pilot project with the Natural History Museum London, Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Newton Abbot Museum and South West Heritage Trust, to test the infrastructure needed to support museums to digitally share their natural science specimens and associated data. This pilot will help researchers understand more about biodiversity, as well as the influence of humanity on our natural world on our rapidly changing planet.

This year we also built on our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. Through Rising Arts Agency's OnBoard programme, we recruited and welcomed two young people under 30 to take their place in our governance. Our new board members will be supported by Rising Arts Agency for 12 months so that they feel fully able to share their ideas and contribute to strategic decisions. We're already experiencing the tangible benefit of their engagement, bringing fresh and insightful perspectives on our Green Action Plan and Equity Action Plan, as well as reflecting their input alongside other board members in our future priorities and plans.

The last year has shown that the museums sector has an innate ability to innovate through uncertainty, find inspiring solutions, and engage their communities about what matters to them. We recognise that facilitating this ambition isn't just down to one grant, one training session, or one networking event, but depends on sustained development support and opportunities to experiment and grow. That is exactly what we are here for, working together with our partners to create the environment and opportunities that work for museums in the South West. This review highlights just some of the many outstanding outcomes we have achieved together.

**Victoria Harding** *Programme Manager*  
*South West Museum Development*

# Introduction from the chair

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It's often said that the only constant is change. Certainly, the last few years have seen an unexpected amount of turmoil, from Brexit to the Covid-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine, all of which have had an impact on the economy and how people live their lives.

Museums have not been immune to the effects of these upheavals. The increased cost of living as seen in higher fuel and energy prices, materials and transport costs, have made running even a small museum that much more expensive. As a development and support agency, our role during this time has been to provide advice, expertise and funding to assist museums large and small across the South West in facing up to such challenges – which they have done with both ingenuity and resilience.

It's worth remembering that, at a time of uncertainty and change, museums provide us with continuity, connect us to the ongoing story of our locality, our nation, its people and its culture(s). They can offer perspective and reassurance, but also inspiration, connecting us socially and helping us find imaginative solutions to the challenges of our future, such as climate change.

As I write, preparations are in hand to respond to the changes that Arts Council England have announced they intend to make to the national Museum Development programme from 2024. These changes include redrawing existing regional boundaries to align with Arts Council England's own five areas. From 1 April 2024 the 'South West' area will now consist of the traditional South West government region as well as Hampshire Solent, which includes Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. Other changes include increased national consistency and the introduction of new central Museum Development roles within Arts Council England.

South West Museum Development has worked closely with key support organisations across the South West region and Hampshire Solent to develop an application for Museum Development funding for 2024–26 and plan a smooth transition to the new arrangements. We will receive Arts Council England's funding decision for 2024–26 in October 2023.

I want to pay tribute to our team and advisory board who have been working hard to ensure that we embrace this change, while keeping our focus on maintaining the quality of service we provide to museums across the whole of our area – continuity through change.

**Stephen Boyce** *Chair, South West Museum Development Strategic Advisory Board*









# Capacity building through skills development

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## SW Museum Skills

The summer tranche of SW Museum Skills marked the return of in-person training and networking, with sessions enhanced by the opportunity to get hands-on and learn practical skills. These in-person training sessions were complemented with online learning, keeping many sessions accessible for the museum workforce. We ran 57 sessions, reaching over 529 participants across the South West and beyond.

These sessions were made possible by our in-house trainers sharing their specialist expertise. We would also like to thank the sector support organisations who have strengthened our programme with their expert knowledge, including Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy, the Carbon Literacy Project, Collections Trust, Culture24, Kids in Museums, The National Archives and Pilio. Our programme covered a wide range of subjects and disciplines as a response to the needs of the sector, whether that was being driven by wider external challenges or professional development and growth demands.

Our South West Museum Development carbon literacy trainers delivered carbon literacy training across all three tranches of the year, training a total of 45 museum professionals. The carbon literacy training is tailored to support museums in both engaging audiences on the subject and actively mitigating their own carbon impact. This training was delivered as part of the Museum Development England Roots and Branches Project, see page 15 for more information on that.

## Wiltshire Museums Digital Marketing

A need for specific digital marketing support was identified by our local place-based Museum Development Officer (MDO) across several museums in Wiltshire, which was developed during 2022/23 into a tailored programme of skills development.

Our Digital Engagement Officer conducted an audit of websites and social media accounts run by the museums, with the intention to use this as evidence for what kind of collective digital engagement support would be most beneficial to these museums.

The museums were graded into three levels, depending on what type of training and support would be a priority for producing engaging and accessible content to boost their online audiences.

The bespoke programme of support was then delivered between December 2022 and February 2023 to museums who applied to take part through an expression of interest process. It was delivered as three sessions over the winter with touchpoints across the programme for additional support and for coming together to share practice as a group. The session content was developed from the audit undertaken earlier in 2022 and focused primarily on practical support across accessibility, social media, blogging, photography fundamentals for marketing, and basic graphic design.

# Communicating and amplifying the value of heritage

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## Annual Museum Survey

We are responsible for the development, coordination and analysis of data generated through the Annual Museum Survey (AMS) on behalf of Museum Development England. As part of the survey, we ask museums within the Accreditation scheme to provide data on their workforce, finance and audiences, so that we can produce insights in relation to governance type and museum size.

The survey helps us understand how the sector is navigating contemporary challenges and the impact those are having on opening hours, visitor numbers, museums' finances, and growth of digital, as well as workforce wellbeing and volunteer engagement. The survey is an essential tool that helps museums benchmark their work against other museums which are in their area or of a similar size or governance structure. The data we collect through the survey is also used to advocate for museums by demonstrating their social and economic value.

In 2021/22 museums were coming out of the last lockdown in England, with public buildings allowed to reopen on 17 May following a targeted vaccination programme for the most vulnerable in society. So, the AMS 2022 was an opportunity to assess the challenges museums were dealing with as they reopened to the public and rebuilt their volunteer workforce.

AMS 2022 insights highlighted a national picture where impacts were most keenly felt in tougher finances, reduced visitor numbers and less volunteering capacity. On average, museums across England reported losing 45% of visitors compared to 2019/20, which was complemented with a 33% increase in social media followers compared to

the same year, showing that, while their audiences were still engaged, they lacked the confidence or means to return in person. Many museums had a significant deficit in their volunteering capacity, with 37% reporting a fall in number of volunteering hours and 29% reporting a drop in new volunteers compared to pre-pandemic levels. In addition to that, 55% of museums in England reported an increase in expenditure, with the energy price cap rising twice in 2022.

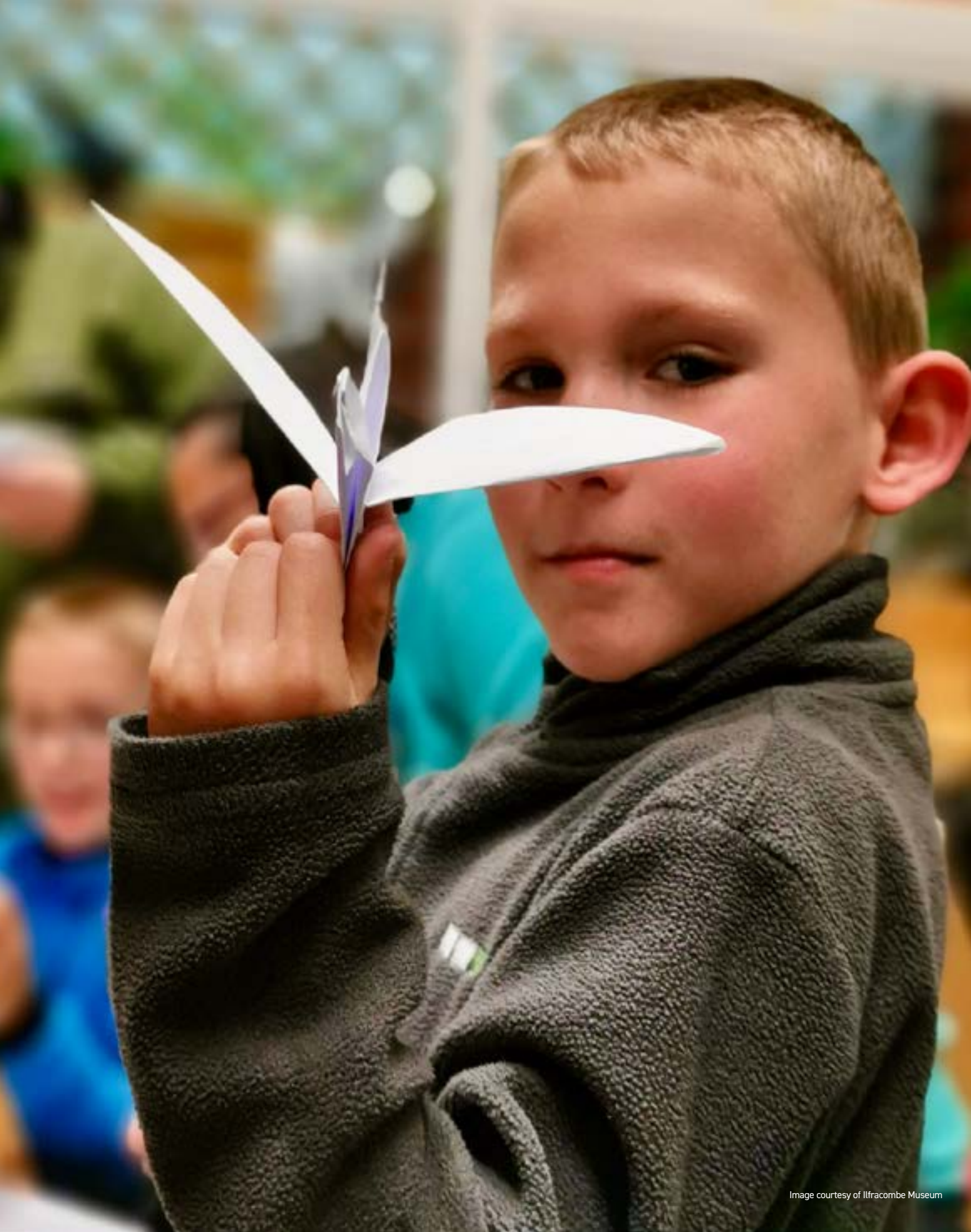
In the South West across 2022:

- 67% of museums did not open or had fewer than 10,000 visits.
- 43% lost visitor numbers compared to 2019/20.
- There was a 44% fall in volunteer hours.
- 28% reported a reduction in admissions income compared to 2019/20.

## Cornwall Heritage Awards

Working in collaboration with Cornwall Museum Partnership, we supported The Cornwall Heritage Awards ceremony at the Royal Cornwall Museum in February 2022, which was bigger and better than ever before. The purpose of this event is to share learning and success, as well as to celebrate museums in Cornwall. This year for the first time all shortlisted organisations were invited to speak at a symposium preceding the ceremony, and we were delighted to be involved and hear from and celebrate the passion and inspiration of people that work in our museums.









# Connected and networked

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## Technical Accreditation Advisory Service

The museum Accreditation scheme sets out the nationally agreed industry standards for museums in the UK.

We work with Arts Council England to provide an accompanying high-quality Technical Accreditation Advisory service to share best practice and raise sector standards. We have dedicated local place-based Museum Development Officers (MDOs) who provide guidance and connect museums seeking advice about Accreditation to wider networks, as well as a specialist Technical Accreditation Advisor.

Our Technical Accreditation Advisor helped museums to submit Accreditation applications and returns through Grantium, led training and forums through our SW Museum Skills programme, as well as supported and upskilled Accreditation mentors to work with other museums beginning their Accreditation journey. 48 museums were provided with Technical Accreditation advice over 2022/23 and 29 museums in the South West successfully achieved Full Accreditation.

**“South West Museum Development’s supportive role has helped us advocate within our organisation, to implement improvements and also to connect and learn from other museums, despite the challenges thrown our way by the Covid pandemic”**

*Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust*

## Rebuilding the Foundations

Rebuilding the Foundations, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England project, supported 10 museums across Gloucestershire to improve their approaches to audience development and volunteer involvement in 2021/22. South West Museum Development invested funding for a second year of consolidation and evaluation to embed further learning from the project.

Led by our local place-based Museum Development Officer (MDO), the emphasis was on strengthening the peer network that had been established by the project and supporting museums to continue to embed their learning. This took the form of online and in-person meetings, one-to-one meetings with our MDO, evaluation questionnaires, and interviews by an external evaluator.

The evaluation highlighted the steps that museums took, with project support, to develop equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) awareness and build understanding in trustee and staff teams. One of the primary findings was the extraordinary resilience of the museums, staff and volunteers and their increasing confidence and capacity to be open to new ideas, ensuring their museums are looking and moving forward, despite many challenges.

Volunteer-led Winchcombe Museum now provides EDI awareness raising briefings as part of training for its volunteer teams. The Museum of Gloucester uses our EDI Roadmap, a Rebuilding the Foundations project resource, in their induction of new staff, embedding a consistent understanding of equitable ways of working. Tewkesbury Museum has attracted support from a local charity, The Barnwood Trust, as after the Trust saw the museum’s commitment to following our EDI Roadmap, it agreed to fund a full access audit of the museum.

**“Our access auditor is really impressed with our draft EDI roadmap which we wouldn’t have without working with the consultant during the RTF project.**

**They really liked the roadmap for its wide-ranging consideration of accessibility and inclusivity”**

*Tewkesbury Museum*

# Increasing inclusion and tackling inequality

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## Rising Arts Agency – OnBoard Programme

We set out a goal in our Equity Action Plan of diversifying our own governance, acknowledging that there are many common barriers that prevent people from entering leadership. So, in 2022/23, we started working with Rising Arts Agency as part of their OnBoard programme to recruit new board members aged between 18 and 30.

We recognise that young people have their own important insights and experiences, and the OnBoard programme aims to embed these in leadership roles to improve the cultural sector.

In December 2022 we welcomed Issie Tovey and Hannah Stone to our board, each bringing their own passions and interests which will shape the future of our work. Issie has previously worked as an art technician at the British Museum and Bonhams and Christies. After working in the Orkney Isles she developed an interest in working with young people and exploring ways in which we can analyse museums. She has begun a degree apprenticeship in Assistant Curation at Tate Britain. Hannah works at English Heritage and joined our board after gaining a Heritage Management Master's degree from Bath Spa University in 2022. Both new board members are being supported by Rising Arts Agency in their first 12 months as part of the OnBoard scheme. We are excited to see how their contributions shape our board and our work moving forward.

## Museum Development England Equity and Inclusion in Museums Programme

In 2022/23 six museums from the South West took part in the Equity and Inclusion in Museums Programme, supporting them through training and peer mentoring to increase inclusion and tackle inequality. We worked in partnership with Museum Development England and the other Museum Development providers to shape, fund and deliver this opportunity. The South West benefited from the highest number of museum places, with six museum organisations engaging in the national programme.

Evaluation and feedback revealed that the programme helped museums to develop and deliver focused Equality Action Plans for long-term organisational change. In addition, the programme has helped these museums with:

- Developing a co-creation project with a secondary school
- Staff training and improvements to customer service
- Audience research to support an application for National Portfolio Organisation status
- Informing a vision for a capital works project in an enhanced welcome area.



# Green action

## Roots and Branches

Led by Museum Development North West, we collaborated with Museum Development England as part of the Roots and Branches project, to respond to rising energy costs by supporting museums to reduce their energy consumption, both saving money and reducing carbon emissions. This was achieved with the help of Pilio, an energy and environmental innovation consultancy, who lent their expertise through training workshops and one-to-one sessions with our museums in the South West.

## Green Grants

At the end of 2021/22, we awarded a total of £20,560 in funding as part of our Green Grants programme. During 2022/23 funded museums have been engaging audiences and communities with issues related to the climate emergency. Our Green Grants were made possible thanks to funds from Arts Council England, and the scheme has funded a wide range of projects that are creating conversations about the climate emergency in a variety of different ways. For example, The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum in Cheltenham used their grant to explore the environmental impacts of fast fashion with a diverse group of young people. This informed an exhibition focused on the repercussions of denim production, as it is the most resource-draining textile on the planet.

## The Wild Escape

We partnered with Art Fund to manage and distribute grants amounting to £313,500 across England (£70,220 in the South West region) for The Wild Escape – a UK-wide creative project encouraging museums to engage with schools and families, inspired by British biodiversity. As part of The Wild Escape, museums, historic houses and galleries were encouraged to work with Key Stage 2 children aged 7 – 11 to explore

wildlife in their collections, exhibitions and spaces, imagining a creature's journey to a future habitat rich in biodiversity. The grants of up to £3,000 enabled over 100 museums in England to take part in The Wild Escape and work with children in both their museums and schools. All of this creative activity led up to a large-scale participative event, a nationwide collective work of art made by children, on Earth Day 2023.



Image courtesy of The Wilson

# Grants

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## On display

We know many museums have objects they would love to display but are unable to do so due to their condition or a lack of suitable display options, so this grant scheme was designed specifically to provide conservation work or new mounts for these objects. Eight successful applicants were awarded a grant as well as half a day's tailored advice from our Conservation Development Officer. Objects to be conserved include a First World War painting, a 17th century wooden bowl and a wedding outfit from 1908. These will go on display for audiences to view from late 2023 onwards.

**£7.830** awarded

## Small grants for change and improvement

We awarded 12 Small Grants in 2022/23 to deliver change and improvement projects in museums. Our vision is that these grants will support inclusive and inspiring museums which are relevant to the lives of the diverse communities they serve. This year's projects certainly delivered on that vision, with a great example being Weymouth Museum's project Working Weymouth. Through community engagement and oral history work, the project enriched the museum's interpretation of its objects linked to working class trades, as well as significantly diversified the museum's supporter and audience base. Our local place-based Museum Development Officer also supported the project through provision of training, brokering of consultancy support and hands-on exhibition development with volunteers.

**£62.086** awarded









# Programmes

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## Organisational Health Check

In 2022/23, 12 museums from across Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Dorset and the West of England participated in the Organisational Health Check (OHC), a self-assessment tool designed to highlight a museum's current best practice, understand where the museum has areas for development and feed into forward planning.

Each museum took part in a facilitated session led by their local place-based Museum Development Officer to discuss the questions posed by the OHC. The results were then translated into a bespoke Advisory Report for each museum, highlighting key development priorities and signposting helpful resources and support. The reports supported each museum with benchmarking, forward planning, workforce development and informing grant applications.

**"It was unbelievably useful to discuss such issues with someone outside of the organisation"**  
*Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum*

## Impacts and Insight Toolkit

Bath Preservation Trust, The American Museum and Gardens and the Holburne Museum in Bath all participated in the Impact and Insight Toolkit. This audience development tool captures data and provides museums with insights into what audiences, participants and peers think about the work they produce.

## South West Visitor Insights

The South West Visitor Insights programme provides participating museums with the tools and support needed to develop their visitor offer, through evaluating survey responses received over a seven-month period.

Following a competitive selection process, 13 museums were invited to join the 2022 programme. Inevitably, after two years of Coronavirus-related disruption, many museums were keen to use the programme to jump-start change and development with a focus on enhancing their now unrestricted visitor experience.

This year's programme included a workshop focusing on the outputs of the programme, site visits, as well as opportunities to benchmark against Annual Museum Survey report data, which enabled museums to develop a more accurate knowledge of their core and priority audiences.

Bringing the participant museums together as a cohort has been one of the programme's biggest successes. Not only did this provide them with the opportunity to share learning and practice, but the peer support element was invaluable in enabling the museums to place themselves within a regional and sub-regional context, which in turn helped them to better understand the audiences they engage with.

# Projects

## Setting Natural Science Collections Data Free

In 2017 we upskilled staff and volunteers across the South West to care for natural science collections as part of our project South West Area Natural Science (SWANS), funded by the John Ellerman Foundation. We've since been looking for a way to carry this work on and support museums to do more with these valuable, but often underrated collections.

We have formed a partnership with the Natural History Museum, London (NHM) and Bristol Museum & Art Gallery to initiate a pilot project, South West Area Natural Science: Setting Natural Science Collections Data Free, to enable museums to digitise specimens in their collection and make their data available to help researchers understand more about biodiversity, as well as the influence of humanity on our natural world on our rapidly changing planet.

Our pilot includes Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Newton Abbot Museum and the South West Heritage Trust, and will ensure that the needs of regional museums of varying scale are accounted for in developing an ambitious mass digitisation project. This will result in the creation of an online portal

housing the UK's natural science specimen data made available to all. This work forms part of a bigger scoping project led by the Natural History Museum, Setting Natural Science Data Free: Scoping a UK Collections Approach, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

The project aims included:

- Build an understanding of the relationship between specimens, collection data and the digitisation process, to inform procedures to support its inclusion in research
- Build knowledge and understanding of how to digitise natural science specimens in accordance with best practice
- Seek an understanding of how operations impact on participation and the factors or barriers to success
- Develop advice and guidance for the wider museum and heritage sector, to support participation
- Engage audiences in the value of natural science collections.



Image courtesy of Newton Abbot Museum

# Cornwall and Isles of Scilly highlights

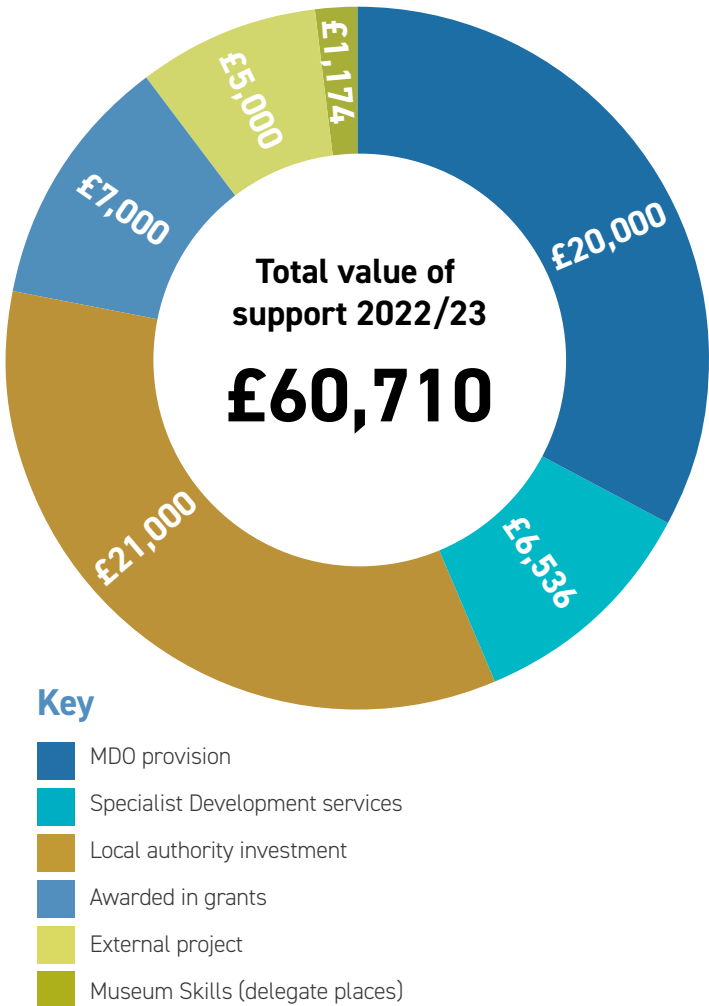
Accredited Museums	32
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	2
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	8
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	14
Museums received support (Accredited)	21
Museums received support (Non-Accredited/ Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	5

**A recurring pattern in Cornwall is that the county is much stronger when it works together in partnership, and this is demonstrated by the thriving community of peer networks supported by our local placed-based Museum Development Officer (MDO). Whether coming together at environmental policy workshops, sharing challenging problems at the Inclusive Collections Network, or seeking support at the three sub-regional museum groups, generosity of spirit and the willingness to work together is key to the success of museums in Cornwall and the wellbeing of volunteers and employees.**

A new volunteer committee took over St Ives Museum this year and wanted to make changes to ensure the museum continues to be sustainable. With support from our local placed-based MDO, they completed the process of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and are now officially Working Towards Accreditation.

The Isles of Scilly Museum Association is currently undertaking an ambitious capital project in partnership with the Council of the Isles of Scilly to transform the old town hall in St Mary's into a new museum and cultural centre. This year, the project has secured funding from Arts Council England and the Shared Prosperity Fund and has entered the development phase of National Lottery Heritage Fund funding. Our MDO and Conservation Development Officer have supported the museum throughout to ensure that the unique collections are documented and prepared for their new home.

Perranzabuloe Museum in Perranporth emerged from the pandemic with a dedicated committee and group of volunteers ready to reopen and better the museum. Our MDO supported them through the Organisational Health Check process to inform future planning at the museum. In addition to confirming their intention to review the governance and consider changing to a CIO, they were able to use the evidence gathered to secure funding which will enable them to spend the next year planning for the future by updating their forward plan and taking steps to understand their audiences.











# Devon, Plymouth and Torbay highlights

Accredited Museums	47
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	0
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	3
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	22
Museums received support (Accredited)	29
Museums received support (Non-Accredited Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	18

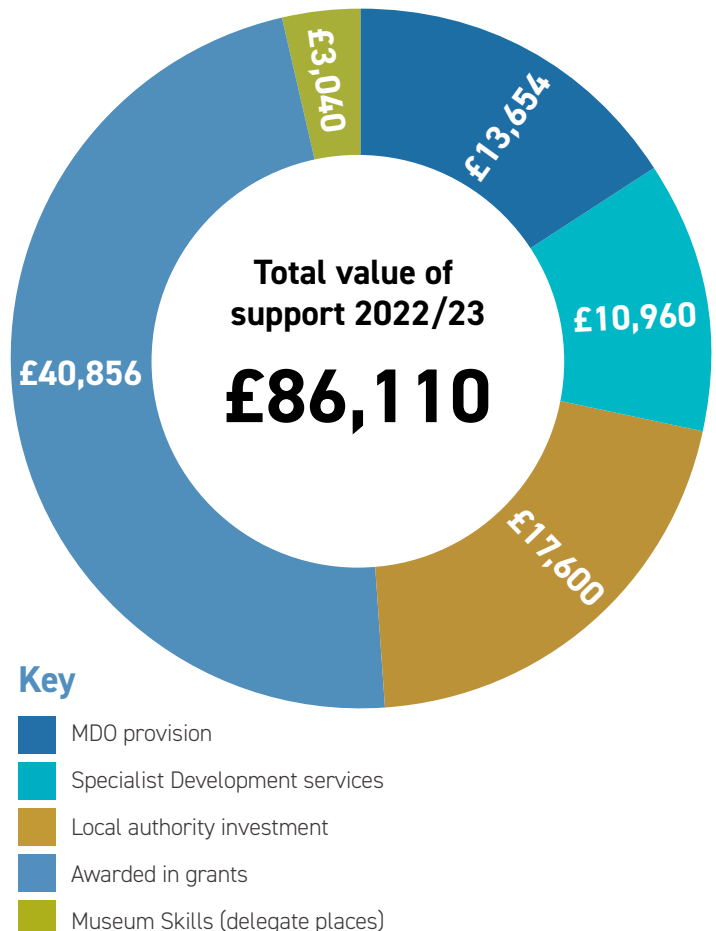
**2022 was a year of success and transition for Devon. Alison Mills stepped back as Museum Development Officer (MDO) for North Devon and Torridge after the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon achieved Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation status and saw us welcome Joanna Cairns, who joined us from the National Trust as our new county-wide MDO for Devon. Joanna started in her new role by making site visits and introductions to museums across Devon, familiarising herself with the many museums and their priorities for 2023.**

A record seven North Devon museums, including Barnstaple and North Devon Museum, had great success in securing grants from South West Museum Development to take part in Art Fund's The Wild Escape project. The grants enabled Key Stage 2 children aged 7 –11 to explore wildlife in the museum collections and contribute towards a nationwide digital artwork about British biodiversity.

Our new MDO has been working with the Devon Museums Group committee to organise regional meetings, as well as produce a survey for members to capture their opinions on how the group will develop and support museums into the future. They have also worked to revive the many valuable sub-regional networking groups that had, in many cases, paused during the pandemic. South Hams, West Devon and East Devon Museums Group have all successfully resumed meetings, with more scheduled for North Devon & Torridge and Teignbridge Museum groups.

All Hallows Museum in Honiton successfully retained their Accreditation status in December 2022. Dawlish and Sidmouth Museum, who were asked to submit Accreditation returns in the first half of 2023, received Accreditation support with renewing and checking policies and plans.

Our Digital Engagement Officer developed two sessions for Devon Museums Group. The first session delivered was Visibility: Boosting your Online Presence Using Third Party Websites. This focused on managing and optimising the use of TripAdvisor and Google My Business, and discussed ideas on how to approach travel or tourism blogs and listings sites. The second session will cover a practical checklist of next steps to support individual implementation back at the museums.





# Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole highlights

Accredited Museums	29
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	2
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	4
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	14
Museums received support (Accredited)	18
Museums received support (Non-Accredited/Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	6

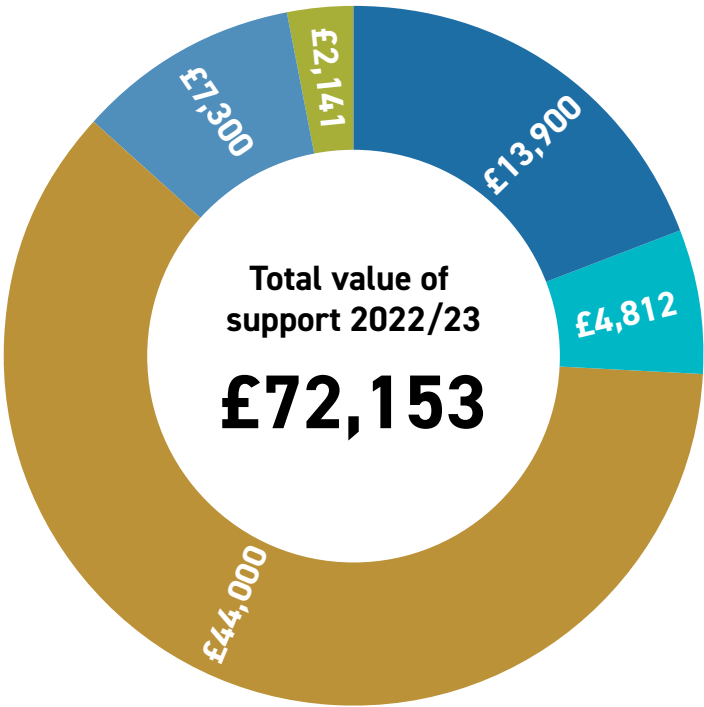
**Throughout 2022/23, museums across Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole have worked hard to develop and diversify their visitor offers in a bid to boost participation and engagement. Museums have been motivated by both an enthusiasm for accessibility but also pressure to sustain and grow income. The steep rise in utility costs is proving challenging for many, especially when coupled with concerns about visitor spend being curbed by the cost of living crisis. Creativity, versatility and dynamism have been critical in keeping museums on track, with support through local networks and collaborative initiatives being highly valued.**

This year, our Museum Development Officer (MDO) worked collaboratively with museum trustees and volunteers at Sherborne Museum to undertake a root and branch review of its operations. The team utilised the Organisational Health Check, which proved beneficial as it informed the design and funding of a major digitisation project. This project will transform public access to the museum’s photography collections, as well as identifying strategic priorities around marketing and fundraising.

Developing governance continues to be a clear priority for many Dorset museums, and our MDO supported the Russell Cotes Art Gallery & Museum with their significant governance change project in 2022/23. The museum is creating a new independent corporate entity, to replace the local council as sole






trustee. As this required a formal application for a parliamentary scheme and multifaceted transition phase work, our MDO worked on the formulation of a successful funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which will enable the museum to commission much-needed specialist project management and legal expertise.

Museum Accreditation is the national minimum standard for museums but also a great framework for working with museums which are looking to develop a more robust and professional approach to their management and visitor offer. Our MDO worked with Langton Matravers Museum, a small, volunteer-run museum on Dorset’s Isle of Purbeck, to review their operations. This entailed work on the museum’s volunteer structure and roles and development of collections management policies and plans, so that the museum can move forward with confidence.





## Key

-  MDO provision
-  Specialist Development services
-  Local authority investment
-  Awarded in grants
-  Museum Skills (delegate places)

# Gloucestershire highlights

Accredited Museums	23
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	0
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	0
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	7
Museums received support (Accredited)	18
Museums received support (Non-Accredited/Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	2

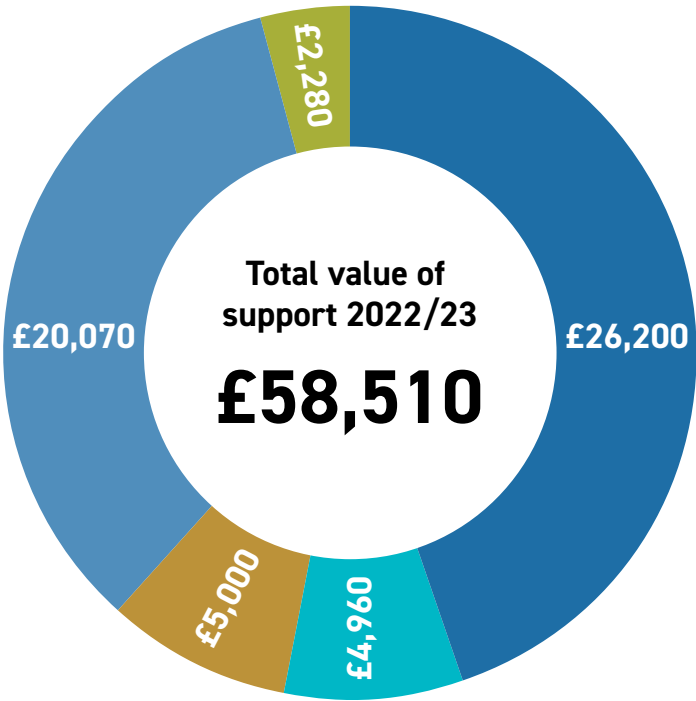
While there have been challenges remaining in some areas such as volunteering, trustee recruitment and donations, there have been some fantastic examples of funding success and a desire to be more networked and share learning amongst the museums in Gloucestershire. There has been a lot of innovation, introducing events to raise much-needed income, engaging new audiences and raising the profile of small museums in local areas. The National Lottery Heritage Fund-funded Rebuilding the Foundations project drew its second year to a close, having supported 10 museums to grow and develop in key areas of volunteering, equity, diversity and inclusion, audience development and safeguarding.

Our local place-based Museum Development Officer (MDO) worked alongside Tewkesbury Museum to secure Museum Estate and Development Fund funding from Arts Council England (ACE) which will ensure the future of their building. Going forward, they are working with our MDO to plan for the period when the work will take place, including reviewing their forward plan, their re-Accreditation and project work that will continue while building work is underway.

Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum and Dunkirk Mill Museum, run by Stroud Textile Trust, took part in the Organisational Health Check which supported them to identify areas for development in their organisations. In addition, Stroud Textile Trust were supported by our MDO to apply for our Small Grants and were successful in securing the grant which related to one of

their identified areas of development, expanding their audience development work.

Court Barn Museum, The Wilson, Kelmscott Manor, Museum in the Park, John Moore Museum and Gloucester Museum were all successful in securing grants to participate in The Wild Escape, funded by Art Fund with support from ACE. Our MDO supported a number of these museums with their applications and reporting. A huge range of events were delivered, and museums reported successes in trialling new engagement activities and the desire to do more to engage visitors in the natural world.





Key

- MDO provision
- Specialist Development services
- Local authority investment
- Awarded in grants
- Museum Skills (delegate places)



Image courtesy of South West Museum Development - Dean Heritage Centre

# Somerset highlights

Accredited Museums	21
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	3
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	1
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	11
Museums received support (Accredited)	17
Museums received support (Non-Accredited/Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	7

**In 2022/23 many museums have continued to address challenges created by the pandemic. In addition, our local place-based Development Officer (MDO) has supported museums across the county to engage with consultation on the 2023 cultural strategy to be adopted by the newly-formed Somerset Council, as well as supported South Somerset Heritage Collections (SSHC) and other museums with collections which will be affected to prepare for the transition to a unitary county council.**

Glastonbury Abbey received funding from us as part of our Small Grants to commission a review of their volunteering programme, as they sought to develop new approaches to diverse and inclusive volunteering opportunities following the pandemic. The review led the museum to create a volunteer management role to provide the capacity to achieve their aims.

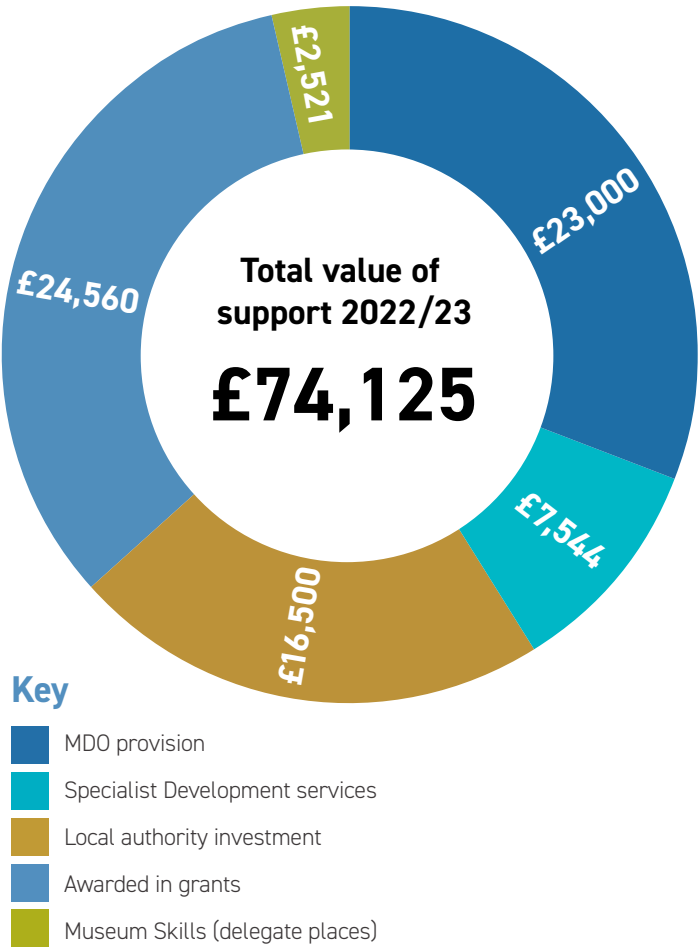
Axbridge Museum used the Organisational Health Check tool with support from our MDO to identify key priorities for the next 12 months. Following this process, the museum has successfully joined the South West Visitor Insights programme for 2023, to better understand its audiences. This will support the museum to ensure that it meets the needs of its visitors and plans ahead to attract key new audiences.

Our MDO supported Yeovil Arts and Heritage Working Group in planning a pilot cultural engagement programme, Story of Yeovil. The project is enabling people from across the town to engage with SSHC in new ways over 2023/24, including changing displays of objects from the collections in the town

library created by a new group, Community Curators. The project is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

SSHC received funding through us for Art Fund's The Wild Escape grant programme to run a series of events for schools in Ninesprings Park, Yeovil, helping 180 children connect with nature through fun activities linked to the collections.

Haynes Motor Museum achieved Accreditation status in early 2023. Our MDO is supporting the teams at The Gauge Museum, Bishops Lydeard and Hestercombe House and Gardens as they work towards becoming Accredited museums.







The Tor →  
↑ Museum, Café  
& Shop  
Free entry to café  
& shop



# West of England highlights

Accredited Museums	35
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	1
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	6
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	11
Museums received support (Accredited)	33
Museums received support (Non-Accredited/Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	8

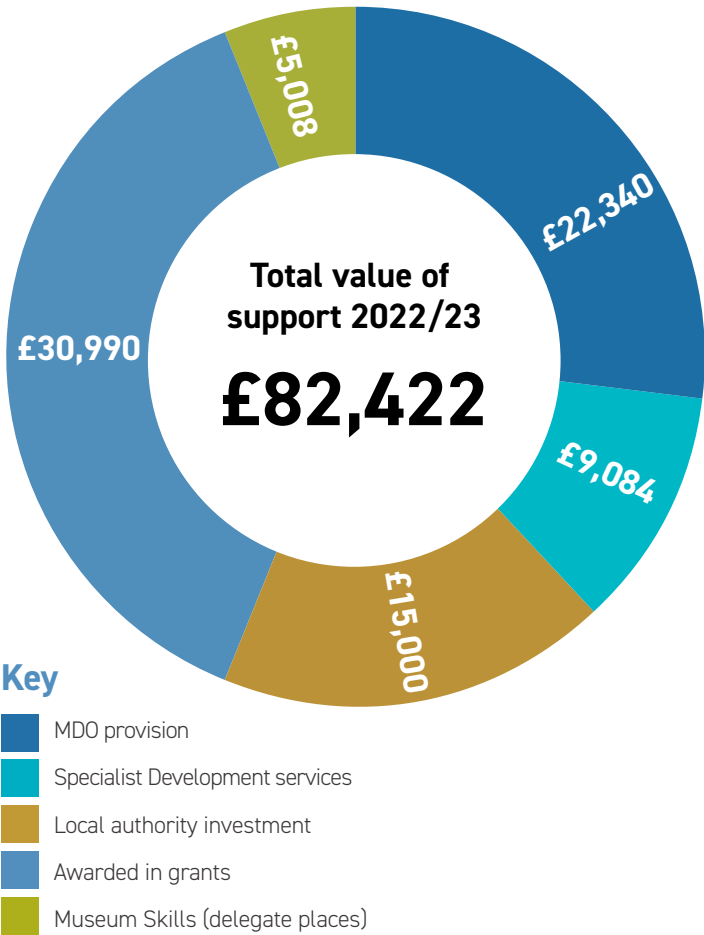
**Museums across the West of England (WoE) continue to thrive and develop dynamic programmes to attract existing and new audiences. Many museums, supported by our local place-based Museum Development Officer (MDO), have actively and successfully secured funding from grant givers including Arts Council England (ACE), National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England and the Association of Independent Museums to support specific projects focused on climate change, diversity and inclusion, and collections care. County museum groups, supported by our MDO in Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, and South Gloucestershire, have met regularly through the year to share best practice, network and reestablish those vital partnerships that had been impacted by the pandemic.**

Beckford's Tower, part of Bath Preservation Trust, was awarded Small Grant funding from South West Museum Development (SWMD) to increase the inclusivity and relevance of their programming. They worked with the dance company State of Trust to create and perform a dance interpretation that was site specific and linked to Beckford's Tower, its collections and William Beckford's connection with plantations in Jamaica. This project brought inclusive storytelling from multiple perspectives and enabled the museum to test out new ways of engaging new audiences with the Tower.

This year our MDO supported local museums in South Gloucestershire to secure funding from ACE National Lottery Project Grants to share the history and experiences of people from the multi-faith Indian

community in South Gloucestershire. The project featured oral histories, contemporary collecting, learning resources and a travelling exhibition. The project successfully enabled the museums to promote cultural understanding across their county and develop new approaches to contemporary collecting.

Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust, funded by a Small Grant from SWMD, successfully trialled pop-up history handling sessions to test new ways of collections engagement at the site. The project involved recruiting young people to help deliver the handling sessions. Each pop-up session was evaluated alongside commissioned audience research to help the Trust better understand the profile and preferences of visitors and non-visitors.





# Wiltshire highlights

Accredited Museums	20
Museums formally Working Towards Accreditation	5
Museums in receipt of NPO or DCMS funding	2
Volunteer run Accredited Museums	7
Museums received support (Accredited)	10
Museums received support (Non-Accredited/Formally Working Towards Accreditation sites)	3

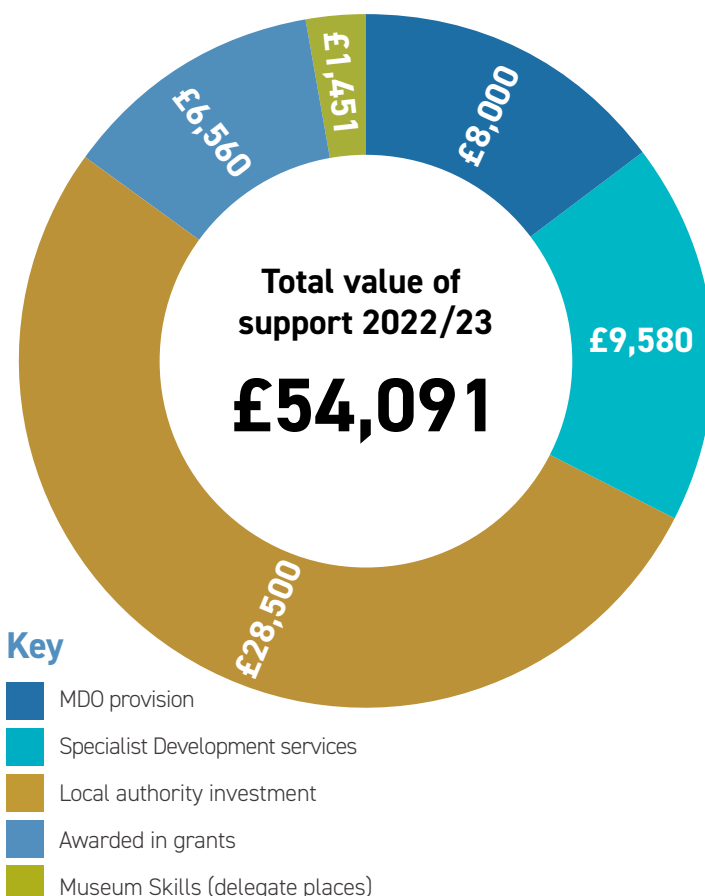
**Our local place-based Museum Development Officer (w) continued to work closely with Wiltshire Council's Conservation and Museums Advisory Service in 2022/23. Museums have been working hard to return to business as usual after the disruption of the pandemic and our MDO has been supporting them to recruit more volunteers, welcome visitors and apply for funding.**

Digital marketing has been a focus, with museums keen to engage with wider audiences online. Our Digital Engagement Officer carried out an audit of the museums' online presence and worked with a small group of museums to increase their skills in areas such as social media, blogging and photography. Read the whole story on page 9.

Stories from the Stores, a collaborative online exhibition, was launched in 2023. This marked the conclusion of Data to Discovery, a research and development project supported by Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants. A cohort of seven museums – REME Museum, Chippenham Museum, Arundells, Boscombe Down Aviation Collection, Athelstan Museum, Market Lavington Museum, and Pewsey Heritage Centre – received one-on-one support and participated in training and project meetings to develop the skills and networks needed to create the exhibition on the Museums in Wiltshire website. Evaluation of the project will be used to inform future work towards a larger county collection hub.

The Royal Artillery Museum received one of our Small Grants to carry out work on their collections. This involved training volunteers to repack objects for their brand-new store and purchasing the materials required to do this to museum standards. Our MDO has been working with the museum to review collection management procedures and procure a new collection catalogue.

Our MDO has worked closely with the Young Gallery, Salisbury, during a period of change. They have provided advice and professional knowledge to the Management Committee to support the merging of the Edwin Young Trust and John Creasey Museum, assisted the organisation with forward planning and given guidance about meeting Accreditation requirements during the transition.











# Financial overview 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Income	£
Arts Council England Museum Development Grant*	592,096
Local authorities	38,600
Museum Development provider Annual Sector Data Contract	51,900
Other contract income	9,000
Other grant income**	113,646
Other income	15,521
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>820,763</b>

Notes: \* Includes £51,896 brought forward from 2021/22

\*\* Includes £11,903 from grants awarded in 2021/22

Expenditure	£
£274,694 was invested in our network of MDOs including £147,600 contributed by local authorities. MDO provision in mid-Devon is directly funded by the local authority and not included in this figure.	31,600
South West Museum Development investment in Museum Development Officers and network	139,275
Audience Development	39,904
Conservation and Collection Care	48,174
Digital Engagement	42,363
Volunteering Development	42,221
Programme Management and Accreditation support and Operational budget	92,122
Governance	14,437
Regional Project Coordination	49,164
Regional Communications	27,404
Workforce and Skills	49,391
Grants	145,800
External projects (South West Area Natural Sciences & Rebuilding the Foundations)	6,859
Contracts (Annual Museum Survey & Sector Research)	61,957
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>790,671</b>
<b>Balance carried forward*</b>	<b>30,092</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>820,763</b>

Notes: \*Includes grants awarded in 2022/23 to be paid out in 2023/24.



# Partners and supporters

We are grateful to the following for their financial and other contributions to the programme in 2022/23:

**Arts Council England**

**Art Fund**

**Bristol City Council – Bristol Culture and Creative Industries**

**Historic England**

**National Lottery Heritage Fund**

We are grateful to the following partners, with whom we have collaborated to ensure that national expertise and support has been brought into the region:

**Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy**

**Arts Marketing Association**

**The Carbon Literacy Project**

**Collections Trust**

**Creative & Cultural Skills**

**Culture24**

**Kids in Museums**

**The National Archives**

**Pilio**

We are also grateful to all the speakers who have shared their expertise through our SW Museum Skills Programme.

We would like to thank the following local authorities, which support Museum Development provision at a local level, either directly or through a financial contribution to the programme:

**Bath & North East Somerset Council**

**Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council**

**Bristol City Council**

**Budleigh Salterton Town Council**

**Cornwall Council**

**Dorset Council**

**East Devon District Council**

**Exeter City Council**

**Gloucester City Council**

**Mid Devon District Council**

**North Devon Council**

**Somerset County Council**

**South Gloucestershire Council**

**South Hams District Council**

**South Somerset District Council**

**Sidmouth Town Council**

**Stroud District Council**

**Torridge District Council**

**Wiltshire Council**







# Our team in 2022/23

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## Specialist Officers

**Polly Allen** and **Rachel Cartwright**

*Digital Engagement Officers*

**Helena Jaeschke** *Conservation Development Officer*

**Rachel Miller** and **Marina Mohideen-Moore**

*Audience Development Officers*

**Eleanor Moore** *Sustainable Volunteering Officer*

## Programme Team

**Victoria Harding** *Programme Manager*

**Roz Bonnet** *Programme and Projects Officer*

**George Meredith** and **Fay Whitfield** *Communications and Events Officers*

**Pat Janus** *Data and Research Assistant*

**Alex Gibson** *Technical Accreditation Officer*

**Iain Richardson** *Business Support Officer*

## Local place-based Museum Development Officers

**Alex Gibson** *Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Swindon*

**Stephanie Clemens** *Cornwall*

**Joanna Cairns** *Devon*

**Pippa Griffith** *Mid Devon*

**Alison Mills** *North Devon and Torridge*

**Jenni Orme** *Gloucestershire*

**Vicky de Wit** *Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole*

**Rachel Bellamy** *Somerset*

**Heather Perry** *Wiltshire*





**We are extremely grateful to all those who work in and run the museums and heritage organisations who engaged in the programme in 2022/23. We would also like to pay tribute to all the volunteers who contribute their skills, time and passion which underpin our sector.**

Aerospace Bristol, Aldbourne Heritage Centre, Alfred Gillett Trust, Arnos Vale Cemetery, Arundells, Ashburton Museum, Athelstan Museum, B&NES Council Heritage Service, Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre, Axminster Heritage Centre, Bath Abbey, Bath Postal Museum, Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution, Beckford's Tower and Museum, Bickton Park Countryside Museum, Blake Museum, Blandford Fashion Museum, Blandford Town Museum, Bodmin Town Museum, Bournemouth Natural Science Society, Tamar Bridge Visitor and Learning Centre, Bridport Museum, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Bishopsteignton Heritage, Britannia Royal Naval College Museum and Archives, Bruton Museum, Brixham Heritage Museum, Fairlynch Museum, Chard Museum, The Wilson, Chippenham Museum, Clifton Suspension Bridge Visitor Centre, Burton at Bideford, Coldharbour Mill, Corfe Castle Town Trust Museum, Bodmin Keep, Court Barn, Combe Martin Museum, Crofton Beam Engines, Crediton Area History & Museum Society, Dartmoor Prison Museum, Dartmouth Museum, Dean Heritage Centre, Dawlish Museum, Totnes Fashion & Textile Museum, Dorset Museum, Dorset History Centre, Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, Dr Jenner's House, Young Gallery, Exeter Cathedral, Dingles Fairground Museum, Fairfield House, Geevor Tin Mine, Fashion Museum Bath, Fleet Air Arm Museum, Frenchay Village Museum, Frome Heritage Museum, Gauge Museum, Grampound with Creed Heritage Centre, Museum of Cornish Life, Glastonbury Abbey, Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, Glenside Hospital Museum, Folk of Gloucester, Gold Hill Museum, Isles of Scilly Museum, Exeter City FC Museum, Lawrence House Museum, Haynes Motor Museum, Liskeard and District Museum, Herschel Museum of Astronomy, Hestercombe House and Gardens, Holburne Museum, Holst Victorian House, Great Torrington Heritage Museum, Jet Age Museum, John Moore Museum, John Wesley's New Room, Keep Military Museum, King Johns Hunting Lodge Museum, Ilfracombe Museum, Lostwithiel Museum, National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Old Guildhall Museum and Gaol, Lyme Regis Museum, Kingsbridge Cookworthy Museum, Museum of the Mercian Regiment, Mere Museum, Green Hill Arts, Heritage & Youth Centre, Museum In The Park, Museum of Bath At Work, Museum of Bath Stone, Lyn and Exmoor Museum, Museum of Design in Plastics, Museum of East Asian Art, Museum of East Dorset, Museum of Gloucester, Museum of Somerset, Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon, Penlee House Gallery and Museum, National Museum of the Royal Navy, National Trust, National Trust – Dyrham Park, National Trust – Mompesson House, National Trust – Snowhill Manor, Museum of Dartmoor Life, No.1 Royal Crescent, Nothe Fort, Penryn Museum, Museum of Policing Devon and Cornwall, Perranzabuloe Museum, Museum of Global Communications, Royal Cornwall Museum, The Castle Heritage Centre Bude, Poole Museum, Powderham Castle, Purbeck Stone Museum (Langton Matravers), Somerset Coalfield Life at Radstock Museum, REME Museum, River & Rowing Museum, Poole Old Lifeboat Museum (RNLI), Roman Baths Museum, Newton Abbot Museum, Royal Artillery Museum, The Leach Pottery, Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Ottery St Mary Heritage Museum, Salisbury Museum, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Shaftesbury Abbey Museum & Gardens, Sherborne Museum, Salcombe Maritime Museum, Somerset Military Museum, Somerset Rural Life Museum, South Somerset Heritage Collection, SS Great Britain, St Barbe Museum + Art Gallery, St Ives Museum, St Mary Redcliffe, STEAM: Museum of the Great Western Railway, Stroudwater Textile Trust, Gerrans Parish Heritage Centre, Sturminster Newton Museum, Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre, Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, Seaton Museum, Sidmouth Museum, Tetbury Police Museum & Courtroom, Tewkesbury Museum, American Museum & Gardens, The Bishop's Palace, Tavistock Museum, Harvey's Foundry Trust (Hayle Heritage Centre), The Cheltenham Trust, The George Muller Charitable Trust, The Stradling Collection, St Hilary Heritage Centre, The Newt in Somerset, The Rifles Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment Museum, Thornbury and District Museum, Teign Heritage, The Box, Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life, Trowbridge Museum, University of Bristol Theatre Collection, Topsham Museum, Victoria Art Gallery, Wareham Town Museum, Watchet Market House Museum, Wells and Mendip Museum, West Somerset Railway, Weston Museum, Westonzoyland Pumping Station Museum, Weymouth Museum, Stuart House Heritage, Whimble Heritage Centre, Wiltshire Museum, Winchcombe Museum, Wotton Heritage Centre, WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre, Yate & District Heritage Centre, Torquay Museum, Lydiard House Museum, Torre Abbey, Richard Jefferies Museum, RWA (Royal West of England Academy), The Valiant Soldier Museum and Heritage Centre, Wheal Martyn Trust.

## For more information contact:

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## Documents available in other formats

You can request alternative formats of this document by contacting: 0117 922 4653.

