



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	10 th February 2025

BRIEF REPORT

This report covers the period October-December 2024 as presented at the February meeting.

Collections Policies Review

Eight policies had been reviewed and presented at the meeting; all being approved. These were Loans-in, Loans-out, Location & Movement Control, Entry, Exit, Care and Conservation, Documentation Policy, Cataloguing Policy. All are required by Accreditation (national standards for museums) and are based on Spectrum - a UK museum collections management standard that is also used around the world.

Collections Management System Replacement Project*

Contract has been signed and the museum will be meeting with the supplier to discuss a delivery timetable. The first stage will be to evaluate a beta data import.

Acquisitions: During the period the museum received 16 new offers of objects or groups of objects. The museum has so far accepted 8 of these, with 2 offers pending/on hold. Items accepted include a collection (by gift and some on loan) from the family of Soli Doctor who migrated from India to Stroud in 1959 to take up an apprenticeship with Newman Hender; the *pachycormus* fish fossil found at Court Farm, King's Stanley; LGBTQ+ items from a trans member of the community; two artworks and a Buddhist wedding sari from participants in last year's Baby Makers project.

Visitor Figures

To the end of December, the museum welcomed nearly 46,000 visitors (up 10% on the year before). The museum closed from 16 December 2024 to Saturday 25th January for its annual conservation deep clean and maintenance.

Schools Programme

13 different schools booked 16 educational sessions or resources between September and December. Nine of these schools are within Stroud District. Four are situated outside of the district. Prehistory (Key Stage 2) being the most booked topic by teachers. The majority are facilitated visits to the museum, with five being remote learning packages.

The following feedback received by the museum was shared:

A comment from KS 1 teacher who brought a class for a Facilitated Visit: 'All of the activities are really well organized. They are the right amount of time for the age of my class to keep them

interested and busy. Information delivered is clear and well thought out and the children all feel valued when contributing their ideas.’

A comment from KS1 teacher who booked a Remote Learning Package and Class Video Call: ‘(the call) was such a valuable part of the experience and delivered so brilliantly by Ruth. It had been so carefully planned for and answered all the children’s questions in such detail. The children were fascinated by it and it made them feel like they were at the museum!’.

Public Programme/Community connections

A good mix of events, activities and exhibitions was programmed and delivered with half term holiday activities for families, talks for adult audiences, drop in craft and crochet sessions, textile workshops, and artist-led family workshops linked to Stroud Book Festival and the ‘Twisted Tales’ exhibition.

Health and Wellbeing continues to be an important strand of the public programme with groups such as Harmony Singing and ArtLift, yoga classes, Gentle Park Walks and free or accessibly priced craft workshops.

The Collectors’ Room featured a display entitled Stroud Maternity Matters. Both these displays came about as part of the Baby Makers project, a National Heritage Lottery-funded collaboration with the Women’s Art Activation System.

The Space community room showcased a display on the 110th anniversary of First Rodborough Guides.

During October half term an Autumn themed Family Explorer Trail was created to help families experience the museum from a seasonal and slightly spooky way. In December a Festive Family Explorer Trail helped families explore the museum in a seasonal and slightly Christmassy way.

In November the museum attended the Community Hub network meeting in Stonehouse. This was a great opportunity to meet the people who convene and run community hubs or provide services for communities in the district.

Access Policy

The Museum’s Access Policy (a requirement of Accreditation) was reviewed and presented for approval at the meeting. This can be read on the museum’s website [here](#).

Visit www.museuminthepark.org.uk/membership to sign-up and get museum insights and news.

Next meeting 12th May 2025.

** The effective management of the collections held in perpetuity for the community relies on an important tool – a collections management system. The current Access Database was developed in the early 1990s and is not fit for purpose – particularly in the sharing of collections information. The project is funded thanks to a generous private bequest to the Cowle Trust. This is the next step in the museum’s development, following membership.*

REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr Marisa Godfrey
DATE	27 th February 2025