



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORT

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| <b>NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY</b>  | Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)  |
| <b>DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED</b>  | 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 (apologies sent, report based on reports/minutes) |
| <b>BRIEF REPORT</b>   |   |
| <p>This report covers the period January-March 2023.</p> <p>The museum welcomed nearly 43,000 visitors (up 35% on the year before) and had just over 68,500 user engagements (this includes enquiries, outreach, website visits but excludes social media) – up 23% on the year before. In 19/20 these were 56,000 and 90,400. Gross retail income was higher than 19/20 with less visitors.</p> <p>Excluding donations for the mourning ring (see below) public donations were strong during the year, with the majority coming via on-site donation boxes. These funds are held by the Trust to support collections care, development and support external grant funding applications. The Trust are also able to gift-aid under HRMC's small donation scheme.</p> <p>Garden sales, which are also held by the Trust, this income supports the walled garden.</p> <p><b>Collections</b><br/><b>Treasure Act Finds:</b><br/>Thanks to generous public donations the museum has been able to purchase a special 17th Century gold 'Painswick Mourning Ring' for the collection. Following a successful fundraising campaign the Cowle Trustees were then able to match the public donations to complete the treasure purchase. Visit: <a href="https://museuminthepark.org.uk/the-painswick-mourning-ring">https://museuminthepark.org.uk/the-painswick-mourning-ring</a></p> <p>The museum has made funding applications to the V&amp;A Purchase Fund and Headley Trust for a for the Cam and Dursley Iron Age hoard of 17 coins. See: <a href="https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1037058">https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1037058</a></p> <p><b>Fossil Fishing Update:</b><br/>Unfortunately, the museum's application to Arts Council England for funding to support the conservation and interpretation of the Fossil finds from Kings Stanley was unsuccessful. They have now made an application to Association of Independent Museums for the conservation element only. They have received a grant of £1,500 from the Curry Fund for the same project.</p> <p>With the Cowle Trustees permission the museum has lent several items from the archaeology collection for radio-carbon dating for the 'Chedworth in Context' project and facilitated two store visits for the researchers.</p> |   |

The **Community Case** currently hosts a Royal Stroud themed display by the Stroudwater Textile Trust featuring photographs and cloth samples from the Textile Trust collections, and a selection of souvenir wares from the collections of the Museum in the Park. On until 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

### Public Programme

The museum has continued to offer a mix of high quality, welcoming and enjoyable activities and events for different audiences and age groups. Exhibitions have included the excellent ‘Hand-Stitched Stories’ by Sabine Kaner, which included sell-out weekend workshops. Events commenced with the Stroud Snowdrop Weekend organised by the gardeners; in March we hosted free workshops funded and run by Into Film Southwest for children and young teens as part of the Stroud Film Festival, this was run alongside a workshop led by a local artist to ensure a broad offer.

A customer quote from the Film Festival weekend: *“the welcome and venue were great and it was great to have something for young teens to do. So often its younger kids or older teens so thanks very much for that.”*

‘Winter warmers’ continued with an advance schedule of slideshow themes, this received lovely feedback. Buzz Club now meets monthly on Sundays with a different guest or seasonal activity each time. All ages are welcome to these drop-in sessions. The museum supported a new outdoor ‘pilot’ course of three sessions using the garden and park to aid recovery and wellbeing, in this instance for women in recovery from trauma and addiction.

There were five Remote Learning engagements with primary schools in January alone, despite the museum being closed for deep cleaning and conservation. This illustrates one of the continuing benefits of the Remote Learning Programme developing during Covid.

### De-carbonisation

The Museum Manager is part of the team working on the Council’s de-carbonisation of the leisure centres and museum. The museum presenting different challenges from the leisure centres. See press release here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news-archive/renewable-energy-will-heat-leisure-centres-and-museum>

### Museum Membership

Visit [www.museuminthepark.org.uk/membership](http://www.museuminthepark.org.uk/membership) to sign-up to the free-to-join membership to get museum insights and news.

The museum team have rolled out a new cloud based new electronic point of sale (EPOS) which is connected to the membership database.



**Cowle Trust:** Nick Duxbury was nominated as a trustee after responding to the trustee vacancy advert. There are no further vacancies at this time.

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| <b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b> | Cllr Nigel Prenter         |
| <b>DATE</b>                | 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 |