

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Regeneration and environment overview and scrutiny Committee to be held on 5th December 2023.

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Subject:

Bradford Museums and Galleries Service

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on progress within the District's Museums and Galleries Service, forward plans, current challenges, and opportunities including an update on service development undertaken since the last report November 2022.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan will promote equality and diversity in all aspects of our workforce management and development. Bradford District Museums and Galleries Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan aligns with Bradford Council's four key equality objectives. 1: An equal, diverse, and inclusive workplace. Ensuring the workforce is diverse in relation to underrepresented groups and reflects Bradford's working age population. 2: Inclusive and accessible services. Developing a more robust understanding of the diverse communities we serve and the gaps in our provision. 3: An inclusive economy – Providing opportunities for equip young people with skills & confidence to succeed. 4: inclusive communities - Support district-wide campaigns for zero tolerance of discrimination.

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Portfolio:

Healthy People and Places

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Regeneration and Environment

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress made by Bradford District's Museums and Galleries during the period November 2022 – October 2023 and considerations for the development of this service area as part of the Council's wider cultural strategy and ambition.

2. BACKGROUND

In January 2022 Bradford Museums and Galleries launched a new ten-year strategy (2022-2032) with renewed vision and strategic priorities for the service. The strategy sets out the ambition for the next decade in line with the local authority's strategic priorities and the city's creative mission. Central to this strategy is the ambition to ensure that everyone in Bradford district has access to ambitious, world class art, heritage, and cultural experiences.

The Mission for the Service is,

“Our unique buildings and collections enable the people of Bradford District to tell their own stories. We work with our communities and partners to develop and care sustainably for our shared heritage so that everyone can learn, find their voice, create, be ambitious, connect with others and better understand their place in the world.”

In November 2022 Arts Council England announced the award of National Portfolio Organisation status to Bradford Museums & Galleries (application submitted May 2022).

3. REPORT ISSUES

3.1 Performance

The period, November 2022 – October 2023, has seen considerable progress with audience development across all venues, averaging over 3,000 visits per week, and evidences a steady recovery of visitors and school visits following the decline seen nationally following the Pandemic.

The number of general visits increased overall by + 7% with the largest increase in visits seen at Cliffe Castle Museum (+ 9%).

School visits increased overall by + 66% with the highest increase seen at Bradford Industrial Museum.

Performance figures for period November 2022 – October 2023

Venue – 2023-24	Industrial Museum	Cliffe Castle Museum	Cartwright Hall Gallery	Bolling Hall Museum	Total
General Visits	28,381	57,324	39,149	14,004	138,858
School visits (pupils)	7,124	5,154	5,074	1,179	18,531
Total	35,505	62,478	44,223	15,183	157,389

3.2 Museum Accreditation

Museum Accreditation was re-awarded to Bradford Museums and Galleries in April 2023. The Arts Council England Museum Accreditation scheme ensures that museums and galleries in the UK meet certain standards of quality and professionalism. It covers aspects such as governance, how we manage collections, and how we engage with our service users. By participating in the scheme, and gaining accreditation, we also needed to demonstrate that we are sustainable, focused and a trusted organisation. The scheme is reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the changing needs and expectations of the museum sector and the public. Accredited status will next be reviewed in 2028.

3.3 National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)

In November 2022 Arts Council England announced the award of National Portfolio Organisation status to Bradford Museums & Galleries (application submitted May 2022). The award of £1,145,310 for 3 years (£381,770 per annum) funds a three year (2023-26) development and activity plan that offers co-creation and engagement opportunities delivered in partnership and tailored to the needs of Bradford District communities.

Year one (2023-24) has focused on engagement across all strands of work, building on existing strengths, addressing proven need, and consolidating delivery partnerships. Delivery has focused on experimentation and testing, trying out innovative approaches, and implementation of evaluation framework.

The programme (Activity Plan) agreed with Arts Council England support's the service ambition to build a distinctive sense of place in Bradford District, based on our diverse heritage and culture, enable everyone to learn, develop skills, build confidence, and understand their place in the world whilst working in partnership to ensure that everyone in Bradford district has access to ambitious, world class art, heritage, and cultural experiences.

NPO funding has enabled the recruitment of fully funded personnel, including a Project Officer, Early Years & Family Learning specialists, Community content producer and a Volunteer Assistant who are working with museum staff to address audience development and engagement priorities that deliver against specific elements from the Creative People and Cultural Communities outcomes in Arts Council England's 'Let's Create' strategy.

3.4 Access

One of Bradford District Museums and Galleries strategic priorities is to work in partnership to ensure that everyone in Bradford district has access to ambitious, world class art, heritage, and cultural experiences.

The Bradford District Museums and Galleries EDI Action Plan has been written and drafts shared for comment with the Equalities & Engagement Lead Officer, CBMDC who will work with us to ensure the Museum Action Plan aligns with the Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Site access audits have been completed for all venues and currently awaiting the final reports including the identification of areas where the service may not be currently compliant with accessibility requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

In addition, we have secured the services of the Inclusive Design for MIMA Group who are working with us to establish and run an Access Forum to ensure that as access improvements are undertaken, they are done alongside people with lived experiences of access needs.

3.5 Schools & Learning

Bradford Museums' schools service is supported by Arts Council England's 'Museums & Schools' programme which helps connect museums with school age children primarily targeting geographical areas with high levels of deprivation and low cultural engagement. The schools programme continues to grow despite ongoing concerns cited from schools around the ongoing rising costs of transport and the cost-of-living crisis. Museums and schools funding enables us to work with priority schools (based on pupil premium) and support the costs of their visits to the museums.

During the period 98 Primary schools (62%) from Bradford District visited at least one of our museums to attend workshops with a further forty-eight schools from outside of the district attending workshops. There has been growth at all sites but most significantly at Bradford Industrial Museum where capacity for further expansion of the schools' learning offer had been identified. Consequently, schools' income has increased, by 29% this year (£34,541.00) with approximately 50% of this income from school visits to Bradford Industrial Museum. The income does not exactly correlate to the increase in visits due to the school numbers target on the Museums and School programme and the increase in the numbers of school visits on self-led programmes. We are now introducing an option for self-led programmes which supports income generation by providing a structured programme and self-led learning resources.

Since 2022 Bradford Museums is one of six national partners with the Victoria & Albert Museum's national secondary schools programme, Design Lab Nation. Fifty-five students from Hanson Academy, Beckfoot School and Beckfoot Upper Heaton took part in an incredible programme of learning based at Bradford Museums and at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Inspired by Bradford's rich textile heritage they worked with Zahid Rauf, a bespoke bridal wear designer. During the visit to the V&A students from Beckfoot school were able to meet with architect Shahed Saleem who designed

the Ramadan Pavilion. All students also took part in a visit to industry partner Melrose Interiors, the UK's foremost manufacturer of rugs and flooring based in Bradford and where they learned about design, use of recycled fibres and designing textiles using state of the art software. Students' final textile pieces were displayed at Cartwright Hall with a celebration event held for family and friends. Due to the success of the partnership Design Lab Nation funding has now been extended for a further two academic years.

Family Learning Programme

Family Learning has taken a partnership approach to developing and delivering programmes of learning. This year we have developed a successful Family Learning programme with accessible activities provided for Easter, Spring Bank, Summer, and October Half Term schools holidays. During October half term 2023, we have for the first time, provided a differentiated programme of activity for families with children in early years (under 5).

The NPO Activity Plan set an ambitious target of reaching 5,000 family members this year and with only six months into the plan we have exceeded that target and have led facilitated learning programme activity with 6,480 local adults and children.

During the Summer we aligned the programme to the national 'Summer Reading Challenge' and led sessions across all our venues, as well as in libraries, across the district. We also worked with the National Science and Media Museum (NSMM) who delivered learning programmes at all museum venues and were able to trail new learning programmes with a wide range of families. For October half term, we were part of the National Family Learning Festival led by the 'Campaign for Learning' and have led a cross district programme with NSMM, libraries and other heritage partners.

Early Years programme

The Early Years programme is a new area of development. We have recruited a new Early Years Assistant who started with us in August 2023. We are working with the 'Birth to 19 Learning Alliance' and the '50 Things' team based at St Edmunds meeting early years providers and practitioners across the district. October half term saw a differentiated programme of family learning for families with children under 5 years old and we are in the process of developing a monthly drop-in session for each of the four museum sites for early years with learning linked to various aspects of the collection. We are also developing an offsite 'pop-up' programme that will introduce children in the early years to museum learning and experiences outside of the museum in places where they already feel safe and familiar. Onsite programmes will launch across museum venues from November and the offsite programme from early December 2023.

Foster care support

We now have quarterly meetings with Bradford Council's Foster Care team. At Easter and May Spring bank holiday family learning events were delivered with bespoke sessions for families with looked after children. During the summer, following evaluation, rather than offering bespoke sessions, we reviewed activities with the Foster Care team offering priority spaces for all booked events. We will continue to

offer this approach as the Foster Care team have advised this enables families to blend in with programmes and feel less singled out. The most recent meeting with team explored how museums can support the growing number of families with foster children under the age of three and the learning team are developing a dedicated Christmas programme for families at Bolling Hall Museum.

3.6 Community engagement

During the period we have developed and written a Partnership and Co Curation Framework. This document sets out a new way of working in partnership and develops our co curation practices as central to the whole service/organisational change we are committed to as part of the NPO Activity Plan. The focus for our partnership work and co curation is to strengthen links with diverse communities across Bradford, telling Bradford stories and engaging people in new ways that ensures we are developing enduring and mutually beneficial relationships. The Framework has been consulted on with staff and community groups with whom we are currently working, and they have found it a useful tool to support them to engage more fully with us.

The first co curated exhibition of the year was 'Don't Give Up.' In Partnership with Windrush Generations and Bradford's Hate Crime Alliance we worked with three young people from the Afro Caribbean community who were trained how to interview and capture the oral histories of the Elders Windrush Generation Elders who settled in Bradford. This led to an incredible exhibition showcasing many stories that most of the elders had shared for the first time. These were stories of upheaval, racism, and resilience. The title of the exhibition, 'Don't Give Up,' was suggested by one of the elders sharing her story. Within the exhibition were loaned objects from the people involved showing things brought with them. A Living Library event in partnership with Professor Udi Archibong from the University of Bradford highlighted how important these stories had been for the children of the elders. As a result of this work one of our community curators, Jill Iredale, has been shortlisted for a National 'Change Maker of the Year' award with the Museums Association which provides national profile for Bradford Museums and Galleries and pays testament to the innovative work with a wide range of communities where co curation and sharing stories is at the heart of our practice.

The second co curated exhibition which launched at the end of August 2023, is the Calm Gallery at Cartwright Hall. Developed in partnership with the Healthy Minds apprentices at All Star Ents, local young people decided that we needed to create a space at Cartwright Hall that actively promoted positive mental well-being. They visited a similar space at Manchester Museum and explored the art stores to select the works. In addition, they curated their own work and art commissions such as sensory boxes and soundscapes into the space and the result is an incredible new gallery which is receiving positive public feedback. A series of well-being events are now being planned to align with the new gallery's mission. Not all co curation activity is taking place within the museum walls. The community curators are also working with refugees and asylum seekers at the Anchor Project to develop an exhibition within St Clements Church. They are working with Bowling Park Primary School on the development of their new book written by pupils Bradford to Bradford and are working with the Ukrainian Club in Keighley to explore their archive and how the new to Keighley Ukrainian communities can add to the archival material the club's hold.

3.7 Volunteering

Bradford Museums & Galleries currently hosts 108 volunteers, 64% of whom have registered during the past two years. Volunteer roles range from visitor services, collection research and documentation, heritage gardeners, looms, printing and motive machinery demonstrators, catering, storytelling, supporting family activities, audience research and evaluation, and bringing historic characters to life as interpreters. Volunteers were recently surveyed and were asked to feedback about their experience of volunteering at our museums including about the skills, satisfaction levels, and wellbeing benefits they have gained. The findings were extremely positive, including 94% saying they feel more engaged with their local heritage, 90% have learnt new things, 88% said volunteering has made them feel part of a community and 85% have developed existing skills and knowledge. A significant contributor to high volunteer satisfaction in our museums is around the work carried out by museum staff who facilitate the day-to-day volunteering programme.

Volunteers have facilitated several events during the period including:

Volunteer Heritage Gardeners at Bolling Hall Museum held 5 Sunday Birdbox workshops for families in partnership with Bradford Trident and Better Start Bradford.

Volunteers Week (June 2023) with invited guests 'Bradford Stories', Bradford Literacy Bus. Over sixty volunteers and staff joined an event at Bradford Industrial Museum event with free books and story bus by Bradford Stories, limited edition hand printed bookmarks by volunteer printers.

Refugee Week Volunteer Taster Day with Stronger Communities. Over thirty refugees and staff from Keighley College and other community groups, aged 18 to 25 years, joined volunteers for an introduction to the museums.

Heritage Open Days 13th & 15th September – Volunteer led events at the Industrial Museum and Bolling Hall.

With support from the NPO activity programme we are now working with a wide range of community partners to develop new models of volunteering that will attract a more diverse range of volunteers that is reflective of the local community we serve. As the UK city with the largest growing youth population, we will also develop a young people's volunteering programme (Young Ambassadors) and will work with a wide range of youth led organisations to ensure 'youth voice' is built into our development plans. The focus for all opportunities will be on identifying volunteer needs, interests, skills development, and wellbeing as well as enhancing museum and gallery programmes.

Work experience

We are working with Bradford Council's 'Xperience Team' to ensure we have a regular offer of work experience opportunities for young people across the district aged 14-16. We currently have two work experience roles available: Visitor Services Assistant and Learning Assistant. These experiences are available three times every academic year and aligned to fit the needs of local schools. To date we have welcomed and worked with four Year 10 students who have worked welcoming visitors at Cartwright Hall, Cliffe Castle and Bradford Industrial Museum and who have also supported the school learning programme. In addition to work experience we are also developing our focus on careers and have attended careers events for Parkside school and Bradford College and are leading a Creative Skills Fair in March 2024 as part of National Careers week in partnership with the Councils Careers and Technical Education team.

Ten Industry Placements, BTEC Art, Shipley College completed their 6-month placement at Industrial Museum this year and worked with volunteer and staff teams in weaving, printing, historical home invigilation, audience survey/customer services and schools/learning team. Three of these students were selected for nomination at the Skills House Careers and Technical Education Learner Industry Sector Award 2023 at Bradford University.

3.8 Exhibitions & Display

During the year, several exhibitions were opened across the venues following the 'Don't Give Up' Caribbean Elders exhibition at Cartwright Hall which closed in February 2023. Following this 'Asia' opened, an exhibition that displays items from the collection focusing on the four Asian countries that are best represented: China, Japan, Pakistan, and India. The exhibition displays artefacts that have either been donated to the museum, or that the museum has applied for funding grants to purchase. The exhibition has been designed to consult and create conversations with visitors with inbuilt devices for visitors to express their interests in various areas, themes, and approach to interpretation.

The de Brecey Tondo went on display at Cartwright Hall Gallery in July (until 3 January 2024). This is the first time anywhere in the world that the painting has been on public display. The mystery painting found to be 'undoubtedly' by Raphael has been the subject of research and debate for more than forty years thanks to its resemblance to Raphael's Sistine Madonna. Recent analysis using artificial intelligence-assisted computer-based facial recognition showed the faces in the paintings are identical to those in Raphael's famous altarpiece. Following his initial analysis, Professor Hassan Ugail, Director of the Centre of Visual Computing at the University of Bradford, has since developed a new AI model to recognise paintings by Old Masters.

Other exhibitions during the year include:

- Undercliffe Cemetery, *Great Garden Tribute to Bradford's Yorkshire Grit* (Industrial Museum, until January 2024)
- *Bradford Banquet*, an exhibition at Bolling Hall that takes visitors on a journey to explore how our diet has changed over the past thousand years, and the role that the Bradford district has played in this (until February 2024)
- Keighley Art Society Centenary (Cliffe Castle, until January 2024)
- Maurice Broomfield's photographs, '*Industrial Sublime*' (loan exhibition from V&A Museum, Industrial Museums, ends November 2023)

3.9 Collections

Continuing to improve documentation of the collections is integral to Accreditation and the service being able to increase and improve access to the collections including development of digital and online access.

During the reporting period 1634 new collection records have been created on the collections management system, Modes. This includes new acquisitions, retrospective accessions, and untraced finds. 2670 objects location records have been updated and over 4,000 digital images have been added to the collection's records. The collection team have been collaborating with a local company, Co-operative Innovations, to develop a digital immersive display of a collection that will be made publicly available for free. Additionally, they have been collaborating with a team of Ph.D. students at Leeds Beckett university on the gamification of museum collections, scanning several artefacts from the collections.

Partnership & Research

We have a partnership with the University of Bradford, as part of the Visualising Heritage project. The university has also been scanning items from our collection, a mummified foot and hawk, in their new cone CT scanner to improve our historical and forensic understanding of these objects.

Bradford Museums is a key partner in the Congruence Engine project. The project is a three-year research project that started in November 2021. It is investigating the potential of social and digital techniques (including AI) in connecting industrial heritage collections held by museums, archives, and heritage organisations across the UK. The project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World fund. The project is trying to understand how people relate to their industrial heritage and how they can use digital tools to create their own stories and interpretations.

We are developing options for congruence engine activity in Bradford as part of City of Culture 2025 linking the project team to existing heritage organisations developing activity across the district.

Acquisition

Thirty-four offers of donation have been received and approved for acquisition since October 2022. These include items such as a Listers Astrakhan coat, Bradford City FA cup medal, Brown & Muffs dressing gown, Fountains Café signs and a photograph portrait of David Hockney.

566 items were retrospectively accessioned into the collections, predominantly items that were donated during Covid, which delayed the accessioning process.

The most significant acquisition this year is the Ian Beesley photographic collection. The renowned social documentary photographer has donated 200,000 items to the photographic archive held at Bradford Industrial Museum, close to where he was born. Beesley's photographic archive spans a 50-year career, includes negatives, notebooks, and press cuttings, is being donated to ensure that it can be freely available and accessible. Since the 1970s, his work has documented the changing social landscape of northern England with a particular focus on the Bradford district and its mills, industry, working people, pubs and sport including the Bradford Bulls and Bradford City AFC.

Loans

There have been fourteen outgoing loans since October 2022, with a further twelve loans approved to go out in 2024. The loans consist of works from the Fine Art, photographic and costume collections. Lenders include National organisations including the Heywood Gallery, MK Gallery, Kettles Yard, Tate Britain, and Laing Gallery, as well as international lenders Mostra Internazionale d'Arte & Hamburger Kunsthalle. Loans to local museums, such as the Thackray Medical Museum, and Henry Moore Institute.

Loaning of these works increases access of Bradford Museums' collections to local, national, and international audiences and highlight their significance, interest, and historical value.

Rationalisation

Six items have been approved for disposal from the collections. These consisted of social history items, such as crochet dollies and table clothes. They had limited provenance and have been transferred to the learning team for the handling collection.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

The service restructure in 2019 and consequent reduction in staff resource, has impacted on income generation and there continue to be several challenges affecting the business model. Allocated savings of £0.5m, from 2020/21, are currently being shown within the Service as pressures whilst plans are developed to either achieve or mitigate the required saving. Museums are therefore currently forecasting a pressure of £0.5m against a net budget of £1.4m. The saving was to reduce costs through service efficiencies and integration, remodelling of operational delivery and investigate commercial opportunities, which is being reviewed as part of the medium-

term recovery plan.

In 2021-22 £531,998 was received from the business rates re-evaluation (back dated to 2017-18). This resulted in BM&G forecasting a break-even position in 2022-23 due to a delay in VO notification and the rebate offsetting the unachieved savings dating back to 2018. In 2023-24 the combined rateable value for Bradford Museums & Galleries is £53,600 compared to £159,500 for the previous year.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The Service is an important part of the Council's cultural offer and infrastructure and as such is a key stakeholder and contributor to the Council's 'Culture is Our Plan' and City of Culture 2025 delivery plan.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

Under the Equality Act 2010 there is a duty on the Council to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people to ensure accessibility to venues.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Bradford Museums and Galleries Strategy, the actions and investment as well as the day-to-day operations of the Service fundamentally supports the District Plan 2021-2025 and contributes to the wellbeing, resilience, and longer-term prosperity of the district. With a particular focus on key assets including the collections and flagship buildings, and their use, this is managed as a district-wide resource for present and future generations. The Mission and Vision ensures that our focus is on maximising the value of our buildings and collections to enable the people of Bradford District to tell their own stories; 'working with our communities and partners to develop and care sustainably for our shared heritage so that everyone can have fun, learn, find their voice, create, be ambitious, connect with others and better understand their place in the wider world.'

The Strategy and its six Priorities are structured to deliver on the District Plan and Council Plan 2021-25, connecting to Bradford2025 and specifically a shared focus on sustainability, clean growth, and long-term legacy.

7.2 TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS

BDM&G has joined the Fit for the Future network, a sector environmental and sustainability network that will advise and support the development of an environmental action plan for the service.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

No implications arising from this report

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No implications arising from this report

7.5 TRADE UNION

No implications arising from this report

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Bradford Museums and Galleries serve all wards in the District

**7.7 AREA COMMITTEE LOCALITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

No implications arising from this report

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Early help and prevention to support people in their communities underpins our work with children and families in partnership with our colleagues in the public and charitable sectors. It also informs our approach to estate management across our museum and gallery properties, working with built environment colleagues to anticipate and address maintenance issues and prevent problems from escalating. Safeguarding is at the forefront of our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We recognise that safeguarding is part of everyone's role across the authority.

(Bradford Museums & Galleries Strategy 2022-32, Core Principles)

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

No implications arising from this report

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

None, this report is for information and comment

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to consider and comment on the updates provided in this report.

11. APPENDICES

None

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None