

## **Tameside Museums and Galleries Service**

### **Forward Plan (2019-2024)**

#### **1. CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This Forward Plan reflects the changes in the way the Council provides its services to meet the needs of its residents and visitors as well as Government policies influencing the Museums and Galleries sector.
- 1.2 The Museum Service was established in 1975. Prior to that date there was only one art gallery in the Borough, the Astley Cheetham Art Gallery. All services are operated directly by Tameside MBC. The council is also custodian of the Manchester Regiment Collection.
- 1.3 The Service includes:
  - Portland Basin Museum (Ashton-under-Lyne)
  - The Museum of the Manchester Regiment (Ashton-under-Lyne)
  - Astley Cheetham Art Gallery (Stalybridge)

#### **2. AIM OF THE FORWARD PLAN**

- 2.1 The aim of this Forward Plan is to provide a policy context for the work of Tameside Museums and Galleries Service for the period 2019-2024. It outlines the main work areas proposed during this time and how the service will be delivered.
- 2.2 The proposals in the Forward Plan will help to:
  - Increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the Borough's museums and galleries and their collections.
  - Ensure equality of opportunity for people to visit, enjoy and engage with the museums, galleries and collections managed by Tameside Museums and Galleries Service.
  - Safeguard and preserve the collections for future generations of Tameside residents and visitors.
  - Drive improvement within the service and enable development.

#### **3. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- 3.1 Tameside Museums and Galleries aim to be:

*A dynamic, engaging and responsive Museum Service that celebrates the people and places of Tameside, ensuring a meaningful and enjoyable experience for all.*

#### **4. BOROUGH DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 4.1 The borough of Tameside consists of nine towns in a mainly urban area east of Manchester. It stretches from the city of Manchester to the Peak District and shares borders with Stockport, Oldham, Manchester and the borough of High Peak. Tameside is

well connected to the region and beyond by the M60 and M67 motorways and by rail links to Manchester and Yorkshire.

- 4.2 The population of Tameside is estimated at 225,197 and the population is anticipated to grow in coming years. Of this population, 20.1% are under 16, 62.3% are 16-64 and 17.6% are over 65. Of the 141 areas in Tameside, 8 of these fall within the most deprived 5% nationally and a further 16 fall within the most deprived 10% nationally. 13.4% of Tameside residents live in income-deprived households. Ethnicity across the borough is 90.9% white, 6.8% Asian, 1.4% mixed, 0.8% black and 0.1% other. By religion, 64% are Christian, 23.6% have no religion, 4.4% are Muslim, 1.5% are Hindu and 0.8% are another religion.
- 4.3 77.6% of people have good or very good health, 15.1% have fair health and 7.3% have bad or very bad health. When asked if their day-to-day activities are limited by a disability, 79.1% of Tameside residents state that they are not limited, 10.3% state that they are limited a little and 10.6% say they are limited a lot. In terms of unpaid care provided per week, 89% of residents provide no unpaid care to others, 6.4% provide 1-19 hours, 1.6% provide 20-49 hours and 2.9% provide 50 or more hours.
- 4.4 The implications for the Museums and Galleries Service are to ensure that we continue to provide services that are enjoyable and accessible to our changing communities in addition to providing a family friendly environment at our sites. We must ensure that the service caters for the cultural heritage of diverse communities and all ages.

## **5. THE COUNCIL: POLITICAL AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES**

- 5.1 The council has an Executive Cabinet as part of its constitution. Each member of the Cabinet has a portfolio setting out their role and responsibilities. There are eight members of the Cabinet, which is chaired by the Executive Leader. Museums and Galleries come under the portfolio of the Executive Member for Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage.
- 5.2 Tameside Council and the NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are led by a Chief Executive. The Chief Executive and nine Directors make up the Single Leadership Team. The Directors are supported by fifteen Assistant Directors/Consultants, who together form the Senior Management Group.
- 5.3 The Museum and Galleries Service sits within Cultural and Customer Services, which is under the Directorate for Operations and Neighbourhoods.

## **6. DESCRIPTION OF THE MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES SERVICE**

- 6.1 The Museums Manager has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the service, drafting policy, budgets, marketing and exhibitions/events management.
- 6.2 The Curator and Assistant Curator support the Museums Manager and are in charge of collections management and interpreting the collections across the Museums and Galleries sites. The current Curator has been in post since January 2018 and the Assistant Curator post was newly created in June 2017.
- 6.3 The Operations and Business Manager manages the day-to-day financial running and health and safety of the Museums and Galleries, as well as other services within Cultural and Customer Services. The Visitor Services Manager oversees the day-to-day running of the Museums and Galleries and manages the Front of House staff. The Technician maintains the sites, assists with collections care and supports the exhibitions programme.

- 6.4 There are nine part time front-of-house posts (equivalent to four full time posts) responsible for visitor services across the museums and galleries. Front-of-house staff also deal with some visitor enquiries, shop management and some workshop activity.
- 6.5 Colleagues from across Cultural Services also assist the Museum Service in a range of discrete areas such as events management and educational provision.

## 7. THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

- 7.1 Since 1 October 2011 Arts Council England (ACE) has taken on responsibility for supporting and developing museums as part of their functions. ACE champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. They support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries - from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.
- 7.2 The Accreditation Scheme, managed by ACE, sets nationally agreed standards for museums in the UK. The Standard supports museums in identifying opportunities for further improvement and development. There are currently over 1,700 museums participating in the Scheme, demonstrating their commitment to managing collections effectively for the enjoyment of our communities.
- 7.3 ACE has published its draft strategy for 2020-30, setting out its funding priorities and areas for development. It proposes to support outcomes that develop creative people, cultural communities and a creative and cultural country. It also places emphasis on ambition and quality, inclusivity and relevance, and dynamism and environmental sustainability. The Museums Service will seek to link into these priorities where appropriate and these will help steer funding bids and future projects.
- 7.4 ACE also supports a programme of museum development support for non-National museums. Tameside Museums and Galleries work closely with Museum Development North West and benefit greatly from their support. Staff have attended many free training days on a variety of subjects including marketing, collections care, Wordpress and subject specialist events. The Museum Service has also participated in several funded projects including the Family Friendly Programme (2018-19), Collections Care and Management (2018-19), Sustainable Improvement Fund (2018), Banish the Backlog (2018-2020) and Natural History Adventures (2019-20).
- 7.5 The Museums Association is a membership organisation for everyone working in museums, galleries and heritage. Established in 1889 they are the oldest museums association in the world. Their mission is "Inspiring museums to change lives". Their vision is "Inclusive, participatory and socially engaged museums at the heart of their communities."
- 7.6 *Museums Change Lives* is the Museums Association's mission for the increased social impact of museums. It demonstrates that museums can be ambitious about their role in society. *Museums Change Lives* explores impacts under three headings - Enhancing Health and Wellbeing; Creating Better Places to Live and Work; and Inspiring Engagement, Debate and Reflection. It aims to enthuse people in museums to increase their impact, encourage funders to support museums in becoming more relevant to their audiences and communities, and show organisations the potential partnerships they could have with museums, to change people's lives.
- 7.7 In 2019 the Museums Association published their latest collections report *Empowering Collections*, based on findings from their Collections 2030 project. The report sets out the Museums Associations strategic aims for collections, stating that over the next decade museums need their collections to be Empowering, Relevant and Dynamic. The ideas

expressed in this report have a direct impact on the strategic decisions we make within the museum service to ensure that in future years we are fit for purpose.

7.8 The Mendoza Review (2017) looked at the challenges and opportunities for all of England's museums and made recommendations across several areas, including growing and diversifying audiences, contributing to place-making and local priorities, delivering cultural education and dynamic collection curation and management. These recommendations are important as they link to the work of the wider museum sector and to the priorities of potential funders.

7.9 Tameside Museums and Galleries Service is an active participant in the wider museum sector within the region. The service is part of or engaged with several organisations:

- Greater Manchester Museums Group (GMMG)
- Museums Development North West (MDNW)
- North West Federation of Museums and Art Galleries (NWFED)
- Northern Military Curators Group
- Northern Art Forum

Each of these bodies enables us to contribute to the development of the wider museum sector within the region and nationally. Moreover, involvement within each group brings specific and measurable benefits to the Museum Service via its staff, visitors, collections and organisational reputation. Particular emphasis is placed on our participation in the Greater Manchester Museums Group (GMMG).

7.10 The cultural sector has also been identified as a significant partner in regeneration linking to areas such as employment, health, social change and neighbourhood renewal. In Tameside the Museums and Galleries form a central part of the cultural activity within the borough. They engender a sense of civic pride and express the local distinctiveness of the area. However we must ensure that the facilities and services provided at our sites reflect the cultural background of all citizens. The service must ensure that the product and service we offer is of a standard that can realistically compete with other leisure and tourism attractions.

## **8. THE LOCAL CONTEXT**

8.1 There are various local programmes and Tameside Council priorities and strategies that link to the work to our work in Museums and Galleries and help to provide a policy context. We work to support these plans and strategies including:

- Greater Manchester Cultural Strategy (2019-2024). *Grown in Greater Manchester. Known Around The World* – identifies areas of strategic opportunity across the city-region. It also sets out a clear plan of how all 10 Greater Manchester districts will work together to target resources that will develop, celebrate, protect and promote the significant culture and heritage assets of Greater Manchester.
- Tameside Cultural Strategy. The Cultural Plan for Tameside expired at the end of 2018. Following the publication of the GM Culture Strategy, it is intended to commence development of a new strategy which aligns with the aims and objectives of Greater Manchester but that is specific to Tameside residents and the offer available in the Borough. We will contribute to the development and delivery of the new strategy.
- The Museum Service actively participates in further Council wide plans and strategies that are developed within and across departments, and are aimed at meeting the goals identified in the Corporate Plan.

- Corporate Plan for Tameside and Glossop (2019). Tameside Council and NHS Tameside & Glossop CCG have come together to form one organisation – Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission. Together a new corporate plan has been developed that reflects the priorities and guiding principles for the joint work in the area. This is the first corporate plan to pull together the objectives of the Strategic Commission. ‘Our People Our Place Our Plan’ outlines the aims and aspirations for the area, its people and the commitment to work for everyone, every day. This Forward Plan aims to contribute towards achieving the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan:

<b>Corporate Plan for Tameside and Glossop</b>	<b>Museums and Galleries key contributions</b>
Very best start in life where children are ready to learn and encouraged to thrive and develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide engaging facilities and activities for young people.</li> <li>• Work with other Council departments to support school readiness and encourage a love of learning.</li> <li>• Working with external organisations to support the best start in life and to reach other groups within Borough.</li> </ul>
Aspiration and hope through learning and moving with confidence from childhood to adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide formal and informal educational opportunities for lifelong learning.</li> <li>• Develop and improve education provision for Tameside schools.</li> <li>• Use the ‘Arts Mark’ and ‘Arts Award’ initiative to create exciting and enjoyable learning experiences within all Museum and Gallery sites.</li> <li>• Offer outreach and loan material for schools and community groups based on the collections.</li> <li>• Engendering a sense of ownership of the local heritage.</li> <li>• Ensuring high quality visitor services, attracting tourism into the borough, which in turn will attract new business investment and residents.</li> </ul>
Resilient families and supportive networks to protect and grow our young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a welcoming and inspiring environment for all visitors.</li> <li>• Ensure that all sites are well maintained and sign posted.</li> <li>• Hosting a variety of network and hub events within our sites, from our SEND school arts hub to our Creative Arts teacher network</li> </ul>
Opportunities for people to fulfil their potential through work, skills and enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a high profile within the borough, developing the sense of public ownership of the museums and galleries.</li> <li>• Offer opportunities for people to work and volunteer.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for lifelong learning.</li> <li>• Work with community and voluntary groups.</li> <li>• Having a joined up approach within TMBC to work across service areas where possible and suitable.</li> </ul>
Modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment that works for all generations and future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all sites meet high health and safety standards and are well maintained.</li> <li>• Ensure that all visitors feel happy, welcome and safe within Museums and Galleries.</li> <li>• Review and address access requirements both intellectual and physical to ensure all visitors can enjoy facilities</li> </ul>

	<p>provided by the service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out exhibitions and activities in an environmentally sustainable way.</li> <li>• Museums and Galleries bring tourism into the borough and help support the local economy.</li> </ul>
Nurturing our communities and having pride in our people, our place and our shared heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage participation in cultural events through ensuring the highest quality and the range of exhibitions and activities within all sites.</li> <li>• Actively collecting and documenting the heritage of the whole community.</li> <li>• Embrace health and wellbeing strategies in work we undertake.</li> <li>• Offer culturally inspired opportunities that facilitate improved health and wellbeing for visitors.</li> <li>• Developing a sense of pride and ownership of the Museums and Galleries and encourage communities to value the places they live.</li> <li>• Working with other services to provide events and facilities that promote understanding and good relations between different communities.</li> </ul>
Longer and healthier lives with good mental health through better choices and reducing inequalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support projects that enhance wellbeing and also promote cultural activities as having a positive effect on wellbeing.</li> <li>• Allowing staff to point visitors in the right direction for additional services that could improve their health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Promote physical activity within and around our venues.</li> <li>• Working with a range of local groups</li> <li>• Having an outdoor education offer available to schools from our sites</li> </ul>
Independence and activity in older age, and dignity and choice at the end of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide safe, welcoming and accessible spaces for people to meet.</li> <li>• Provide lifelong learning experiences.</li> <li>• Museum loan boxes and reminiscing sessions both on site and as outreach</li> <li>• Support groups, networks and initiatives that foster independence in old age.</li> </ul>

## 9. THE CURRENT SITUATION

9.1 We asked museum staff to contribute to a SWOT analysis of our current offer:

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative/Committed Staff</li> <li>• Varied collections</li> <li>• Sites well maintained</li> <li>• Free venues</li> <li>• 'Can-do' attitude</li> <li>• Good range of exhibitions, events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current lack of museum for Manchester Regiment collection</li> <li>• Lack of learning staff based at museum</li> <li>• Poor capacity (lack of staff/time)</li> <li>• Lack of control over aspects of</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and workshops</li> <li>• Strong reputation</li> <li>• Café and shop are added attractions</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> </ul>	<p>Portland Basin site eg café, boat trips, canal boats moored, building maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website needs improvement</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelopment of Astley Cheetham Art Gallery – exhibit more collection and attract new audiences</li> <li>• Redevelopment of Manchester Regiment Museum and art gallery space in Ashton Town Hall</li> <li>• Partnership working across the Council for events, activities, exhibitions, green agenda, promotion of our sites</li> <li>• Marketing opportunities to explore across all sites</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further Council funding reductions</li> <li>• Failure to be relevant to wider socio-economic agendas</li> <li>• Any loss of café facility at Portland Basin would impact on museum</li> <li>• Reduction in site maintenance levels</li> </ul>

9.2 The Museums and Galleries visitor figures since 2013/14 are as follows:

2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
146,770	163,616	135,853	133,361	131,390	119,962

Visitor figures are recorded through electronic door counters.

9.3 Visitor figures broken down by year and site since 2013/14 are as follows:

Year:	Portland Basin Museum	Manchester Regiment	Astley Cheetham	Central Art Gallery
2013/2014	102,488	28,891	147*	15,244
2014/2015	114,204	29,937	164	18,311
2015/2016	113,994	3,550	335	17,974
2016/2017	114,980	0*	761	17,620
2017/2018	114,733	0*	711	15,946
2018/2019	107,801	0*	590	11,571*

\*Astley Cheetham Art Gallery was open 5 days during the year 2013/14. The gallery was open for 26 days per year 2014-2019. Opening hours were increased to 17 hours per week in February 2019.

\*The Museum of the Manchester Regiment closed in May 2015 due to the building work to the adjacent council offices and accounts for the overall drop in figures across the sites in 2015/16.

\*Central Art Gallery closed in February 2019 and contributes to the fall in visitor figures overall for 2018/19.

## 9.4 Portland Basin Museum

- 9.4.1 Portland Basin Museum has the highest profile within the Museums and Galleries Service and attracts the highest proportion of visitors. There was a peak in visitors between 2014 and 2018, consistently attracting around 114,000 each year. This was in part due to a marked effort throughout those years to diversify the site's usage and programme a wider range of events and activities.
- 9.4.2 The museum was redeveloped and opened to the public in 1999. It is located in a former canal warehouse and celebrates Tameside's social and industrial history. The attractive location of the museum, combined with its unique ambience, makes this a very popular amenity within the region. It is exciting and family friendly and is fully accessible to the public. The Ground Floor consists of a temporary exhibition area, the 1920's street, the Tales of Tameside gallery and museum shop. The Lower Ground Floor explores the local industries of the area with many interactive exhibits appealing to all ages, including a play area for pre-school aged children. School workshops are held within the street sets and in the industrial history gallery.
- 9.4.3 Portland Basin Museum is well loved in the community. Customer feedback has revealed that visitors particularly enjoy exploring the 1920's street and the various interactives on the ground floor. The many interactives and the ability to touch things within the museum ensure that there are plenty of fun things to do. The displays and changing exhibitions generate plenty of local interest and the museum encourages self-directed learning. School holiday craft activities, a changing programme of events and activities, plus free entry ensure a high number of repeat visits. The museum is the number one attraction in Tameside on Trip Advisor and has achieved their 'Certificate of Excellence' each year since 2012.
- 9.4.4 The museum is part of Visit England's Visitor Assurance Quality Assessment Scheme. In 2018 the gallery achieved its highest score of 79% following the annual mystery shop. The quality of the attraction and its displays, the high level of customer care and the overall cleanliness were highlighted as strengths. This is an annual assessment and allows the museum to display the Visit England logo, showing that it provides a quality visitor experience.
- 9.4.5 The museum is recognised as a prime site for families learning together and has the added appeal of parking, a picnic area and a reasonably priced gift shop. During the summer holidays and on Bank Holidays visitors can enjoy a canal boat trip from the museum wharf, organised by voluntary groups such as Tameside Canal Boat Trust. The museum is completely accessible and an Access Audit is available for the public to view on the website.
- 9.4.6 The museum's collection includes a large collection of domestic items, items of local history, archaeology, industrial history, civic silverware and natural history.
- 9.4.7 Exhibitions often have a focus on community involvement, with visitors encouraged to contribute their memories and ephemera to the exhibition. This approach creates a sense of ownership and interest for the duration of the show. Exhibitions change twice-yearly at Portland Basin Museum and over the past few years have included 'A Collectors' World', 'Goal!', 'Toy Box Tales', 'Accessorise', 'Clickety Click' and 'Open All Hours'. Exhibitions draw on the strengths of the reserve collection and often have a family-friendly focus. Other exhibitions, such as 'If You Go Down to the Woods Today' were made up entirely of objects loaned in from the public, in this instance, teddy bears, and this has proved a very popular way of engaging with audiences. Exhibitions have also been created with local schools, for example 'Unravelling' showcased industrial townscape artworks created by three local schools as part of a long-term project between Tameside Cultural Services and Z-arts.

- 9.4.8 To commemorate the centenary of the First World War, we re-interpreted the museum's 1920s street as 1914-18 Street, with new information panels and new interpretation in the room sets. In addition, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we conserved a wooden First World War memorial from Ashton Grammar School and worked with theatre company 2 Boards and a Passion to interpret the memorial. A play was created based on the names on the memorial and performed by students from Ashton Sixth Form College using the museum's street as a set. The memorial remained on display until 2019. The museum also created an exhibition, Tameside's War, which used objects from the collection to tell local stories of how the war had impacted on Tameside.
- 9.4.9 Throughout the whole service the importance of consultation and community ownership has been recognised in the process of exhibition planning. We maintain good links with Tameside Local History Forum and have worked with them to create displays within the museum. For example, volunteers from the Forum researched the names on the Ashton Grammar School memorial referred to in the previous paragraph 9.4.7. The relationships built have been invaluable and have helped us to be more responsive to the needs and desires of local residents. The expertise that is found in these local groups has also improved our historical knowledge of the local area.
- 9.4.10 Over the past five years we have broadened our circle of community partnerships and built relationships with the broader arts sector. Supported by the Council's Arts and Engagement team, we have hosted a far wider range of events and activities at the museum than in previous years and have been part of long term projects with community partners. Events have been created with Scallywags Theatre Company, MadLab, 2 Boards and a Passion, Z-arts, Mad Science and Safari Phil, amongst many others. For example, to celebrate the museum's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday in March 2019, we worked with Z-arts to create the 'Big Birthday Bash'. This event was attended by 1300 people and saw the museum filled with costumed characters, musicians and a magician who interacted with visitors and the museum's displays as part of a big birthday party.
- 9.4.11 The building in which Portland Basin Museum is housed is not owned by the council, but by an independent landlord, Sanctuary Housing. The museum is maintained by Robertson on behalf of Tameside Council. Bridge View Café is owned and run by a private contractor, meaning the café is completely independent of the museum. We maintain a good working relationship with the café operators, which helps to support the whole visitor experience. We also have no control over the boats which are moored and operated from the wharf. Tameside Canal Boat Trust, The Wooden Canal Boat Society and Community Spirit all operate from Portland Basin. We maintain good relationships with these organisations and support the promotion of their work and services to museum visitors where feasible, and welcome opportunities to work with them.

## **9.5 Astley Cheetham Art Gallery**

- 9.5.1 Astley Cheetham Art Gallery is located on Trinity Street in Stalybridge, above Stalybridge library.
- 9.5.2 Astley Cheetham Art Gallery opened in 1932, following a donation of money for the building of a library and art gallery in 1889 by the Cheetham family of Stalybridge and the subsequent receipt of the Cheetham family bequest of paintings. The original collection has since been added to and now comprises over 500 paintings and illustrations. It is widely acknowledged as being one of the finest small regional collections. The gallery was totally refurbished in 1996 and redecorated again in 2002.
- 9.5.3 Between 2013 and February 2019, the gallery was open for two Saturdays per month and every Saturday in August. Following the closure of Central Art Gallery in Ashton-under-

Lyne in February 2019, the opening hours of Astley Cheetham Art Gallery have increased to 17 hours per week.

- 9.5.4 Exhibitions are changed at the gallery every six months and have mainly showcased the Astley Cheetham art collection. These exhibitions have included 'Colour: The Art of Powerful Pigment', 'Once Upon A Time', 'Nature in Art' and 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. Some exhibitions were created in partnership with the community. In 2016 the 'Discovering Cockbrook' exhibition was the result of a collaboration between the gallery, Tameside Local History Forum's History of Your Doorstep group, Ashton Photographic Society and Interference Art. In 2017 'Tameside's Best' exhibition featured favourite artworks from the collection as voted for by the public in an online survey. Other exhibitions have tied in with national anniversaries, for example 'Art Treasures' in 2018 celebrated 250 years of the Royal Academy with a display of artworks from the collection. The Open Art exhibition has returned to the gallery following the closure of Central Art Gallery giving members of the public the chance to have their artworks on display.
- 9.5.5 A display case on the first landing of the staircase is used as a changing display space. Over the past few years there have been displays of objects from the social history collection, quilts made by Stalybridge Patchwork and Quilters Group, artworks by local artists and textiles by the local branch of the Embroiderers' Guild.
- 9.5.6 The gallery also displays some other items from the Museums and Galleries collection, including a small collection of Ancient Egypt artefacts donated to the gallery in 1933.
- 9.5.7 There is always a craft activity available for family visitors and there is a selection of children's art books for children to read and be inspired by. There is usually a trail to accompany each exhibition, such as an I-Spy trail of things to spot in the artworks. An exhibition in 2014, 'Animal Magic', was aimed at children, with the paintings hung lower on the wall and with interpretation aimed at a younger audience. The Arts and Engagement team regularly programme children's theatre performances at the gallery during the school holidays as well as screenings of films such as Stick Man.
- 9.5.8 The gallery is part of Visit England's Visitor Assurance Quality Assessment Scheme. In 2018 the gallery achieved its highest score of 72% following the annual mystery shop. The quality of the exhibitions, the impressiveness of the art collection and the high level of customer care were highlighted as strengths. This is an annual assessment and allows the gallery to display the Visit England logo, showing that it provides a quality visitor experience.
- 9.5.9 It is proposed to redevelop the art gallery and make it an attractive, engaging, must-see destination which attracts both a local audience and tourists to the town. There are a number of improvements which will need to be implemented to the fabric of the building to achieve this aim, some of which will require Listed Building Consent as the building is Grade II listed. The gallery would remain predominantly a space to showcase the Astley Cheetham collection but could also be used for temporary exhibitions such as Open Art and for local artist exhibitions. It is proposed to install moveable walls which would allow more than one theme to be displayed at a time.
- 9.5.10 The gallery is accessible via a staircase from the library. An Access Audit of the gallery is available for the public to view on the website.
- 9.5.11 To mitigate the loss of Central Art Gallery in Ashton-under-Lyne, space for an art gallery has been incorporated into plans alongside the new Museum of the Manchester Regiment in Ashton Town Hall.

## **9.6 Museum of the Manchester Regiment**

- 9.6.1 The museum, formerly situated on the first floor in Ashton Town Hall, is run by the Museum Service on behalf of the trustees of the Manchester Regiment. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, Colonel-in-Chief of the Manchester Regiment and the King's Regiment, opened the original museum in 1987. Part of the museum was redeveloped in 2002 and reopened by His Royal Highness Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales. The Forshaw Gallery was completely redeveloped in 2006.
- 9.6.2 The Museum tells the history of the Regiment from the foundation of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Regiment in 1758 to the eventual amalgamation with the King's Regiment in 1958, and up to today as part of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. The Manchester Regiment was formed in 1881 and had its headquarters in Ladysmith Barracks in Ashton-under-Lyne and as a result the majority of its recruits came from the surrounding towns that now make up Tameside. The displays centred on real life stories and utilised a diversity of display techniques and interactives to interpret the collections. It displayed over 2,200 service medals awarded to over 800 soldiers. The Manchester Regiment saw active service in the First World War and the famous war poet Wilfred Owen was serving with the regiment when he was killed in action in 1918.
- 9.6.3 The museum collection consists of medals (including six Victoria Crosses), uniforms, weapons, equipment, silverware, memorials and personal souvenirs.
- 9.6.4 Due to the closure of Ashton Town Hall upon its separation from the previous Council office building the Museums had to temporarily close in May 2015. A funding application was submitted by the Council to the Heritage Lottery Fund in February 2018 to create a new museum in the ground floor space at Ashton Town hall, using plans drawn up by museum designers, Redman. If successful this new museum would have been developed alongside the refurbishment of the wider Town Hall building. Unfortunately the bid failed at stage 1 of the HLF process with the reason being stated as an oversubscription to the fund and strong competition from other bids. A request for £1m has been included in the wider Ashton Town Hall development from the Council's capital programme. If the funding bid and business case is successful this would be utilised to fund a new Museum of the Manchester Regiment.
- 9.6.5 During the closure of the museum, many of its functions have continued. The Museum Service continues to care for the collection and accept offers of objects. The Curators have responded to many requests from family members to view relatives' medals and other items, which we have assisted with where possible. We also continue to respond to family history enquiries relating to soldiers who served in the Manchester Regiment and the Local Studies and Archives Centre continue to accept offers of paper items.
- 9.6.6 We continue to promote Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre as the depository for paper items related to the Manchester Regiment and as the first point of call for family research.
- 9.6.7 There have been several displays of Manchester Regiment objects at Portland Basin Museum, including for the centenary of the Somme, the centenary of the battle of Manchester Hill, the anniversary of the start of the Boer War and a case of new acquisitions.
- 9.6.8 The 'Meet Tommy Atkins' sessions, where visitors can meet a costumed First World War character, have been held at Portland Basin Museum during the Museum's closure. Outreach sessions using the Tommy Atkins character continue to be offered and taken up by schools.

9.6.9 In 2013 we completed a major project, The Men Behind the Medals, funded by Esme Fairbairn. Over 800 men were comprehensively researched and a 9 volume compendium of their life and times published alongside a new website. This work has been widely celebrated among other UK Regimental and Corps Museums and the wider museum sector. The project has provided a lasting legacy to deal with future donations and a wealth of personal soldiers' stories that can be interpreted in the new museum. New medals acquired since 2013 are being researched by a volunteer and information about the soldiers' stories will be added to the website.

9.6.10 The Museum's Stitch In Time group, who were featured in the Museums Association's 'Museums Change Lives' publication and also acclaimed in the Museums Journal for its contribution to the health and wellbeing of participants, continued to meet after the closure of the Museum. It is planned to relaunch the group in the new museum.

## 9.7 Education and Learning

Number of pupils (aged 4 to 16 years) visiting in organised school groups. (2013-2019)

Year	Portland Basin Museum	Museum of the Manchester Regiment	Astley Cheetham Art Gallery	Central Art Gallery	All Sites Total
2013/2014	3,094	175	0*	481	<b>3,750</b>
2014/2015	2,962	358	25*	484	<b>3,829</b>
2015/2016	2,502	8*	0*	294	<b>2,804</b>
2016/2017	2,158	0*	0*	612	<b>2,770</b>
2017/2018	2,860	0*	0*	661	<b>3,521</b>
2018/2019	3,269	0*	0*	337*	<b>3,606</b>

\*The Museum of the Manchester Regiment closed for redevelopment in May 2015 and Astley Cheetham Art Gallery was open two Saturdays per month until February 2019. Central Art Gallery closed in February 2019.

9.7.1 A museum or gallery is a unique resource as it is based on first hand experience of 'real' objects. The service is in the valuable position of bringing history and the visual arts to life, with the museums providing access to the past and the galleries offering an insight into the artistic processes, giving greater understanding of the social and economic place of art within the community.

9.7.2 For a long time the service has believed that the learning experiences within the museums and galleries extend far beyond formal education. We aim to create special moments of inspiration and excitement for all our visitors no matter what their age.

9.7.3 All facilitated art and history sessions are delivered by freelance facilitators, booked as and when needed. The museum is able to offer discounted Yellow Bus travel to schools.

9.7.4 History workshops offered by the service include 'Home and Hearth', 'Victorian Toys', 'Upstairs Downstairs' and 'Tameside Transport'. Art workshops offered include 'Art from Tameside', 'Pattern', 'Portraits' and 'Trades from Tameside'. Opportunities for linked visits with the Outdoor Learning sessions offered by the Arts and Engagement service are also promoted to schools.

9.7.5 Workshops are marketed via the website, regular emails to schools and also a promotional leaflet. The marketing resources were reviewed and rebranded in 2017 and given a

consistent look and feel across Museums and Galleries, Tameside Local Studies and Archives and the Outdoor Learning offer. Evaluation forms are filled in by teachers following their visits and help inform improvements to the service.

- 9.7.6 Since 2014 Cultural Services has worked to embed Arts Award in our working practices and as a result has been awarded the status of good practice centre for Arts Award delivery by Trinity College. Arts Award is a national qualification and arts programme for children and young people aged 5 to 25 and is supported by Arts Council England and managed by Trinity College. It provides a learning pathway in arts and culture and has become a major success for Tameside as a whole. The Cultural Services team support the programme in schools, colleges, community settings and with harder-to-reach groups through training and development days for leaders and advisers, and also by providing bespoke learning logs. The service has also trained an infrastructure of more than 150 advisers in schools, cultural organisations and in community settings. We plan to continue to support Arts Award in our schools offer.
- 9.7.7 In addition to formal schools education we also provide a series of adult 'I Made It' masterclass workshops where participants can learn a range of skills such as crochet, screen printing, painting and willow weaving. An out of schools workshop programme, museum trails and worksheets are also offered.
- 9.7.8 The Museum Service offers a comprehensive loan box service, with boxes on a wide range of topics, including First World War, National Service, Domestic Life, Toys, Victorian Schoolroom, Local Artists and Seaside Holidays. The boxes are charged at £30 per week for schools and £5 per day for community groups. The boxes were redeveloped in 2015 and continue to be well used.
- 9.7.9 The provision of family friendly events across all sites is now seen as an established part of our work. In 2018 the service successfully applied to be part of Museum Development North West's Family Friendly programme. This included support and advice from organisations including *Kids in Museum* and *Family Arts Standard*, feedback from family visitors and a small grant to develop new trail sheets for Portland Basin Museum. We plan to build on this work over the next few years and add more resources for families at our sites and online.
- 9.7.10 Education and learning provision is at the heart of our aims and ambitions. Learning is considered in the planning of all displays, exhibitions and interpretation. We consider how exhibitions and permanent displays relate to the school curriculum and the general interest of the visiting public.
- 9.7.11 We endeavor to continue with the development of our formal education offer to schools, with additional workshops being added to or amended each academic year across Cultural Services. Next academic year we are looking to add a workshop that links literacy to both our collections and sites.

## **9.8 Audience Development**

- 9.8.1 From audience feedback via surveys, comments books, conversations and social media, we know that the key audiences at Portland Basin Museum are families, schools, older visitors often visiting on a coach tour, special needs groups, and local history / industrial history enthusiasts. Our programme of events, exhibitions, interpretation and the permanent displays aim to cater for the needs of these different audiences.
- 9.8.2 Less information has been collected about the motivations behind visitors to Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and this is an area for development during this Forward Plan. An electronic visitor survey will be carried out with visitors from 2019 and more consultation will be carried out with non-visitors.

- 9.8.3 There has been a strong focus on developing the family offer at Portland Basin Museum over the past five years and families will continue to be a key target audience. Encouraging more families to visit Astley Cheetham Art Gallery will follow on from this, as well as encouraging more schools to visit the gallery.
- 9.8.4 Consultation carried out in early 2018 around the proposals to redevelop the Museum of the Manchester Regiment will also inform the audience development plan.
- 9.8.5 Feedback from non-visitors to our sites shows that one of the reasons people have not visited is that they did not know the museums and galleries existed. An important part of our audience development plans include thoroughly reviewing our existing marketing methods to create a marketing strategy that will enable us to best use our resources to reach our target audiences, both within Tameside and further afield.

## **9.9 Museum and Gallery Storage and Collections Management**

- 9.9.1 Collections are held in trust for public enjoyment, inspiration and learning. We support and strive to achieve national standards in collections care, set out in the Museum Accreditation scheme, to ensure the preservation and appropriate acquisition of collections for the benefit of future generations.
- 9.9.2 The reserve collection of any museum is a vitally important part of the service offered to the public. It acts as a repository for the heritage of the region and plays a key part in long-term preservation of collections.
- 9.9.3 The Local Studies and Archives Centre in Ashton-under-Lyne stores, cares for and makes accessible the borough's paper-based heritage. The Museums and Galleries care for objects and artworks. There is much cross over between our collections, and the collecting priorities of the Local Studies and Archives Centre are referenced in our Collections Development Plan.
- 9.9.4 When not on display, the museum and art collections are stored off site, where they are catalogued and cared for by the Curator and Assistant Curator. Environmental monitoring at the off-site stores is carried out quarterly.
- 9.9.5 The stores were subject to flooding in 2018 when lead was stolen off part of the roof. Vulnerable parts of the collection were moved to safety and there was no damage to the collection. However a large number of archival boxes in which the collection is stored have needed replacement and the stores remained inaccessible for several months, which delayed work on the actions of the Documentation Plan.
- 9.9.6 A Sustainable Improvement Fund grant from Museum Development North West in 2018 has helped fund more archival boxes, acid free tissue, object marking equipment, accession registers and other items related to collections management and storage.

## **9.10 Conservation**

- 9.10.1 The Museum Service's Care and Conservation Policy sets out the approach taken to collections care and conservation, including environmental monitoring and adherence to museum sector standards.
- 9.10.2 The Museum Service's Care and Conservation Plan details the artefacts that have been treated in recent years and the sources of funding acquired. It also prioritises areas for conservation treatment moving forward.

## **9.11 Documentation**

9.11.1 In the past few years a great deal of work has gone into rectifying our documentation backlog. The collection is catalogued on MODES, which was upgraded to the most up-to-date version, MODES Complete, in 2014. Our Documentation Policy and Collections Development Policy set out in detail what we collect, why we collect and areas for collection development.

9.11.2 In 2018, we successfully applied to be part of Museum Development North West's Banish the Backlog programme. There is a small backlog in the social history collection and military history collection and this programme is aimed at helping tackle these backlogs in an achievable and sustainable way. Under the mentorship of the Collections Trust, the Curator and Assistant Curator have created a schedule of work over the next few years to address the outstanding issues. This plan is outlined in detail in our Documentation Plan and forms an objective of this Forward Plan.

## **9.12 Environmental Sustainability**

9.12.1 We are committed to working towards the goals of environmental sustainability. We recognise our responsibility in trying to reduce our impact on the environment and the opportunities we have to influence suppliers, contractors and visitors, and we recognise the contribution we can make towards the regeneration and sustainability of our local communities.

9.12.2 We will look to improve our commitment by:

- Seeking to achieve sustainability targets set by government and the Council.
- Working with partners in the implementation of energy saving measures.
- Minimising waste through the reduction, re-use and recycling of materials and by using reconditioned and recycled products where such alternatives are available.
- Encourage staff awareness through communication and training and recognise that staff engagement is an important and key factor for success. All staff to work in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.
- Engage with visitors and partners to share our vision and to raise awareness of sustainability issues.
- Introduce green workplace initiatives to lead to reductions in energy usage.
- Ensure consideration is given to the impact on the environment and sustainability before committing expenditure or beginning any new projects.
- Conserve energy, water, fuel and products from natural resources whenever possible.
- To commit to involvement and support for green initiatives set by the Council.
- Supporting sustainable and ethical suppliers in our museum shop and reducing use of single use plastic.

## **9.13 Review of the 2015-20 Forward Plan**

9.13.1 The following table sets out how we have met the aims and objectives set out in the previous Forward Plan.

*Objective 1: Ensure that our sites are maintained to a high standard, accessible, friendly and have the highest levels of customer care.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
1.1 Undertake Access Audits for all sites and action recommendations where feasible	<p>Access audits completed for each site in 2015 and made available on our website.</p> <p>Action plans drawn up for each site based on feedback from Visit England's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme.</p> <p>Autism audit of Portland Basin Museum undertaken in May 2019 with the Council's autism lead.</p>
1.2 Maintain current levels of physical and intellectual access	<p>Portland Basin Museum has maintained levels of access.</p> <p>The Museum of the Manchester Regiment closed in May 2015 and plans are in place for redevelopment within Ashton Town Hall that will increase physical accessibility.</p> <p>Central Art Gallery closed in February 2019 but opening hours at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery have been increased to retain access to the art collection and activities. There are plans for art gallery space within Ashton Town Hall as part of the Manchester Regiment Museum redevelopment.</p>
1.3 Maintain and develop content for the council website and associated websites	<p>Access audit information was added to the website in 2015.</p> <p>Events and exhibitions are updated on the website regularly.</p> <p>A website was created to promote the four touring Generation exhibitions created with three partner art galleries in 2014-16, funded by ACE.</p> <p>Paintings in our art collection are accessible on the Art UK website and on Bridgeman Art Library. Sculpture in our collection has been photographed in 2019 for addition to the Art UK website.</p> <p>Men Behind the Medals website is maintained.</p>
1.4 Ensure the Men Behind the Medals resources are maintained	<p>Research is being undertaken by a volunteer for medals acquired since the Men Behind the Medals project was completed in 2014.</p>
1.5 Deliver Documentation Plan objectives including placing selected records on-line	<p>The majority of the medal collection is online on the Men Behind the Medals website. Many artworks are accessible on the Art UK website and on Bridgeman Art Library. Sculpture in our collection has been photographed in 2019 for addition to the Art UK website.</p>

*Objective 2: Ensure that all sites demonstrate the highest levels of Customer Care.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
2.1 Ensure all Council-wide equalities training is fully implemented and actively seek added value for all staff, such as GMMG training	<p>Staff undertake annual council-wide on-line training on topics such as Health and Safety, Fire Safety and Information Management.</p> <p>Museums Manager and Curator were part of a GMMG Aspiring Leaders programme in 2014-15.</p> <p>Dementia Friends sessions attended by all staff.</p>

	Front of House training day in May 2019 included a session by TMBC's autism lead.
2.2 Ensure all staff have up to date Customer First Training	Relevant customer service training is tailored to meet staff needs.
2.3 Complete Annual Development Reviews and progress agreed training	Annual Development Reviews are completed annually and training needs are reported to TMBC's Workforce Development.
2.4 Ensure Casual Front-of-House register is maintained in relation to service needs	Recruitment to the Casual register took place in 2015 to support programming across Cultural Services. Further recruitment is due in 2019.
2.5 Monitor absence levels	Absence levels are monitored and reported to HR monthly. TMBC's Managing Attendance procedure is adhered to.
2.6 Review and develop Operation Manuals for all sites	Completed 2015 and being reviewed and updated 2019.

*Objective 3: That all sites uphold the highest health and safety standards, minimising risks for both staff and visitors.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
3.1 Maintain annual VAQAS status and action recommendations where feasible	VAQAS has been maintained for all open sites annually. Portland Basin Museum and Astley Cheetham Art Gallery achieved their highest ever scores in 2019 of 79% and 72% respectively. Action plans are created annually and issues addressed.
3.2 Ensure new staff have DBS checks and investigate retrospective checks with HR department	Current HR procedures are adhered to.
3.3 Review service wide Emergency Plans	Emergency plans for each site were revised in 2018 and are subject to annual review.  Business Continuity Plans were updated in 2019 and reported to TMBC's Risk Management and Audit Service.
3.4 Complete Health and Safety audits at all sites	Health and safety audits are completed annually at each site. Health and safety risk assessments are maintained for activities and events taking place within the museums and galleries.

*Objective 4: To ensure we provide high quality visitor services attracting tourism into the borough, which in turn will attract new business investment.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
4.1 Plan a series of maintenance and replacement of interactive models throughout the service	Plans for the redevelopment of Astley Cheetham Art Gallery drawn up in 2018 incorporating interactive elements. Listed Building Consent being sought 2019.  Plans developed with Redman Associates for the redevelopment of the Museum of the Manchester Regiment in 2017 incorporating interactive elements.

	<p>Portland Basin Museum's under 5s play area refurbished 2019 incorporating an interactive sit-on train model, a new reading corner and a refurbishment of the existing popular market stall.</p> <p>New trails and activity sheets created for Portland Basin Museum in spring 2019.</p> <p>Maintenance of interactive elements of displays and exhibitions at Portland Basin Museum is ongoing.</p>
4.2 Re-carpet reception area at Central Art Gallery	Not done – Central Art Gallery closed February 2019.
4.3 Create a marketing Strategy for the Museum Service as part of Cultural Services department	<p>Insufficient time to complete in this period but will roll forward as an action for 2019-24. More work on audience development needs to be carried out 2019-24 to inform the marketing strategy.</p> <p>Museum Manager attended a marketing strategy workshop organised by Museum Development North West.</p> <p>Branding across Cultural Services devised for leaflets and posters.</p>
4.4 To actively contribute to any future tourism developments within the borough, when required	The plans drawn up to redevelop the Museum of the Manchester Regiment and Astley Cheetham Art Gallery will contribute to the tourism of the borough.

*Objective 5: To develop closer links with community groups.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
5.1 Meet with leaders of Black and Minority Ethnic communities to consult on service provision	<p>Portland Basin Museum hosted Kumbu Kumbu in 2014, a HLF project led by Tameside African Refugee Association involving two African cultural events days, an art exhibition and a fashion show at the museum.</p> <p>An arts project highlighting Hate Crime took place at the museum with participants creating banners, badges and bags. The exhibition toured to Bennett Street Youth Centre, Hattersley Hub and Z-arts during 2014-15.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum supported a PANDA placement in 2015-16 culminating in an exhibition highlighting issues facing young black women.</p>
5.2 Continue active membership of community forums and establish new links with emerging groups	<p>Close links are maintained with the Local History Forum and Portland Basin Museum has hosted exhibitions created by the group in 2018 (Women of Tameside) and 2019 (Peterloo).</p> <p>Tameside Archaeological Society hold an annual finds day at the museum as part of the Festival of Archaeology.</p> <p>Tameside's Wildways group created raised beds and a bug hotel on the wharf at Portland Basin Museum in 2016.</p> <p>Museum staff worked with the community group at Ryecroft Hall to install a display about the First World War.</p> <p>Links have been established with Be Well Tameside and Shelter, who have used Portland Basin Museum as a</p>

	<p>starting point for running events.</p> <p>Exhibitions held at Central Art Gallery to support and promote the work of local groups and schools.</p>
5.3 Work with local heritage groups to record and preserve Tameside's Heritage	<p>Volunteers from Tameside Local History Forum and Cheshire Family History Society researched the Ashton Grammar School memorial as part of our Heritage Lottery Funded project in 2014.</p> <p>Worked with Tameside Local History Forum's 'History On Your Doorstep' group to create an exhibition at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery in 2016 looking at the local heritage of Cockbrook.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum hosted the Tameside Local History Forum exhibitions in 2018 (Women of Tameside) and 2019 (Peterloo).</p> <p>Tameside Local History Forum research contributed to an exhibition on 70 Years of the NHS at Central Art Gallery in 2018.</p>
5.4 Maintain relationships and nurture developments with existing users: Knit and Natter, Stitch-in-Time and Quilting Bee, PB café and other site users	<p>Groups have been maintained and supported across the sites. Central Art Gallery closed in 2019 leading to Knit and Natter finding an alternative venue. Stitch in Time temporarily disbanded in 2019 and will be relaunched in the new Museum of the Manchester Regiment.</p> <p>Quilting Bee have contributed to several projects, including Radical Locks in 2018-19, which was an artist led project bringing together women's groups across Tameside to mark 100 years of some women gaining the vote.</p> <p>Dementia Awareness Week and Older People's Day have been supported through events at Portland Basin Museum.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum's old street regularly used by individuals and groups for filming, such as Blackpool College film studies students.</p> <p>Closer links are being developed with the Wooden Canal Boat Society which will be built on during 2019-24.</p>
5.5 Investigate increasing volunteering opportunities	<p>Several volunteers and works placements have been supported. Volunteers have helped write articles for newspaper publication, researched medals and helped with cataloguing and photographing the collection.</p> <p>A new volunteer handbook is being drawn up in 2019 and volunteers are being actively recruited to support with specific tasks.</p>

*Objective 6: To work with other services to provide events and facilities that promote understanding and good relations between different communities.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
6.1 Contribute towards community based activities in partnership with Arts and Engagement team	Museum staff have actively worked with colleagues from the Arts and Engagement team throughout the past five years, such as Museums at Night in 2015; a community Day of Action at Portland Basin Museum in 2017; the Radical Locks project in 2019; annual Armed Forces Days.

	The Arts and Engagement team continue to support Museums and Galleries by programming high quality events and activities across the sites, including children's theatre, workshops and cinema screenings at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and events by popular providers including Safari Phil, MadLab, 2 Boards and a Passion, Stone Soup, Scallywags theatre Company, Z-arts at Central Art Gallery and Portland Basin Museum.
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*Objective 7: Ensure high quality exhibitions and activities within all sites.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
7.1 Obtain additional funding for exhibition programming	<p>In 2014 the Museum Service partnered with three other galleries in the north of England in a successful bid to Art Council England's Strategic Touring Fund for £150,000 to make contemporary art accessible for families. <i>Generation</i> resulted in four touring exhibitions created by four different artists being shown at Central Art Gallery between 2014 and 2016. The exhibitions increased family audiences to the gallery and increased their confidence in accessing contemporary art.</p> <p>A grant of £10,000 was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund's First World War Then and Now fund in 2014. The project funded the conservation of a wooden war memorial in the museum's collection commemorating men from Ashton Grammar School who were killed in the war. The names on the memorial were researched by volunteers from Tameside Local History Forum and a piece of promenade theatre, named Pack Up Your Troubles, was created between local theatre company 2 Boards and Passion and Ashton Sixth Form College students. The memorial and associated exhibition remained on display until 2019.</p> <p>A grant of £10,000 was obtained from Arts and Heritage in 2017 to support an artist to create an artistic response to collections at Portland Basin Museum. Artist Magnus Quaife focussed on the museum's collections from Gartside brewery and set about working with a local brewery in Mossley to recreate an original Gartside beer recipe. The beer was served at an evening event at the museum, alongside canapes created by catering students from Tameside College using the beer as an ingredient.</p>
7.2 Ensure all programming has a clearly defined Impact aim as per Museums Change Lives initiative	All museum and gallery activities support the Museums Change Lives aims of enhancing wellbeing, creating better places and inspiring people and ideas.
7.3 Work with GMMG to develop joint exhibitions and loans, regionally and internationally	<p>GMMG branded exhibitions were created in 2015 in each borough incorporating objects from across all the GMMG museum services.</p> <p>The GMMG website and on-line exhibition, Our Connected History, remains live.</p> <p>A painting from the Astley Cheetham Art Collection, Babbacombe Bay, was loaned to Exeter Museums Service</p>

	<p>in 2017 and there are plans to loan two artworks from the collection to National Palace Museums Taipei as part of an International Touring exhibition led by Bury Art Museum.</p>
<p>7.4 Create and deliver a range of First World War commemorative activities across sites and in the community.</p>	<p>In 2014, Stone Soup was commissioned to create educational resources for Key Stage 3 to accompany the museum's loan boxes. The project was funded via the MOD in a grant secured through the Arts and Engagement team.</p> <p>A grant of £10,000 was obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Ashton Grammar School Memorial project (see 7.1)</p> <p>A temporary exhibition, <i>Tameside's War</i>, was created at Portland Basin Museum in 2014 using objects from the museum's collection to tell the story of recruitment, local soldiers, life in the trenches and families left at home.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum's 1920s street was reinterpreted as a 1914-18 Street for the duration of the centenary. New text panels were created for each roomset based on research undertaken in the Local Studies and Archives Centre focusing on life in Tameside during the war.</p> <p><i>Meet Tommy Atkins</i> sessions, were held at the Museum of the Manchester Regiment and from 2015 at Portland Basin Museum during the school holidays. In the sessions a costumed interpreter demonstrates the kit and equipment a First World War soldier would have carried.</p> <p>A leaflet was produced outlining all the First World War centenary events and exhibitions organised by Tameside Cultural Services.</p>

*Objective 8: Ensure a high profile within the borough and region engendering a sense of ownership within the borough and a positive reputation within the region.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
<p>8.1 Consult with the Council's Marketing and Communications team on maximising press impact</p>	<p>Exhibitions and events are regularly promoted through the Council's social media.</p> <p>The Marketing and Communications team write and approve all press releases and provide support in gaining press and radio coverage.</p> <p>Museums and Galleries contribute directly to the Tameside Culture Twitter and Pinterest feeds.</p>
<p>8.2 Gain press coverage for all significant activities undertaken by the Service: grant funding, exhibitions, events, activities, etc</p>	<p>Museums and Galleries have a regular column in the Manchester Weekly and use it to promote events, exhibitions and the collections.</p> <p>Significant projects and exhibitions, including the Gartside Beer Brewing project, the Generation exhibitions and the Ashton Grammar School Memorial project have gained excellent coverage in local and regional press.</p>
<p>8.3 Investigate the removal of redundant brown signs</p>	<p>Museums and Galleries have supported TMBC in identifying redundant brown signs. There are still redundant brown signs across the borough to be removed.</p>

8.4 Direct mailings of publicity material to local community groups and individuals using centralised marketing database in development	Not been possible to complete in this period and so the action will be carried forward to 2019-24 as part of the work to create a Marketing Strategy.
8.5 Conduct familiarisation visits for all new staff members of Cultural Services	All new museum staff have had a tour of the Local Studies and Archives Centre and of the museum's stores. A Front of House training day in May 2019 included a 'Who's Who' section to familiarise new staff with the roles of staff across Cultural and Customer Services.
8.6 Ongoing review of website content and services	New updates to the website planned for 2019-20 to highlight what's available for families across the sites and also information for people with autism, following learning from our participation in Museum Development North West Family Friendly Programme.
8.7 Ensure a maximum number of council departments / initiatives are fully aware of the Museum Service's offer and abilities eg health and wellbeing	Museums and Galleries are promoted council-wide via the Chief Executive's Weekly Brief, the Operations and Neighbourhoods Weekly Brief, the Live Wire monthly newsletter and the staff portal. Tameside schools are regularly emailed regarding the Cultural Services schools offer. The Museum Service is regularly approached by other council departments to be involved in initiatives for example: Tameside Markets approached Cultural Services in 2019 to manage a new gallery space within an empty market stall in Ashton Market. The Youth Service approached the service in 2019 with a view to partnership working on exhibitions. The service was asked to contribute ideas to the development of Denton Wellbeing Centre in 2018. Action for Tameside has based Dementia Awareness Week activities and other wellbeing activities at Portland Basin Museum. Launch of the council's Water Refill Scheme held at Portland Basin 2019.
8.8 Actively contribute to wider museum sector discussions and initiatives	Museum staff attend regular GMMG meetings and take part in GMMG initiatives. The service participates in Museum Development North West programmes and initiatives and participates in the annual benchmarking of North West museums.

*Objective 9: Ensure that the borough's museums, galleries and collections are cared for and added to for future generations.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
9.1 Complete Accreditation Return for all sites when invited	Ongoing
9.2 Review all policies / plans as required for	All policies are reviewed within the cycle specified for each

Accreditation return	policy. Plans are reviewed annually.
9.3 Manchester Regiment loan agreement renewal due 2017	This renewal has been delayed due to the museum redevelopment but is due to be finalised in 2019.

*Objective 10: To ensure that the collections are relevant to the needs of the community and actively collecting contemporary and Twentieth / Twenty First Century objects which will benefit the future generations of Tameside residents.*

Action	Activity completed
10.1 Identify additional funding for active / contemporary collecting	Funding has been secured from AMOT for the purchase of a set of medals relating to Sgt Harry Grantham, for whom there is a blue plaque in Ashton.
10.2 Pursue an active collecting policy to plug gaps in the collection especially in relation to anticipated future programming needs	Collecting is undertaken in line with our Collections Development Policy.

*Objective 11: To develop a documentation system which will give curators and the public quickly accessible and accurate information about any accession within the collection.*

Action	Activity completed
11.1 Ensure Documentation Plan is kept up to date and timescales met	This work is ongoing as part of the Banish the Backlog project. The Documentation Plans is reviewed regularly and progress updated.
11.2 Ensure Documentation Policy is kept up to date	The Documentation Policy is reviewed and kept up to date in line with its review cycle.
11.3 Ensure Documentation Procedural Manual is kept up to date	The Documentation Procedures Manual has been updated in 2019 to reflect the new Spectrum 5.0.
11.4 Continue to process all new acquisitions within 28 days of receipt	All new acquisitions are processed within 28 days in line with the Documentation Procedures Manual to avoid generating a backlog.
11.5 Complete online collections project via MODES for Windows upgrade	MODES for Windows has been upgraded to MODES Complete. Medals and oil paintings are available to view online and sculpture is being added 2019.
11.6 Investigate new technology (applications and funding streams)	One of the <i>Generation</i> exhibitions utilised interactive mobile technology. Some objects labels incorporate QR codes that link to the GMMG <i>Our Connected Histories</i> website. Object records on a spreadsheet are being imported into MODES.

*Objective 12: To ensure the preservation of objects within the collection to the highest standards.*

Action	Activity completed
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12.1 Use Benchmarking for Collections Care to audit standard of collections management and action recommendations where feasible	<i>Benchmarking for Collections Care</i> was completed as part of an application for Sustainable Improvement Funding (SIF) from Museum Development North West in 2018. This benchmarking also contributed to our work on Banish the Backlog.
12.2 Identify and programme priority conservation of objects and paintings as per the Care and Conservation Plan	Objects have been identified as part of the plan. Work by the Curator and Assistant Curator to review the collections means this plan will be regularly revised.
12.3 Actively seek additional funding for conservation treatments	Funding was secured from HLF in 2014 to conserve the wooden Ashton Grammar School memorial.
12.4 Actively seek written quotes for object treatments in line with Care and Conservation Plan	A quote has been obtained to restore the Portland Basin waterwheel and funding for this will be pursued during the period 2019-24.
12.5 Monitor environmental conditions in museum stores	Environmental conditions continue to be monitored across all sites and stores, and the results logged quarterly by the Museum Technician.  New data loggers were purchased in 2018 using the SIF funding.
12.6 Action improvements which are needed for store conditions	New acid-free boxes, acid-free tissue, objects marking equipment and other collections related materials were purchased in 2018 using the SIF funding to improve the storage of the collection.

*Objective 13: To secure and improve the storage provision for the permanent collections.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
13.1 Monitor developments with off-site storage facility	The museum stores remain in situ and improvements are ongoing to the storage of the collection. There was a flood in 2017 following the theft of lead from the roof.
13.2 Continue rationalisation of the collections as per approved plans	The Curator and Assistant Curator joined the service in 2018 and 2017 respectively and have taken over the work of cataloguing the collections. As part of Banish the Backlog, a Museum Development North West funded project, an improved Documentation Plan has been devised to tackle the existing backlog in the social history collection.
13.3 Continue store improvements as per approved plans	New acid-free boxes, acid-free tissue, objects marking equipment and other collections related materials were purchased in 2018 to improve the storage of the collection.
13.4 Implement storage improvement plans	The Curator and Assistant Curator spend one day per week in the stores, continuing the inventory of the social history collection. Objects previously on display in the Museum of the Manchester Regiment have been audited and their storage improved.

*Objective 14: To ensure that the service maintains the highest level of security at all sites for the collection.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
14.1 Implement recommendations identified in Security Review 2014 across all sites	Recommendations have been implemented.
14.2 Undertake collections valuations programme for all collections	Valuations were undertaken in 2015, and will be undertaken again in 2020 as part of a 5 year programme.

*Objective 15: To increase our education and event provision, increasing the number of school pupils visiting our sites.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
15.1 Review schools programme in light of curriculum changes	All workshops have been reviewed by the Education Manager and changes made where relevant. Schools have continued to book popular workshops despite curriculum changes. These will continue to be reviewed to ensure the service remains relevant.
15.2 Review teaching packs and information	Teaching resources offered to teachers have been reviewed.
15.3 Develop new teaching packs and supporting material	New workshop outlines have been devised for each workshop using Cultural Services branding. A leaflet was produced in 2017 promoting educational provision across the services.
15.4 Develop new exhibitions policy for Museum Service	The policy for the service is to support community involvement in exhibitions, creating exhibitions relevant to key audiences and creating engaging and interactive exhibitions across the sites. The service is responsive to community needs and has a flexible can-do attitude.
15.5 Develop new Education Policy for Museum Service	A new focus over the period 2014-19 has been on integrating the Museum and Gallery education offer, the Outdoor Learning offer and the Local Studies and Archives learning offer to create a coherent cross-culture offer.
15.6 Actively seek funding opportunities to develop educational offer	A funding bid was submitted to HLF in 2017 to redevelop the Museum of the Manchester Regiment. This included consultation with local schools, a Mini Museum Makers project with two local schools and the creation of an Activity Plan which set out educational opportunities for the Museum of the Manchester Regiment. The bid was unsuccessful but the work carried out will feed into the museum redevelopment.
15.7 Contribute to Cultural Offer including Arts Award / Arts Mark	Arts Award has become a big part of Tameside's cultural offer over the past five years and the borough is one of the lead providers in the country. The Education Manager has devised a series of Arts Award logs for use by schools and groups, including logs specific to the Museums and Galleries.  In 2014 and 2015, Portland Basin Museum hosted two sleepovers for local Brownie groups. The Education

	Manager devised a Brownie Centenary Arts Award log to provide a focus for the sleepovers and to provide a learning outcome.
15.8 Consult with formal education sector as to their needs and investigate potential changes aimed at increasing usage	<p>Several focus days have been held at Portland Basin Museum involving teachers from the borough, showcasing what Cultural Services has to offer and finding out how we can improve this offer.</p> <p>Evaluation forms are filled by teachers following visits to museums and galleries and the feedback used to make improvements where possible.</p>
15.9 Develop adult learning programme for Museum Service	<p>A programme of <i>I Made It</i> masterclasses launched in 2015. These are monthly workshops held at Portland Basin Museum, and occasionally Astley Cheetham Art Gallery, which introduce people to a new craft skill. Workshops have included willow weaving, glass fusing, crochet, lino and screen printing, book binding, stone carving and water colour painting.</p> <p>The annual Open Art exhibition gives adults across the borough a platform to showcase their artistic talents.</p> <p>Reminiscence sessions are offered both at the museum and as outreach, and groups are able to borrow the museum's loan boxes for reminiscence.</p> <p>Events aimed at adults have been popular, including a local orchestra playing at Portland Basin Museum as part of Museums At Night in 2015; the Pack Up Your Troubles theatre piece created as part of the Ashton Grammar School project in 2014 and reprised in 2018; the launch of the Gartside beer in 2018 brought new audiences to the museum.</p>
15.10 Monitor educational visits on a monthly basis and produce annual report on developments.	All figures for school visits, workshops, outreach and activities are logged on an Annual Data Collection spreadsheet and feed into KPIs. An annual report highlighting key data is produced across Cultural Services.

*Objective 16: Ensure that the service continues to provide information in an interesting and stimulating way for all ages and abilities.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity completed</b>
16.1 Review interpretation across sites	<p>Plans have been developed with Redman Associates to create a new Museum of the Manchester Regiment using a variety of interpretation methods.</p> <p>Plans have been devised to redevelop Astley Cheetham Art Gallery to enable more of the collection to be displayed and to allow a space for local and regional artists to exhibit.</p> <p>Feedback from VAQAS regarding interpretation is taken on board and fed into action plans.</p> <p>The ACE funded <i>Generation</i> exhibitions at Central Art Gallery in 2014-16 saw contemporary art being interpreted in new and innovative ways.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum reinterpreted its 1920s street for the First World War centenary. In 2019 the street was</p>

	<p>interpreted back as 1920s, with new text panels and changes to the displays. A new large display case was purchased and installed at the entrance to the 1920s street in 2019, enabling many items previously held in storage to be displayed. It currently contains a display of domestic items from the past, providing further opportunities for reminiscence.</p> <p>Suffragette themed interventions were added to the 1920s street in 2018 to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of some women gaining the vote.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum regularly records exhibition tours with the NT Express website for people who are blind or visual impaired.</p>
<p>16.2 Review and develop interactive data at museums (Viewpoint)</p>	<p>Data from Viewpoint was kept for visitors to Portland Basin Museum, the Museum of the Manchester Regiment up to 2015 and at Central Art Gallery between 2015 and 2019. This data was recorded in quarterly reports. Viewpoint ceased to be supported financially by Museum Development North West in 2018.</p> <p>A new visitor survey, using Survey Monkey has been devised with support from TMBC's comms team. This survey will be available to be completed by visitors via a self-serve tablet at Portland Basin Museum and Astley Cheetham Art Gallery in 2019.</p> <p>A Survey Monkey survey was undertaken in early 2017, promoted on the council's website and via social media, with users and non-users of the Manchester Regiment to inform the redevelopment plans and the subsequent bid to HLF.</p>
<p>16.3 Develop community exhibition and outreach programmes</p>	<p>Several exhibitions over the past five years have involved community participation. A wedding dress exhibition at Central Art Gallery saw couples loaning their wedding outfits and photographs for display.</p> <p>The public were asked to vote via an online Survey Monkey for which artworks from the collection they wanted to see on display at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery as part of the <i>Tameside's Best</i> exhibition in 2018.</p> <p>The public have loaned their cherished childhood toys for <i>Toy Box Tales</i>, an exhibition at Portland Basin in 2019.</p> <p>An exhibition at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery in 2016 was the result of a community project between Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre and Tameside Local History Forum looking at the history of Cockbrook.</p> <p>The Museums and Galleries have a long history of encouraging schools participation in exhibitions and projects. The art galleries have held a bi-annual schools exhibition, StART for several years; schools have been involved in other gallery exhibitions including an exhibition celebrating 70 years of the NHS; Cultural Services worked with Z-arts and three Tameside schools in 2018 culminating in an exhibition of townscapes and the cotton industry at Portland Basin Museum.</p>

	<p>The service has supported local young carers since 2010 through weekly artist led activities at a local school.</p>
<p>16.4 Review 'early years' learning across all sites</p>	<p><i>Little Hands</i> was launched in January 2015 aimed at engaging pre-school children with the museum, supporting school-readiness, increasing confidence and skills among parents / carers and providing an enjoyable learning experience. The weekly sessions have proved popular, with excellent feedback from participants.</p> <p>The ACE funded <i>Generation</i> exhibitions at Central Art Gallery 2014-16 introduced a pre-school audience to contemporary art and gave parents the confidence to visit an art gallery, in many cases for the first time.</p> <p>Theatre productions aimed at a young audience have been held several times a year at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery since 2015.</p> <p>Groups of culturally dis-engaged parents with young children have been supported to visit Portland Basin Museum on days when the museum is closed.</p> <p>An exhibition of teddy bears at Portland Basin Museum in 2017 was aimed at an early years audience, with lots of hands-on activities, bright and engaging graphics and simple interpretation.</p> <p>Portland Basin Museum developed a new trail in 2019 aimed at children under 5 to encourage interaction between children, their parents / carers and the museum exhibits. A new trail for older children and an I-Spy trail were also devised. These were funded by Museum Development North West as part of their Family Friendly Programme.</p>
<p>16.5 Develop learning opportunities within off-store site, using the reserve collection</p>	<p>It has not been possible to develop learning opportunities at the off-site stores due to a flood in 2017 and subsequent clean up. Instead opportunities to use the reserve collection in different ways are being explored and will be developed throughout 2019-24.</p>
<p>16.6 Investigate new technologies and their potential applications</p>	<p>Tablets / iPads are being investigated to host a new visitor survey across the sites.</p> <p>Tablets / iPads form part of the interpretation in the plans for the new Museum of the Manchester Regiment.</p>
<p>16.7 develop further loan boxes – outreach for schools and community groups</p>	<p>In 2015 four new loan boxes were developed and three existing loan boxes were revamped. These were launched at Older People's Day in 2015 with a discount voucher scheme for care homes to encourage use of the boxes. Contents of the boxes is continually reviewed and improved.</p> <p>Resources aimed at Key Stage 3 were added to the Manchester Regiment loan boxes to support schools' learning around the First World War.</p>

## 10 CONSULTATION AND ANALYSIS OF VIEWS

- 10.1 Our main consultation tool up to spring 2018 was Viewpoint (previously Standpoint), a touchscreen interactive which recorded the experiences of visitors to Portland Basin Museum, the Museum of the Manchester Regiment and Central Art Gallery. This system ceased to be subsidised by Museums Development North West in 2018 and we are setting up a Survey Monkey interactive survey supported by the Council's Communications team.
- 10.2 Prior to the application to Heritage Lottery Fund in spring 2017 to redevelop the Museum of the Manchester Regiment Museum, we consulted with the public via the Council's Big Conversation. We also consulted with schools in Ashton and set up Mini Museum Makers with two local schools. Artist-led consultation was carried out with visitors at Portland Basin Museum and two local libraries. The chair of the Manchester Regiment Advisory Committee and the Regimental Trustees were also consulted. Results of the consultation informed the redevelopment plans and the HLF bid.
- 10.3 We listen to the comments made by our visitors about our sites and the services we offer, both through informal conversations and visitor comments books.
- 10.4 Portland Basin Museum in particular attracts much positive feedback via Trip Advisor and we respond to these comments. We have received their Certificate of Excellence each year since 2012, meaning visitors have rated us an average of 4.5 out of 5. For this consistent achievement, we are in Trip Advisor's Hall of Fame.
- 10.5 We make use of social media as a way of interacting with the public and promoting our activities. We regularly appear on the council's Facebook page and since May 2013 we have had our own Twitter account @tmbc\_culture. We are also on Pinterest and regularly check mentions about our sites on-line through Google alerts.
- 10.6 The Council has undertaken consultation with the public to inform this plan via a survey available both on-line on the Council's website and off-line in printed format at Portland Basin Museum, Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and posted out on request. We publicised this via social media, on the website, and via our regular article in the Manchester Weekly. The survey included ten questions asking respondents to say whether they had visited the museum and gallery sites, what kind of activities and exhibitions they would like to see in the sites, and their priorities for our future work.
- 10.7 The table below summarises the consultation results:

Question	Responses
1. What does a visit to a museum or art gallery mean to you?	A place to learn about my local heritage (88.75%) A fun trip out (78.75%) A social place to meet with friends / family (37.50%) A place to carry out research (38.75%) None of the above (1.25%)
2. Have you visited the following museums or galleries?	Portland Basin Museum (94.94%) Astley Cheetham Art Gallery (49.37%) Manchester Regiment Museum (59.49%) None of the above (2.53%)
3. If you have never visited the museums or galleries, what is the reason for this?	I didn't know they existed (52.63%) I don't visit museums or galleries (0.00%) I'm not interested in the subject matter of the museums or galleries (26.32%) Other (31.58%)
4. What do you think	Redevelop the Museum of the Manchester Regiment (48.15%)

the priorities should be for the next 3-5 years?	<p>Make improvements to Astley Cheetham Art Gallery (27.16%)</p> <p>Make improvements to Portland Basin Museum (34.57%)</p> <p>Do more community based projects (45.68%)</p> <p>Improve marketing of the Museums and Galleries (43.21%)</p> <p>Increase learning opportunities across the Museums and Galleries (50.62%)</p> <p>Other (6.17%)</p>
5. What would attract you to visit museums and galleries in the future?	<p>Changing exhibitions (78.48%)</p> <p>Special events (79.75%)</p> <p>Activities for children (48.10%)</p> <p>Other (11.39%)</p>
6. What do you feel are important items to feature among the museums and gallery displays?	<p>More of the historic collections on display (68.75%)</p> <p>Information about local history or artists (75.00%)</p> <p>Local people's stories and community involvement (72.50%)</p> <p>Hands-on things to do / interactive exhibitions (62.50%)</p> <p>Activities for children (57.50%)</p> <p>Other (5.00%)</p>
7. What exhibitions would you be interested in visiting in the museums and galleries?	<p>More exhibitions based on the borough's museum and art collections (60.26%)</p> <p>Local artists' work (64.10%)</p> <p>Community-led exhibitions (42.31%)</p> <p>Exhibitions focussing on local history (82.05%)</p> <p>Exhibitions that tie in with national events (60.26%)</p> <p>Other (5.13%)</p>
8. What events would you be interested in attending in the museums and galleries?	<p>Local history themed events (69.23%)</p> <p>Learning a skill eg painting, crochet, screen printing (42.31%)</p> <p>Events aimed at children (44.87%)</p> <p>Drama events eg theatre performances, costumed characters (38.46%)</p> <p>Events linked to learning about the museum collections or artworks (61.54%)</p> <p>Other (3.85%)</p>
9. Would you like to see the following issues reflected in the work of Tameside Museums and Galleries?	<p>Environmental sustainability (68.83%)</p> <p>Community cohesion (53.25%)</p> <p>Celebrating diversity (48.05%)</p> <p>Health and wellbeing (61.04%)</p> <p>Armed forces and veterans (45.45%)</p> <p>Other (12.99%)</p>
10. How would you like to find out about exhibitions and events in Tameside's Museums and Galleries?	<p>Tameside Council's website (61.25%)</p> <p>Social media (85.00%)</p> <p>Leaflets / posters (53.75%)</p> <p>E-news (31.25%)</p> <p>Local newspapers (38.75%)</p> <p>Word of mouth (16.25%)</p> <p>Other (6.25%)</p>
Any other comments?	<p>There were a variety of comments, some praising the current offer and others offering suggestions for improvements. Comments included:</p> <p>"Please get the Museum of the Manchester back up and running",</p> <p>"Please look at improving Portland Basin outdoor space around the</p>

	<p>canal”</p> <p>“It is essential we retain our heritage but ensure it’s suitable for 21<sup>st</sup> C, interactive, refreshed regularly”</p> <p>“As a local artist I would love to get more involved with local galleries by having the opportunity to display and sell my work”</p> <p>“Community space needs to be accounted for”</p> <p>“Very annoyed that Stalybridge has not been accessible for a number of years”</p> <p>“I do visit and find them so valuable for the community”</p> <p>“I would like to see more nature workshops / nature based / recycling / learn more about plants and wildlife and climate change”</p> <p>“Reach out and showcase young artists”</p> <p>“More on Tameside’s history”</p>
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10.8 The majority of people had visited one or all of our sites and primarily visit to find out about their local heritage. They are interested in seeing more events and exhibitions linked to local heritage and art and are interested in discovering more about our collections. Environmental sustainability and health and wellbeing are the issues they would like to see reflected more in our work. People are keen to see the Museum of the Manchester Regiment redeveloped and would like more learning opportunities across our sites. They would like to find out about our exhibitions and events through social media and the Council’s website.

10.9 The Forward Plan has also been developed with staff across the service. A Front of House training day included asking staff about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the service and what they would like to see happen across the sites. These views have informed the SWOT analysis and have fed into the action plans. The ideas and inputs of other staff across the service have also been included following staff meetings and planning sessions.

## 11 RESOURCE PLAN

### 11.1 Financial resources

11.1.1 We draw in funding from various external sources to deliver programmes of work while the core budget covers staffing and other costs. It is anticipated that this trend will increase in the future.

11.1.2 Since 2014, we have successfully obtained over £36,000 of external funding. Funders have included Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts & Heritage, Museum Development North West, AMOT and AGMA. We plan to build on this and continue to seek new funding to enable us to deliver exciting and innovative projects at all of our sites and in the local community.

11.1.3 We were also a partner in an Arts Council England’s Strategic Touring Fund project, which was awarded £150,000. The scheme enabled the Museum Service to work closely with organisations in Burnley, Durham and Berwick-upon-Tweed to create a series of interactive exhibitions to engage families with contemporary art between 2014 and 2016. This additional funding provided unprecedented opportunities for related events, activities and marketing.

11.1.4 As part of Tameside Cultural Services, we work increasingly closely with the Arts and Engagement team who work extensively on generating income through external grant

applications and commissioning works. We benefit from this connection in many ways, such as the programming of children’s theatre in museum and gallery venues.

11.1.5 The table below shows the Museums and Galleries revenue budget for 2019/20.

Staffing Costs	£322,650
Exhibitions, interpretation, activities and marketing	£15,067
Events and education facilitators	£13,500
Maintenance costs, travel, telephones, licences, subscriptions	£9,520
Income target from education and activities	-£16,497
<b>Total</b>	<b>£344,240</b>

## 11.2 Staffing resources

11.2.1 The table below summarises the staff working at across the Museums and Galleries as at July 2019.

<b>Staffing Resource</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
Museums Manager	29 hours
Operations and Business Manager	36 hours (works across Cultural Services)
Curator	36 hours
Assistant Curator	36 hours
Technician	36 hours
Visitor Services Manager	36 hours
Front of House attendants x 9	Part time hours totalling 4 full time equivalents
Education Manager (part of Arts and Engagement service)	30 hours (allocating approx. 7 hours per week for Museums and Galleries work)

## 12 SERVICE AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS FOR 2019-2024

12.1 Our key aims are to provide:

- a) **Access to Services:** Ensure that all our sites are accessible, sustainable and friendly, with the highest standards of customer care.
- b) **Access to the Community:** Respond to the needs and demands of the local community and to participate in the life of Tameside, contributing to the cultural, social and economic activity of the borough.

- c) **Access to Learning:** Offer visitors enjoyable, inspirational and educational experiences.
- d) **Access to Collections:** Care for, document and develop the borough's collections and interpret them in imaginative and engaging ways.

## 12.2 Key Objectives

12.2.1 We have eighteen objectives that fall under the themes of our key aims. The following objectives are headline priorities for the service over the life of this Forward Plan:

- To ensure physical and intellectual access for all visitors to museums and galleries sites and services - specifically to create a new Museum of the Manchester Regiment and art gallery space in Ashton Town Hall and to redevelop Astley Cheetham Art Gallery in Stalybridge.
- To ensure the sustainability of the Museums and Galleries through improving opportunities for income generation.
- To support a sustainable environment.

## 12.3 Action Plans

12.3.1 Certain assumptions have been made in costing the following activities; that the museums revenue budget will be maintained at 2019/20 levels, that staffing will remain at 2019/20 levels and that the staffing structure will be unchanged. Work will be funded using revenue funding unless otherwise specified ie capital funding has been requested or grant funding will be sought.

12.3.2 We are also required to meet actions set out in the Operations and Neighbourhoods Business Plan and annual KPIs, which are reported to the Council quarterly and reviewed annually. These actions are included in the action plans below.

**Key Aim 1: Ensure that all our sites are accessible, sustainable and friendly, with the highest standards of customer care.**

*Objective 1: Ensure physical and intellectual access for all visitors to museums and galleries sites and services.*

Action	Timescale	Lead staff
1.1 Create a new Museum of the Manchester Regiment in Ashton Town Hall	2022	Museums Manager
1.2 Increase capacity to display artworks at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and in Ashton Town Hall	By end 2020	Museums Manager
1.3 Complete health and safety audits for each site and risk assessments for all activities and events	Ongoing annually and as required	Culture Operations and Business Manager
1.4 Maintain access audits on-line for each site	Ongoing annually	Curator
1.5 Maintain VAQAS for all	Ongoing annually	Museums Manager / all staff

sites		
1.6 Maintain the website and the Men Behind the Medals website	Ongoing	All staff
1.7 Maintain interactives and permanent displays at all sites	Ongoing	Museum Technician

*Objective 2: Ensure that all sites demonstrate the highest levels of customer care.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
2.1 Ensure Council-wide on-line training is completed by all staff	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Visitor Services Manager
2.2 Complete Annual Development Reviews and progress agreed training	Ongoing annually	Museums Manager / Visitor Services Manager
2.3 Ensure Casual register is maintained in relation to service needs	Progress recruitment by April 2020	Museums Manager
2.4 Monitor absence levels	Ongoing monthly	Culture Operations and Business Manager
2.5 Monitor feedback from visitors and VAQAS regarding the visitor welcome	Ongoing and annually	Visitor Services Manager
2.6 Respond to comments on Trip Advisor	Monthly	Visitor Services Manager
2.7 Ensure all Front of House staff have a tour of the museum stores and the Local Studies and Archives Centre to be able to promote the service	Ongoing for new starters, within two months of starting	Visitor Services Manager

*Objective 3: Embed learning from the Family Friendly Programme across all sites.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
3.1 Create a families page on the website outlining what is on offer across the sites for families	By May 2020	Museums Manager / Education Manager
3.2 Create an 'Introduction' wall at Portland Basin Museum highlighting what's on today, children's trails, maps of the	By end 2019	Museums Manager / Museums Technician

museum, etc		
3.3 Work with the Council's autism lead to create on-line pre-visit resources for families with autistic children	By end 2019	Museums Manager
3.4 Create a Family Friendly manifesto using <i>Kids in Museums</i> resources	By end 2020	Education Manager / Museums Manager
3.5 Include family friendly activities and interactives at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery	By end 2020	Education Manager / Museums Manager
3.6 Include family friendly activities and interactives at Museum of the Manchester Regiment	By end 2022	Education Manager / Museums Manager
3.7 Programme a range of exhibitions, events and activities to appeal to family audiences	Ongoing as required	Museums Manager / Curator / Assistant Curator
3.8 Create activity backpacks for families	By end 2020	Education Manager / Museums Manager

*Objective 4: Ensure the sustainability of the Museums and Galleries through improving opportunities for income generation.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
4.1 Improve the display space in the shop at Portland Basin Museum	By April 2020	Culture Operations and Business Manager
4.2 Include a retail offer at the new Museum of the Manchester Regiment	By end 2022	Culture Operations and Business Manager
4.3 Increase loan box bookings through their prominent display at Portland Basin Museum and the creation of a leaflet to promote them	By July 2020	Museums Manager / Visitor Services Manager
4.4 Review marketing of reminiscence sessions available and link them with marketing of the museum loan boxes	Ongoing	Education Manager / Visitor Services Manager
4.5 Review schools marketing to schools both inside and outside the borough	Ongoing	Education Manager / Visitor Services Manager

4.6 Maintain existing school offer, making sure links to both national curriculum and local heritage are clear to understand	Ongoing	Education Manager / Visitor Services Manager
4.7 Through marketing encourage more cross site visits within Cultural Services, for example, a school visit to Local Studies and Archives Centre and to Portland Basin Museum – giving a full day experience with linked activities at both site	Ongoing	Education Manager / Visitor Services Manager

**Key Aim 2: Ensure that all our sites are accessible, sustainable and friendly, with the highest standards of customer care.**

*Objective 5: Support a sustainable environment.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
5.1 Investigate opportunities to recycle waste, such as school packed lunches	By April 2020	Museums Manager
5.2 Reduce the use of single-use plastic in the shop and stock sustainable products	Ongoing	Operations and Business Manager
5.3 Promote environmental sustainability through the Natural History Adventures (Dippy the Dinosaur) exhibitions and fringe events	February – October 2020	Curator (working with Outdoor Learning Officer from Arts and Engagement)
5.4 Maintain cycling and walking leaflets to promote exercise around Portland Basin Museum	As required	Museums Manager
5.5 Use the wharf at Portland Basin Museum to encourage environmental awareness through new signage, planting more bee friendly plants, and investigating the feasibility of growing vegetables with community partners	By end 2021	Curator / all staff

*Objective 6: Improve marketing of the Museums and Galleries.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
6.1 Create a marketing strategy	By end 2020	Museums Manager
6.2 Create a new electronic visitor survey for use across all sites	By end 2019	Museums Manager
6.3 Work with the Council's communications team to ensure high visibility for exhibitions and events through press releases and social media posts	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Curator / Assistant Curator / Education Manager
6.4 Improve signage across the sites, including banners on the front of buildings	By end 2020	Museums Manager / Curator
6.5 Ensure we have posters/ flyers for all events and activities across sites that are distributed and displayed widely within Borough	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Curator / Assistant Curator / Education Manager

*Objective 7: Reach non-visiting audiences.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
7.1 Create an audience development plan, to link with a marketing strategy	June 2020	Museums Manager / all staff
7.2 Work with colleagues across Cultural Services to develop and promote a programme of exhibitions in The Market Gallery in Ashton Market	Ongoing – exhibitions to change every 8 – 12 weeks	Museums Manager / Arts and Engagement Manager / Markets Manager
7.3 Work with colleagues across the council to engage communities with the Museums and Galleries, such as the Youth Service through co-creating exhibitions	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Curator
7.4 Investigate creating a focus group of users and non-users	By end 2020	Museums Manager / Curator

*Objective 8: Increase visitors to Astley Cheetham Art Gallery.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
8.1 Redevelop Astley Cheetham Art Gallery, subject to Listed Building Consent, to improve the visitor experience	By end 2020	Museums Manager
8.2 Improve signage at the gallery, both outside the building and in the library entrance space	By end 2020	Museums Manager
8.3 Work more closely with colleagues in the library to cross promote activities and visitor information	By end 2020	Museums Manager
8.4 Make contacts with local / regional artists and college / university art course tutors to create a changing programme of exhibitions	By end 2019	Assistant Curator
8.5 Change exhibitions every 4 months instead of every 6 months	Ongoing from 2019	Assistant Curator
8.6 Link to council initiatives in the town, such as Christmas lantern parade and town improvements	Ongoing from 2019	Museums Manager / Assistant Curator
8.7 Engage with local media and venues in the town to promote the gallery and encourage visitors to the town	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Assistant Curator
8.8 Create more self-guided elements to the space to encourage free visits	Ongoing	Education Manager / Assistant Curator
8.9 Through our varied marketing channels increase awareness to local schools that they can visit for either a facilitated or self-guided visit	Ongoing	Education Manager / Visitor Services Manager

*Objective 9: Nurture our communities so that Museums and Galleries are seen as safe and welcoming places.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
9.1 Ensure the sites are Dementia Friendly and new staff have attended Dementia	Ongoing as sites are redeveloped and new staff start	Museums Manager

Friends sessions		
9.2 Work with the Council's autism lead to promote the sites as autism friendly	By April 2020	Museums Manager
9.3 Support existing groups and networks (eg Quilting Bee, Young Carers, Tameside Local History Forum) and develop links with new groups	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Curator / Visitor Services Manager
9.4 Link with Age Friendly initiatives to support activity in older age	By end 2020	Curator
9.5 Investigate opportunities to support health and wellbeing through externally funded projects or with local partners	Ongoing	Curator
9.6 Create exhibitions that appeal to diverse audiences and celebrate diversity	Ongoing – exhibition planned for 18 months ahead	Curator / Assistant Curator

**Key Aim 3: Access to Learning: offer visitors enjoyable, inspirational and educational experiences.**

*Objective 10: Provide opportunities for early years learning across the sites to support the best start in life.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
10.1 Continue the weekly term- time Little Hands sessions at Portland Basin Museum	Weekly, to be reviewed each term time	Education Manager / Museums Manager
10.2 Redevelop the under 5's play area at Portland Basin Museum	By end 2019	Museum Technician
10.3 Programme events for pre-schoolers at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery	Ongoing	Museums Manager / Arts and Engagement team
10.4 Incorporate hands-on activities to engage young children with art across the galleries	By end 2020	Education Manager / Museums Manager
10.5 Increase targeted marketing of our offer to early years audiences, eg distribute Little Hands flyers to nurseries, soft play centres	By end 2020	Museums Manager / Visitor Services Manager

10.6 Support visits to sites for vulnerable groups	Ongoing	Education Manager
10.7 Develop activity sheets for early years across all sites	Ongoing	Education Manager
10.8 Have a selection of books focused on early years and an area for storytelling and reading. Where possible have puppets and objects linked to the books	By end 2019	Education Manager

*Objective 11: Increase school bookings across all sites.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
11.1 Ensure the Museum of the Manchester Regiment is created to suit the needs of schools, through liaising with teachers and continuing the Mini Museum Makers project	By end 2022	Museums Manager / Education Manager
11.2 Promote Arts Award participation alongside school bookings	Ongoing	Visitor Services Manager / Education Manager
11.3 Maintain database of schools and head teachers inside and outside the borough for marketing of our offer	Set up by end 2019 and updated ongoing	Visitor Services Manager
11.4 Continue to update our education workshop outlines in line with the national curriculum, develop new workshops and share this information with local schools	Ongoing	Education Manager / Visitor Services Manager
11.5 Host or support termly teacher networking events and SEND networking events to promote our service and encourage collaborative approach to learning	2-3 times per year	Education Manager
11.6 Encourage cross site visits within Cultural Services through schools booking process and marketing to schools	Ongoing	Visitor Services Manager / Education Manager
11.7 Develop a new workshop to sit across various sites:	By end 2019	Education Manager and Outdoor Arts and Events

linked to literacy, the outdoors, visual arts and environmental issues		Officer (part of Arts and Engagement team)
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*Objective 13: Provide opportunities for people to fulfil their potential.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
13.1 Offer adult / <i>Made It</i> masterclasses, supporting a wide range of creative skills	Monthly throughout the year	Education Manager
13.2 Provide opportunities for volunteering	Ongoing	Curator / Assistant Curator
13.3 Continue to provide the annual Open Art exhibition to provide Tameside residents with a platform to showcase their art work	Ongoing annually	Assistant Curator
13.4 Provide opportunities for local schools to display their work at our sites	Ongoing annually	Curator / Assistant Curator
13.5 Continue to offer Arts Award for people aged 5-25 alongside our school workshops and as part of special projects	Ongoing annually	Education Manager

*Objective 14: Maintain and improve facilities at Portland Basin Museum.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
14.1 Revise the use of the wall space in the Learning Space and improve the appearance and functionality of the space	By end of 2020	Curator / Museum Technician
14.2 Improve facilities for recycling for school groups	By April 2020	Museum Technician
14.3 Change the film in the cinema area	By end of 2020	Curator
14.4 Investigate funding opportunities to redevelop the Learning Space and surrounding agriculture and coal mining displays to better support education and events	By end 2023	Museums Manager
14.5 Investigate funding to	By end 2023	Curator

conserve the waterwheel and improve the appearance of the wharf space		
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**Key Aim 4: Access to Collections: Care for, document and develop the borough's collections and interpret them in imaginative and engaging ways.**

*Objective 15: Maintain Accreditation for all sites.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
15.1 Review this Forward Plan annually	Ongoing annually	Museums Manager
15.2 Review all policies by their specified review dates and gain appropriate approval	Ongoing	Curator / Assistant Curator
15.3 Ensure the Documentation Procedures Manual and other working plans are kept up to date	Ongoing and reviewed annually	Assistant Curator
15.4 Process all new acquisitions within 28 days.	Ongoing	Assistant Curator

*Objective 16: Progress the work of Banish the Backlog.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
16.1 Progress the actions set out in the Documentation Plan	Ongoing	Curator / Assistant Curator
16.2 Seek additional funding to conserve objects identified in the Care and Conservation Plan	Ongoing	Curator / Assistant Curator
16.3 Recruit volunteers to assist with documentation work	By end 2019 / ongoing	Curator

*Objective 17: Use the museum's collections in engaging ways.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
17.1 Create a programme of exhibitions across all sites, projecting 18 months ahead	Ongoing on a rolling basis	Curator / Assistant Curator
17.2 Use the natural history collections in exhibitions and events as part of the Natural History Adventures fringe	February – October 2020	Curator

events		
17.3 Maximise the number of artworks on display at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery through use of moveable walls and investigate feasibility of displaying artworks on the stairs	By end 2020	Museums Manager / Assistant Curator
17.4 Investigate funding opportunities to work with partners / artists to use the museum and art collections to engage audiences	By end 2023	Curator / Assistant Curator
17.5 Ensure the continued use of the collections within our access and learning programme.	Ongoing on a rolling basis	Education Manager

*Objective 18: Ensure the safety of the collection.*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead staff</b>
18.1 Implement recommendations from the security reviews	April 2020	Museums Manager
18.2 Investigate funding for more display cases at Portland Basin Museum	Ongoing	Curator
18.3 Review emergency plans for each site annually	Ongoing annually	Museums Manager
18.4 Monitor environmental conditions across all sites and stores	Ongoing quarterly	Museum Technician
18.5 Undertake collections reviews of the social history collection	By end 2023	Curator / Assistant Curator
18.6 Undertake valuations for the required parts of the collection every 5 years	By the end of 2020	Curator / Assistant Curator

## **16 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 16.1 The Forward Plan will be the basis for the next five years for developing new programmes for work and for bidding for new sources of income. The proposals in the plan will be monitored annually, and the full plan reviewed in 2024.