

EAST DEVON CULTURAL STRATEGY - OUR GOAL IS THAT BY 2031:

1. East Devon's cultural offer is perceived by residents as high quality, interesting, fun, relevant, accessible and well-promoted
2. Residents who have taken part in cultural activity feel that their health, happiness and wellbeing have improved as a result
3. Children and young people across the district feel they have ample opportunities to take part in cultural and creative activities
4. More people work in the cultural and creative industries in East Devon, backed up by more training, skills and pathways to employment
5. Cultural organisations, artists and creative businesses feel connected, resilient and creatively ambitious (professional and voluntary sectors)
6. Investment into arts, museums and heritage through earned income, grants, sponsorship and philanthropy has increased
7. The number and diversity of visitors, audiences and participants in culture and creative activity in East Devon has increased
8. Culture is helping to tackle the climate emergency

As grant recipient, we would be grateful if you could help us track progress by completing the following questions, if relevant, using quantitative and qualitative data, for activity between April 2023 and March 2024. Please keep answers to a maximum of 250 words.

1. Please provide a brief summary of your work this financial year.

South West Museum Development (SWMD) is a business-to-business sector support programme providing development services to the museum and heritage sector in the south west of England.

The following museums in East Devon benefit from Museum Development services provided by SWMD:

- Allhallows Museum
- Axminster Heritage Centre
- Exmouth Museum
- Fairlynch Museum and Arts Centre
- Sidmouth Museum
- Ottery St Mary Heritage Museum
- Whimble Heritage Centre

All museums except for Sidmouth Museum are classed as Micro Museums receiving less than 10,000 visitors per annum. Sidmouth Museum is classed as a Small Museum receiving 10,000 – 20,000 visitors per annum.

In 2023/24 the following services were provided to museums:

- Local place-based Museum Development Officer support



- Specialist services in audiences, conservation and collections, digital and volunteering
- Technical Accreditation Advice
- Small Grants programmes
- SW Museum Skills training programme
- Development programmes: Organisational Health Check, SW Visitor Insights, Volunteering Fit for the Future

In East Devon in 2023/24 museums received the following support:

- Museum Development Officer support
- Specialist services: digital, conservation and collections
- Technical Accreditation advice to support Accreditation Returns and applications to the scheme
- 14 training attendances to the SW Museum Skills training programme
- 1 participant in Volunteering Fit for the Future programme
- 1 On Display! Grant recipient, awarded £1,000 (2022/23 and 2023/24)
- 1 The Wild Escape Grant recipient, via Thelma Hulbert Gallery in partnership with Honiton Museum, awarded £6,000 (2022/23 and 2023/24)

2. How are you tracking if audiences are finding your work high quality, interesting, fun, relevant, accessible and well-promoted? What feedback have you had?

SWMD operates the Annual Museum Survey which captures audience data from participant museums across the south west and England. Our most recent Annual Museum Survey which covers **2022/23** tells us in the south west:

- There was a median 45% increase in visitor numbers compared to the previous year. For Micro Museums (All) this was 53% and for Small Museums (Sidmouth) this was 35%.
- The median museum website visits were 31,000 and median social media followers were 5,096.

3. What evidence do you have that your audience's and volunteers' health, happiness and wellbeing have improved as a result?

SWMD operates the Annual Museum Survey which captures audience data from participant museums across the south west and England. Our most recent Annual Museum Survey which covers **2022/23** tells us in the south west:

- The median number of volunteers per museum is 44, contributing a median of 3,125 volunteer hours.
- £44,730 is the median value of volunteer hours per Museum.
- 31% of museums reporting an increase in volunteer hours per Museum.



- 37% reported an increase of new volunteers per Museum.

Museum and heritage organisations provide opportunities to connect with others through volunteering opportunities - supporting residents to connect with others, mitigating social isolation, supporting mental and physical health, and allowing residents to learn new skills including employability skills, returning to work opportunities, as well as giving back to their local community.

4. How many children and young people (under 25) have been able to engage with your offer?

SWMD operates the Annual Museum Survey which captures audience data from participant museums across the south west and England. Our most recent Annual Museum Survey which covers **2022/23** tells us in the south west:

- 93% of museums provided on-site education sessions. For Micro Museums this was 89% and for Small Museums this was 95%.

5. Have you been able to offer job opportunities in the cultural and creative industries? Or training, skills and pathways to employment?

SWMD delivers the SW Museum Skills training programme. The programme provides training and skills development opportunities online and in-person to staff, volunteers, trustees, students and trainees in the museum and heritage sector. The programme provides sector specific training to develop skills, increase confidence support wellbeing.

In 2023/24 53 formal training opportunities were delivered through SW Museum Skills reaching 629 participants. Museums in Easton Devon participated in training to build their knowledge and skills in the following training sessions:

- Accreditation – the UK sector standard for museums
- Conservation and collections
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Governance
- Rights Management
- Volunteering

6. Which partnerships (e.g.: cultural organisations, artists or creative businesses) have been key to building your resilience and creative ambition?

In 2023/24 SWMD has worked with the following organisations to enhance its Museum Development offer to museums:

- Arts Council England



- Art Fund
- Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy
- Bristol City Council – Bristol Culture and Creative Industries
- Collections Trust
- Digital Culture Network
- Kids In Museums
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- The National Archives
- Touring Exhibitions Group

7. Has the funding from East Devon District Council helped you leverage increased funding?

Funding from East Devon District Council forms part of funding from 18 Local Authorities across the south west. This investment in **2022/23** equated to £147,600.

In Devon, the funding from East Devon District Council forms part of Local Authority investment at district and parish level from councils for Budleigh Salterton, Mid Devon, North Devon, Sidmouth, South Hams, and Torridge.

This funding from East Devon District Council has, and will continue to, enhance the collaboration and partnership of museums across East Devon.

8. How many visitors/audiences/participants in East Devon have you reached this year? And how does that compare to last year?

All the museums in East Devon have been reached with access to development support, training, specialist expertise and opportunities for funding.

SWMD's most recent data set is for **2022/23**. In 2022/23:

- 201 museum and heritage sites benefitted from our support
- 529 delegates attended our SW Museum Skills training programme.
- 112 museums received support to improve collections care.
- 24 museums received support to develop their audiences.
- 37 museums were supported to develop their digital engagement.
- 50 museums were helped with volunteering development.

9. Are you monitoring diversity, equality and inclusion in your audiences and cultural teams? For example do you have a breakdown of your work force/audiences by age groups, ethnic groups, disability, sexual orientation and gender?

Monitoring of protected characteristics is undertaken by Bristol City Council as the host of SWMD. Due to the size of the SWMD team it is not possible to release this data set as individuals would be identifiable.



10. How has your work helped to tackle the climate emergency? Are you monitoring the environmental impact of your work?

Museums and heritage organisations can provide a space for, and contribute to, the wider debate on the impact of the climate crisis through their collections on topics such as the reduction in biodiversity, increase in waste materials and sustainable energy use.

One of SWMD's five strategic aims is *To acknowledge the climate emergency and take an active role in the green recovery.* In 2023/24 SWMD continued to deliver Carbon Literacy training to the museum and heritage sector including a bespoke commissioned training programme for cultural organisations in East Devon.

SWMD's partnership with the Art Fund for The Wild Escape project which took place over 2022/23 and 2023/24 saw over £70,220 of grant investment to museums in the south west to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity in response to the climate emergency in children.

SWMD monitors the carbon impact of its programme through Julie's Bicycle.

11. What challenges have you faced in the last year?

During 2023/24 the SWMD team has undertaken a comprehensive open application process to Arts Council England and secured funding for 2024-26 in order to continue the role as Museum Development provider for museums across the South West. Opportunities in the future programme will see more funding streams, an increased funding budget available to Accredited and working towards Accreditation.

