



About Museum Development South West

[Museum Development South West](#) (MDSW) works with, and for, the museum and heritage sector in the South West of England to effect positive, lasting change and deliver public value. Supported by Arts Council England and 20 contributing Local Authorities and support partners, we create opportunities which build confidence and skills, encourage innovation, and celebrate our heritage and culture for approx. 300 museums within the Arts Council Accreditation Scheme. An established programme with a track record of delivering museum development services since 2006, the current programme is funded until 2024-26 with an extension to 2027.

What we do

We provide trusted, local and relevant development services to support museum and heritage organisations to improve, innovate, collaborate and celebrate. Read more about [our work here](#)

Our **2024-26 Programme prospectus** provides an overview of the services and activities we'll be delivering over the next two years, **read it here:** [2024-26 Programme Prospectus](#).

Our work in East Devon in 2024-25 Q1-3

In 2024/25, so far, as the financial year has not yet closed and so these numbers will increase as we process the final months of activity, museums within East Devon have engaged in the following Museum Development South West support:

- Advice and support from the local place-based Museum Development Officer
- Two museums accessing Technical Accreditation Advice
- 20+ instances of Specialist Development Services in Conservation Development and Collection Care
- Ongoing programme development support from Sustainable Volunteering Officer
- 11 delegates attending 8 different training opportunities across wide range of topics

Access to specialist and technical support – Conservation and Collections Care (Q3)

Museums across East Devon (Sidmouth, Whimble, Axe Valley (Seaton), Exmouth, Sidmouth Toy and Model) have accessed a wide range of specialist advice and support in Conservation and Collection Care illustrated by the following specific support in Q3 Oct – Dec 2024:

- Bespoke training on Temperature and Relative Humidity management in museums
- Free supplies to enable marking and labelling of museum objects
- Provided, services and download of software for 'Tiny Tags' to monitor environment
- Support to access a loan mannequin for display
- Documentation advice for entry forms
- Conservation advice to protect a carved oak table

Access to specialist and technical support – Sustainable Volunteer Development

Exmouth Museum was one of ten museums across the South West to secure a place on Volunteering Fit for the Future programme in the previous year 2023/24. Building on this investment Exmouth Museum has continued to work with the Sustainable Volunteering Specialist Officer to develop their volunteering policies and contribute to the national Volunteers Week in June 2024.

Building Capacity through Skills Development and Training - April – Dec 2024

Museums across East Devon engaged in Museum Development South West free to access training opportunities: 7 x Volunteers, 1 x Paid Staff and 3 x Others engaged in 11 training places in the SW Museum Skills Programme across a wide range of topics:

- Safeguarding Essentials,
- Foundations of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion,
- Creating a Learning Offer for your museum,
- Rethinking Cataloguing,
- Collections Management for Trustees,
- Collections Review,
- Improving and Organising Collections Storage,
- Introduction to Hazards in Collections.

The programme included access to national training providers Collections Trust as well as specialist commissioned trainers funded by Museum Development South West. These delegates were from museums across East Devon including Axminster Heritage Centre (6 delegates) Exmouth Museum (2), Whimble Heritage Centre (1) Killerton (1) and Axe Valley Heritage Museum (Seaton) (1).

Connected and Networked: the Devon Museum Development Officer (MDO) has provided general support and advice offered to all museums with regular updates on opportunities to engage in SW Museum Development programmes and activities. The MDO has coordinated the East Devon Museums Group Meetings held in January 2024 at Ottery St Mary Heritage Museum, May 2024 at Whimble Heritage Centre and December 2024 at Sidmouth Museum. The MDO is also the Arts & Culture East Devon (ACED) Museum and Heritage Champion supporting museums to engage in wider ACED opportunities and programmes.

Accreditation: The MDO has provided bespoke Museum Accreditation support to Axe Valley Heritage Museum (Seaton) on the eligibility process. Technical Accreditation advice was provided by our MDSW consultant to review the governing documents of Axe Valley Heritage Museum in support of their application for eligibility of the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme. Two further museums, Whimble Heritage and Exmouth Museums governance documentation was also reviewed by the Technical Accreditation advisor to support their eligibility process for Museum Accreditation.

Investment: Support and advice with grant applications was provided by the MDO to Whimble Heritage and Axe Valley Heritage Museum (Seaton) with multiple instances of support for Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grant programme for Whimble Heritage. The MDO provided additional support to the East Devon Cultural Producer in development of the grant application for the *Our Wild and Changing Estuaries* Project.

The MDO for Devon is Joanna Cairns, Museum Development Officer

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Your investment

Your investment of £4000 per annum directly targets museums that are Accredited and those Working Towards Accreditation in East Devon to access our full range of support services and opportunities such as those described within this report. Your investment forms part of a local network of investment from other Local Authorities in Devon which amplifies the core services provided by Museum Development South West (MDSW) funded by Arts Council England. Each year MDSW secures additional development opportunities for museums through grants and contract income to improve services for audiences and local communities. This Local Authority investment is essential in delivering effective, tailored services that meet the needs of museums in the East Devon and the wider region.



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