



DERBY MUSEUMS

# IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025

[derbymuseums.org](http://derbymuseums.org)



## PURPOSE AND VALUES

# *Derby Museums is for the thinker and maker in all of us*

We operate as a social and cultural enterprise; business-like, entrepreneurial, but with a profound sense of social purpose.

We care for Derby's collections of cultural heritage, three museums in Derby – including one UNESCO World Heritage Site – and we welcome over 200,000 visitors each year.

We're proud to be the home of the largest collection of works by Joseph Wright of Derby in the world, along with 350,000 objects which inspire us to appreciate our world, our city and our homes.

We collaborate with our communities, businesses and individuals to co-produce our museums. We contextualise global issues by relating and connecting them to local stories.

We are Derby Museums.



*Being  
independent*



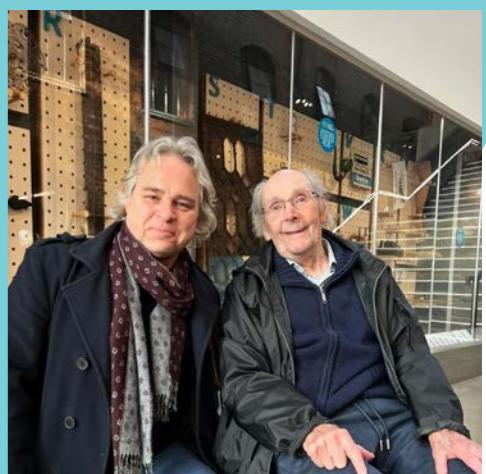
*Pursuing  
mutual  
relationships*



**OUR  
PURPOSE  
AND VALUES**



*Fostering  
a spirit of  
experimentation*



*Creating the  
conditions  
for well-being*

*Proving  
that we  
are doing it*

# WELCOME

On behalf of the trustees of Derby Museums Trust, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Derby Museums' Annual Impact Report for 2024-25. This past year has shown, more powerfully than ever, that Derby Museums really is for the thinker and maker in all of us. In what can feel like difficult times, our museums have stood as places of discovery, reflection and real joy – three marvellously varied spaces where people of all ages can explore, learn, and feel a sense of belonging.

This is made possible by the passion, skill and care of our staff, volunteers, partners and supporters. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who makes Derby Museums so welcoming. The dedication, creativity, making and teaching skills of the team is exceptional, as are those providing first rate hospitality in our cafes, shops and at special events, they keep our museums thriving and our visitors returning. Our volunteers alone contributed an extraordinary 13,910 hours this year; their energy, generosity and enthusiasm enliven the galleries, workshops and community programmes, and we could not achieve our ambitions without them.

We are immensely proud to be home to the world's largest collection of works by Joseph Wright of Derby, alongside 350,000 objects that help us appreciate our world, illuminate the past and prompt conversations about the future. They remind us that Derby has always been a place of innovation and making; a place whose global connections continue to shape the present.

We cannot ignore the reality that museum finances remain challenging. Substantial increases in costs, alongside long-term reductions in public funding, have placed real strain on our ability to operate. Despite this, Derby Museums has responded with resilience and an unwavering commitment to remain free and accessible to all. Through careful financial planning, entrepreneurial activity, major fundraising efforts and the invaluable support of our partners and donors, we continue to invest in the experiences that matter most to our communities. This year alone, we enhanced the lives of the 66,477 children and young people who took part in activities and visits across our sites.

Throughout everything we do, we believe museums and galleries have a remarkable power to enlighten, uplift and educate. They bring people together, offer hope and seek to foster understanding. They inspire us to think, feel and do. In Derby, they also reveal the extraordinary creativity and resilience of a city built on innovation.

To our supporters, thank you for your continued support. Together, we will ensure that Derby Museums remains a place that sparks curiosity, celebrates thinking, and encourages everyone to explore the world in a different way.



*Elizabeth Fothergill CBE  
HM Lord-Lieutenant  
of Derbyshire  
and Chair of  
Derby Museums*

In what sometimes can feel like a troubling world, Derby's museums remain places of exploration, reflection and comfort to many. This year, despite a precarious financial environment, our museums have welcomed more people, enjoying more activities than ever before.

Our museums are a world of discovery on people's doorstep, exploring Derby's art, culture, human and natural history. Most importantly we do this by showing the city's global connections and influence. From the Romans to the age of Enlightenment through to our world leading innovation in industry and energy, Derby has thrived as a place of exchange of ideas and a place for people to connect, whether they've been in the city for generations or, like me, a recent arrival.

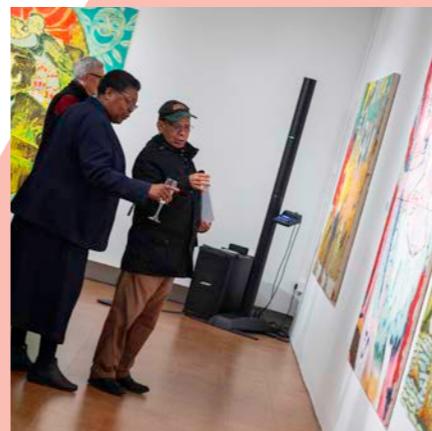
In the years to come, I expect Derby Museums to continue to be a place of hope and belonging.



*Tony Butler OBE  
Executive Director,  
Derby Museums*

IN 2024-25  
WE ACHIEVED...

**13,910**  
volunteer  
hours



**350**  
Ancient  
Egyptian  
objects  
reinterpreted



**213,340**  
visitors to  
our venues  
(204,101 in  
2023-24)



**10,371**  
school children  
engaged (8,514  
in 2023-24)



**65,477**  
children and young  
people took part in  
activities and visits  
across our sites  
(42,194 in 2023-24)



**£50,169**  
donated  
through  
donation  
boxes

# WE INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE, BUILDING SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Derby Museums' learning programmes use STEAM learning (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) as an interdisciplinary approach, through which young people learn to understand the world around them.

This approach encourages creative, enquiry-based thinking, enabling young people to develop the capacities necessary to thrive in the future, to be curious, empathise and innovate – think, feel and do.

In 2024-25, 13,163 children, families, young people and adults engaged with informal learning activities across our sites. These included: drop-in activities during the school holidays, festivals, one-off events and structured programmes such as STEAM Tots – aimed at early years.

Together with local employers, we developed programmes to give young people that first experience of the teamwork and critical thinking required for the workplace:

- In March, 'The Science of Innovation' saw 189 students work with Rolls-Royce apprentices to learn about careers in engineering through a wide range of hands-on science and engineering activities, using real equipment.
- March also saw the first cohort in a new multiyear Vaillant-funded initiative 'Launch Into Engineering'. This weeklong programme took place at the Museum of Making and Vaillant's manufacturing plant in Belper. It saw twelve year 10 students learn practical skills and develop real-world awareness. 70% of students agreed that the programme had made them think about studying STEAM subjects in the future.

• Manufacturer IMI completed their support of the Midlands Maker Challenge, a four-year programme which brought together students from schools across the region to creatively respond to real world challenges brought on by climate change, such as water shortages and biodiversity loss. Learnings from this project have fed into school sessions.

'Discover Creative Careers' week – a government funded, industry-led programme working to ensure there is a larger and more diverse intake of talent into the creative industries – saw people of all ages getting hands-on with specialist craft skills alongside Heritage Crafts.

At the Museum of Making, a 15-week programme ran as part of the National Saturday Club initiative, focused on developing the craft and making skills of 13-16 year olds. This culminated in a summer exhibition and award presentation at Somerset House, London.

The 'Past:Present:Work' employability project with YMCA Derbyshire provided YMCA residents and young adults the opportunity to explore heritage through craft skills and workshops at the Museum of Making. The programme bridged the gap between the classroom and a public facing heritage space, empowering young people with essential life skills.

We reviewed, updated and delivered outreach sessions to 11 schools across the East Midlands, as well as delivering a full timetable of onsite school sessions across all three museums.

We are grateful to all of our industry partners, including Rolls-Royce, whose generous support underpins our STEAM learning programmes, significantly impacting the lives of children and young people in the city.



## IN 2024-25

**64,637**  
children  
visited one  
of our three  
museums

**114**  
schools in  
Derby and  
Derbyshire  
engaged with  
Derby Museums



**10,371** school  
children and **1,935**  
students in higher  
or further  
education  
engaged with  
Derby Museums



*"It was  
a top-quality  
work experience  
and has inspired  
me to be  
an engineer."*

A participant of the  
Launch Into  
Engineering programme

# WE BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER, SUPPORTING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

**52**  
schools and  
community  
organisations  
engaged with us  
to co-create our  
programmes

Over **50**  
participants in the  
*Derby Yaadaañ*  
project helped  
us collect over  
1,200 previously  
private images



**40,000**  
visitors to  
6 temporary  
exhibitions



**830**  
engagements  
with new audio  
descriptions of key  
paintings in the  
Joseph Wright Gallery



*"In our  
online lessons,  
we drew our homes  
and pictures of how we  
play, and then shared them  
with each other. It was really  
exciting to see how some of  
our homes are similar. [...]  
We found out that whether we  
live in Luxor or Derby, we all  
like playing in similar ways."*

Pupil, aged 8, who took part in the  
learning exchange between  
The Bemrose School, Derby,  
and the Future International  
School, Luxor



We are proud to collaborate with  
our communities, businesses and  
individuals to co-produce our  
museums. We contextualise global  
issues by relating and connecting  
them to local stories.

This year an exhibition and project titled *Displaced: from the Nile to the Derwent* set about reinterpreting the museums' collections from ancient Egypt. Combining new research and current best practice in the interpretation and display of colonial collections and human remains, this project explored how and why Egyptian artefacts, including the remains of two mummified people, found their way to Derby. Loaned items from the Chatsworth collection, the British Museum and Manchester Museums enhanced the stories told. Outcomes from the show contributed to more respectful permanent displays for Pypyu and Pa-Sheri, the mummified humans who reside at Derby Museums.

New school learning resources  
for our Egypt collection were  
developed from an exchange  
between The Bemrose School in  
Derby and the Future International  
School in Luxor, Egypt.

The development of the  
*Derby Yaadaañ* project archive  
and exhibition began addressing  
some of the gaps in Derby Museums'  
knowledge connected to Derby's  
South Asian diasporic communities.  
These community histories were  
largely absent from the city's  
archives, despite the plethora of  
objects relating to them in our  
collections. The project exhibition  
featured a photographic archive  
of portraits by photography studio  
W.W. Winter of people who migrated  
from South Asia to Derby after 1945,  
and stories shared through this  
project have begun to be interwoven  
across sites to enrich interpretation.

Funding from DCMS Wolfson allowed  
improvements to be made to the  
displays and interpretation at  
Pickfords' House. Access to displays  
was improved, with physical barriers  
removed and more objects put on  
display. New participant-led research  
has enriched the interpretation of the  
house, focusing on the stories of women  
and communities whose voices have  
previously been neglected.

With thanks to funding from  
The National Lottery Heritage Fund,  
a range of heritage experiences for  
visitors affected by sight loss were  
introduced, including audio  
descriptions of a selection of key  
paintings in the Joseph Wright  
Gallery and the launch of tactile  
object-handling sessions that are  
now available for group bookings.  
Additional accessibility improvements  
have been implemented, including  
enhanced lighting at the Museum  
of Making.



*"I wanted to extend my heartfelt thanks for the wonderful summer activities you organised this year. The variety of engaging and educational experiences you offered truly made the summer special for both children and parents alike. I also want to express my appreciation for the care and attention your team showed in taking care of the children. It was evident that their safety and well-being were a top priority, and as a parent, that means the world to me. Thank you again for your dedication and for creating such a welcoming and nurturing environment. We look forward to participating in more of your events in the future."*

Parent of a child who participated in the Holiday Activity and Food Programme and had not previously engaged with Derby Museums

## WE BRING FAMILY FRIENDLY EXPERIENCES TO DERBY

Derby Museums' STEAM Learning programme has supported citywide activity for 'CANVAS' – a Derby Theatre led project harnessing the creativity of young people in Derby. Our team delivered early years activities in Derby City Family Hubs and cultural venues, as well as museum-inspired skills-based workshops open to all young people aged 13-25 years in Derby.

Over the summer, free activities were made available for families in Derby who were eligible for benefits-related free school meals through the Holiday Activity and Food Programme. Young people aged 9-14 years old explored themes including Egypt, Our City, Home, Traditions and Play accompanied by artists and makers, with trips to Derby QUAD, Down to Earth Derby and Deda. Participants were also provided with healthy, nutritious meals from our River Kitchen.

The Makory – our Mobile Museum of Making – attended community events throughout the summer, showcasing making and our collections at the Arboretum Family Hub Fun Day, Caribbean Carnival and Wirksworth Festival. As the Derbyshire Makes programme of county wide events launched in 2025, the Makory had a glow up, transforming into a bright yellow bus as it supported this programme bringing Derbyshire's creative heritage to life.

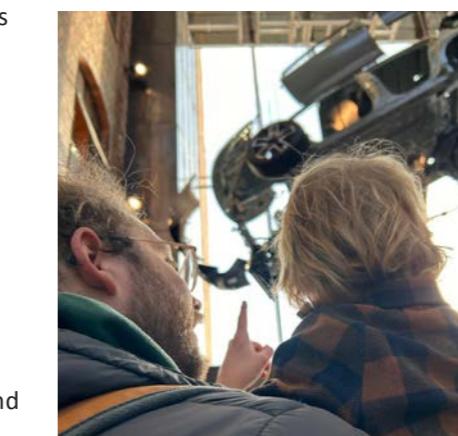
For younger visitors, we have continued to deliver a series of introductory workshops offering an intergenerational experience, igniting an interest in making and encouraging learning together. For example, 'An Introduction to Printing and Textiles' provided a space for exploration of materials and understanding of a creative process.

In December, the Museum and Art Gallery had a special visit from Santa and his elves as we partnered on the Cathedral Quarter Christmas Grotto. 1,397 children attended this affordable Christmas experience with their families – overall footfall was in excess of 3,000. Of these visitors, 66% were first-time attendees to Derby Museum and Art Gallery. The Cathedral Quarter Christmas Grotto was supported by the Cathedral Quarter Business Improvement District.

Christmas at Pickfords' House welcomed school children and families to explore traditional crafts and festive fun. A visitor favourite, this magical experience was set in our Georgian townhouse amongst beautiful traditional decorations, igniting the senses and celebrating the home.

**213,340 visitors to our three museums**

**1,637 visitors to Assemble**



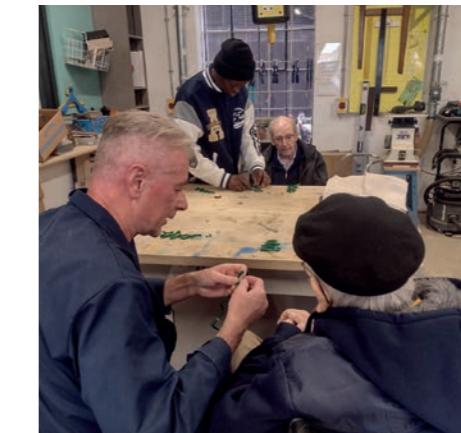
# WE INSPIRE MAKERS, PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS TO EQUIPMENT

**£21,150**

generated for  
independent  
makers through  
our shops



**67**  
makers  
showcased  
through  
our shops



**163**  
adults engaged  
in our new  
workshop  
courses for  
adults



*"It all began  
at the Museum of Making  
in Derby.*

*I visited the workshop during an  
Open Day. Discussing a project to make a  
particular advent calendar, Arthur introduced  
me to the CNC machine and I was fascinated.  
Courses followed on Veneering, Kitchenalia,  
Plywood Furniture and many projects were  
undertaken as a volunteer during which time  
I learnt many skills and also much about  
workshop Health & Safety.*

*My work was admired, commissions followed  
and from there it was a small step to selling  
at craft fairs. A local shop saw my products  
and Shedload took its place on the high street.*

*I now have a growing network of stockists  
and many plans for next year, including the  
arrival of a part time Sales Manager.*

*And so Shedload grows."*

**Robert, maker and owner  
of Shedload Designs**

Derby Museums' Workshop at the  
Museum of Making continues the  
site's 300-year legacy of making.

This year, we have worked to reduce the barriers to access the Workshop. The space has been enhanced with a new visual identity, interpretation and marketing materials, whilst membership and the online booking process were removed and replaced with an in-person induction and a simpler phone and email booking procedure. This led to a greater number of activities and programmes being made available to the public, and an easier to access public Workshop. Introductory and advanced courses in 2024-25 included introductions to cabinet making, tinsmithing, blacksmithing and woodturning. Participants regularly worked with a variety of materials including glass, metal, ceramics, wood and textiles.

Relationships continued to be developed with individual makers and organisations, including Heritage Crafts and learning providers such as the University of Derby and Derby College.

Our retail spaces showcased products from 67 makers, creators and designers across the region, including bespoke ranges, helping generate over £21,150 for independent makers. Our retail spaces are extensions of our galleries and are curated in line with our vision to inspire the thinker and maker in all of us. For many of our makers, being stocked in the shops is their first foray into retail; our retail team are able to support them through this process, offering suggestions on merchandising, branding and packaging to help develop their financial sustainability.

# WE OFFER VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES TO EXCITE, CHALLENGE AND INTRIGUE

Meaningful coproduction is at the heart of all we do, and working alongside our team of volunteers, we create inspiring museums built with and for the people of Derby.

With 172 active volunteers, volunteering has long been central to the participative approach of Derby Museums. Our volunteer team support collections care, research, participation in learning activities and the development of the model railway. Volunteers offer inspiring visitor engagement opportunities within our galleries, and at events such as Assemble.

Opportunities to work with our Egypt collection were popular with volunteers, with 44 volunteers inducted (of which 24 were new to Derby Museums volunteering) and over 400 hours given to the *Displaced: from the Nile to the Derwent* exhibition. Training for this exhibition explored the ethics of Egyptian human remains on display in European museums, object handling sessions and staff talks, offering volunteers the opportunity to build knowledge and encourage visitors to consider new viewpoints around what it means to have these objects and human remains in our museums.

Our workshop volunteers gave time to supporting projects across departments, including repairs to displays, creating learning resources for a Sinfonia Viva concert and the production of prompt cards for visitors to use at our three sites.

Volunteers contributed to the coproduction of the upcoming redisplay of Archaeology and Nature Galleries – 17 volunteers took part in activities considering how we might better tell stories in these galleries. They also helped safely clean the Bronze Age log boat, preserving it for years to come.

Volunteers learnt how to take oral testimonies for archives, a skill that will be deployed in partnership with Murmuration Arts for the 'Nightlight Lullabies' family project opening in 2025. The team also learnt how to use the local studies library to boost research skills.

*"Our volunteer team play a huge part in advocating the work of Derby Museums. We couldn't do the work that we do without them, and I never fail to be inspired by the passion, skills and energy that they share with us. We offer new experiences in heritage management, connections within their local area and an insight into the wonderful, and often strange, world of museums – it's a real privilege to work with such a unique and mutually beneficial volunteer programme!"*

Hope Slater, Co-production Volunteer and Programme Coordinator

**13,910**  
volunteer hours  
generously given  
across three  
Museum sites



**65**  
packets  
of biscuits  
provided

**51**  
different ways  
for volunteers  
to get involved



# WE ARE INNOVATIVE AND SECTOR LEADING, WITH NATIONAL IMPACT

Since being established as an independent charitable trust in 2012, Derby Museums has transformed the way cultural heritage is presented and appreciated in the city, and has played a key role in advocating for museums across the UK.

In May 2024, the Museum of Making received a Special Commendation in the prestigious European Museum of the Year Award, awarded to museums who have developed a new and innovative approach from which other European museums can learn. The commendation was given for our work using industrial heritage in a participatory way to enhance the skills of our visitors and make STEM learning inclusive and connected to contemporary society. The Museum of Making's visitor experience team also received a 'Highly Commended' in the Museum and Heritage Awards 'Visitor Welcome of the Year' category, particularly for their work in the reopening of the Museum of Making after the three-month closure caused by Storm Babet.

18 fellows completed cohort three of the UK Creative Community Fellows (UKCCF) programme, an experience that brings together artists, community organisers and entrepreneurs to explore new tools and frameworks to drive physical and social transformations through arts and culture. Through the partnership between Derby Museums, the Bowes Museum and US-based National Arts Strategies, participants gain a network of support, new perspectives and the tools and confidence to create change.

Mid-way through the programme, 100% of survey respondents reported feeling more confident in their leadership abilities, and one year later, 88% said that the programme helped them advance their work in a way that was either 'transformational' or 'significant'.

Recognised as experts in their field, Derby Museums colleagues are regularly invited to receive visits from museum professionals and to speak at sector events. Highlights of the year included: presenting learnings from co-producing *Displaced* with international schools at the GEM

*"Transformational is always the word I use to describe the impact of the programme. It has given me so much confidence and empowered me to think of myself as a leader and expert in my community. The tools and skills we have learned have helped me to shape the strategic development and also to be able to talk about my work and demonstrate it in a way I struggled to do previously."*

A participant in the UKCCF programme



**91%**  
of UKCCF participants said they are more equipped to make a difference in their community



**35**  
specialist talks given by Derby Museums colleagues across the sector



**'Special Commendation' received in the European Museum of the Year Awards**



**1 OBE received by Executive Director Tony Butler for services to the Arts**

In recognition of his services to the Arts, Derby Museums' Executive Director Tony Butler was appointed as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in HM the King's New Year Honours list 2025. Tony led Derby Museums through the redevelopment of the Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, a groundbreaking programme that enshrined public participation and harnessed the energy of businesses, the public, the community and the voluntary sector, and he continues to weather ongoing challenges to steer Derby Museums to be the sector leading organisation that it is today.

Tony Butler took part in a series of parliamentary events with several other civic museums and National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC) members aimed at promoting the work of UK museums to MPs. Together, they have advocated for increased investment in local museums. As a result of this work, the government announced £20m of funding is to be made available to civic museums to help stabilise the sector. In an economic landscape that remains challenging, this vital support will help to prevent closures and enable civic museums like Derby Museums to better serve their communities across England. In March, it was announced that Tony Butler will be a member of the expert panel for the planned DCMS review of Arts Council England, continuing his support of the sector.

## CASE STUDY: ASSEMBLE

**Assemble: Derby's Making Festival is Derby Museums' flagship 'making' event.**

*"Thank you for organising such a great day, my grandchildren loved it, there was so much to do and we're already looking forward to seeing you again next year."*

A visitor to Assemble 2024

Assemble is the largest annual event in Derby Museums' calendar, encapsulating the Museum of Making's ethos by celebrating making in all its shapes and forms to inspire the next generation of makers and show that anyone can be a maker.

In line with Derby Museums' core principles, Assemble is for the thinker and maker in all of us. Assemble allows us to discover, engage and support local, regional and national makers, as well as building working relationships with makers who often go on to become museum facilitators, sellers in our commercial spaces and attend other Derby Museums events.

Assemble highlights the importance of sustainability within making, promotes wellbeing and builds a strong sense of community between us, our makers, audiences and participants.

Assemble 2024 was the first year of a three-year partnership with Belper-based heating manufacturer Vaillant, whose support enabled us to bring in commissioned spectacle makers, thus drawing in new audiences and increased secondary spend at the Museum of Making.

*"As a local creative maker and teacher, being given the opportunity to showcase and share my skills and knowledge at Derby's Museum of Making during Assemble has been and is fantastic. Sharing the event with so many other makers is inspirational, discovering who is out there doing their thing, in their own creative way and having the time to meet these people and find out about what they do and why is just brilliant."*

*Being offered the opportunity to not only sell what I create, but to also demonstrate how I make my tiny sculptures and offer the opportunity to others to make their own creations too, is such a great combination.*

*The legacy of Assemble doesn't just happen on the day, but is something that happens all year round, with visitors from Assemble contacting me to help them with their own creations, sometimes years later! Thank you."*

A maker at Assemble 2024

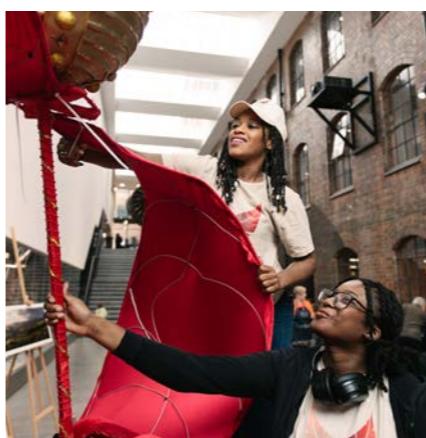
Family-focused and interactive, Assemble celebrates making from technology to craft, painting to engineering, it aims to inspire young people to see themselves as problem solving, creative human beings.

Assemble brings to life the hobbyists, crafters and organisations represented at the event, inspiring visitors to make, create and consider potential careers in making. In 2024, Assemble brought together over 75 makers (aged from 23 to 84!) and attracted over 1,600 visitors, 91% of whom visited from outside of Derby city.

We are grateful to Vaillant, whose generous support enables us to bring this family friendly experience to Derby.

*"Assemble 2024 was a really well organised event, great support in the build up - accommodation and parking allowing me to set-up my workshop. I was inundated with cardboard supplies for the day. Would happily return for future events."*

Tim Neath, Spectacle Maker at Assemble 2024



## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CULTURAL LIFE OF DERBY

**213,340**  
visitors engaged

**56%**  
of visitors from the local area



**569**  
visitors welcomed at 'Hello Derby: A Festival of Welcome', as part of Derby Refugee Week

**44%**  
of visitors from outside of the local area

**£9.8m**  
contributed to the local economy



Across our museum sites in 2024-25 a broad range of our 'everyday' cultural activity occurred.

Life Drawing sessions produced with Derby College in the Museum on the Wardwick became a popular fixture. We hosted internationally renowned experts to reveal new perspectives on Derby's cultural heritage. These included events with Dr Angela Stienne on the ethics of Egyptian mummified bodies in museums, Dr Cath Feely and University of Derby History students on Empire and the making of modern Derby, and Dr Allan Chapman and the Derby and District Astrological Society on the first Astronomer Royal – John Flamsteed.

In May, we welcomed new arrivals to the city with the City of Sanctuary Network at 'Hello Derby', a co-produced event as part of Refugee Week.

This sits alongside our ongoing relationship with the pioneering social enterprise Upbeat Clean, who employ refugee women and others wanting to rebuild their lives, offering them a supportive work environment and paying a real living wage.

Our museum spaces are habitually used for wider cultural participation with collaborative live music and events.

In October, we brought a city-wide CAMRA beer festival back to Derby – cited by the Lonely Planet as the 'best place to drink real ale in the world' – for the first time in four years, welcoming over 3,000 visitors.

In March, we welcomed over 1,000 visitors to TOASTED Ceramic Fair, where 40 independent ceramicists from across the country exhibited. The event generated over £28,000 for independent makers in just one weekend.

We partnered with Psychic Dancehall, an experimental electronic music festival hosted at the Museum on the Wardwick and Dubrek Studios. As part of this we worked with the University of Derby's Live Event Technology students and instigated new partnerships with the University and live music organisations and promoters across the city.

'Dracula Returns to Derby' – an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project led by the University of Derby, Derby Museums, University of Bournemouth and Sheffield Hallam University – ran throughout the year and delivered a series of public workshops and events, connecting visitors and audiences with the world's most famous vampire and highlighting Derby as the location where the theatrical world premiere of Dracula took place in May 1924. The project will culminate in a four-day conference and exhibition at Pickfords' House opening in May 2025. Derby Museums co-produced 17 events across the project, welcoming audiences of over 560 and commissioned 15 artists to create work inspired by new research.

Despite our financial challenges, Derby Museums continues to present innovative and meaningful work for its audiences, both local and further afield. The museums remain Derby's principal attractions contributing over £9.8m to the local economy this year. Through our events and exhibitions, we encourage people to look at the world differently, learn more about their city and feel pride in the place they live.





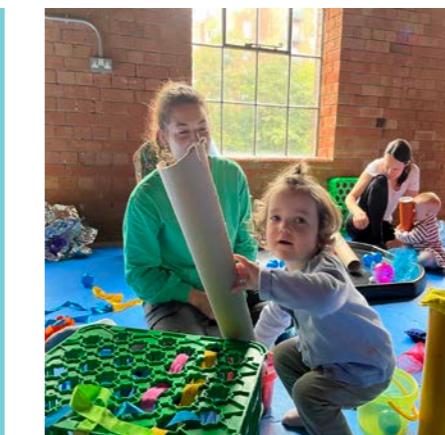
## LEARNING IN PARTNERSHIP

**14,888**  
young people  
directly engaged  
through  
STEAM learning  
programmes

Derby's identity was 300 years in the making, and the Enlightenment spirit of creativity and invention resonates today. The heritage of the city is used to frame ambitions for the future both as one of the UK's top high-tech cities and a principal centre for manufacturing and sustainable engineering.

Derby Museums' partnerships with industry are integral to providing young people with the inspiration and experience to pursue a career in industry. Our commitment to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) learning is underpinned by support from Rolls-Royce, IMI and Vaillant.

Together with Vaillant, we opened the new Power Pod display at the Museum of Making, inviting visitors to learn more about a low carbon future with an engaging display of old and new objects including an interactive air source heat pump. The first cohort of students also completed the new Vaillant-funded 'Launch into Engineering' programme, building skills for the future.



**269**  
school children  
engaged in  
*Think Human*  
workshops

Examples of Loughborough University's world-leading research and innovation were translated into interactive exhibits using touchscreens, mannequins and genuine products.

*Think Human* was the first temporary exhibition at the Museum of Making to interrupt the Museum's permanent galleries, providing visitors with a new way of looking at objects already on display, demonstrating cutting edge research and new inventions. As a result, nearly all visitors to the Museum of Making interacted with this exhibition in some way.

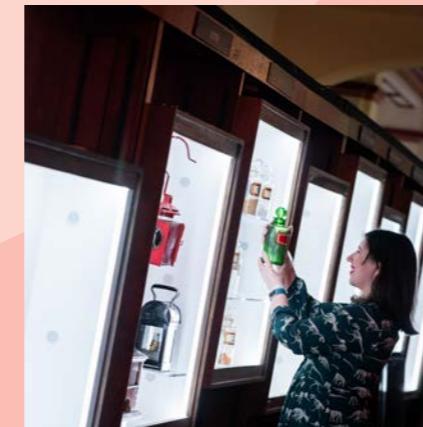


# SHARING DERBY'S HERITAGE THROUGH EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS

Across our programmes, we transform the way cultural heritage is presented and appreciated in the city. In recent years, Derby Museums has been recognised for innovative participatory practice with awards including Finalist in the 2022 Museum of the Year Awards and a Special Commendation in the 2024 European Museum of the Year Awards.

During 2024-25 we welcomed 213,340 visitors across our three sites. Visitors enjoyed a variety of temporary exhibitions, showcasing a wide range of our collections, engaging with contemporary themes:

- *Displaced: from the Nile to the Derwent* opened up a discussion with visitors about the collections from Ancient Egypt in the care of Derby Museums.
- The work of renowned British artist Alison Lambert was featured in *Human Explorations*, with large-scale charcoal drawings and monotype prints mining the depths of human emotion and mythology.
- *The Missing Act* showcased a body of Derbyshire-themed works from emerging artist Max Gimson, winner of the ninth Jonathan Vickers Fine Art Award.
- In partnership with Loughborough University and the Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors, *Think Human* encouraged visitors to explore how user centred design makes the world a better place for individuals, organisations and society.



1

Arts Council England  
Designated collection of  
outstanding significance

350

Ancient Egyptian objects  
reinterpreted, including the  
remains of two mummified  
humans: Pypyu and Pa-Sheri

100

objects, previously in  
storage, now on display  
in our new venue the  
Museum on the Wardwick

330

objects acquired from  
55 donors

1,380

archaeological finds  
recorded in Derbyshire  
and Nottinghamshire

28 objects loaned for  
display in other museums and

50 objects loaned to  
universities for research



# FINANCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Since the end of the Covid pandemic, Derby Museums' financial position has been fragile. Financial pressures are being brought to bear by a combination of heavily decreased public revenue funding and increased costs beyond our control such as high inflation, a large increase in the minimum wage and high energy costs. Over the last few years financial resilience has been maintained by use of cash reserves and this year a large award by Garfield Weston Foundation, bringing the museum to a near break-even position.

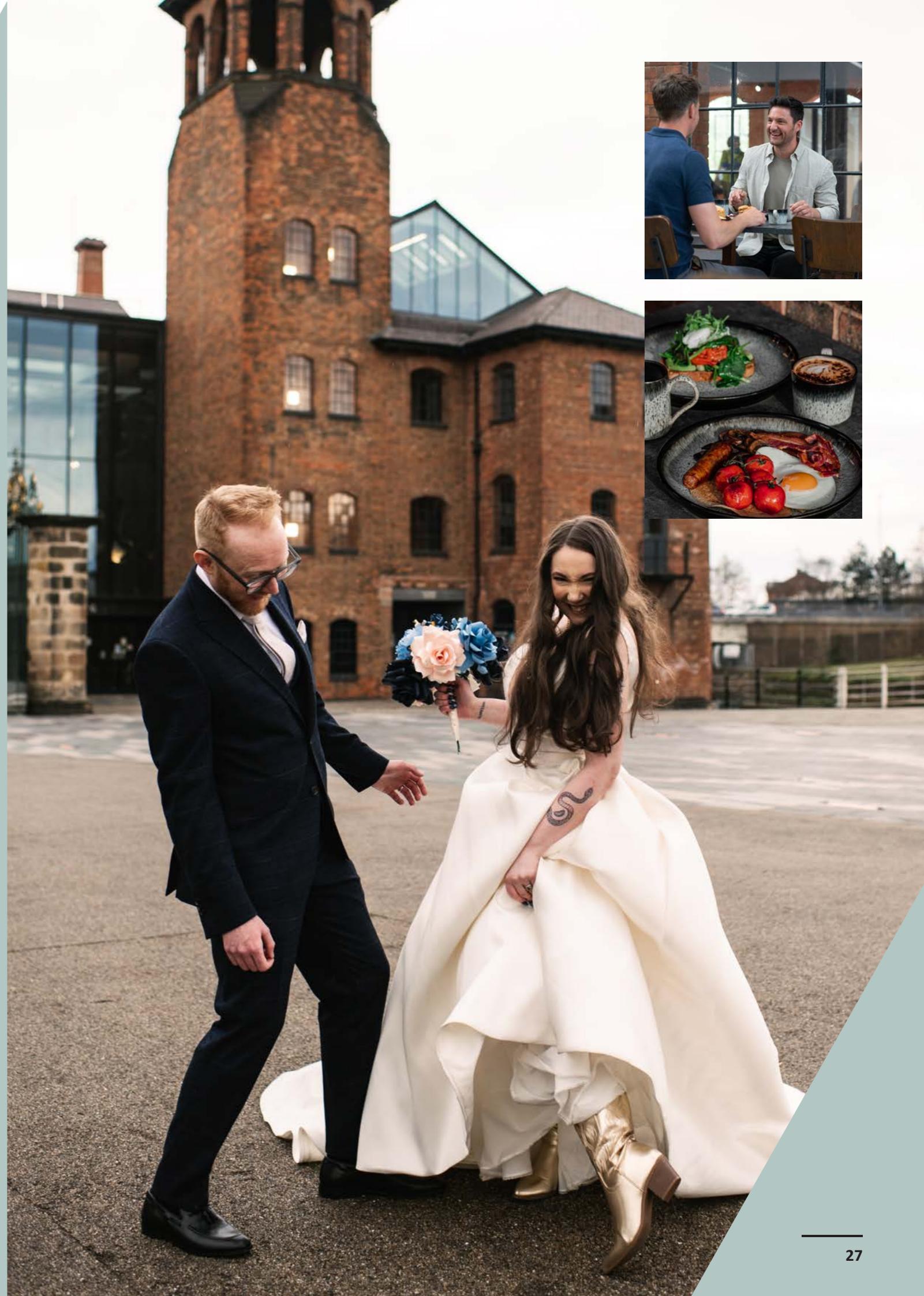
In 2024-25 we continued to take several positive steps to mitigate the risk to our financial sustainability. This included investment in a Full Business Review funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and an investment in our fundraising capacity. The review identified and recommended a refined strategy building on Derby Museums' current vision and strengths whilst adapting to the challenging socio-economic context in which it now functions. Following the review, 12 out of 33 recommendations have already been actioned, with the remaining recommendations and areas of opportunity continuing to be explored.

Funding secured from Arts Council England and Foyle Foundation to enliven the Museum on the Wardwick (the former city library) was invested in new flooring, sustainable lighting, blackout blinds and event lighting to support venue hires and income generation from the space. This has resulted in a 75% year-on-year reduction in electricity consumption and a tripling of income from hires, while also making the space a viable and exciting live performance venue.

Derby Museums Enterprises (DME) was recognised in the NatWest SE100 Index as one of the UK's 'Top 100' pioneering social enterprises. DME manages venue hire, retail, catering and other forms of income generation through ticketed events across the three museum sites, with all profits donated to Derby Museums. Every wedding, conference, cup of coffee, Psychic Dancehall gig ticket or pint of Derby Heritage Beer Festival real ale contributed to keeping Derby Museums fantastic and free. DME's ethos aligns with the wider curatorial ethos of the Museums – we celebrate local makers, from Denby Pottery used in the River Kitchen, to the local music promoters we partner with on our live music events. Wherever possible, our retail ranges are sourced from within walking distance of the museums, because we believe in empowering our local economy.

Other funding secured included a Reimagine grant from Art Fund to develop and deliver a 'wool takeover' at the Museum of Making, and a programme to engage young people, families and wider audiences in creative solutions to the climate emergency. Alongside this, we received a grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund – delivered by the Museums Association – to ignite debate and discussion on sustainability, co-producing systems and processes to enable shared decision-making on Derby Museums' environmental and financial sustainable future.

In 2024-25, we worked as part of the National Museum Directors' Council's Ecology subgroup to advocate for funding to be released for local and regional museums to produce carbon audits, providing a baseline idea of carbon production within the museums sector. This advocacy was successful, and we are now progressing our work to produce a baseline carbon audit. We have also switched electricity provider, and all of our electricity is now sourced from renewables. Our retail and catering is sourced locally wherever possible, to minimise carbon emissions and support the local economy.



# FUNDRAISING

## Corporate Support

In September we invited businesses to get behind our work through joining the Derby Museums Business Network. The Network attracted support from 23 individuals and businesses who through their membership enjoyed quarterly networking events. We are grateful to all our members who help us to bring world-class experiences to Derby. We are also grateful for the continued support of Vaillant and Rolls-Royce who generously support our learning programmes.

## Trusts and Foundations

Projects funded through trusts and foundations ranged from a grant from Garfield Weston Foundation to support our operating costs to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to build organisational resilience. Alongside this, we continued to deliver two National Lottery Heritage Fund projects: 'Derby's Egypt', which included the reinterpretation of our Egypt collection, a temporary re-display of the collection; and 'Derby Yaadaañ', in which we co-developed a digital archive with Derby's South Asian communities.

## Individual Supporters

We would like to thank all the individuals who backed our Joseph Wright appeal, supporters who donated to our Treasure Fund and Robert Shields DL - Longcliffe Quarry, whose generous support enabled us to acquire a collection of portraits by photographer Kate Bellis.

We would also like to thank every visitor who donated through our donation boxes, raising £50,169 to help us remain fantastic and free and 219 supporters who donated £8,617 through our Buy a Bird and Adopt an Object schemes, supporting family activities across our museums.

## Derby Museums Friends

A huge thank you as always, must go to the Derby Museums Friends. Together we enjoyed seven exclusive Friends events: a talk by Dacre Stoker (writer and great grand-nephew of Bram Stoker), a British Celanese collections talk, our summer social, a festive celebration, a hospital project object handling session, the Friends' Forum and a Model Railway Volunteers workshop. We are also extremely grateful to the Friends who helped us to fundraise at the Derby Heritage Beer Festival, where we raised a whopping £2,994 to support our work.



## Legacy and in-memory Donations

Our thanks go to all the individuals who have pledged a gift to us in their Will. This philanthropy will help ensure our city's heritage lives on.

Our thanks also go to the 32 supporters who have chosen to remember a loved one through our Adopt an Object and Buy a Bird schemes. All of our adoptions are important, though these ones continue to hold a special place in our hearts.

## Derby Museums Endowment

Derby Museums would like to continue to thank supporters and the National Lottery Players for helping build our £2m endowment. In 2024-25, this investment contributed £118,000 to Derby Museums' operating costs.



# 13

Trusts and Foundations

# £50,169

donated through donation boxes

# £7,635

donated to our  
Joseph Wright Appeal

# 23

Businesses and individuals  
supporting us through the  
Business Network



# 3

major corporate partnerships

# £8,617

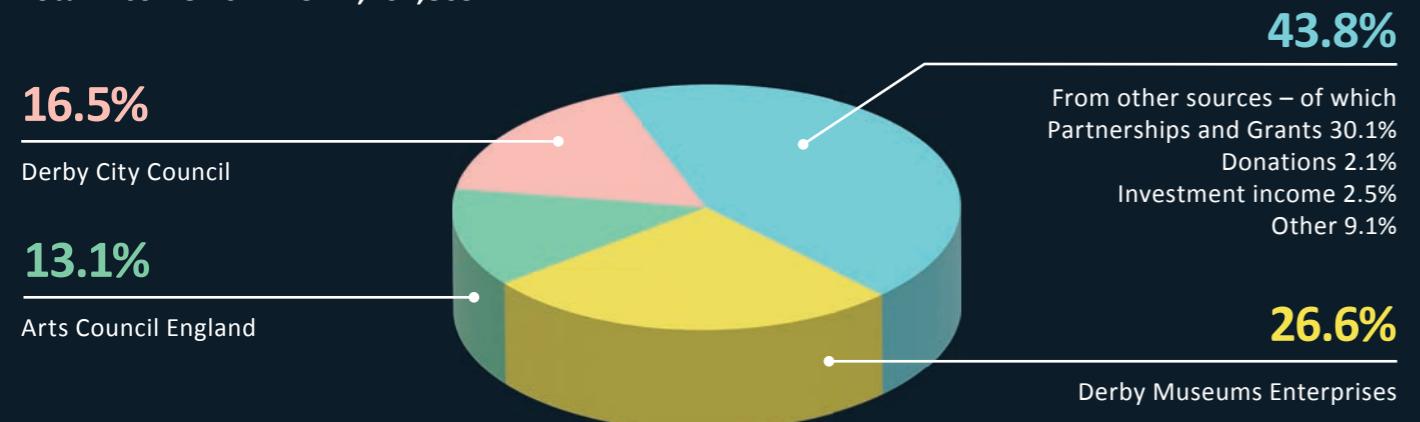
donated through our on-site  
adoption/Buy a Bird schemes

# £118,000

Endowment contribution to  
Derby Museums' running costs  
this year

# WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

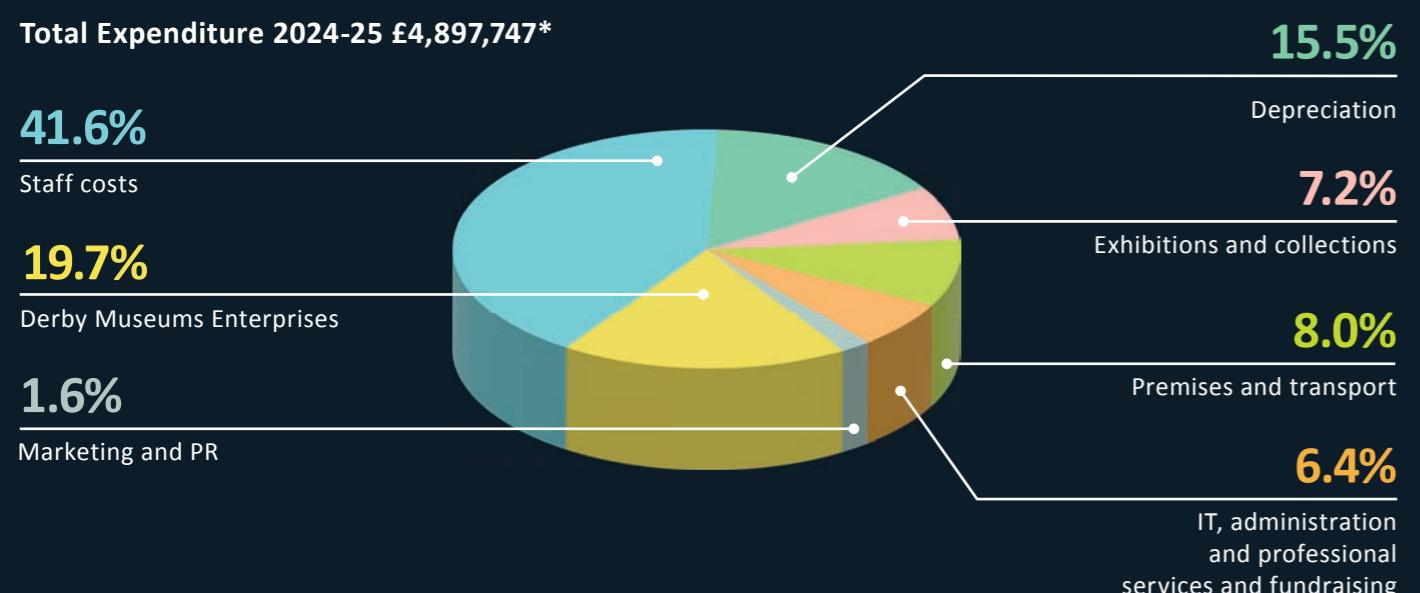
Total income 2024-25 £4,201,865



# WHAT THE MONEY WAS SPENT ON

*When it comes to running three museums, we make every penny count*

Total Expenditure 2024-25 £4,897,747\*



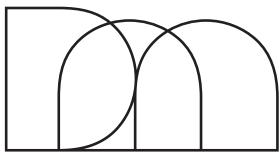
\*The funding gap includes a large depreciation charge for the Museum of Making. The rest of the funding gap was met by unrestricted reserves.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the generous businesses, individuals and grant making bodies who supported Derby Museums in 2024-25, through whose support we can continue to care for our region's heritage. We couldn't do it without you.

MAJOR PROJECT PARTNERSHIPS	BUSINESS NETWORK MEMBERS	OUR PARTNERS
IMI	Acres Engineering Ltd	GEM (Group for Education in Museums)
Rolls-Royce plc	Brian Ashby	Arts Derbyshire
Vaillant	Circulayo	Indian Community Centre
	Cosy Direct	John Smedley
	English Wine Project	Jonathan Vickers
	Freeths	Fine Art Award
	Fulton Partnership	Kedleston Hall
	Ian and Sylvia Morgan	Lima Studio
	Leonardo Hotels	National Arts Strategies
	Midland Lead	National Saturday Club
	Morley Hayes	Pakistani Community Centre
	Nimbus Disability	Sheffield Hallam University
	Penguin PR	Sight Support Derbyshire
	Pennine Healthcare	Sinfin Asian Men's group
	Peter Cowley	Sinfin Asian Women's group
	Rolls-Royce	Sinfonia Viva
	Smith Partnership Solicitors	W.W. Winter
	TDP	The Bemrose School
	The Alternative Board	The Bowes Museum
	The Pepperpot	The UK Ghost Story Festival
	Vaillant	Thomas Pocklington Trust
	Vibrant Accountancy	Toasted Ceramics Fair
	Wavensmere Homes	University of Derby
		University of Leicester
		University of Lincoln
		University of Loughborough
		YMCA Derbyshire
CORPORATE SUPPORTERS		OUR VOLUNTEERS
Cathedral Quarter Business Improvement District		
OUR DONORS		OUR FRIENDS
Our Adopt an Object supporters		
Our Buy a Bird supporters		
Our Endowment Campaign supporters		
Our Regular Giving supporters		
Legacy pledgers		
OUR CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL CLIENTS AND EVERYONE WHO HELD AN EVENT IN OUR SPACES		

SUPPORTED BY



DERBY MUSEUMS

ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

Supported using public funding by



HERITAGE  
FUND



MUSEUM AND  
ART GALLERY

PICKFORDS'  
HOUSE

**With thanks to the following photographers for the inclusion of their images in this report:**  
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Pictoria Pictures, Vaillant and Visit Derby.

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Derby Museums is a  
registered charity, number 1149710.

MUSEUM  
TOGETHER WE MAKE DERBY MUSEUMS

STEAM learning  
SCIENCE • TECHNOLOGY • ENGINEERING • ART • MATHEMATICS

own  
you can  
service.  
information  
, please talk