



Birmingham  
Museums

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019 / 20



# REFLECTING BIRMINGHAM TO THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD TO BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham Museums Trust is an independent educational charity formed in 2012.

It cares for Birmingham's internationally important collection of one million objects which are stored and displayed in nine unique venues including six listed buildings and one scheduled monument.

Birmingham Museums Trust is a company limited by guarantee.

Registered charity number: 1147014





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When I joined as Chair of the Board in February no one could have imagined that we would be in the grips of a pandemic within only a matter of weeks.

The coronavirus crisis has changed many things and raised many questions. What remains constant is Birmingham Museums' mission to ensure everyone in the region has the opportunity to experience Birmingham's world class collections regardless of age, background or financial means.

Despite the period of this report being so dramatically impacted by the pandemic, we achieved many things. Over 100,000 children from around 2,000 schools engaged in museum learning, the highest number of school visits of any cultural organisation in the city. Over 1,100 people gave their time and expertise to support the charity through volunteering. Through our work with communities and audiences we are attracting a more diverse range of visitors to our sites, and our health and wellbeing programme supported many of the more vulnerable people in our community, particularly as we went into lockdown. The launch of our Digital Asset Management System made many of our artworks and images free to download, allowing millions of people worldwide to access Birmingham's collections digitally.

I would like to thank Birmingham City Council and Arts Council England for continuing as our core funders, enabling us to provide access for everyone. This year I am also very grateful to DCMS and Arts Council England for supporting our organisation through the Culture Recovery Fund.

At the start of the year Dr Ellen McAdam retired as Director after nearly seven years, and I would like to thank her for leading the organisation during this time. Sara Wajid and Zak Mensah are now appointed joint CEOs and I look forward to working with them at such a transformational moment for the charity.

While we know there are many challenges ahead, we will build on our successes and look forward with confidence and ambition in our response to the ever changing landscape of the pandemic. I am confident that our capacity for innovation, adaptability and resilience will stand us in good stead.

I look forward to the future, with plans to diversify the Board of Trustees, and to reflect the superdiverse demographic of this city more strongly within our public offer.

Finally, I would like to thank all our amazing staff, volunteers, corporate supporters and my fellow Trustees who have supported us over the year.



**Niels de Vos**  
Chair, Birmingham Museums Trust

As the pages of this annual report show, this was a year of many achievements, all unfortunately overshadowed by the arrival of coronavirus and lockdown in March.

Birmingham Museums Trust won the Overall award for excellence at the Charity Awards 2019 for the National Lottery Heritage Fund-funded Collecting Birmingham project. This focused on working with audiences in four inner-city wards to collect objects that would enable us to tell stories about growing up, living and working in this young, superdiverse city. This is perhaps the project that, more than any other, has signalled the change in Birmingham Museums' approach to audience engagement. BMT has now earned an international reputation for its innovative and socially engaged practice, as I discovered when I was invited to give a paper on the project at the Best in Heritage conference in Dubrovnik in September. The change in practice is reflected in our increasingly diverse audiences.

In 2019 we opened MiniBrum at Thinktank, a new gallery curated by under 8s and designed to enable children to explore what it means to live in a big city. Poppy, the elected Mayor of MiniBrum, welcomed the Duchess of Cambridge to her city in January 2020. The popularity of the new gallery would have meant the best year for Thinktank since the museum opened, had lockdown not intervened. At the time of writing all our venues are still closed.

In February Professor Ian Grosvenor, our Chair since 2016, stood down. Professor Grosvenor helped to steer the Trust through a critical period in our history, and we owe him a debt of gratitude for all his work. We welcome Niels de Vos as his successor.

This is my last annual report, as I too am standing down after nearly seven years as Director. Leading one of the UK's greatest regional museum services has been a unique and challenging experience, and I wish all the team the best for the future.



**Dr Ellen McAdam**  
Director, Birmingham Museums Trust

## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



### AWARDS

Overall award for excellence,  
Charity Awards 2019, for  
Collecting Birmingham

Best Modern or Impressionism  
(1840 to WWII) – Group or  
Theme exhibition, Global  
Fine Art Awards 2019

Best Visitor Attraction in  
Birmingham, for Birmingham  
Museum & Art Gallery,  
Birmingham What's On  
Readers' Awards 2020

Best Art Gallery/Exhibition  
Venue in Birmingham, for  
Birmingham Museum & Art  
Gallery, Birmingham What's  
On Readers' Awards 2020

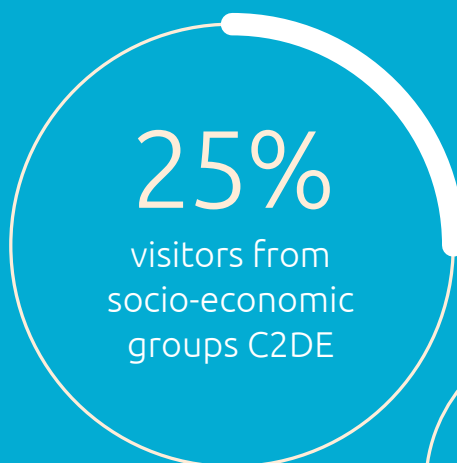
Best Independent Café/  
Coffee Shop in Birmingham,  
for Edwardian Tearooms at  
Birmingham Museum & Art  
Gallery, Birmingham What's  
On Readers' Awards 2020

Best Exhibition in the Midlands  
(Runner-Up) for *Leonardo  
da Vinci: a life in drawing*,  
Birmingham What's On  
Readers' Awards 2020

VISITS TO OUR VENUES, 47% FIRST-TIME VISITORS

# 923,145

### DIVERSITY



### DIGITAL



# 1,277,249

visits to Birmingham Museums  
Trust's website

### SOCIAL



# 229,629

social media followers

#### VOLUNTEERS



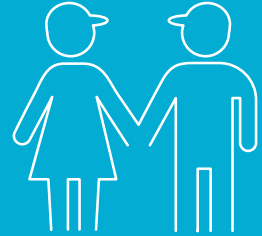
1,119

volunteers gave  
24,221 hours  
of support

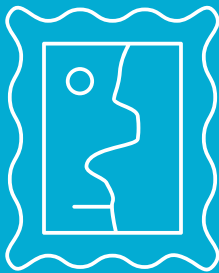
#### SCHOOL BOOKINGS

106,420

School children from  
2,053 schools took part in  
our education programmes



#### LOANS



9,700,000

visitors saw 3,716 loans  
in the UK and abroad

89,154

pupils made onsite  
school visits

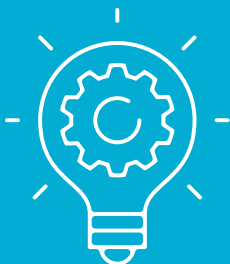


17,226

pupils were engaged  
through outreach and  
Museum in a Box kits



#### INFORMAL LEARNING



192,198

visitors participated in  
informal learning

50

children and young people  
participated in accredited  
Arts Award programmes



#### VISITOR SATISFACTION

VAQAS

standard achieved for  
7 museum venues



VisitEngland™





# AUDIENCES





## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Birmingham Museums Trust continues to provide children and young people across all educational settings with access to high quality arts, heritage and STEM learning. We are proud to host the highest number of school visits of any cultural organisation in Birmingham.

**Highlights include:**

- **92,500 children and young people** from schools or alternative educational establishments engaged with our museums through facilitated activities and guided resource learning across all key stages.
- **194,350 children, young people and families** took part in informal learning through outreach, holiday activities and our Planetarium programme.
- Our first formal early years engagement programme of onsite learning and pilot-based outreach activities was offered at MiniBrum, our new early years gallery at Thinktank.
- **73 teachers** accessed continuing professional development (CPD) activities relating to our exhibitions via our work with the local Secondary Visual Art Network.
- As part of *Leonardo da Vinci: a life in drawing*, we delivered an exciting cross-curricular CPD programme for 10 educators across Birmingham to explore art, design and STEM learning. This exhibition also supported and nurtured a further 10 young artists from Bournville College of Art and Design to explore STEM themes within art using the collections of Birmingham Museums Trust and the Royal Collection.
- We created new educational spaces and resources for schools, families and visitors at Soho House and Blakesley Hall.
- **50 children and young people** received an Arts Award, awarded by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England.



### MINIBRUM CO-PRODUCTION WITH HENLEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Children of Henley Montessori School provided an inspiring example of co-production in the creation of the MiniBrum gallery. Montessori education encourages children to be independent, resilient learners, confident to follow their own interests and test new ideas, and this was perfect for the co-production ethos of MiniBrum. From choosing their favourite objects to designing models and engaging interactions, the children led all aspects of the design while working alongside exhibition designers, curators, conservators and learning and engagement officers. Everything you can see and do within MiniBrum has been created in response to their ideas.

*"The finished museum is a replica of the children's original designs and ideas, testimony to the whole process they were involved in. An opportunity that none of them will fully realise the significance of in their education until they are older."*

**Helen Everley**  
Head Teacher, Henley Montessori School

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- In 2019/20, our community engagement programme reached around **3000 people** across the city through **100 events and projects**.
- As part of our *Faith in Birmingham* gallery, local Buddhist, Mandaean and Bahá'i communities celebrated and shared their faiths. The *Faiths in tune* festival brought music, dance and art from different faith communities into Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- Our wellbeing programme continued to grow. We offered our Creative Carers Programme for the fourth year running, created a new mindfulness audio guide and ran *Be well at BMAG* activities and dementia friendly tours led by museum enablers. In June 2019, we launched CreateSpace, a new partnership project supporting adults to use art and heritage for their wellbeing. 15 CreateSpace sessions were run in 2019/20.
- Inspire 19, our fourth annual youth art competition, launched in February 2019. A selection from hundreds of entries on the theme of 'family' went on display at Blakesley Hall.
- Our community engagement team supported the development of *Power to the people*, *Dressed to the nines*, and *Webster and Horsfall: 300 years of innovation*, as well as the reinterpretation of Sarehole Mill.
- We introduced Birmingham Museum Trust's Community Welcome Pass, offering free supported access to Thinktank for community groups in the city working with vulnerable people. The first groups taking part included those working with young carers, children with disabilities and refugees. In the first month of the scheme, **over 100 people visited** with the Community Welcome Pass.
- The Don't Settle project at Soho House saw the development of new interpretation, tours and events led by young people of colour, helping us tell previously untold stories.

*"Just able to do art, not be excellent. No pressure, makes you feel good and good about your achievement wherever you're at."*

**Attendee**  
Createspace



*"This is a charity that has shown real innovation within the sector and had a powerful impact on its local community."*

**Su Sayer**  
Chair of the Charity Awards judges, Charity Awards 2019

## CHARITY AWARDS – OVERALL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

In June 2019, Birmingham Museums Trust was delighted to accept the Overall award for excellence at the Charity Awards 2019, the longest-running and most prestigious awards scheme in the charity sector. As well as winning the top prize in the arts, culture and heritage category, we were chosen as the overall winner

for our Collecting Birmingham project; a project that addressed the need to truly reflect the city's multi-cultural and socio-economic diversity in our collection. Consulting with 3,500 individuals at 83 events and workshops, we acquired 1,800 new objects. By choosing these items and themes through community

consultation, people from some of Birmingham's most ethnically diverse and socially deprived areas became an integral part in curating the new exhibitions that would interpret and reflect their lived experience. We are incredibly proud of the new relationships we have cemented with our local communities and are

equally grateful to Civil Society Media and their sponsor, Charities Aid Foundation, for the honour of receiving the award.





## VOLUNTEERS

- **1,119 volunteers** gave us **24,221 hours** of their time.
- Volunteers welcomed visitors, assisted with family activities, worked with our collections team, supported conservation work, advised us, engaged with our communities, supported our curators, gardened and worked on other projects.
- Working with Home of Metal, we recruited **27 volunteers** who gave **1,000 hours** of their time to support *Home of Metal presents Black Sabbath 50 years*.
- As part of the Don't Settle project led by Beatfrees, we welcomed **six volunteers** to our new Young Advisory Board at Soho House.
- **Seven volunteers dedicated 220 hours** to support the engagement of visitors and the evaluation of *Birmingham revolutions – power to the people and Dressed to the nines*.
- We offered **two accredited training courses** and regular in-house training opportunities for the volunteer team.
- Events for the volunteer team included a day trip to Leicester to explore other museums, our *Volunteer Summer picnic* at Blakesley Hall to celebrate National Volunteers Week, and Birmingham Museum Trust's *Thank you party* for staff and volunteers in December 2019.
- Our Volunteer of the Year Award was presented during National Volunteers Week, and Student Volunteer of the Year during Student Volunteering Week. We awarded 19 three-year, 58 five-year and 12 10-year service awards in December 2019.
- Our *Corporate volunteering* and *Meet the expert* programmes saw 630 employees from 39 companies and organisations across the West Midlands volunteering with us for a day.
- We offered corporate volunteer activities to employees of AIG, Arcadis, Avison Young, BT, Claremont, Environment Agency, Groupon, HS2, HSBC, Lloyds, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, NatWest, Network Rail, PWC, RBS, Selfridges, Siemens, TA Cook, Phoenix Group, Turner & Townsend, Virgin Media, West Midlands Combined Authority and WSP.
- 15 organisations supported us with our *Meet the expert* programme: Aston University, Birmingham City University, De Montfort University, Institute of Sheet Metal Engineers, Leicester University, MOLA, RSPB, Social Mobility Foundation, Teddy Bear Hospital, University of Birmingham, University of York, Warwick University, Wildlife Trust, Woodlands Trust and WWF.



*“Not only has this volunteering provided me with object handling and documentation experience, it has also given me the chance to work with fascinating pieces of art.”*

**Volunteer**  
Birmingham Museum  
& Art Gallery

## WORKS ON PAPER – DIGITISATION VOLUNTEERS

The works on paper project began in July 2018. A component of our Rapid Digitisation Project, it aims to digitise and inventory all works on paper in the collection including paintings, sketches and prints. Working with our collections digitisation assistant, nine volunteers have dedicated 1,150 hours of their time to support this project. The volunteer team are working through the collection one object at a time, measuring, condition checking and photographing them and updating the digital records. This year they have digitised 6,601 works on paper, many of which are now accessible on our digital asset management system. In recognition for all this hard work, the team were finalists in the West Midlands Volunteer Awards 2019, awarded by West Midlands Museum Development.

*“I love volunteering at Blakesley – it gives me more than I give it, which doesn't seem right, but it is true. Thank you for the opportunity.”*

**Volunteer**  
Blakesley Hall



## MARKETING AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

- Birmingham Museums Trust attracted **923,145** visitors in 2019/20. There were significant increases for Blakesley Hall (**24,013** visitors, up 34% on the previous year), Soho House (**10,557** visitors, up 29% on the previous year), and Thinktank (**243,308** visitors, up 5% on the previous year).
- We saw a significant rise in **BAME** visitors, with the proportion across all venues **increasing to 22%**.
- Awareness of Birmingham Museums Trust's **charitable status** amongst visitors **rose from 46% to 54%**.
- A new membership online sales system and website was launched in October 2019, with the aim of increasing member renewal rates via autorenewal and allowing gift memberships to be sold for the first time. There was a huge growth in membership sales with **membership income rising by 37% to £131,515**.
- As well as hosting a visit by The Duchess of Cambridge, MiniBrum staged the Midlands broadcast of BBC Children in Need, with over 130 guests helping to showcase the space on live TV.
- MiniBrum also crowned its first Mini Mayor, eight-year-old Poppy Jordan, at a ceremony with the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Mohammed Azim. Poppy went on be interviewed for local radio and newspapers.
- Our press office achieved **£3,936,787 of media coverage**, far exceeding target and up from £3,835,167 the previous year. There was particularly extensive regional and national media coverage for MiniBrum and *Home of Metal presents Black Sabbath 50 years*.



## ROYAL FOUNDATION VISIT TO MINIBRUM

The Duchess of Cambridge visited MiniBrum at Thinktank on 21 January 2020 to launch the landmark UK-wide survey *5 Big Questions*, aimed to spark the biggest ever conversation on early childhood. MiniBrum was delighted to be chosen and were able to showcase the innovative way the gallery was designed and created with young children. Pupils from Henley Montessori School who curated their very own Mini Museum

within the gallery, were amongst those who welcomed Her Royal Highness. The visit achieved far reaching coverage, with many media pieces featuring images and videos which highlighted MiniBrum, including BBC Breakfast, Vogue, The Times and The Telegraph.

## DIGITAL AUDIENCES

- Our open access policy has been very successful this year, following the launch the public version of our digital asset management system (DAMS) in May 2019. Over the year it quickly outstripped our targets, achieving **1,712,539 image views and 18,933 downloads**. A partnership with Unsplash, one of the world's leading photography websites, began in January 2020. In the three months to March 2020, our images had over **67 million views and 344,344 downloads**.
- We ran a Remix event *Digital storytelling in the museum, a projection takeover day*, in conjunction with BBC Digital Cities in September 2019.
- We commissioned artist Cold War Steve to produce new artwork inspired by images in our online image resource and worked with Black Hole Club to commission an emerging artist to create a new digital artwork.
- The number of Birmingham Museums Trust **social media followers** increased by 10.5% to **229,629** across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Our **social media reached 793,074 people** for *Home of Metal present Black Sabbath 50 years*; a campaign that successfully engaged people, while operating within the copyright restrictions on the use of Black Sabbath music or images.
- We ran a successful crowdsourcing call out for fashion photos to put in a video to accompany *Dressed to the nines*, and created several other videos to promote exhibitions, sites, the online shop and wayfinding to the museum.
- We were praised by art critic and TV presenter Bendor Grosvenor in the Financial Times for having "seized the potential" of the restored Jan Brueghel the Elder painting shown in the BBC television show **Britain's Lost Masterpieces**, aired in November 2019. We shared the images on DAMS and made a video highlighting the painting's transformation, successfully reaching **135,401 people** across our social media channels.



## PLANETARIUM UPGRADE

The new 4K planetarium system launched in Thinktank in April, offering brighter, sharper images and crystal-clear surround sound. The updated system has created opportunities for new show development, programming and collaboration. We have launched five new shows – Ice Worlds, The Hot and Energetic Universe, Moon Shot, Winter Sky and Spaceports, three of which were made in-house, written and narrated by museum enablers and members of the learning team. Since September 2019 there has been a regular evening programme of events aimed at adults. *Planetarium Lates* have comprised science talks, art and music using the planetarium dome. Collaborations have included working with students from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, some of whom have composed music for our shows.



# ALL OUR SUPPORTERS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE WORK WE DO

## MAJOR FUNDERS



UK Research  
and Innovation





#### WE OWE A SPECIAL DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO

Patrons and Corporate Patrons of Birmingham Museums Trust /  
Friends of Birmingham Museums / Public Picture Gallery Fund /  
All the donors and supporters of our Annual Appeal

#### THANK YOU TO ALL FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS TRUST

Anonymous donors / Armed Forces Covenant Trust / Art Fund /  
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V&A Purchase Grant Fund / Arts and Humanities Research Council /  
Association of Science and Discovery Centres / Birmingham City University /  
Birmingham Gems 2020 / Birmingham Municipal Fund / British Council /  
British Museum / Contemporary Art Society / Cooper Parry / Coutts Bank /  
European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme /  
Fazenda / Garfield Weston Foundation / Henry Moore Foundation / HSBC /  
Inspiring Science Fund co-funded by the Department for Business, Energy &  
Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome /  
LoveBrum / Mott MacDonald / Newcomen Society / Opus Restaurant /  
Savills (UK) Ltd / Smallpeice Trust / Stavros Niarchos Foundation / Staying  
Cool / The William A Cadbury Charitable Trust / The Wolfson Foundation /  
True Vue / University of Birmingham / Webster and Horsfall / Westhill  
Endowment Fund / Woodmansterne Art Conservation Awards

#### WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL SUPPORTERS OF BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK 2019

Birmingham City Council / Jewellery Quarter Business Improvement District /  
Scan Tech Digital

**AND A BIG THANK YOU TO THE PUBLIC AND OUR  
VISITORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS**





# VENUES







## ASTON HALL

- **31,602 visitors.**
- **£163,546 in income** via admissions, donations, events, retail, catering and venue hire.
- Aston Hall delivered a very successful events programme once again this year. The line-up included the ever-popular *Fright nights* and *Aston in Wonderland*, as well as brand new additions such as *Mythical beasts and fantastic creatures* and our *Festive market*, all generating significant income for the site and attracting new audiences.
- Aston Hall scored 89% in VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme and once again received their visitor attraction Accolade for Best Told Story.
- We were honoured to be finalists, alongside the best of the region's tourist attractions, for Small Visitor Attraction of the Year in the West Midlands Tourism Awards 2020.
- 2019/20 saw increasing demand for group travel packages at Aston Hall, contributing to a healthy growth in admissions, retail, and food and beverage income.

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE

Aston Hall is a house brimming with atmosphere and mystery, so it is no surprise that it received significant coverage and a rather unusual accolade in the press this year when one of the country's leading teams of paranormal experts named it the UK's most haunted heritage site. This boosted the popularity of our ghost tours and of our immersive *Fright nights*, with tickets selling out time and time again. This heightened interest in the paranormal also led to the successful addition of a *Ghost dinner* in the 2019/20 programme, an event that combined a thrilling tour with a delicious meal in the Stable Yard Café.



# HERB GARDEN CAFE



## BLAKESLEY HALL

- **24,013 visitors.**
- **£92,797 in income** via admissions, donations, events, retail, catering and venue hire.
- Birmingham Museum Trust's annual exhibition *Inspire 19*, was exhibited at Blakesley Hall for the first time from July–September 2019, displaying artwork created by young people aged 0–19 years around the theme of family.
- We expanded our work with local communities and groups by hosting the *Happy healthy holidays* playscheme in August 2019 which enabled access to activities and educational programmes for local children over the school holidays.
- Blakesley Hall continued to create and deliver successful events for our visitors. The programme included *Apple day* and *Falconry day* alongside new events such as a car boot sale, Summer fete and *Public Services day*. The annual events *Blakesley Hall ale & cider festival* and *Santa at Blakesley* remained popular attractions, raising significant income for the site and attracting new audiences and partnerships.
- Blakesley Hall continued its successful volunteer programme with several corporate volunteer groups joining our regular volunteers to support us in improving the grounds.

## HERB GARDEN CAFÉ

The existing tearoom in the visitor centre at Blakesley Hall was refurbished and rebranded as Herb Garden Café in November 2019. The new look café has been very popular with visitors and contributes to a more relaxed and pleasant ambiance in this space overlooking the garden. Thanks to the changes made, income increased by 30% compared to the previous year. Blakesley Hall also worked in partnership with Midlands-based charity Aquarius, to provide young people with work placements in the Herb Garden Café. To help ensure the café reflects its new name, volunteer groups have also worked on plans for herb planting in the borders around the café.



## MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

- **570,435 visitors.**
- **£1,275,006 in income** via schools, donations, events, retail, catering and venue hire.
- In June 2019, we welcomed *Home of Metal presents Black Sabbath 50 years*. This exhibition, in partnership with Home of Metal, attracted a diverse audience of 24,000 visitors over its three-month run.
- The history of an important local family business was told in *Webster and Horsfall: 300 years of innovation* thanks to generous funding from the company.
- Two exhibitions *Birmingham revolutions – power to the people* and *Dressed to the nines* were created to test story ideas for the museum's longer-term development. Firm favourites with visitors, including *Man and His Sheep* (1989) by Ana Maria Pacheco, were displayed as part of *Thoughts on Portraiture*.
- A gallery installation of three films by Yugesh Walia explored cultural moments and experiences for Birmingham's Black and Asian communities in the 1980s.
- Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery scored 90% in VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme. For the sixth year running we were awarded their Quality Food and Drink Accolade for the Edwardian Tearooms.
- In the What's On Readers' Awards 2020, we won Best Independent Café/Coffee Shop in Birmingham for the Edwardian Tearooms, Best Visitor Attraction in Birmingham, and Best Gallery/Exhibition Venue in Birmingham. We were also awarded Best Exhibition in the Midlands (Runner-Up) for *Leonardo da Vinci: a life in drawing*.

## HOME OF METAL PRESENTS BLACK SABBATH 50 YEARS

A celebration of Black Sabbath from the perspective of their fans, this exhibition in partnership with Home of Metal showcased the band as pioneers of Heavy Metal and highlighted their significant role in British music heritage. Formed in Aston, Birmingham in 1968, Black Sabbath are inextricably linked to the West Midlands. The exhibition explored how the music of four working class lads captured the hearts and minds of fans globally. Opened in June 2019 by band members Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler, the exhibition attracted 24,000 visitors from across the country and overseas to view the rare collection of personal memorabilia from band members, and to witness how fans have paid tribute to their idols over the last 50 years.





## MUSEUM COLLECTION CENTRE

- **2,389 visitors.**
  - Our Heritage Open Day was even more successful than 2018's record-breaker, attracting 1,180 visitors who enjoyed vintage bus rides, model railways, food and drink, storytelling, and the chance to explore the store.
  - We developed a volunteering programme to support our open afternoons, allowing us to increase the number of visitors who can attend each session.
  - We continued to facilitate collections programmes including the Arts Council England NPO-funded Science & Industry project.
- This project has shed new light on this fascinating area of our collection, and has supported us to undertake condition surveys, hazard checks and improve the storage of this collection.
- We continued engagement with HS2, mitigating against the impact of the major infrastructure project. Dust and vibration monitoring are now in place to establish a benchmark against which any increase through construction work can be measured. Along with Birmingham City Council, we began the process of legally transferring areas of land on the site that are needed by HS2.

## SPIRIT STORE

Working with a specialist, we completed an inventory of our fluid preserved specimens, known as the Spirit Collection. Photographing each object and recording information such as description, dimensions and condition, the inventory enabled us to identify which objects in the collection were deteriorating and required further conservation action to be taken. Inventory projects such as this provide invaluable data that both aids the management of the collection, and informs the decision making on its care and future use. This type of activity is essential to our role in caring for and developing the collection, and such inventories form a routine part of our work.





## MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QTR

- **18,370 visitors.**
- **£133,673 in income** via admissions, donations, events, retail, catering and venue hire.
- The Museum of the Jewellery Quarter delivered a successful programme of events including regular heritage walks exploring the Jewellery Quarter and *Explore the factory floor* open access days. The museum also held a series of popular jewellery making workshops for both adults and children.
- The museum welcomed its second jeweller in residence, Vanessa Miller. Vanessa created a range of silver jewellery based

on Smith & Pepper's iconic snake range. These are available to buy in store and online. The jeweller in residence is funded by a generous donation from one of Birmingham Museum Trust's Patrons.

- We hosted a number of selling shows in our gallery space, including *Jewellery Quarter type* by artist Tom Hicks and *East meets West* in collaboration with China West Midlands.
- The Museum of the Jewellery Quarter scored 88% in VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme and received their Best Told Story Accolade.

## FACTORY VIEWING WINDOW

In November 2019, the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter embarked on a redevelopment of the reception and retail spaces. As part of the renovation we created a viewing window giving visitors a chance to see into the historic Smith & Pepper factory workshop from the reception area. The focus of the project was to boost conversion to the guided tour of the factory by providing visitors with a preview of the fascinating spaces explored on the factory tour.

Alongside the creation of the new viewing window, the redevelopment also included improvements to the retail space, a much-needed refresh of the paintwork and flooring and the relocation of the reception desk towards the front of the space. The latter has greatly improved the visitor welcome at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter.



## SAREHOLE MILL

- **14,316 visitors.**
- **£59,373 in income** via admissions, events, retail, catering and venue hire.
- We celebrated the successful completion of the bakehouse project in February 2020 which has enabled baking to take place regularly on site for the first time since the late 19th century.
- As part of this project, the historical interpretation across the property has been reimagined with new display panels and the addition of sound boxes recreating the noises of a working mill.
- The food and beverage experience has been greatly enhanced, with produce from the new bakehouse now available in the Millers Tea Room. To compliment this, we have also introduced barista coffee which has proven very popular with our visitors.
- We saw the continued success of events such as *Folk day*, *Pancake day* and the sell-out *Pumpkin flotilla*.

## BAKEHOUSE

February 2020 saw the completion of the bakehouse project made possible by generous donations from the HB Allen Charitable Trust and from the community via a crowdfunding campaign. The project restored the original bakehouse back to working order, with modern facilities installed to enable baking to occur on a regular basis. With a baker now employed, Sarehole Mill once again can boast a working bakery for the first time since the 1870s, with daily bread available from our shop. We are working towards a future where Sarehole Mill be able to once again grind its own flour, taking visitors on the full journey from grain to loaf.





*"Being part of a project with the specific aim of delivering visible diverse stories to a traditional heritage site alone has made me feel empowered. Being aware that the work we were doing was actually serving a purpose that would potentially engage a wider and more diverse group of people in collating history has really inspired me. Even through having conversations in my group about all the creative ways we could potentially diversify history has really been inspiring."*

**Amira**  
Young Curator



## SOHO HOUSE

- **10,557 visitors.**
- **£48,951 in income** via admissions, events, retail, catering and venue hire.
- Soho House saw a significant increase in visitor numbers and participation compared to the previous two years. Our summer events programme inspired more people to explore this significant historic property.
- We celebrated the 200th anniversary of James Watt's death, through a range of events and tours exploring his legacy. This included the return of the popular *Soho House steam fair*.
- Soho House teamed up with Beatfrees, an organisation that provides a community for young creatives. Five young curators supported us in bringing Soho House back into the heart of the Handsworth community.
- We welcomed our new Young Advisory Board to Soho House. This group of six volunteers is helping to shape the direction and future of Soho House and provide an important connection between Soho House and its local community in Handsworth.

## DON'T SETTLE

Reimagining Soho House was our first-year project with Don't Settle, a partnership project empowering young people of colour from Birmingham to change the voice of heritage. Five young curators worked with the Soho House team to reimagine Soho House in the 21st century. Focusing on businesswomen from Handsworth, Birmingham's reggae music scene and how the industrial revolution could have affected our climate today, the young curators learnt skills in planning, designing and displaying an exhibition around a historic house. This young team were instrumental in leading the successful launch of the exhibition and delivering guided tours to Handsworth residents.





**thinktank**  
Birmingham science museum

- **243,308 visitors.**
- **45,581 school children** visited.
- **4,216 people** engaged in our STEM outreach programmes.
- **66,385 people** engaged in our STEM onsite programming run on weekends and school holidays.
- **£2,586,529 in income** via admissions, schools, membership and third-party promotions such as Groupon.
- MiniBrum, the brand new under 8s STEM gallery which opened in May 2019, has seen a rise in visitors to Thinktank especially in under 3s and membership holders. MiniBrum has enabled Thinktank to set up a preschool club during term time and school holidays.
- We have had some fantastic publicity this year with live filming during

BBC Children in Need in November 2019, as well as the visit by HRH Duchess of Cambridge in January 2020 to launch her early years survey, *5 Big Questions*.

- We enjoyed the **busiest February half term on record with 25,641 people** coming to the site over the nine days in February 2019.
- In April 2019, we opened our refurbished 4k Planetarium with fantastic feedback from customers. It was a key tool in our celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the moon, for which we developed a brand-new planetarium show and hosted an after-hours party for visitors to learn about the Apollo programme.
- Thinktank scored 86% in VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme, with praise going to the new Signal Box Café and MiniBrum.

## MINIBRUM

The opening of MiniBrum in May 2019 has had a huge impact on the visitors coming to Thinktank to spend time and to learn about STEM from a very young age. The number of visitors attending Thinktank who are under three years old has increased by 64% compared to the previous year. This is in part due to the fantastic new gallery that allows families to learn together as children explore their very own city, but also due to the exciting programming that has been created to engage younger visitors.

MiniBrum hosted a *MiniChristmas* event where children were invited to decorate the gallery with a range of traditional decorations and meet a very special visitor. A Mini Mayor was appointed who had the honour of meeting the real Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Mohammed Azim, and giving him a tour of the gallery.

The learning and engagement team also created a preschool programme of activities to encourage parents and carers to visit Thinktank on weekdays in term time. The programme uses both MiniBrum and the new 4K Planetarium as a space to tell stories, explore new worlds and to bring people together to share experiences and make new friends.



*"Being a Castle Keeper has given me an enormous amount. I have developed new skills, gained new interests and passions and expanded my knowledge in a huge range of areas."*

**Volunteer**  
Weoley Castle



## WEOLEY CASTLE

- **8,139 visitors.**
- In January 2020, Weoley Castle introduced a regular open day on the last Friday of each month. This provided visitors with a dedicated day where they could explore the ruins with the added benefit of a guided tour. These Friday openings complement the other scheduled event days at the site.
- The annual *Medieval open day* saw costumed reenactors take over the ruins and received fantastic visitor feedback. *Falconry day* in September was commercially successful, and the site welcomed record numbers to watch the birds of prey fly over the ruins.
- In summer 2019, Weoley Castle hosted a *BioBlitz and bugs* activity, giving families a chance to explore the biodiversity of the Weoley Castle ruins and view their findings under the microscope. Our year-round programme of children's craft activities also saw many returning families from the local community.

## CASTLE KEEPERS

The volunteer Castle Keepers of Weoley Castle met fortnightly at the site to plan events, support the conservation and maintenance of this important scheduled monument, research and expand their knowledge and promote the ruins amongst the local community. This year, 25 volunteers alongside corporate volunteering teams, dedicated over 1,500 hours to support the site. They assisted with events onsite including craft activities, guided tours, the *Great Easter egg hunt*, *Medieval open day* and *Falconry day*. The team also took a visit to the Museum Collection Centre to view artefacts from Weoley Castle.



# COLLECTIONS

## ACQUISITIONS

**Birmingham Museums Trust acquired 80 items for the city's collection this year, of which 16 were purchased and 64 donated or bequeathed. Among these were a number of objects that had previously been on long-term loan and on display in the *Birmingham History* or *Faith in Birmingham* galleries. Acquisitions included:**

- A group of objects owned by a Prison Officer at HMP Birmingham (formerly Winson Green), late 20th century.
- A replica of the Staffordshire Hoard helmet commissioned as part of the Staffordshire Hoard Conservation and Research project.
- A set of Muslim prayer beads purchased in Jerusalem, late 20th century, donated by Mr Makhdoom Chishti.
- An architect's model of the city of Birmingham, late 20th century.
- A printed textile, *Not your fantasy*, 2018, by Farwa Moledina, purchased through a gift in the will of Tessa Sidey.
- A group of works by late 19th and early 20th-century artists of the Birmingham School, purchased from the collection of Remo and Mary Granelli with the support of the Public Picture Gallery Fund.
- Plaster portrait plaques of Birmingham artists Kate and Myra Bunce presented by Michael and Helen Kendrick.
- Three films, *African Oasis*, 1980, *Mirror, Mirror*, 1980, and *Sweet Chariot*, 1981 by Yugesh Walia, purchased with the assistance of the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the Collecting Birmingham project.
- Three pieces of jewellery made by the Birmingham manufacturer Alabaster and Wilson, mid-20th century, purchased with support from the Friends of Birmingham Museums Trust.
- A group of items related to protest in Birmingham, including a waistcoat adorned with campaign badges, late 20th century, donated by Ms Jayne Faulkner.
- Archaeological material and archives from Cob Lane burnt mound excavations in 1980 and 1981 and other burnt mounds in south Birmingham.
- A Les Paul guitar formerly owned and played by Basil Gabbidon of the band Steel Pulse, late 20th century, purchased with the assistance of the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the Collecting Birmingham project.
- A ring featuring the cityscape of Birmingham, 2019 by Vicky Ambrey-Smith, purchased with support from the Contemporary Art Society Omega Fund and the Friends of Birmingham Museums Trust.
- An eight-part ceramic installation, *Certain Times XXIV* by Lubna Chowdhary, presented by the Contemporary Art Society through the Jackson Tang Ceramics Award.
- A design for a fresco, *The Return of Peace*, 1916, by Joseph Southall, presented by Mrs Anne Willson.
- A sculpture *Study of Head – John the Baptist III*, 1992 by Ana Maria Pacheco, bequeathed by Dr Robin Thompson in memory of Hendrika Thompson-Dielessen with Art Fund support.



## WAISTCOAT WORN BY GILLIAN SMITH

Owner Gilliam Smith decorated this waistcoat with the badges of political campaigns she supported during the 1970s and 1980s. Many of the badges relate to the 1984–85 miner's strike which was a period of industrial action to prevent colliery closures across the British Isles. Gilliam Smith lived in Kings Heath during the strikes and helped the miners by collecting and distributing food parcels to strikers and their families.

The waistcoat and other objects were donated by Jayne Faulkner, the daughter of Gilliam Smith, and were originally on loan to Birmingham Museums as part of the *Your Birmingham Gallery* in the Birmingham History Galleries which opened in 2012. The waistcoat was acquired by Birmingham Museums Trust in 2020 and was displayed in temporary exhibition *Dressed to the nines*.

*"That jacket sort of represents my mum basically, she fought and campaigned for the rights of native American Indians, and during the miner's strike she fought and campaigned for the miners, and that jacket I think sort of sums my mum up, in what she did, in what was important to her."*

**Jayne Faulkner**  
Daughter of Gilliam Smith

## LOANS

Over 8.7m visitors have enjoyed seeing objects on long-term loan to museums around the world. 3,327 loans were seen by 8,887,099 people and a further 389 short-term loans for exhibition were seen by 1,041,681 visitors, of which 356,239 visitors were to national venues and 685,442 visitors to international venues. We received a total income from loans of £97,351.

808 objects were lent to Birmingham Museums for seven exhibitions. These included:

- 49 artworks lent for *Too cute! sweet is about to get sinister*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- 12 artworks lent for *Leonardo: a life in drawing*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- 11 works lent for *Webster and Horsfall: 300 years of innovation*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- 726 objects lent for *Home of Metal presents Black Sabbath 50 years*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- One object lent for *Dressed to the nines*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- Three objects lent for *Birmingham revolutions – power to the people*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- Six artworks lent for *Whitworth Wallis artist in residence: Leanne O'Connor*, held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

### Outward loans to eight UK venues:

- National Portrait Gallery, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Library of Birmingham, Tate Britain, Dovecot Studios, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Midlands Arts Centre, Mercer Art Gallery.

### Outward loans to 11 international venues:

- Pitti Palace Florence, National Library of France, Vero Beach Museum of Art, Seattle Art Museum, San Antonio Museum of Art, Yale Center for British Art, KODE Art Museums and Composer Homes Bergen, Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde Stockholm, Tokyo Mitsubishi Ichigokan Museum Tokyo, Kurume City Art Museum Kurume, Abeno Harukas Art Museum Osaka



*"An artist guild from another county came as a group to the museum for the first time. [...] They could not believe they were standing in front of these works; they saw them in books and studied them but were in awe to be in their presence. It was an experience to be treasured. I wish every docent could experience what I did today. What a high."*

#### Docent

Vero Beach Museum of Art

## VICTORIAN RADICALS

Organised in partnership with the American Federation of Arts (AFA), Birmingham Museums Trust's international exhibition *Victorian radicals: from the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts movement* presents highlights from the city's outstanding holdings of Victorian and Edwardian fine and decorative art, including paintings, works on paper, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and stained glass. The exhibition, seen by over

135,000 visitors, continued its tour of the United States in 2019/20, completing showings at Vero Beach Museum of Art, Seattle Art Museum and San Antonio Museum of Art. The US coronavirus lockdown brought a temporary closure of the fifth leg of the tour at the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, Connecticut in March 2020, however the exhibition will be extended there until September and will then continue to tour to The

Frick Pittsburgh, the Nevada Museum of Art, and the Museo de Arte de Ponce in Puerto Rico. Following the success of the tour, the works will return home for a major showing at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery in 2022.

We are delighted to have won the award for *Best Modern or Impressionism (1840 to WWII) – Group or Theme exhibition* in the Global Fine Art Awards 2019, in partnership with the AFA.

Now in their sixth year, these awards are selected by a panel of expert judges from 99 nominees across 14 categories, representing works in six continents, 27 countries and 74 cities. The award confirms the success of Birmingham Museums Trust's largest ever touring exhibition, which has brought Birmingham's outstanding collection and its pioneering artistic figures to a whole new audience in the US.



## COLLECTIONS CARE

- We condition checked and conserved objects as part of exhibitions, loans and displays, and managed the movement, storage and documentation of collections across sites.
  - We undertook collection documentation for the four-year Arts Council England NPO-funded Science & Industry and Rapid Digitisation projects, with volunteers aiding inventory, cataloguing, data-tidying and digitisation. This included the digitisation of framed works, many of which had been unseen for some time. The images will be made accessible via Birmingham Museums Trust's digital asset management system
  - A dedicated inventory assistant was appointed to manage the administration of long-loans, and audit and inventory activity across all sites.
  - We completed the asbestos survey of the main warehouse at the Museum Collection Centre, while the Collections Team developed a process for collections rationalisation, which would include hazardous objects from the survey, in line with the MA Code of Ethics.
- This was trialled through the transfer of an object that had been on long-loan and had little relationship to Birmingham.
- We improved the collections management system, EMu, with the events module increasingly used to manage collections management activities, while dedicated short-term posts allowed focused data-tidying of the accession lots module.
  - We hosted a number of interns and students, and began hosting a year-long Museum Futures trainee, through the British Museum.
- We concluded the volunteer silver cleaning project and created a new volunteer opportunity to support conservation housekeeping at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, augmenting the teams volunteering at our Historic Properties and Thinktank.
  - We supported the care and management of the city's Public Art collection including the conservation cleaning of the Old Square mural and Robert Peel statue, and the 3D-scanning of the Thomas Attwood statue.

# THE STAFFORDSHIRE HOARD

## AN ANGLO-SAXON TREASURE



EDITED BY CHRIS FERN, TANIA DICKINSON & LESLIE WEBSTER

## STAFFORDSHIRE HOARD MONOGRAPH

The Staffordshire Hoard monograph was published by the Society of Antiquaries in London in November 2019 and is the result of a ten-year conservation and research project. This exceptionally high-quality publication features papers, illustrations and photographs by a specialist team of archaeologists, historians, scientists and conservators, including a section by Birmingham Museums Trust's conservation team. The monograph presents a wealth of information on various aspects of the Staffordshire Hoard, including its meaning and symbolism, material techniques and workshop practices, and the religious and historical context. It successfully contextualises the Hoard in the wider Anglo-Saxon world and aids understanding and interpretation of this unique treasure.

- Research and development of Birmingham Museums Trust's collection is at the heart of our work. This year we built on knowledge developed through past projects and formed new partnerships to make step changes in our existing practice.
- Working across the collection, we developed 10 new thematic display concepts which will help to shape the redevelopment of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. Two of these, *Birmingham revolutions – power to the people* and *Dressed to the nines*, were developed into prototype displays. They featured objects and artworks

acquired this year, including a waistcoat covered in campaign badges.

- We created a new collections development policy which will guide acquisitions over the coming five years. Through a consultation-led approach, and rooted in themes linked to Birmingham and the wider region, the policy builds our capacity to develop the collection and displays relevant to, and engaging for, the city and its people.
- We worked with Birmingham manufacturing company Webster and Horsfall to create an exhibition that celebrates their 300th anniversary.

It tells the story of their business in the context of the city's industrial past using our collection and the company archive.

- Through the West Midlands Portable Antiquities Scheme, delivered in partnership with the British Museum, we recorded 3,704 archaeological finds in 2,890 national database records. We engaged 3,079 people, from metal detectorists to school children, and managed 79 treasure cases, including a large silver late Roman hoard from Wem in Shropshire.
- Academic research partnerships, funded through the Arts and

Humanities Research Council, included participation in the Pre-Raphaelites Online network, aimed at bringing together UK and US academics and museums with significant collections in this area to generate original research. Through the doctoral training programme, Midlands4Cities, three placement students supplemented our own collections research, while a successful funding application secured a PhD project with the University of Warwick to research the Italian Renaissance collection of decorative art.



### BIRMINGHAM REVOLUTIONS – POWER TO THE PEOPLE & DRESSED TO THE NINES

*Birmingham revolutions – power to the people* explored the city's vibrant history of protest and activism. From the Priestley Riots of 1791 to the LGBTQ+ campaigns of today, the display narrated the history of gatherings, riots, strikes and campaigns in the city through art, literature, clothing and music.

*Dressed to the nines* explored some of the changes which occurred in the types of clothing worn for special occasions from 1850 to the present day. It included 12 full outfits associated with the city, many never exhibited before, among them an embroidered court suit which belonged to Birmingham-born Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.



# MAKING IT HAPPEN

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce training and development continued to be a key focus at Birmingham Museums Trust, creating collaborative learning opportunities across our organisation. We had **284 staff actively using our online learning platform** completing **2,205 courses** this year. This represented an increase in active users of 113, with 1,350 more courses completed since the previous year.

### Highlights include:

- **164 leadership learning events** completed. Courses included conducting appraisals, capability and misconduct, absence management, recruitment of new staff, communicating with employees, investigations and grievances.

- A new mandatory training matrix was designed specifically to support individual roles, with content tailored to maximise performance and support individual development needs.
- We invested in project management training for managers who oversee our strategic and corporate projects, to help build our project management capacity.
- We developed a mental health First Aid programme, a new initiative and part of our ongoing employee wellbeing activities.
- We continued to invest in capacity to support up to **22 young local people** from diverse backgrounds, working on our incredibly

successful Science and Heritage Career Ladder initiative.

- Our membership of a national apprenticeship consortium helped us develop new apprentice opportunities in:
  - Property Maintenance Operative, Level 2
  - Museums and Galleries Technician, Level 3
  - Team Leader & Supervisor, Level 3
- This year we helped develop a programme of communications workshops called Don't Settle in collaboration with BeatFreaks, focussing on how to engage with different audiences, with a focus on young people of colour.

- We have simplified and streamlined how staff and managers access learning and development events, supporting improvements in workforce development budget allocation and efficiency.
- We began work on a revitalised 'back to the floor' programme which will see staff and managers working front of house to help understand more about our visitors and their experiences.







## DEVELOPMENT

In 2019/20 Birmingham Museums Trust generated fundraising income of £1,235,000 from our supporters, donors and grant makers. Two major collections acquisitions proved a challenging but ultimately successful fundraising task, securing John Akomfrah's *Handsworth Songs* (1986) and a marble relief of Pre-Raphaelite artist John Everett Millais by Alexander Munro. These acquisitions required the support of multiple funders and achieving the funding targets remained in doubt until the very last moment. We are especially grateful to the Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund who agreed to contribute to the acquisition of both important artworks.

## CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP SCHEME

**Leave the office behind and enter a world of inspiration!**

In 2019 we launched our new Corporate Membership club and welcomed our first two members, Cooper Parry and Savills (UK) Ltd. The membership offers businesses in the city the opportunity to fulfil their corporate social responsibility requirements, inspire employees and clients, and includes fantastic hospitality and professional networking opportunities. We are extremely proud to be part of this vibrant and diverse city. We work with businesses and their employees to engage with the city's past and make an impact on its future together. The membership offers businesses a new way of developing their brand as well as exclusive access behind the scenes and to exciting activities with our curators. It also offers venue tickets and special events for their staff.



# TRADING

## RETAIL

### All About Brum

Celebrating the city of Birmingham has been an ongoing focus with regards to product development. In 2019/20 we created the Brum Cup, an environmentally friendly, reusable cup featuring the Birmingham skyline, drawn by local artist Olive Burke. We created Walk Birmingham, a new book containing 20 walks around Birmingham, aimed at encouraging people to get active and learn more about the heritage of the city. The book has consistently been in our bestsellers list both in store and online. We have also established links with local makers to showcase their work and further celebrate the city. YES BAB T-shirts and bibs by local designer Punks & Chancers, made with ethically-sourced organic cottons and vegan inks, have proved very popular this year.





## FOOD AND BEVERAGE

### Signal Box Refurbishment

In June 2019 we completed the refurbishment of our café at Thinktank. Renamed Signal Box Café, it is a family friendly, fun setting where great food can be enjoyed in a comfortable environment. Our objectives were to provide menu improvements that gave the customer greater choice and quality while improving profitability and reducing labour costs for the organisation. One of the many successes of Signal Box Café has been creating a brand that takes influence from the surrounding collection. The City of Birmingham locomotive adjacent to the café provided inspiration for the design and theme as well as providing interactive sounds as a backdrop to the dining experience. Thanks to the development of Signal Box Café we have seen an increase in sales of 16%.

## CONFERENCE AND BANQUETING

### Venue Hire Rebrand

In 2019/20 we undertook a rebrand of our venue hire marketing materials and on-site wayfinding. Initiated at Thinktank, we introduced new signage in and around our Event Suite and brought existing signage in line with our refreshed venue hire branding. In addition, we created a suite of marketing materials for all sites that better reflect the business and better promote the spaces and services we offer our clients. We completed a refresh of event and food photography at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and Thinktank and have used this resource to improve our social media content and improve our sales calls. The rebrand supported us in delivering 5% income growth across Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and Thinktank.



The establishment of the ECMN grew from an email exchange between Ellen McAdam and Tony Butler, Directors of Birmingham and Derby Museums respectively, in September 2015. Influenced by the successful Women Leaders in Museum Network, the aim was to create an informal network that would develop opportunities for mutual support and collaborative working, with a focus on developing a strategic response to the long-term funding issues affecting the sector.

Following a period of consultation (facilitated by an Arts Council England grant), the ECMN was established in 2016, comprising of senior museum professionals from organisations with similar backgrounds and governance structures. The mission of the network is to support the leaders of England's civic museums, offer peer support and share knowledge and expertise, support enterprise

and advocate for the value of civic museums in the light of rapidly declining local government funding.

ECMN identified three work strands:

### **1. Think piece on the future of civic museums (lead: Tony Butler, Derby Museums Trust)**

The Think piece has been influential in highlighting the issues facing civic museums. In summer 2019, ECMN was consulted on the initiative by Arts Council England and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) to carry out a survey of the condition of civic museums' estates. This formed the basis of the successful attempt by DCMS to lobby Treasury for the new £250 million Culture Investment Fund, launched in October 2019. Representatives of ECMN are regularly included by funders and government in sector consultations.

### **2. International touring exhibitions (lead: Ellen McAdam, Birmingham Museums Trust)**

These international touring exhibitions aim to highlight the quality of the collections in English civic museums and to generate income for the network. Two exhibitions are proposed: *Enchant: fairies, magic and the supernatural* (2022 onwards at two venues), and *Gods, myths and legends* (2023 onwards at three venues), the latter sponsored by the Nikkei Shimbun. Independent arts curator and writer Kathleen Soriano will lead both exhibitions, with support from Toby Watley (Director of Collections) and Victoria Osborne (Curator, Fine Art) of Birmingham Museums Trust. At the time of writing it seems likely that the COVID-19 outbreak will have an impact on the timetable for these shows.

### **3. Benchmarking and data sharing**

Considered a valuable measure for organisations within the network, it has proved difficult to collect coherent data from members with such different business and governance models. Work on this strand is currently on hold until a new lead is appointed to take this forward.

### **The future of ECMN**

As of May 2020, the membership stood at 47, with potential for expansion. The Steering Group are seeking funding for business planning and legal support to enable them to constitute ECMN as a formal membership group.



# FINANCES



## TOTAL INCOME

11,502,686

<div></div>	BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL	40%
<div></div>	TRADING	19%
<div></div>	ADMISSION INCOME	19%
<div></div>	ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND NPO	9%
<div></div>	MILLENNIUM POINT TRUST	2%
<div></div>	OTHER	11%



## TOTAL EXPENDITURE

11,736,080

<div></div>	STAFF COSTS	53%
<div></div>	OTHER OPERATING EXPENDITURE	40%
<div></div>	MAINTENANCE AND RUNNING COSTS	3%
<div></div>	MARKETING	2%
<div></div>	FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION	2%



## TRUSTEES AND MANAGEMENT

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Professor Ian Grosvenor**

Chair *(to February 2020)*

**Niels de Vos**

Chair *(appointed February 2020)*

**Mohammed Ali MBE**

**Councillor Muhammad Afzal** *(to January 2020)*

**Clive Bawden** *(appointed October 2019)*

**Alderman Randall Brew OBE, JP, FCA**

**Dr Louise Brooke-Smith OBE**

**Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP** *(appointed May 2019)*

**Cllr Phil Davis MBE** *(appointed January 2020)*

**John Diviney**

**Eamon Mooney**

**Mohammed Rahman** *(to May 2019)*

**Luke Southall**

**Tracey Stephenson**

**Jonnie Turpie MBE**

**Chrissie Twigg**

**Claire Williamson**

### SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Dr Ellen McAdam**

Director

**Rachel Cockett**

Director of Development

**Janine Eason**

Director of Engagement

**Alex Nicholson-Evans**

Commercial Director

**Richard Paterson**

Director of Finance

**Toby Watley**

Director of Collections

### EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAY CHANGES

#### BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

##### Gas Hall

*Home of Metal presents Black Sabbath 50 years*

26 June – 29 September 2019

##### Other Galleries

*Too cute! sweet is about to get sinister*, curated by Rachel Maclean

26 January – 12 May 2019

*Leonardo da Vinci: a life in drawing*

1 February – 6 May 2019

##### Op art

From May 2019

*Reflecting Birmingham to the world and the world to Birmingham*

From 3 July 2019

*Birmingham in the 1980s: films by Yugesh Walia*

3 August – 10 November 2019

*Thoughts on portraiture*

3 August – 17 November 2019

*Birmingham revolutions – power to the people*

7 December 2019 – 6 September 2020

*Dressed to the nines*

7 December 2019 – 6 September 2020

*Webster and Horsfall: 300 years of innovation*

30 January – 4 October 2020

#### BLAKESLEY HALL

*Inspire 19*

20 July – 14 September 2019

#### MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QUARTER

*Jewellery Quarter type*

1 August – 31 October 2019

*East meets West: people, places and objects in Birmingham and the West Midlands*

9 January – 27 June 2020

#### SOHO HOUSE

*Don't Settle at Soho House*

From 22 November 2019

#### THINKTANK

*MiniBrum*

From 25 May 2019

#### TOURING

*Victorian radicals: from the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts movement*

Seattle Art Museum, Seattle

13 June – 8 September 2019

San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, Texas

10 October 2019 – 5 January 2020

Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut

13 February – September 2020 (extended due to COVID-19 outbreak)

### TALKS AND LECTURES

#### Barker, R

11 October 2019, Age Friendly Museums Network West Midlands: one-day showcase conference, Birmingham

#### Beddoes-Davis, E

26 February 2020, Curatorial careers, art and employability event, University of Birmingham School of Art and Law

8 December 2019, Authenticity and impostor syndrome, Tate/British Art Network workshop for the Early Careers Curators Group, The Hepworth Wakefield

6 August 2019, Thoughts on portraiture: Ana Maria Pacheco's 'One Man and his Sheep' and friends, Birmingham and Midland Institute

#### Brain, D

4 December 2019, Conservation Club at Birmingham Museums, Icon Twitter Conference 2019

#### Bridgman, R

17 December 2019, Building socially engaged practice at Birmingham Museums Trust, Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) lecture series, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

4 October 2019, *Curating World Cultures*, Museums Association conference, Brighton

#### Bridgman, R & Fowles, A

25 February 2020, Talking museums: a critical dialogue, National History Museum, Lahore, Pakistan

#### Butler, L

21 November 2019, Lightning talk on MiniBrum co-production, Science Museum, London

24 October 2019, MiniBrum presentations, ISF Grantholders' meeting, Thinktank

10 October 2019, MiniBrum presentation, Education Forum, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, Belfast

#### Cockett, R

15 November 2019, Authenticity in leadership: aligning your personal and professional values, Space Invaders, Thinktank, Birmingham

23 January 2020, Fundraising at Birmingham Museums Trust, Fundraising Managers Forum, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, London

#### Eason, J

6 November 2019, Day out with the kids panel discussion, Family Attraction Expo, NEC, Birmingham

30 October 2019, Moving on: supporting veterans at Birmingham Museums, SSAFA study day, Birmingham.

3 October 2019, Birmingham Museums and social impact, presentation to international delegates, Museums Association Conference, Brighton

#### Large, L

8 July 2019, History of the dinosaur displays at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Researching dinosaurs: a multidisciplinary symposium, Lapworth Museum, University of Birmingham

#### McAdam, E

7 January 2020, Ancient Mesopotamia – land, monuments and people, Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society/Friends of Birmingham Museums Trust, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery



19 November 2019, Birmingham Museums and difficult histories, Launch of *Difficult histories and positive identities*, report commissioned by Cumberland Lodge

3 October 2019, Making the case for museums, ECMN discussion at Museums Association conference, Brighton

27 September 2019, Collecting Birmingham, The Best in Heritage conference, Dubrovnik, Croatia

#### **McMullen, E**

20 November 2019, New displays at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery: *Birmingham revolutions – power to the people* and *Dressed to the nines*, History Day, University of Birmingham

#### **Miller, L**

4 December 2019, Conservation of a complex contemporary artwork at Birmingham Museums Trust, Icon Twitter Conference 2019

#### **Morton, K**

30 January 2020, From Ancient Peru to Lucie Rie and beyond: working towards new ceramics displays at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, CoCA (Centre for Ceramic Arts) symposium, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

30 April 2019, *Leonardo da Vinci: a life in drawing*, Birmingham and Midland Institute, Birmingham

#### **Osborne, V**

30 October 2019, *Victorian Radicals: from the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts movement*, Yale Center for British Art press launch, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London

#### **Przyrodzki, R**

21 November 2019, Marketing for museums, guest seminar, University of Derby

#### **Spurdle, L**

26 February 2020, Whose story is it anyway? and panel chair, Telling tales: inclusion and collaboration, Hello Culture Remix, BBC Digital Cities, Manchester

28 January 2020, Whose story is it anyway? and panel chair, Telling tales: inclusion and collaboration, Hello Culture Remix, BBC Digital Cities, The Watershed, Bristol

12 November 2019, Removing the barriers: open access at Birmingham Museums Trust, DCDC conference workshop, Birmingham

8 November 2019, Women in digital careers talk: how did I get here? Girls That Geek, MAC, Birmingham

15 October 2019, Image licensing and the Creative Commons CC0 Waiver, Picture Library Symposium, Museum of London

24 September 2019, Whose story is it anyway? Hello Culture Remix, BBC Digital Cities, Birmingham

#### **Thompson Webb, J**

14 June 2019, Have you got this one? Icon 19, Belfast

21 May 2019, What's eating your collection? poster presentation, 4th International IPM conference, Stockholm

## **PUBLICATIONS**

**Allnatt, V**, 2019 Six silver Medieval hammered coins from Fradley, Staffordshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 69–70

**Allnatt V, and Worrell S**, 2019 Two broadly contemporary early Roman brooches from Orelton, Herefordshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 40–41

**Bolton, A**, 2019 Penny of Edward the Confessor from Pershore, Worcestershire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 130

**Bolton, A**, 2019 Medieval padlock from Tysoe, Warwickshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 107

**Bolton, A**, 2019 Medieval seal matrix from Longdon, Worcestershire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 128–129

**Bolton, A**, 2019 Roman spatula handle from Dodderhill, Worcestershire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 121–122

**Bolton A, and Wood E**, 2019 A very late Early Medieval/Anglo-Scandinavian (c. AD 900 to 950) sword guard from Colwall, Herefordshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 35

**Fern, C, Dickinson, T, Webster, L (eds)**, 2019 The Staffordshire Hoard: an Anglo-Saxon treasure, London, Society of Antiquaries in London

**Freeman E**, 2019 A Medieval Papal Bulla of Pope Pius II from Ellesmere, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 50–51

**Freeman E**, 2019 An incomplete button and loop fastener from Hinstock, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 52

**Gilmore T, and Reavill P**, 2019 A late Saxon or early Medieval cross staff head Mount from Bitterley, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 44

**Hoverd T, Reavill P, Stevenson J, and Williams G**, 2020 The Herefordshire Viking Hoard; unpicking the story of stolen treasure, *Current Archaeology* 361, 46–51

**Jones M, and Reavill P**, 2019 A Medieval vervel/hawking ring of Medieval date 1380–1450 from Hereford, Herefordshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 38–39

**North J, Reavill P, and Cherry, J**, 2019 A silver Medieval seal matrix from Telford West from Telford West, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 63–64

**Reavill P**, 2019 Herefordshire Portable Antiquities in Ray K. Archaeology: 2018 *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* 66, 162–167

**Reavill P**, (ed), 2019 *West Midlands Archaeol* 60

**Reavill P**, 2019 A copper alloy harness fitting/terret ring of later Iron Age – early Roman date (100 BC – 100 AD) from Brimfield, Herefordshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 33–34

**Reavill P**, 2019 An Early Bronze Age undecorated Migdale Axehead from Craven Arms area, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 47–48

**Reavill P**, 2019 A late Iron Age fob-dangler from Cockshutt, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 48–49

**Reavill P**, 2019 A Medieval heraldic decorated box lid from Lilleshall, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 53

**Reavill P**, 2019 A later Prehistoric Iron Age votive miniature wheel from Newport area, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 56–57

**Reavill P, and Gilmore T**, 2019 A very late Iron Age 'Donside' Terret Ring from Lebotwood, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 51–52

**Reavill P, and Rosenbaum M**, 2019 A Medieval millstone from Clee Hill, Shropshire, *West Midlands Archaeol* 60, 46

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