

**Herefordshire Museum Service**

Additional Recruitment  
Information

## Herefordshire Museum Service

Herefordshire Museum Service has offered local people and visitors the opportunity to explore its varied collections of local history, natural sciences and fine and decorative arts for the last 149 years. However, over the last decade alongside all other public services it has experienced a reduction in funding which has led to significant cuts in the service and staffing. The redevelopment of Hereford Museum and Art Gallery has provided the impetus to realise the potential of the museum service.

The museum service is on a journey to become a socially engaged organisation. For us this means making the museum's venues community spaces and its collections community resources. We believe we have a role to play in shaping society, promoting life-long learning, inclusivity and accessibility and supporting the health and wellbeing of all the people of Herefordshire. We want to be a service around which partners can mobilise to support local communities and advocate for social justice, human rights, climate justice as well as help people make sense of contemporary issues. The move to socially engaged practice will ensure that Herefordshire Museum Service can contribute to and deliver on the council's strategic priorities and corporate plans. At the heart of the process is a focus on participatory practice through community engagement and community-led decision making.



## Purpose

Herefordshire Museum Service connects people with the county's rich artistic, cultural and natural heritage to explore contemporary issues and inspire enjoyment, curiosity and wonder.

We do this by

Collecting, caring for and interpreting objects with a connection to Herefordshire

- Celebrating and sharing the county's diverse cultural heritage
- Stimulating creativity, curiosity and enjoyment
- Fostering a sense of place and community
- Promoting life-long learning, participation and wellbeing
- Involving local people in our work and decision making.

## Mission

To inspire and connect the people of Herefordshire with issues that matter through access to world-class arts, culture and heritage.

## Vision

For Herefordshire to be a centre of excellence in community-led programming and cultural engagement where diversity is celebrated, creativity fostered and curiosity sparked.

## Values

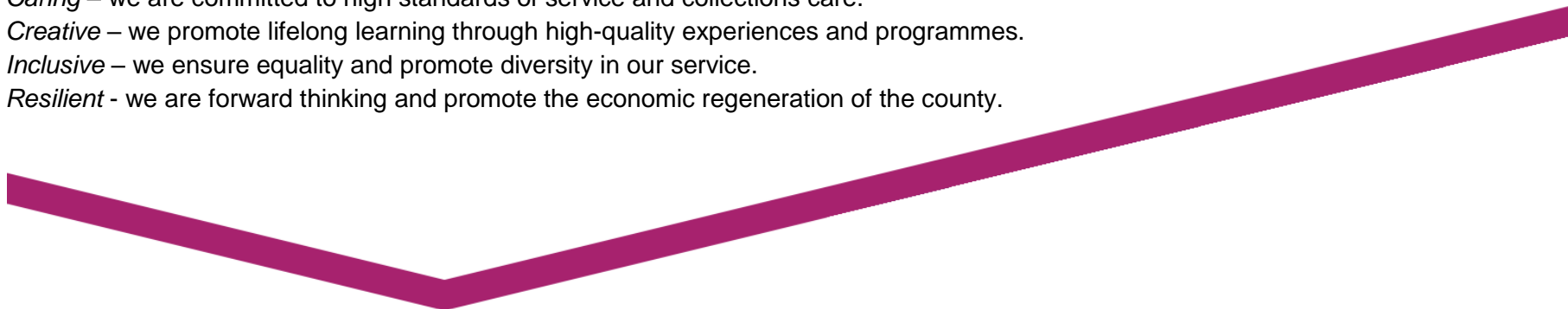
*Democratic* – we are committed to community engagement and partnership working.

*Caring* – we are committed to high standards of service and collections care.

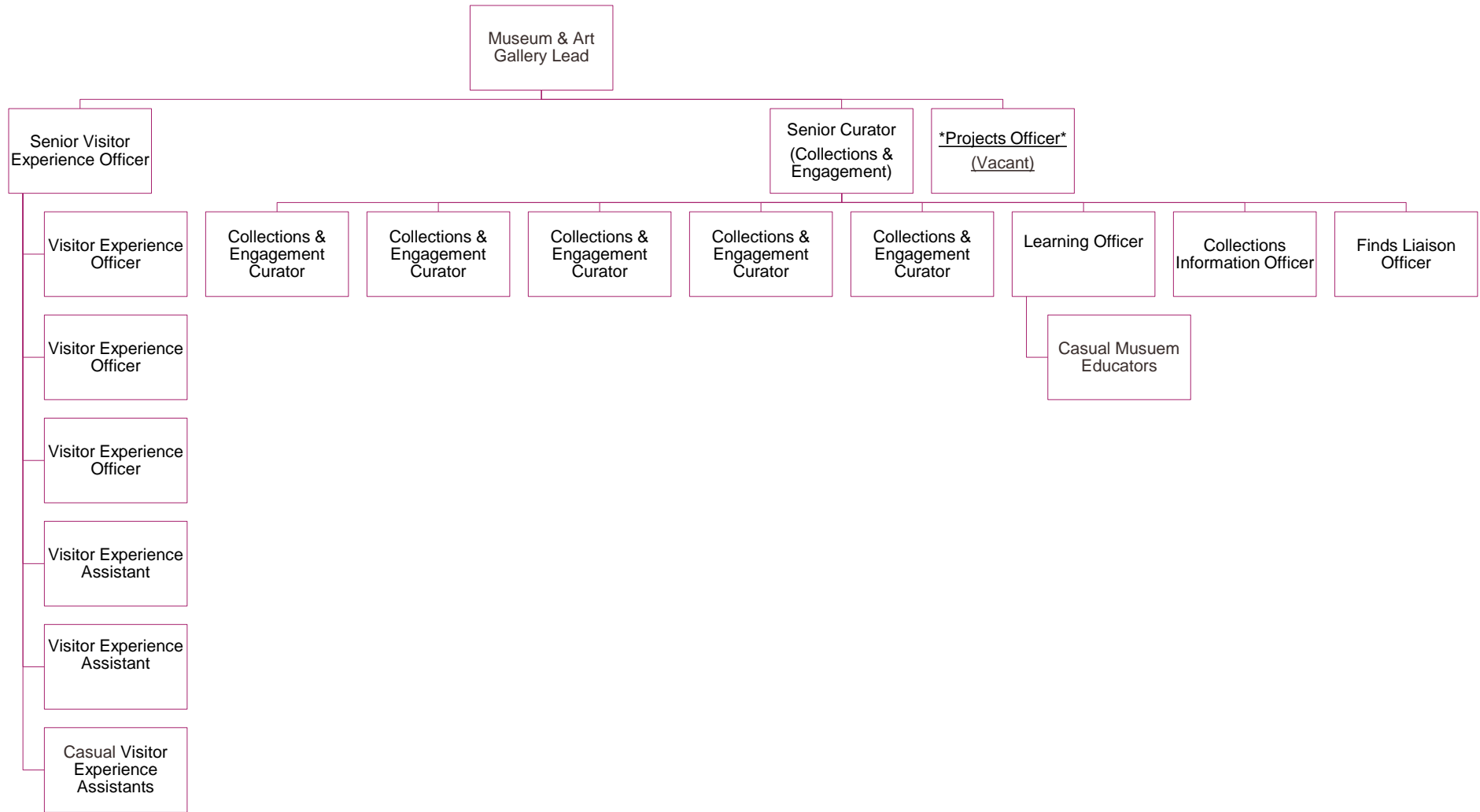
*Creative* – we promote lifelong learning through high-quality experiences and programmes.

*Inclusive* – we ensure equality and promote diversity in our service.

*Resilient* - we are forward thinking and promote the economic regeneration of the county.



# Organisation 2024



## Visitor Experience Team

The Visitor Experience Team are the public face of the service at our venues. They are responsible for delivering an excellent visitor journey. We want our team to be welcoming so that people can get the most out of their visit.

The Visitor Experience team:

- Are frontline collections interpreters, encouraging local groups and visitors to use the museums and resources we have to offer
- Try to increase earned income through retail, ticket sales, hires, ceremonies, donations etc.
- Help to deliver and support events, schools activities and community programmes
- Work with the Collections and Engagement Team to help with collection care on gallery and for the redevelopment
- Cultivate volunteering opportunities and support work experience and skills development opportunities.

The team is led by the Senior Visitor Experience Officer. The team current consists of:

FTE	Role
1 x 1fte	Senior Visitor Experience Officer
1 x 1fte	Visitor Experience Officer
1 x 0.5fte	Visitor Experience Officer
2 x 0.25fte	Visitor Experience Assistant
2 x 0fte	Casual Visitor Experience Assistants

## Collections and Engagement Team

The Collections and Engagement Team is responsible for service's collections, engagement and learning work. Including, but not limited to:

- Collection activity, such as documentation, loans and care activities.
- Engagement activity, such as projects, events, exhibitions and learning
- Public projects and outreach
- Supporting the redevelopment of Hereford Museum and Art Gallery

The team is led by the Senior Curator (Collections & Engagement)

The Collection & Engagement team current consists of:

FTE	Role	Collections Area	Engagement Area
Vacant	Senior Curator (Collections & Engagement)	-	-
1fte	Collections and Engagement Curator	Natural Sciences and Social History	Climate Emergency
1fte	Collections and Engagement Curator	Arts	Rural Isolation
1fte	Collections and Engagement Curator	Social History	Families
0.5fte	Collections and Engagement Curator	Costume and Textiles	Community Wellbeing
1fte	Learning Officer	Handling Collection	-
0.2fte	Finds Liaison Officer	-	-
2 x 0fte	Casual Museum Educators	-	-

## Collections areas

The museum service holds around 150,000 objects. They predominately tell the history and stories of Herefordshire and its people. These collections are owned by Herefordshire Council with a small number of items on loan: about 0.1%. The collections have been grouped into the following areas:

### Social History

- *Social History*  
Herefordshire-based' in that it reflects the rural crafts and trades which operated within the county at particular times such as: crafts, trades and industries, home life, social and civic institutions, science, transport, recreation, religion, printed items, packaging, ephemera, photographic equipment, photographs and glass plate negatives, documents, agricultural tools, machinery, bicycles, domestic furniture and fittings and wheeled vehicles.
- *Furniture*  
The furniture collection includes beds, chests, chairs, tables, cabinets. It ranges from the 17<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century
- *Arms and Armour*  
The Arms and Armour collection comprises firearms, edged weapons, armour and artillery artefacts from the Iron Age, Roman, Medieval and Civil War periods to modern times, including mementoes and trophies collected abroad by local people.
- *Ethnographic*  
There is small number of core ethnographic artefacts from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the South Pacific. There are ethnographic

in the costume art collections from China, Japan, India and Europe.

## Arts

- *Fine Art*

The fine art collection is broad based with an increasing focus on Herefordshire connections. It includes watercolours, oils, sketches, prints, wood engravings, studio ceramics and sculpture. It features theatrical prints, topographical views and abstract studies. The work ranges from late 18<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century to the modern day. There are a small number of non-British artists, including Japanese prints

- *Decorative Art*

The decorative art collection includes ceramics, studio pieces, glass, silverware, pewter ware, clocks and watches, trinket boxes, scent bottles and costume accessories. The collection ranges from late 18<sup>th</sup> to modern day. There is some foreign material including Chinese ceramics.

- *Photographic*

The photographic collections reflects life in Herefordshire from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day and comprises: original and copies of photographs, glass plates / lantern slides and equipment. Subject areas represented include; local events, local industries, trades and crafts, leisure activities, living conditions, buildings and customs and beliefs.

## Archaeology

- *Archaeology*

The collection is the repository for archaeological material recovered in the county. The collection is made up of finds and documentary archives: ceramic (pottery and building material), fired clay, animal bird and fish bone, human bone, shell, leather, fibre, plant remains and other ecofacts, stone, flint, minerals, paper records, books, cards, drawings on film and paper, photographs, negatives, transparencies, x-rays, digital images and digital information. Herefordshire's human history is represented by all periods: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval, Post Medieval and Historic. There is a small quantity of non-local archaeological artefacts from Greek, Etruscan, Italian Roman, Cypriot and Egyptian cultures, and lithic artefacts from across Britain, Ireland, France and Saharan Africa.

- *Numismatic*

The numismatic collection includes monetary items, medals, badges and seals from archaeological and social historical periods. The numismatic collections comprise coins, bank notes, tokens, jettons, medalets, checks, coin weights, produce seals, quality seals, personal/institutional seals, seal casts, medals and badges. The collections date from the Iron Age to modern periods.

## Costume and Textiles

- *Costume and Textiles*

The collections is a representation of the costumes and textiles relating to Herefordshire which reflect local differences as well as national trends. It consists of women's, men's and children's costume and accessories, civil and military uniforms and textiles and a small amount of foreign costume. It ranges from the 17<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. It is predominately local and British in nature. There is a small number of foreign costume and textiles that includes Polish and Chinese costume, and Indian, African and Coptic textiles.

### Natural Sciences

- *Natural History and Geology*

Vertebrates collection consists of birds, mammals, fish other vertebrates, eggs, field data many of local origin. Entomological collection of Lepidoptera, Hymenoptera, Trichoptera, Arachnida, mollusc shells, bee and wasp nests, items relating to bee-keeping and odd items representing other taxa and forms, including several fluid preserved mounts. Geology collections of fossils, minerals, petrological, soil samples, palaeontological specimens. The mineral collection is a representative collection of British minerals. The West petrological collection is a stratigraphic collection of all Herefordshire rock types and their local subdivisions. The botany collection includes the herbarium, perry pear and cider apple foliage and of fruit tree seeds and pips.

### Handling Collections

The handling collections are for educational and handling use. They not accessioned into the museum collections. They will be managed by the Learning Officer

## **Audience Engagement Areas**

Each of the engagement areas have been identified through the development stage of the museum and art gallery redevelopment project. They make up the key audiences that we will be working with as we redevelop the museum and wider service. Each of the areas is outlined below:

### Families

Families are intergenerational groups. They can be traditional, blended, same sex, single parent, chosen or combinations thereof. This includes disadvantaged local families, those with lower incomes, young carers or those experiencing care, living with health inequalities and those with SEN or physical disabilities.

The museum service has a good track record with families and there is great potential to build on this success. Rural isolation and pockets of rural deprivation have a significant impact on wellbeing, social connections and access to culture for some of this group. Health inequalities have



been identified as a key social issue for them. The museum already has a strong families offer and can broaden its offer to benefit a wider range of families.

#### Families and culture:

- Families want to spend time together, particularly for us, with children
- Cultural activity helps to make memories with loved ones and share with friends
- They are ways of doing something fun and entertaining without overspending
- Most, but not all, families do not consider culture very important or themselves as 'arty' people
- Families are motivated by the right offer, especially when free or low cost with appropriate wrap around offer (close car parking, refreshments, baby change facilities, pram area etc.)
- They will engage in culturally specific projects that reflect their own communities

#### Rural isolation

Isolation is often defined as having little to no social contact with people, a community or services. Isolation can be made worse when living in a rural areas because of the lack of access to key services, poor transport links and community opportunities. It can be both a physical and mental feeling.

The museum service has little experience of championing social issues such as this. There is potential to form longer term relationships with audiences and for doing activity which supports the council's work with isolated communities in the county.

#### Rural isolation and culture:

- Involuntary social isolation and loneliness can be more prevalent in rural areas, where there is a reliance on private road transport to access services and, increasingly, a lack of places to meet, such as community centres, pubs, or village halls. Older people and those with disabilities are particularly at risk and the risk is higher in places without an engaged and active community. ([Herefordshire Council 2020](#))
- 26% of people of all ages reported they felt lonely at some point during they the last week and 8% said they felt lonely most or all of the time ([Data Orchard 2018](#))
- 28% of Herefordshire households comprise one person – half of whom were over 65 with the highest number of lone pensioner households (Census 2021).
- There are opportunities to develop activities in partnership with local mental health groups, as well as care homes and schools.
- Museum collections can be used to tackle isolation and improve wellbeing through community engagement
- Programming in this area will require both outreach and venue-based activity.

### Community wellbeing

Community wellbeing is a reflection of the social, economic, environmental and cultural circumstances people and their communities find themselves in. Communities with a high levels of wellbeing are more resilient and can tackle challenges, crisis and change more effectively than those that do not.

The museum service has little experience of championing social issues such as this. There is to support the council's work with community wellbeing through partnerships and activity using the service's resources to help improve community wellbeing across the county.

#### Community wellbeing and culture:

- Museums can be places that enhance quality of life, improve mental and physical health, especially when working in partnership with health and wellbeing organisations ([Museums and Community Wellbeing 2022](#))
- We have an opportunity to impact the wellbeing of our local communities through creativity in its broadest sense is by focusing on connectivity and co-production approaches.
- Improve wellbeing through enriching access to culture and heritage and through social connections
- Working with arts can have an incredibly positive impact on mental health and wellbeing for all ages, but particularly young people and has opportunities for intergenerational skills sharing that build wellbeing

### Climate emergency

The science of climate change is well established. It is real and human activity is the main cause. There is a climate emergency because the climate is changing quicker than world can adapt to it. The warming planet is causing serious and urgent problems, we must take action now to limit the change.

The museum service has little experience of championing social issues such as this. There is potential to form longer term relationships with audiences by aligning with contemporary issues like the climate emergency.

#### Climate and culture:

- Exploring issues of climate change through cultural programming is an effective way of getting people involved, it is becoming expected at cultural organisations will have a position on contemporary social issues ([Audience Finder 2023](#))
- People who have taken part in climate themed cultural programming have found it gave them the space and time to think about their personal choice and how this impacts on the climate ([Act Green 2022](#))

- Audiences expect cultural organisations to be leading action to address the climate emergency ([Season for Change 2021](#))
- Older audiences are as likely to be worried about climate change as younger audiences (Season for Change 2021)
- Younger audiences are interested in social justice, climate change, gender and identity, diversity and multiculturalism. Secondary age people were most interested in art and climate change.