Museums, Libraries & Archives: Delivering Outcomes in the South West
Cover image:
Inspiring communities: Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery's Museum in Transit stops off at Stoke Fun Day in the city
Museums, Libraries & Archives: Delivering Outcomes in the South West

Introduction

Museums, libraries and archives in the South West are resources with the power to deliver real benefits to the communities they serve.

This document shows how they contribute to Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets, through the new National Indicator Set or locally set priorities.

Our region is home to an energetic and innovative museum, library and archive sector and the support of Local Authorities and the wider community is vital to that success.

We hope that these case studies will stimulate new discussions about the role of museums, libraries and archives within Local Strategic Partnerships, and that you find them useful as you work on your new LAAs.

Our aim is to build increasingly productive relationships between MLA South West, the sector and Local Authorities. MLA South West has a small team of officers dedicated to supporting local government and sustainable communities – their contact details are at the end of this document.

In the meantime, I hope these examples of best practice will inspire, delight and surprise you.

With your continued support, museums, libraries and archives can make a big difference to people who live and work in, or visit the South West.

Bob Sharpe
Chief Executive, MLA South West

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MLA South West is part of the MLA Partnership, which comprises The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and the nine regional Museums, Libraries & Archives agencies. MLA is the Government's agency for museums, libraries and archives.

The MLA Partnership delivers strategic leadership for and on behalf of museums, libraries and archives, collaborating with partners across the UK. Our research identifies good practice, which we use to promote improvement. We offer advice, support and resources to funding bodies and other groups to drive innovation. Our aim is to raise professional standards and champion better services for users of all ages and backgrounds. MLA South West also gives strategic and development support to museums, libraries and archives in learning, workforce development, participation, digital development, funding and standards.

Our priorities over the next twelve months are:

- providing opportunities for more people to engage
- advocating for continued and improved investment
- seeking new sources of funding
- raising standards and improving services.
A Named Partner – Our duty to co-operate

The Local Government White Paper places local government at the forefront of delivering better services. Local Authorities have a duty to prepare and deliver a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The main delivery mechanism of an SCS, the Local Area Agreement, offers a real opportunity to define local priorities and shape services. Culture has much to offer in this regard: a strong cultural offer means better outcomes for local government and local people.

MLA Council is a named partner with a duty to co-operate in the development of Local Area Agreements.¹

As a named partner, MLA Council has a duty to support and advise Local Authorities on the contribution that museums, libraries and archives can make to Local Area Agreement outcomes. At a regional level, MLA South West is the main conduit for the museum, library and archive sector in liaising with Government Office and all South West Local Authorities to advocate on behalf of the sector.

MLA South West and Local Area Agreements

MLA South West works with Local Authorities and other Government agencies in the region to promote and support the contribution of cultural services to key agendas.

We aim to help Local Authorities exploit the full potential of their museums, libraries and archives for delivering local outcomes and indicators as part of Local Area Agreements.
Where do museums, libraries and archives fit in to sustainable communities?

Local museums, libraries and archives are at the heart of a rich cultural offer, which can also include arts, film and media, creative industries and heritage.

Cultural services contribute significantly to cross-cutting themes, including health improvement, education and learning, inclusive communities, community cohesion, community safety and sense of place, as well as physical and social regeneration. Many cultural activities are delivered directly by Local Authorities, but the best cultural services forge alliances not just with other council departments but with local partners in the public, business and voluntary sectors.

Tourism and the creative industries are of growing economic importance and these sectors increasingly depend on the strength of the local cultural offer, which reflects the aspiration of a particular place and its communities.

The museum, library and archive sector offers trusted public spaces, making it ideally placed to deliver outcomes for people that other local services struggle to reach.

Museums, libraries and archives contribute to achieving outcomes both in their core, intrinsically valuable role and in extending their reach to further improve the quality of life for communities and neighbourhoods.

Museums, libraries and archives are hugely popular with the public

The latest Government research shows that 94% of people actively engage with the arts, culture, heritage and sport. And these figures on how we spend our leisure time (based on visits and/or participation) illustrate how much people love museums, libraries and archives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic cities and towns</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic buildings</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art exhibition</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballet</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Roman Baths at Bath Spa: One of the region's top tourism performers. © Roman Baths Museum.
Museums, libraries and archives attract tourists

‘History and heritage’ is one of the top two reasons why people visit the South West, just behind beaches and ahead of the natural environment.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Beach Holiday</th>
<th>28%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History &amp; Heritage</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to Nature</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2005-06 visits to England’s museums and art galleries recorded higher growth than any other type of attraction, including 7% growth in the South West, where museums have been highlighted as a key driver for the region’s improving tourism performance.4

Museums, libraries and archives: the South West picture

Museums

In the South West region there are over 500 museums, ranging from large Local Authority museums to small independent museums run entirely by volunteers.

MLA administers the Accreditation Scheme – a standards benchmark – and MLA South West provides pre-application advice and is the assessing body for the Scheme in the region. There are currently 226 Accredited Museums in the South West of which:

- 121 are independently funded
- 51 are Local Authority funded
- 42 are National Trust properties
- 8 are armed services museums
- 4 are university museums

Libraries

There are approximately 350 public libraries provided by the region’s sixteen Local Authority library services, excluding additional mobile provision.

The overall size of the library domain is however much larger, encompassing higher and further education, school, institutional, health service and commercial libraries.

Archives

There are nine Local Authority archive services in the South West, which broadly span the pre-1974 administrative county boundaries, although some now operate under joint service level funding agreements.

Wild about Plymouth: Bug-hunting with Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery

The following pages outline just some of the ways in which museums, libraries and archives are delivering, or have the potential to deliver, on outcomes that contribute to Local Area Agreement targets, either through the new National Indicator Set or locally set priorities.

Local Area Agreements are based around the four following themes and the case studies detailed show the wide ranging outcomes that the sector can achieve:

- Safer & Stronger Communities
- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Enterprise and Environment

Delivering Outcomes in the South West 7
Delivering Outcomes in the South West

Libraries, archives and museums offer some of the most imaginative ways of building community cohesion and reaching people who are marginalised or disadvantaged. They can also play an important role in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour by providing diversionary activities for young people, or helping with the rehabilitation of offenders.5

Safer & Stronger Communities

Capturing the imagination: Youngsters discover sought-after toys past and present at the Royal Cornwall Museum’s ‘Must Have Toys’ exhibition.
The New Smugglers – Dorset Coast Digital Archive

Funded by MLA Strategic Commissioning

People have been smuggling for centuries – to avoid taxes on goods, to move illegal products around, or even to supply illegal labour.

Secondary School students in Dorset can now examine smuggling by exploring historical and contemporary documents and images made available through Dorset Coast Digital Archive. The students can look at evidence of contemporary smuggling practices and discuss the moral, social and legal issues arising from drug, artefact and people smuggling today.

What is smuggling and why do people do it? What happens if you get caught? The Dorset Coast Digital Archive builds up an intriguing picture of smuggling and its control, but the way in which we react to some of the archive materials may reveal our own attitudes to the relationship between citizens, the law and its enforcement.

Working with four Dorset schools, Dorset Coast Digital Archive has developed learning materials for the National Curriculum Key Stage 3&4 Citizenship and Diversity framework. These are now available on the archive’s website: www.dcda.org.uk

Outcome:

- Safe space for young people to explore the relationship between citizens and the law.

Output:

- Learning materials developed for Key Stage 3&4 Citizenship and Diversity.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 17, NI 74, NI 77, NI 115, NI 182, NI 183 and all secondary ‘Enjoy & Achieve’ NIs.

Examining the evidence: students explore historical and contemporary smuggling in the Dorset Coast Digital Archive. (image courtesy of Highcliffe School)

Highlighting Issues of Asylum – Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery

Funded by MLA Renaissance

As Plymouth becomes home to a growing number of politically displaced people, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery has been using its MLA Renaissance funding to highlight issues of asylum.

‘Leave to Remain’, an exhibition of large-scale photographic portraits and accompanying testimonies from asylum seekers across the UK, was displayed in Autumn 2006 and accompanied by a programme of events led by documentary photographer, Diana Matar. A selection of clay figures, created by members of the city’s refugee community as part of a public art project, were also displayed at the museum at the same time.

Work on this theme continued into 2007 with a performance of ‘The Asylum Monologues’ – an account of the UK’s asylum system in the words of the people who have experienced it.

The museum’s outreach staff have also worked on a project with members of Plymouth’s Kurdish community. They created a display featuring information, paintings, photographs and traditional costume and an evening event for those involved, with Kurdish food, music and dancing.

“Thank you for the Kurdish exhibition I have taken away information and will enjoy learning more. Good wishes. May this be a good place for a new life.” Museum visitor

Outcomes:

- Improved inter-racial understanding
- Greater feeling of welcome, belonging and wellbeing for asylum-seekers in Plymouth.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 2, NI 3, NI 10, NI 11, NI 13, NI 20, NI 21, NI 23, NI 50, NI 69, NI 119, NI 140.

45% of museum visitors agree that they felt more positive towards other people and their cultures and ideas as a result of their visit.
Celebrating Eid and Islamic Art – Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum

Funded by MLA Strategic Commissioning

Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum used Islamic material in their collections to develop workshops and resources for schoolchildren at Key Stage 1 and 2, supporting them to explore different faiths and festivals.

The museum learning team worked with Gloucester City Council Muslim Liaison Officer and Racial Equality and Diversity in Schools Service (READS) to create useful, positive and sensitive resources.

Children discovered objects such as Persian carpets, coloured costumes and geometric art shapes. Workshops at the museum and at four local schools focused on the story of Noah to develop knowledge and understanding of Islam and the shared stories and similar practices of different faiths. Similarities and differences were both celebrated.

Following the pilot, the museum now offers workshops for all primary year groups as well as a new ‘Take Away’ loan box for schools.

Outcomes:

- Children showed increased enthusiasm for their subject
- Children were observed being respectful of faith objects and developing an understanding of their significance
- New loans box now being borrowed by schools.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 2, NI 10, NI 13, NI 23, NI 35, NI 69, NI 93, NI 107, NI 140.

“70% of young people believe that a lack of positive activities provision leads to more youth crime.”
The Campus

The Campus is a unique partnership building offering a diverse range of community facilities and cultural services to the residents of Locking Castle housing development in Weston super Mare.

North Somerset Council, the Department for Education and Skills and numerous local partners worked together to deliver a building that enabled the Council to develop cross directorate and external partnerships – to benefit the local community.

The multi-purpose building has enabled North Somerset Council to bring together a wide range of cultural services under one roof and really defines the term ‘community building’. Facilities include a free community learning and resource centre/library with 21 computer workstations, community and meeting rooms, a community police office, sports and games areas and two schools.

Heron’s Moor Community School and Baytree School for young people with severe learning difficulties share many areas and facilities at The Campus. This unique opportunity for integration has benefited pupils, breaking down barriers, improving confidence, respect and communication skills and cementing a cohesive and all-inclusive culture.

The Campus regularly consults with local residents, empowering individuals to shape the development of the facilities and services. As well as forging links between the community and the Council, the dialogue has led to a range of new provision including exercise and dance classes, extended schools activities and Sunday opening of the library.

Outcomes:
- Improved participation levels
- Improved dialogue between Council and community
- Greater integration between students of different abilities, promoting mutual respect
- New cross-directorate and external partnerships driving efficiency and impact.

Outputs:
- New neighbourhood building offering diverse community and cultural facilities.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 2, NI 3, NI 4, NI 5, NI 6, NI 9, NI 50, NI 57, NI 110, NI 119, NI 137, NI 138, NI 139, NI 140, NI 151, NI 153, NI 175, NI 176, NI 195.

In March 2007 the library attracted 8259 visits – equivalent to over 80% of the local community.

“It is just what people living within the area have needed, especially as in recent times there has been an ever increasing population without the local recreation and social facilities” Feedback from Locking Castle Community Questionnaire

Through MLA and The Big Lottery’s Community Libraries programme, £10.7 million has been secured for South West libraries including North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Poole and Torbay for enhancing public libraries as venues for diverse community activity.
Delivering Outcomes in the South West

The museum, library and archive sector delivers on the Every Child Matters framework for children and young people’s services. The Bookstart programme in libraries gives free books to parents and carers, while museums’ and libraries’ curriculum-based educational programmes contribute to the framework’s ‘Enjoy & Achieve’ outcomes.

The Royal Cornwall Museum’s ‘Must Have Toys’ exhibition was produced in partnership with the V&A and displayed in galleries refurbished using money from MLA’s Renaissance programme. The exhibition drew record numbers of visitors, including thousands of children and a Dalek.

Children & Young People
The Government’s new Children’s Plan promises a fresh entitlement for all young people to take part in cultural activities in and out of school.³

Teens through the Time Warp and ContinYou Extra Time Museums Mini Guide

Supported by MLA Strategic Commissioning and the Heritage Lottery Fund

North Somerset Museum worked with 30 young people to develop ‘Then & Now: Teens through the Time Warp’ – an exploration of teenage life from the 1950s to the present day. Using oral history techniques, young people interviewed their parents and grandparents to find out about their experiences of life as a teenager.

Using the material they had gathered, the young people worked with museum staff to bring the history to life in a public exhibition.

Teens through the Timewarp was recognised as one of the country’s top heritage projects in the National Lottery Awards, broadcast on BBC1 in September 2007.

Outcomes – Teens through the Timewarp:

- The young people developed skills in research, investigation and project management
- Gathering the source material gave the young people chance to explore their relationship with the older generation
- The exhibition benefited the wider community by informing them of teenagers’ experiences, leading to improved understanding of the experiences of different generations
- Improved intergenerational relationships and community cohesion.

Teens through the Timewarp is one of three case studies featured in a new guide, ‘Extra Time for Museums’. This mini-guide is full of practical ideas and top tips for developing links between study support clubs and museums. It also includes a range of short case studies showing how others have turned their ideas into reality.

Providing access to a varied menu of study support activities and out-of-school-hours learning (OSHL) is a key aspect of the ‘core offer’ of extended services that all schools are expected to provide by 2010.

With almost 2,000 venues in the South West, museums, libraries and archives offer a huge resource for study support. They stimulate informal and innovative learning, offer a fresh space to explore ideas, improve achievement, behaviour and attitudes and contribute to the outcomes of Every Child Matters and the new Children’s Plan.

Outcomes – Extra Time for Museums:

- Access to a varied menu of study support activities and out-of-school-hours learning (OSHL)
- Improvements in young people’s self-esteem, achievements, attitudes to learning, behaviour and school attendance.

National Indicators: NI 3, NI 6, NI 10, NI 11, NI 18, NI 19, NI 45, NI 50, all ‘Enjoy and Achieve’ NIs, NI 88, NI 110, NI 195.

Teens through the Timewarp:
Young people created this exciting look at teenage life from the 1950s to the present day, as part of extended learning at North Somerset Museum.
Young people from around Bristol have lived and breathed the Roman way of life. In a project led by 40 youngsters working with museum experts, they have created multi-media interpretation materials for the public at King’s Weston Roman Villa.

This ambitious project was rewarding for both young people and adults – developing museum staff, benefiting the local community and having fun along the way.

Roman Roots re-interprets the Roman villa and connects the local community with their heritage. This Heritage Lottery Fund Young Roots programme involved youth services, musicians, archaeologists and young people. It also developed links with the local community in King’s Weston, one of Bristol’s most deprived wards and an area of neighbourhood renewal.

Outcomes:
- Young people enjoyed taking part in high quality activity
- Young people supported to make a positive contribution to their neighbourhood
- Increased volunteering by young people in cultural activity
- Improvement and ownership of neighbourhood by its own residents.

National Indicators: NI 2, NI 3, NI 5, NI 6, NI 50, NI 110, NI 117, NI 195 and potentially all ‘Enjoy & Achieve’ NIs.
Funded by MLA Strategic Commissioning

Cornwall Local Education Authority identified a need for schools to be more creative in the way they delivered the Literacy framework. So Falmouth Art Gallery worked with primary schools and the Local Authority Literacy team to create a ‘Speaking, Listening and Learning’ pack.

The pack includes task sheets and teacher’s notes and links to the Speaking and Listening Literacy objectives. High quality images of the Gallery’s art are included as well as questions and challenges. The pack can be used both in the gallery and the classroom to improve children’s communication skills and increase their confidence to participate.

Outcomes:

- Children were observed using the approach from their task sheet with other art works – transferring their new skills
- Schools across the South West are requesting the packs
- Success led to a second pack developed with the LEA – a cross-curricular Technology & Art pack on automata, developed with the County Adviser for Design & Technology.

National Indicators: NI 10, NI 11, NI 50, NI 73, NI 76, NI 93.

“The children all had an excellent time and without knowing it, dramatically improved their speaking and listening ability in just one short afternoon”. Teacher
Delivering Outcomes in the South West

Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery’s community and outreach team joined forces with staff and volunteers from Plymouth and District Alzheimer’s Society to spend a week at three residential centres, all of which specialise in caring for people living with dementia.

Residents took part in specially devised reminiscence activities using toys and other resources from the museum. Reminiscence stimulates conversations, boosts people’s morale and helps them maintain a sense of identity.

Some of the work produced as part of these activities was then displayed at the museum in a special exhibition called ’Me and My Memory’. The display also featured general information about Alzheimer’s and dementia and was launched with a special event to coincide with Alzheimer’s Awareness Week 2006.

Since the end of the project, the outreach team have continued to visit the residential centres to conduct further reminiscence sessions.

Outcomes:

- Exhibition raised awareness of Alzheimer’s in the locality
- People with long-term health conditions enabled to take part in enjoyable, stimulating activity
- Improved quality of life and independence of vulnerable older people
- Promoted wellbeing among older people at risk of being admitted to hospital
- Enriched individual lives and stronger community cohesion.

National Indicators: NI 2, NI 6, NI 23, NI 119, NI 120, NI 128.
Meeting the Past – National Waterways Museum, Gloucester

Funded by MLA Strategic Commissioning

The National Waterways Museum and Hempsted C of E School’s Extended Learning Package uses archives to inspire children’s curiosity about their local area.

A programme of three visits enables children to meet different aspects of the past. On the first visit, the class uncover real clues to the past among the archive’s historical documents. During the second visit, children meet the past in person – a local resident who was evacuated as a child from the East End to Cornwall. On the third visit, the children meet a participatory storyteller who uses role play to help children imagine life working in Gloucester docks. The children then create their own archive box for the museum.

The project has demonstrated the power of opening doors to primary historic evidence as a way of bringing history to life for all ages.

“We will use the Museum and Archives to deliver our NC History curriculum (WW2) with the strong emphasis on Citizenship in our future work. I have received so many positive comments from the parents of the children who are taking part. The children have been inspired and have obviously wanted to share their experiences with their parents”.

Teacher

Outcomes:

- Children were interested and respectful towards the local WW2 evacuee
- Profound effect on archive staff who now want to do more work with schools
- Teachers reported a huge impact on children of meeting local evacuee.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 2, NI 3, NI 6, NI 7, NI 10, NI 17, NI 23, NI 73, NI 86, NI 88, NI 93, NI 95, NI 110, NI 119, NI 137, NI 138.

83% of visitors to archives in the South West said that visiting the archive was the main reason for their visit to the area.”

Archivist

“The fantastic response of children and teachers to our local resident’s evacuation stories has highlighted to us the importance of collecting the rich experiences of older members of the community in a format that can be passed onto younger people – before it is too late”.

Archivist

83% of visitors to archives in the South West said that visiting the archive was the main reason for their visit to the area.”

Teacher

Outcomes:

- Children were interested and respectful towards the local WW2 evacuee
- Profound effect on archive staff who now want to do more work with schools
- Teachers reported a huge impact on children of meeting local evacuee.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 2, NI 3, NI 6, NI 7, NI 10, NI 17, NI 23, NI 73, NI 86, NI 88, NI 93, NI 95, NI 110, NI 119, NI 137, NI 138.

Young people find out about life in Gloucester during World War Two
Alongside their obvious contribution to tourism, museums, libraries and archive services support lifelong learning, from structured programmes to providing routes through to employment or personal development, increased confidence and self-esteem. Regional and local museums also play an important role in the regional economy, providing leisure facilities and visitor attractions that initiate and directly contribute to economic growth in the tourism industry.
Delivering Outcomes in the South West

MLA Renaissance

Funded by MLA Council

The South West’s museums are being transformed through MLA’s multi-million pound Renaissance programme.

MLA South West is helping museums across the region to raise standards and deliver real results in education, learning, community development and economic regeneration.

In the South West, five ‘Hub’ museums are flagships for the programme:

- Bristol City Museums and Art Gallery
- Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum
- Bournemouth Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM), Exeter
- Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery
- Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro

The Hub museums work with MLA South West to deliver improvements based on the key themes of education, collections and exhibitions, workforce development and the wider museum community.

From 2002 to 2008, £23.2 million has been invested in the region’s museums and funding has been protected for a further three years.

This success has led to a further £20 million of funding being levered in to the South West’s museums, making projects such as the new Museum of Bristol (see page 21) happen and enabling transformational improvements elsewhere.

The increased capacity and profile of our region’s museums has also led to new relationships with national museums and galleries, bringing important collections to the South West.

Meanwhile, MLA South West co-ordinates a network of Museum Development Officers, offers development grants and supports hundreds of museum staff and volunteers through skills training to ensure that the benefits of Renaissance funding are spread as widely as possible.

MLA’s Renaissance is helping museums to meet people’s changing needs – and to change people’s lives.

Outputs:

The results are phenomenal. In 2005-06, through the region’s Hub museums:

- 1 million+ museum visits were made and almost a quarter were new users
- 145,000 school-aged children participated in learning activities
- 20,000 adults were involved in outreach activities.

National Indicators: NI 1, NI 2, NI 3, NI 4, NI 5, NI 6, NI 7, NI 10, NI 11, NI 23, NI 50, NI 54, NI 110, NI 140, NI 151, NI 166, NI 174, NI 179.
Museum Skills Programme – throughout the South West

Funded by MLA Renaissance

More than 1,200 volunteers and staff benefited from MLA South West's free training courses in 2007-08. The scheme provides affordable, relevant and accessible development opportunities for people who work or volunteer in our region's museums. The programme develops the workforce, spreads good practice and encourages the development of sustainable museums.

To date, 33 courses have been held at venues all over the region, including:

Business and Administration:
- Business Skills
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Project Management

Specialist Skills:
- Identifying Wiltshire Fossils
- Dealing with Archaeological finds in Wiltshire
- Care of Collections

And in 2008 workshops will also include:
- Recruiting, managing and developing volunteers in Dorset
- The Communicating Museum in Somerset

Outcomes:
- Improved resident skills base – museum staff and volunteers
- Motivated volunteers
- Higher standards for visitor attractions.

National Indicators: NI 3, NI 6, NI 7, NI 151, NI 152, NI 166, NI 174.

Tools For Schools: participants at a Museums Skills workshop learn how to bring the National Curriculum to life using museum collections
New Visitor Interpretation at Torre Abbey – Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery

Supported by MLA Renaissance

Renaissance Hub museum resources extend into the wider museum community.

Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery is investing £20,000 of its Renaissance funding in the development of new interpretation materials at Torre Abbey in Torquay.

Torre Abbey is one of Torquay's leading visitor attractions. Owned by Torbay Council, it is a Grade 1 listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument dating from the 14th century. The abbey is undergoing a major £6.5 million redevelopment funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Council, English Heritage and Torre Abbey Friends.

The MLA Renaissance grant will enable Torre Abbey's designer to provide detailed proposals for a number of rooms and galleries. He will also prepare a style guide for signage, a template for future display panels and a series of "people paddles", which will be installed at intervals around the Abbey to tell the stories of the people that once lived there.

Once completed, the redeveloped site will provide new income generation opportunities for the Council.

Outcomes:

- Higher standards for visitor attractions
- New income generation opportunities for Council-owned site
- Increased cultural tourism.

National Indicators: NI 5, NI 6, NI 7, NI 151, NI 166.

The Museum of Bristol – A new museum on Bristol’s harbourside

Supported by MLA Renaissance

With a £11.3 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant and £11.3 million from Bristol City Council, work is underway on the groundbreaking Museum of Bristol, opening in 2010 and putting Bristol's heritage firmly on the map, regionally and nationally.

MLA Renaissance funding is supporting this project through the development of access to collections, conservation and workforce development.

The Museum Of Bristol will take a dynamic approach to social history – telling the story of Bristol through the experiences of the city’s people, past and present; creating a catalyst for debate on contemporary issues.

The £24.8 million project is being developed on Bristol's harbourside – playing a key role in its regeneration and contributing to the cultural offer of the city. It will create new partnerships between businesses, cultural institutions and neighbouring communities. Preserving the historic façade, the Museum of Bristol will create a revitalised 21st century destination that inspires, entertains and promotes a deeper level of participation.

Outcomes:

- Strengthened local identity and belonging
- New opportunities for civic participation for young and old
- Increased cultural tourism.


“A first-class attraction for the city and the whole region... bringing everything together in one place for the first time”. Nerys Watts, Heritage Lottery Fund Manager
LibrariesWest – Somerset, Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset and North Somerset

A partnership of South West library services is being championed as national model of excellence.

LibrariesWest is made up of five Local Authorities – Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset (lead authority), and South Gloucestershire – who have agreed to work together on a number of different processes to reduce costs and offer a better service to 1.5 million customers in over 100 libraries.

One of the major outcomes is an online catalogue, which combines the individual library catalogues of all five Authorities and offers customers a greater choice of items to borrow and/or reserve.

The Museum, Library and Archive (MLA) Council’s ‘Better Stock, Better Libraries’ report cites the project as an example of best practice: “All orders can be managed quickly and efficiently within the single delivery point.

“Goods receipting, book servicing and general book management benefit from economies of scale, allowing cost reductions from carrying out tasks in a single point, rather than at multiple points.”

Libraries enjoy the benefits of joined-up thinking alongside the independence to make their own decisions, which means the public gets the best of both worlds – lower costs and improved services.

Each individual Authority has control over the libraries in its area and over their day-to-day running. The cataloguing and purchasing of books is done centrally in order to achieve the best value for money.

Meanwhile, the decisions as to which books, videos, DVDs etc are to be purchased is still done within each authority, with only the actual ordering done centrally.

Outcomes:
- Greater cost efficiency
- Improved services to the public
- Opening up access online
- Enhanced customer choice.

National Indicators: NI1, NI2, NI3, NI5, NI9, NI13, NI14, NI23, NI50, NI110, NI140, NI179, NI185, NI186, NI188.

For more information visit: www.librarieswest.org.uk

“70% of children believe that a library is one of the best places to learn outside school”. The Reading Agency

32,000 PCs have been installed in public libraries in the UK through MLA’s ‘People’s Network’, making internet access available to everyone.
Where to find support and advice

There is a wealth of expertise that can help all Local Area Agreements benefit from museums, libraries and archives. To access this knowledge and experience please contact:

Museums, Libraries and Archives South West (MLA South West):
Katie Kitching or Rachael Pringle
Policy & Project Managers
Responsible for local government and sustainable communities at MLA South West.
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Advocacy documents on behalf of museums, libraries & archives

Culture Matters (Culture South West)
Culture South West and the South West regional cultural partners published Culture Matters in September 2007. It is aimed at Local Authorities and their elected members.

Culture Matters shares examples of local government success in cultural delivery. The examples show where collaborative and Council-led activities are making a big difference to people's lives by creating vibrant, culture-rich, sustainable communities. Downloadable from Culture South West website: www.culturesouthwest.org.uk

Culture and Sport Online Toolkit
Culture & Sport Toolkit for Local Area Agreements from Southeast Cultural Observatory: www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit

This toolkit is the result of a partnership project in the South East region and a practical response to a need for evidence gathering related to Local Area Agreements.

The toolkit's purpose is to support Local Strategic Partnerships to embed culture and sport within their Local Area Agreements, and to raise awareness of the important contribution that culture and sport can bring to community life.

Guidance on integrating Culture & Sport into Local Area Agreements in the East Midlands
This briefing note supports Local Authorities and their partners seeking to embed culture into Local Area Agreements. Produced by Cultural Improvement Partnership East Midlands. Downloadable at: www.cipem.org.uk

Members’ Briefing Pack – East Midlands
This Members’ Briefing Pack is designed to advise elected members about the role that culture can play in a range of strategies, policies and outcomes for local communities. Developed by the Cultural Improvement Partnership East Midlands. The document comprises 13 A4 briefing sheets which can be viewed at the following web link: www.cipem.org.uk/councillor-briefings.html

References
1 Developing the Future Arrangements for Local Area Agreements, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007
5 See for example Evaluation of the LGA/DCMS Cultural Pathfinder Programme, De Montfort University, 2007.
6 Introduction to Plymouth City Council Race Equality Scheme 2005 – 2008, Plymouth City Council 2005
8 MORI, 2002
9 The Children’s Plan: Building Brighter Futures, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007
This publication can be downloaded as a pdf file from MLA South West’s website. It can be made available in large print on request.

‘Museums, Libraries and Archives: Delivering Outcomes in the South West’, published by MLA South West, January 2008. Information correct at time of going to press, E&OE. Compiled and edited by Claire Gulliver, Katie Kitching, Rachael Pringle and Dave Shuttleworth. The authors would like to thank everyone who generously provided information and images for this publication. Design by Ninepoint www.ninepoint.co.uk

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