

SCOTTISH
MUSEUMS
COUNCIL



The heart of the community

Communities and collections

Did you know?

12m

There are more than 360 museums and galleries in Scotland acting as custodians to over 12 million objects.

50%

Over 50% of the Scottish museums workforce is staffed by volunteers.

2,387

Orkney Museums have overall, through educational activities including school visits, special events and loan boxes, benefited 2,387 children over the last year.

3x

In 2004, there were 14,791,234 visits to Scotland's museums and galleries – almost three times the population of Scotland.

85,000

Almond Valley Heritage Centre receives approximately 85,000 visitors a year, over 40,000 of which are children. 20,000 visitors come from schools, community centres, special needs groups and other community based organisations.

300

Ullapool Museum enjoys a membership of 300 people – representing 15% of the local population. The museum also has approximately 50 active local volunteers who help the museum to keep going.

TOP 3

Visiting museums and heritage is consistently amongst the top three activities undertaken by tourists to Scotland.

86,794

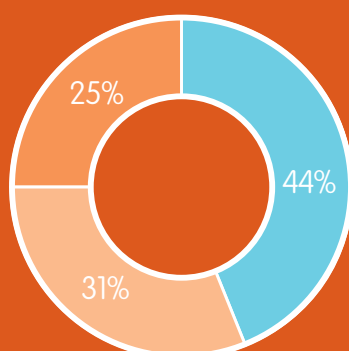
Glasgow Museums were visited by 86,798 children in 2005/06, and 1,274 individuals with special educational needs. The Open Museum in Glasgow administered 1,107 loan kits to various community groups throughout the city, many reaching those otherwise unable to visit a museum.

+1%

East Lothian is the second fastest growing community in Scotland and is expected to continue to grow by at least 1% a year. Over the next three years the Local Authority, through its museums and galleries, is aiming to develop a stronger sense of community and purpose, focusing on identity and community involvement in its heritage strategy.

In 2004, Scottish museums accounted for 37% of visitor attractions, with an additional 7% of other attractions containing museum collections.

- Museums
- Country and forest parks
- Other attractions



Museums do this...

Museum collections embody cultural identity, confidence, and contribute to the cohesion of the communities in which they reside.

Practically every community has at least one museum collection through which they engage in many different ways.

Each one of these museums contributes to the wider social and economic agenda in Scotland, and the majority undertake community-based activities often with very limited resources.

In 2006 the Scottish Museums Council (SMC) identified the need for further research to establish a formal link between museums and their impact on communities.

SMC has identified five beneficial impacts that museum collections have on their local communities.

- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Diversity
- Community Confidence
- Tourism

The following pages illustrate a fraction of the innovative community-based projects that go on around the country, many of them achieved on a very limited budget. They provide a solid foundation on which to further examine and develop the link between collections and the communities in which they reside.



(01) A selection of dolls, Museum of Childhood, Edinburgh

(02) 'Buddy' the lion, Paisley Museum and Art Galleries, Renfrewshire Council

Education and Lifelong Learning

(03) Timespan, Helmsdale

The 'Storytelling' project is exploring new and exciting ways to interpret Highland folklore through poetry, role-play, writing, drawing and mask-making. As part of the project, local children worked with a digital artist, using photographs and workshops to illustrate stories.

The project increased the technical ability of the children and the artwork was displayed at the museum.



(04) Aberdeen Art Gallery

'Ten Drawings by Leonardo da Vinci: An Exhibition to Celebrate the 80th Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen' was an exhibition hosted by the Gallery during the summer holidays and used as a basis for a themed summer programme of events including dance, drama, life drawing and drop in activities.

320 participants attended the drop in day, 96 adults and 60 children the art workshops and 97 children the dance and drama activities. Almost all the events were over-subscribed.



Health and Wellbeing

(05) Scottish Borders Council Museums and Galleries Service

'The Guid Scots Diet?' is a large-scale touring exhibition and museum education/learning project exploring Scots food and diets from Mesolithic times to the present day.

The project has had excellent feedback from visitors and the exhibition really encouraged the children to think about what they eat and what is in their own lunchboxes.

(06) Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Currently under redevelopment, the new building will be used to educate the public and enthuse young people about healthcare issues using a dedicated research space and new public health area.

The idea is to create a virtual environment where people can interact with the collections by, for example, trying their hand at virtual keyhole surgery.

Diversity

(07) St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art, Glasgow

This unique museum aims to promote mutual understanding and respect between people of different faiths and of none. Its adult learning programme, Faith to Faith, allows visitors to discuss and debate issues relating to religion in Scotland, and the world, today.

Faith to Faith is now widely recognised by the faith communities in Glasgow, anti-sectarian and anti-racist organisations, and those involved in policy and political decision-making.

Tourism

Scottish Emigration Museum

This is an ambitious project aiming to provide the global community of people of Scots ancestry and learners with on-line access to a unique, inspirational collection of migration-related resources. The project is a partnership between SMC, National Museums Scotland, the National Libraries of Scotland and the National Archives of Scotland.

Global interest in genealogy and family history has never been higher, and SMC are keen to tap into this niche market and encourage other key organisations to engage with this initiative.

Community Confidence

(08) City Art Centre, Edinburgh
Rainbow City, an exhibition by the 'Remember When' project, consisted of images, memories, virtual tours and history walks relating to the history of Edinburgh's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community from the 16th to the 21st century.

Feedback from those who visited has been overwhelmingly positive: "Your exhibition made me remember to hold my head up high, to feel pride at what my peers have achieved and every time I take the hand of my girlfriend, I'll give thanks."
Visitor from Edinburgh.



(11) The Gordon Highlanders, Aberdeen
The museum has 150 volunteers aged between 45-80 years who operate the museum's front of house services, manage the research service and are involved in the maintenance of the garden and grounds. In addition, a small team work on collections care and the museum is keen to train and develop them further.

Volunteering gives people a sense of belonging and purpose, creates new social networks and makes an important contribution to the community.

(09) Discovery Point Antarctic Museum, Dundee
The centrepiece of the museum is the fully-restored *RRS Discovery*, which carried Robert Falcon Scott and his crew to Antarctica. However, the museum's facilities go far beyond the ship, with a full education suite, a visitors centre with state of the art audio-visual and multimedia displays, a café and shop. The excellent facilities mean the museum can be hired out as a venue for corporate functions, conferences, private functions and even weddings, as well as hosting its own events.

The museum has been awarded five-star visitor attraction status by VisitScotland, the highest grade possible, and in 2005, attracted in excess of 105,000 visitors.



(12) Scottish Mining Museum, Newtongrange
This 5-star visitor attraction has deep roots in the local community, with ex-miners acting as tour guides. The museum runs educational workshops, is a venue for events and weddings, and the café doubles up as a community meeting place. In addition, members of the community helped transform a piece of wasteland at the site into a community garden for the TV programme 'Beechgrove Garden'.

The garden enhances the appeal of the museum, providing somewhere pleasant to walk and sit and reinforces the museum's place at the heart of the community.



So what?

From 2004/05 to 2005/06, the total cultural spend in Scotland dropped by more than £30.5m or 6%. The CIPFA Ratings Review shows a drop of almost £7m in Local Authority spending on museums and galleries over the same period – a fall of 15%.

This problem of funding is compounded by a disparity in local authority 'spend per head' on museums and galleries. For example, in 2004/05 this ranged from £26.83 in Glasgow to £0.47 in Argyll and Bute.

If museums are to continue to inspire future generations, there is a need for continued investment in the development of their collections.

What people think...

"Museums play an important role in local communities. They serve to inspire, educate and to challenge. We have an outstanding collection of museums throughout Scotland, and people all over the country should go out and enjoy them".
First Minister, Jack McConnell.

"Museums and galleries are creative, inspirational environments. They teach people how to look and to perceive things – how to be creative. One can learn from and be taught by that environment itself".
Muriel Gray, Broadcaster.

"To walk into a museum or gallery is a wonderful escape from the humdrum. To be bombarded by the beautiful, the grotesque, the ancient and the modern lifts us out of our familiar old furrows, at least for a while".
Kaye Adams, Broadcaster.

"I think it is very important that we all value the role that museums and galleries play in our lives. They offer us a creative environment in which we can enjoy, learn and take inspiration from".
Jack Vettriano, Artist.

"To understand who we are, we must look to our families and communities. Local museums can help to do so by recording our personal and community achievements".
David Hamilton, MSP.

**It's your local
museum –
Support it,
Save it or Lose it...**

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