

# Quarterly Report

2024/25 Q4





## Q4 2024/25

This document celebrates achievements and summarises key activity from Leeds Museum & Galleries (LMG) over the period January to March 2025.

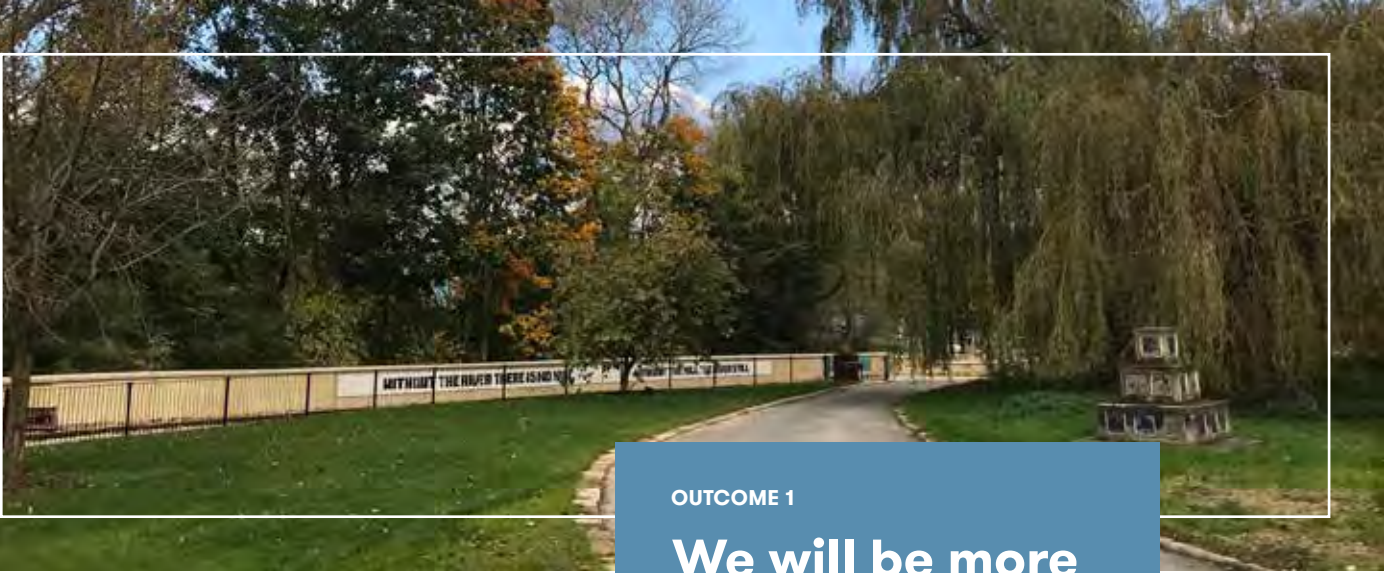
It is structured in line with our 5-year strategy **Deepening Connections, Widening Impact**, which has been developed with colleagues, partners and Arts Council England's core investment principles in mind. Throughout the document where activity and achievements meet Arts Council England Investment Principles they are referenced under each heading in order to report progress for our National Portfolio Organisation status.

Data comparisons are made with the same period of the previous year unless otherwise stated.

### Leeds Museums & Galleries' Strategic Outcomes

- 1 We will be more sustainable and responsible, financially and environmentally
- 2 We will provide higher quality audience engagement and experiences, both physically and digitally
- 3 We will continue to be a leader in collaborative, sustainable, accessible cultural learning and creative skills development
- 4 We will have an audience and workforce that is representative and reflective of the city
- 5 We will have collections and heritage assets that are better known, better understood, and better cared for
- 6 We will have international reputation and reach



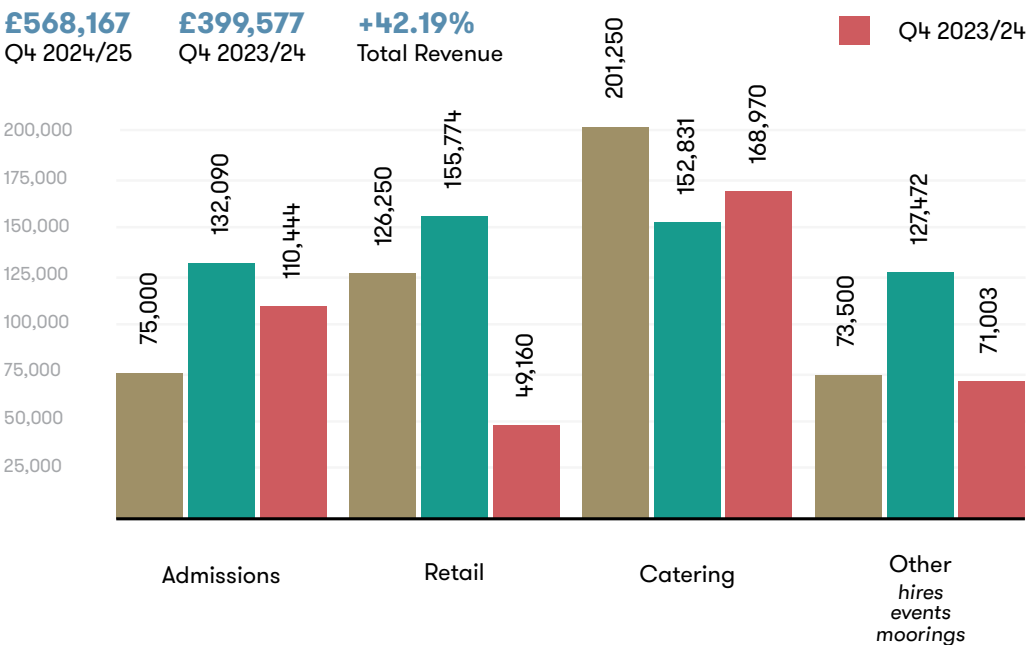


# At a glance

Earned income continues to be a focus and has significantly increased during this quarter compared to Q4 23/24.

Admissions and room hire are trending upwards, whilst catering fell due to a high turnover of staff. Retail has performed brilliantly, particularly at Leeds City Museum, due to the popularity of the Miffy exhibition. The gardening groups continue to maintain and improve the green spaces across venues, including a new community orchard at Leeds Industrial Museum.

## Revenue



OUTCOME 1

We will be more sustainable and responsible, financially and environmentally

ACE IP MET  
Dynamism  
Environmental  
Responsibility

## Headlines

Retail and admissions income at Leeds Industrial Museum are up on Q4 2023/24, with overall income budget exceeded.

The new online shop's conversion rate has increased by 66% compared to last year, in its first 3 months. Redesigning the website and changing the platform to Shopify has made products easier to find and easier to sell.

Leeds City Museum has increased commercial room hire income by 40% for the year. This is through developing ongoing relationships with repeat clients.

Leeds City Museum retail income increased by 237% for the year. This is due to the success of the current temporary exhibition miffy's 70th birthday.

A number of commercial improvements have been made, including the installation of a new coffee machine at the Tiled Hall Cafe at Leeds Art Gallery, the development of a retail space at Leeds Discovery Centre, redecoration of the meeting room at Leeds Industrial Museum, and fresh marketing for weddings at Temple Newsam.

A community orchard project at Leeds Industrial Museum saw over 30 volunteers coming together to plant trees in the grounds. This project was in partnership with Hyde Park Source, TCV, and Fruitworks; supported by a grant from Fruitworks to encourage urban orchards around Leeds.

LMG's website carbon rating is now two grades above the global average.

A number of sustainable adult craft workshops have been held at Abbey House Museum to support the Revive, Repair, Re-Use: Stories of Sustainability exhibition. These included making spring equinox wreaths from 100% foraged foliage found in the local area and assembling felt flower bouquets using material from Scrap, a local social enterprise.

The appointed contractor for a major capital scheme at Leeds Industrial Museum has committed to purchasing 80% of all the required materials and supplies locally. This includes procurement of a steel frame for a new roof from a Sheffield supplier.



2024/25 Q4



# In Focus

**In March, Lotherton's Garforth In Bloom volunteers returned from their winter break to continue their conservation work on the Terrace Garden.**

They are recreating the original Scottish garden planted by Gwendolen Gascoigne in 1903. Over the past four years the volunteers have removed the old rose bushes, fed and fertilised the tired soil, and replanted the borders with the original heathers. This March, they have continued the planting of new vivid purple heathers. They are protecting these baby plants from Easter bunnies with arches of chicken wire.

Garforth In Bloom will continue watering and tidying until it's time to plant the snapdragons that go in the middle of the beds, for summer colour. These are being grown at Temple Newsam from seeds harvested from last year's plants. The winter colour comes from the Winter Jasmine growing up trellises at the corner of each bed.







OUTCOME 2

We will provide higher quality audience engagement and experiences, both physically and digitally

ACE IP MET  
All

## At a glance

This has been a busy and successful quarter for audience development.

Visitor figures rose sharply, we opened a brand new exhibition at Lotherton Hall, Miffy continues to do very well, and *Living with Death* is shortlisted for a top award. We are reaching audiences in different ways with phenomenal growth in the uptake of our newsletter, and an increase in social media followers.

## Press Highlights

[‘Extraordinary’ Leeds inventor’s superbike displayed in tribute at Leeds Industrial Museum after death aged 102](#)  
- Yorkshire Evening Post

A new Miffy exhibition opens at Leeds City Museum features in [Yorkshire Post](#), BBC Look North, [Yorkshire Evening Post](#), BBC Radio Leeds and BBC Breakfast national news.

A huge collection of historic plants are being studied for a new community project in Leeds, as featured on [BBC national online](#) and [Fox Weather \(USA\)](#), and in Yorkshire Post and Yorkshire Evening Post.



### Visitors

211,965  
2024/25

178,897  
2023/24

+18%  
Venue  
visitors



### Socials

356,396  
2024/5

339,298  
2023/4

+5%  
Social media  
followers



### Website

232,893  
2024/25

181,755  
2023/24

+28%  
Website  
visitors



### Views

1,956,741  
2024/25

687,227  
2023/24

+185%  
Webpage  
views

## Headlines

Leeds City Museum’s Sociable History Club attendees have almost doubled to over 60 attendees a session and Abbey House Museum’s 1152 Club attendees have reached pre-Covid levels.

Over 40 volunteers are regularly engaging in the development of a music exhibition at Leeds City Museum, which opens in the autumn.

Wellbeing Wednesdays have been delivered to residents of Leeds City Council’s Care Homes and the Assistant Community Curator at Leeds Art Gallery has delivered a pilot project at Calverlands Complex Needs Day Centre.

A record number of wellbeing surveys were collected over this quarter, including youth engagement groups, volunteers, and craft workshops attendees. The average score was 4.6 out of 5 based on feedback around measures including: feeling safe, happy, welcome, and enjoying the company of others.

Our new website is able to track more granular data and allows us to be more dynamic with our content. This means we’re able to be more strategic with the information hierarchy, capitalise on SEO, and direct audiences to more powerful call to actions.

Our Digital Development Officer attended the Ticketing Professionals conference and their learning will inform decisions on ways to increase digital audiences.

There has been a 400% growth in LMG’s newsletter mailing list, expanding our reach and audience with a strong open rate of 38%, far surpassing the industry average of 25%. It has a consistently low unsubscribe rate of 0.05%, a testament to the value our emails provide.

**Fashion at Play: Children’s Clothing Through the Ages opened at Lotherton Hall.** As part of the exhibition members of the Leeds community shared their own memories and experiences of maternity and baby dressing in modern times through a series of in-situ films. Lotherton’s Youth Fashion Curators also created a teenage fashion display case as part of the show.

Leeds City Museum’s *Living with Death* exhibition closed on Sunday 6 January and attracted a total of 66,209 visitors over its eight-month run (total museum visitors during this time 142,404 – 46% conversion rate). The exhibition has since been shortlisted for the Museums & Heritage Temporary Exhibition of the Year (under £80k) Award.





## In Focus

**On the 1 February 2025, we celebrated the Chinese Lunar New Year, *Echoes of Spring – Year of the Snake*, at Temple Newsam House in partnership with Leeds Chinese Community School (LCCS).**

It was the result of a year-long endeavour in developing and strengthening Temple Newsam's ties with LCCS. The full day of events, co-curated by the Assistant Community Curator with the LCCS, included various workshops - a piano marathon in the Great Hall, a traditional Chinese dance workshop, and a calligraphy and Chinese painting workshop. It was an inclusive and accessible event that was open to the wider public with 'Pay

What You Feel' entry, as well as information and signage available in both Mandarin and Cantonese.

The culmination of the celebration was a live performance in the stunning surroundings of the Picture Gallery. A wide range of local artists and performers, of all ages and from different parts of the performing arts scene in Leeds, as well as students and staff of LCCS, took part in its production. It was widely attended by LCCS board members, students, staff, volunteers and families, the general public, as well as the Lord Mayor of Leeds.

As an intergenerational event that was enjoyed by families from across the city, it was a celebration and reflection of the vibrant and diverse culture of Leeds.








OUTCOME 3

We will continue to be a leader in collaborative, sustainable, accessible cultural learning and creative skills development

ACE IP MET  
Dynamism  
Environmental  
Responsibility  
Inclusion &  
Relevance

## At a glance

Our work included starting the second cohort of Mini Wonders, the Nesta and Art Fund Early Years research programme for parenting and school readiness. We also delivered the first national Access in Museums conference for cultural learning professionals and concluded the Explore: Urban Nature programme with the Natural History Museum.

 Pupils	 Family	 SEND
10,612 Q4 2024/5	10,923 Q4 2024/25	23 2024/5
11,872 Q4 2023/4	11,362 Q4 2023/24	27 2023/4
-4% Engaged through workshops, self led and outreach	-4% People engaged in family activities	-15% Workshops differentiated for pupils with SEND needs

MyLearning  
69,880  
Unique Users  
Q4 2024/25

229,880  
Page Views

1,245  
Downloads

1,738  
Watched Videos

## Headlines

Leeds Art Gallery with Coop Academy Brierley (LS9, Burmantofts and Richmond Hill) and the Henry Moore Institute, worked with neurodivergent young adults to think about 3D art and made individual and collaborative sculptures from reclaimed everyday objects.

The second cohort of families from Armley ward started the NESTA and Art Fund Mini Wonders Early Years parenting and school readiness research programme at Leeds Industrial Museum. Initial findings suggest museum spaces build trust to enable developmental conversations to happen. LMG is receiving £64,000 of funding for the programme.

The Explore: Urban Nature programme concluded with the Natural History Museum London in February. The four year programme increased science capital in young adults and biodiversity within the local environment. LMG received £30,000 of funding to deliver the programme.

We presented at the Museums Association Future of Schools one-day online conference to 150 delegates, hosted a Yorkshire Accessible Museums Network meeting for 25 delegates, and spoke at both the Mini Wonders launch and Explore Urban Nature conclusion events.

We concluded the NPO funded, 15-month Assistant Learning and Access Officer role, a museum learning training post with the employee getting a next step job in the sector.

An LMG journal article published in The International Journal of Arts Education, 'How Can Developing Object-Based Learning Skills During Primary Initial Teacher Training Influence the Trainee's Approach to Classroom Teaching and Learning?' which won an Award for Excellence with the highest peer review score for the volume.

Members of Leeds Art Gallery's Youth Collective have been delivering workshops to each other, supported by the Youth Engagement Curator: "For four years I've wanted to deliver a workshop to the Youth Collective, but never had the confidence. Through you encouraging me, I thought why not, go for it. I was incredibly nervous beforehand, but shouldn't have worried. I really enjoyed it and ten minutes in, I felt confident. Thank you for the opportunity Angie, I want to deliver more within this safe environment. Plus it helps me secure employment, especially after graduation."



## In Focus

LMG initiated and hosted the first national two-day Access in Museums conference at Leeds City Museum, in March 2025.

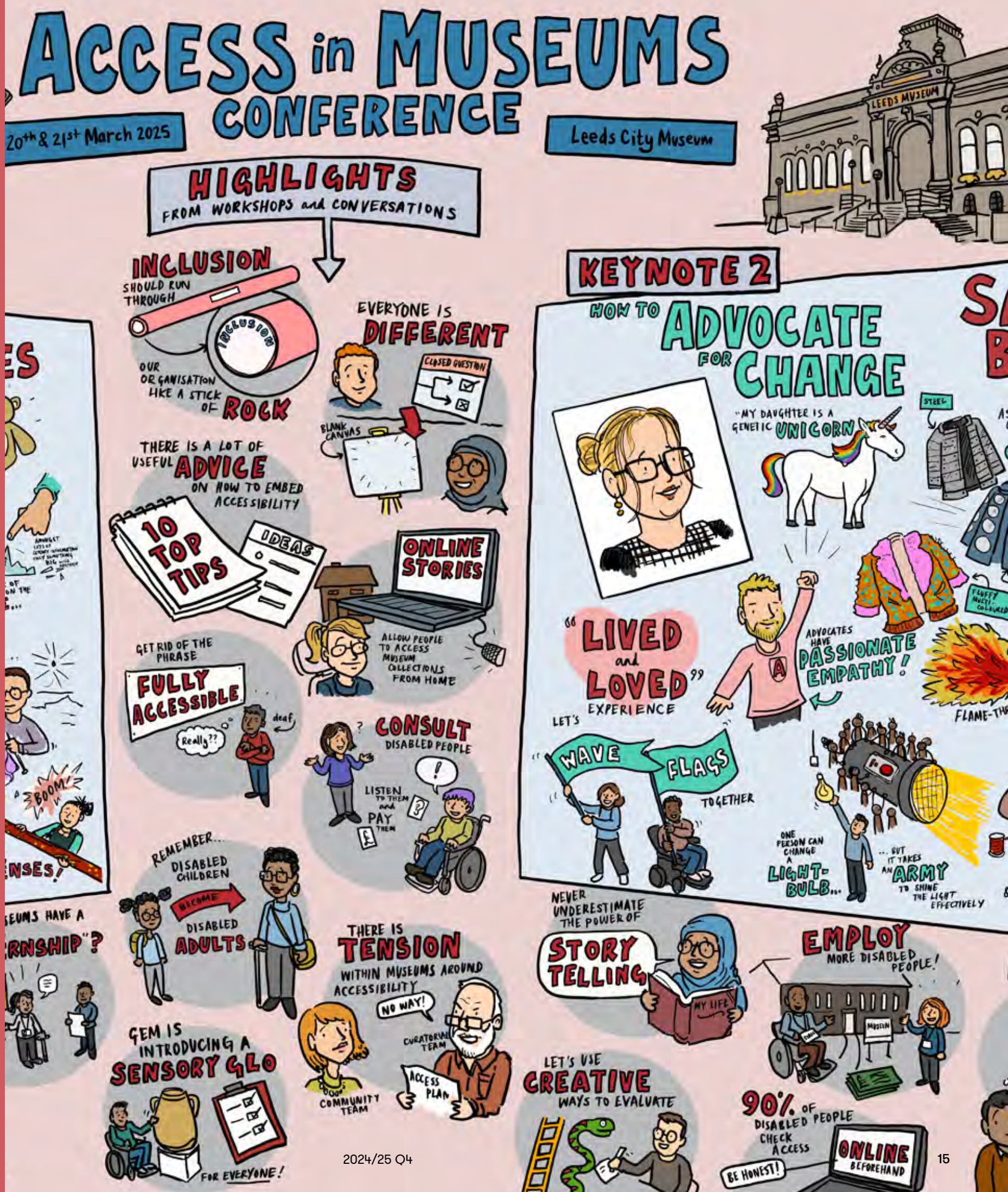
The conference had 70 delegates and 17 speakers, with keynotes from Joanna Grace and Sam Bowen, both nationally renowned within arts inclusive practice. Delegate numbers were kept below the room capacity to make the conference as inclusive as possible for those attending with disabilities and neurodivergence. For access, Stagertext delivered live closed captions and a graphic notes illustrator provided extra support.

**'It was very moving and has given me a new sense of purpose to really make the changes needed in my department. I liked the fact that the event was about all needs, not just focused on one or two. Made some good contacts and am looking forward to hearing more!'**

– Attendee

The conference was supported by the Group for Education in Museums (GEM) through financial sponsorship and the Yorkshire Accessible Museums Network (YAMN) in kind. This enabled the conference to cover its costs. We plan to make this an annual event, alternating between in person and online conferences for access.

LMG chairs the Yorkshire Accessible Museums Network (YAMN). The network supports cultural learning professionals across the UK with increasing accessible practice. There are four online meetings a year showcasing best practice and reaching 120 professionals.







OUTCOME 4

We will have an audience and workforce that is representative and reflective of the city

ACE IP MET  
Ambition & Quality  
Inclusion & Relevance

## At a glance

It has been a busy quarter for volunteering at LMG alongside co-curated events and creative sessions. An innovative object access project has been piloted and one of the team has been nationally recognised for their contribution to engagement work.

**6** -25%  
Co-curated displays

**184** +29  
Community creative sessions

**72** +/- 0%  
Generous hostings



### Volunteers

**152**  
2024/5

**95**  
2023/4

**+60%**  
Volunteers



### Hours

**3514**  
2024/25

**2257**  
2023/24

**+56%**  
Hours contributed by volunteers

39 co-produced events with our community partners



## Headlines

**The Youth Engagement Curator at Leeds Art Gallery worked with the Leeds Bosom Buddies and photographer, Casey Orr.** Casey photographed women who identify as young mums, LGBT+, and some as Global Majority. One of the portraits is now on display within the *Portrayals of Women* exhibition.

**The Assistant Community Curator at Leeds Art Gallery supported the Lazarus project, which will produce a public artwork co-created by users of homeless charity St George's Crypt, and artists Pippa Hale and David Hawkins.** By embarking on a creative journey together, the project aims to nurture and celebrate the creativity of people experiencing homelessness and change public perceptions.

**Staff at Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds City Museum, Leeds Discovery Centre, Leeds Industrial Museum, and Lotherton have had 'Becoming trauma sensitive' training** to support our visitors, alongside annual safeguarding training. Leeds Discovery Centre has also had Unconscious Bias training.

**The Audience Development Team and the Learning and Access Team are working together with All In Access** and pilot organisations across Leeds to develop and test the All In Access Scheme.

**Curator of Industrial History continues to work closely with Sree Subramanian of University of York and Shaheera Pesnani of Historic England on research areas and potential storylines for our John Fowler locomotive 'Cheetal',** built in 1923 for the Karachi Port Trust. Shaheera Pesnani is interrogating the Sindh Archives for the project on her current visit to Pakistan.

**The Head of Operations & Enterprise has been supporting the South Yorkshire Transport Museum as their Museum Mentor with their Accreditation submission.**

**Angie Thompson, Leeds Art Gallery's Youth Engagement Curator, won a prestigious award** for her work with the Care Creatives and wider youth engagement programme – the Marsh Award for Excellence in Visual Arts Engagement.





## In Focus

**In recent months we have been trialling our new tactile workshop for the Blind and Partially Sighted.**

We are using 3D prints of museum objects to improve intellectual access to our collections and enable visitors who are Blind or Partially Sighted to engage with collections in a totally new way.

This workshop is based on months of consultation and will shortly be rolled out as part of a monthly, bookable and free programme at Leeds City Museum. 3D prints allow participants to handle objects in new and interesting ways. For example, a small coin can be enlarged so that someone can more accurately feel details on the 'head'/'tails' sides, and a large vase can be made smaller

so it can be easily lifted and rotated. Similarly, objects that are toxic, fragile, or dangerous, which would otherwise never be part of an object handling session, can be printed so that visitors can actually engage with them.

Participants were also given large print photographs of the original objects for reference, along with examples of the objects' original material/weight so they could 'see past the plastic'.

**"We all found everything really interesting. I think it's the best solution yet, to make things behind glass accessible".**

– A member of the Leeds Federation of the Blind





OUTCOME 5

We will have collections and heritage assets that are better known, better understood, and better cared for



## At a glance

A project connecting East Leeds' communities with the botany collection secured funding. At the same time, a major restoration project, the Butler's Pantry, opened to the public at Temple Newsam.



ACE IP MET  
All

**577** +40%  
Objects conserved

**395** -36%  
Objects condition checked

**466** +62%  
Enquiries answered

**8677** +63%  
TMS records updated

**488** +264%  
Records amended as a result of community input

**492** +33%  
New records created

**44** +2%  
Researchers accessing collections

### Visitors to objects on loan out

**101,345**

Q4 24/25

**311,492**  
Q4 23/24

-67%

### Long Loans (12 months+)

**182 out** +4%

**1001 in** from 70 lenders +1%

### Short Loans (up to 12 months)

**198 out** to 28 venues, 3 international +153%

**989 in** from 145 lenders -34%

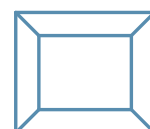
### The Picture Library

Members Loans

**431** **541**  
2024/25 2024/25

**374** **476**  
2023/24 2023/24

**+15%** **+14%**  
Members Artworks on loan



## Headlines

A carpet, originally installed at Temple Newsam by **Emily Meynell Ingram (1840-1904)**, has been restored and returned to site with support from Leeds Art Fund.

**Leeds Industrial Museum has continued a collaboration with Leeds Irish Health & Homes and award-winning poet Ian Duhig.** Inspired by LMG's collections, the work of ten poets will feature in a published anthology 'The Holdings' launching in May.

**We received £99,690 from the Museums Association's Esmée Fairbairn Collection Fund for our Dead Plants Society project.** Connecting with East Leeds communities through Space2, an arts and social change charity, we're going to explore botanical stories, biodiversity, and look at climate change with LMG's plant collection.

**Two young archive volunteers have been gaining essential skills in object handling and cataloguing at Leeds Industrial Museum.** This has been very successful in helping students to feel supported in applying for roles within the heritage industry and has significantly increased the amount of objects catalogued within the Hunslet Archive.

**New objects acquired this quarter through community links include two special edition Xero Slingsby albums and placards from a disability rights march.**

**A new pilot project sees an object box loaned to Leeds Teaching Trust to be used in speech therapy sessions with people recovering from strokes.**

**Collections team completed the audit, documentation and management of munitions collections at Leeds Industrial Museum with the assistance of sector specialists RAMORA UK.**

**The final report by Dr Michael Bailey into the construction and history of our important 1812 Blenkinsop/Murray locomotive model has been completed.** The process used CT scanning technology to further understand the model's construction.

**A number of facilities improvements have been made** including the installation of blinds in key galleries at both Leeds Art Gallery and Temple Newsam, redecoration of main circulation areas at Leeds City Museum and the redecoration of toilets at Leeds Industrial Museum. Collections storage improvements have been made to the paper and maquette store at Leeds Art Gallery and the picture store at Lotherton.



# In Focus

**Work started on the room two years ago, uncovering hidden fireplaces, lost decorative schemes and sinks which had been stored in the cellars for decades.**

Traditionally, the Butler's Pantry was the place where the house's silver would have been stored as well as a working space for the butler and the footmen. The room was turned a technical workshop in the 1960s, removing or obscuring many original features, but it had plenty of potential to be restored to its former status.

Detailed research pieced together a picture of how the room used to appear and function. This allowed the space to

be restored close to how it would have been in the 1890s. The project was made possible by support from DCMS/Wolfson Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund, Arts Council England, Headley Trust, Leeds Art Fund and Friends of Leeds City Museums.

Now complete, visitors can experience this room. Along with exploring the stories of working people in the house, they can appreciate Temple Newsam's important collection of British silver, displayed in a fully accessible room for the first time in brand new showcases.







OUTCOME 6

**We will have international reputation and reach**

## At a glance

**Our international loans and press coverage have continued, with the major focus of this quarter being the launch of international exhibition, *miffy's 70th birthday*, at Leeds City Museum.**

ACE IP MET  
All

## Headlines

**A crumb of ancient Egyptian bread found in a previously undocumented collection of Victorian microscope slides at Leeds Discovery Centre has been news in the UK and beyond:**

[Crumb of ancient Egyptian bread found in Leeds museum archive](#) - BBC News

[Volunteer finds ancient Egyptian bread crumb in UK archive](#) - Miami Herald

[Ancient bread crumb found in uncatalogued museum items](#) - Baking Business (Australia)

**As part of the Intercultural Cities steering group, LMG learned about anti-rumours projects happening across Europe, including a pilot in Camden, London.**

## Headlines

**Leeds Art Gallery has been the subject of a range of national and international press pieces**, including for the waxing of its Antonio Canova sculpture, *Venus (The Hope Venus)* including in *The Times* and the British Library collaboration, *Karanjit Panesar: Furnace Fruit* including *Frieze* and *Burlington Contemporary*:

[Karanjit Panesar Refuses to Be Consumed](#) - *Frieze*

[The Best Shows to See Across the UK This Spring](#) - *Frieze*

[Furnace Fruit review by Vaishna Surjid](#) - *Burlington Contemporary*

[Karanjit Panesar: Furnace Fruit/ Empire Lines x Leeds Art Gallery](#) - EMPIRE LINES podcast

**In this quarter, international loans have been to venues in Lanuvio, Italy; Basel, Switzerland and for *Modern Sculptors in Stone* at La Pedrera, in Barcelona, Spain.**





## In Focus

**Leeds City Museum launched its latest temporary exhibition in February, *miffy's 70th birthday*. The exhibition is a collaboration between Leeds Museums & Galleries, Mercis bv, and Norfolk Museums Service.**

Both Leeds and Norfolk have worked closely with Mercis bv on the development of the exhibition. Most of the artworks and objects in the exhibition are generously loaned from the collection of Mercis bv, the global brand owner of Miffy, many of which are housed at the Centraal Museum Utrecht.

From the launch of the exhibition to the end of Q4 Leeds City Museum welcomed 62,000 visitors to the museum, compared with 39,000 visitors in the same period in 2024. The launch event for the exhibition on Saturday 8 February was the busiest day at the museum since it opened to the public in 2008.

The exhibition has had a significant impact on retail sales, with the museum shop earning £92,000 in this period compared with £5,500 in the same period in 2024. The venue sold almost 13,000 products across the Miffy range and more space has been created in the shop for new and exciting Miffy products to be introduced during the lifespan of the exhibition.

In addition to onsite engagement, the exhibition, events and associated products have accounted for 15% of all Leeds Museums & Galleries website views. Website visitors for the Miffy exhibition and events have spanned 100 countries. Miffy product views total over half of the online shop views.

The exhibition will run until 7 September 2025 and it will then move to Time and Tide Museum of Great Yarmouth Life, Norfolk Museums from 11 October 2025 – 1 March 2026.





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2024/5 Q4