

Quarterly Report



2025/26 Q1



Q1 2025/26

This document celebrates achievements and summarises key activity from Leeds Museum & Galleries (LMG) over the period April to June 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



OUTCOME 1

We will be more sustainable and responsible, financially and environmentally

At a glance

Admissions, retail and commercial hire are all up compared with the same period in 2024-25.

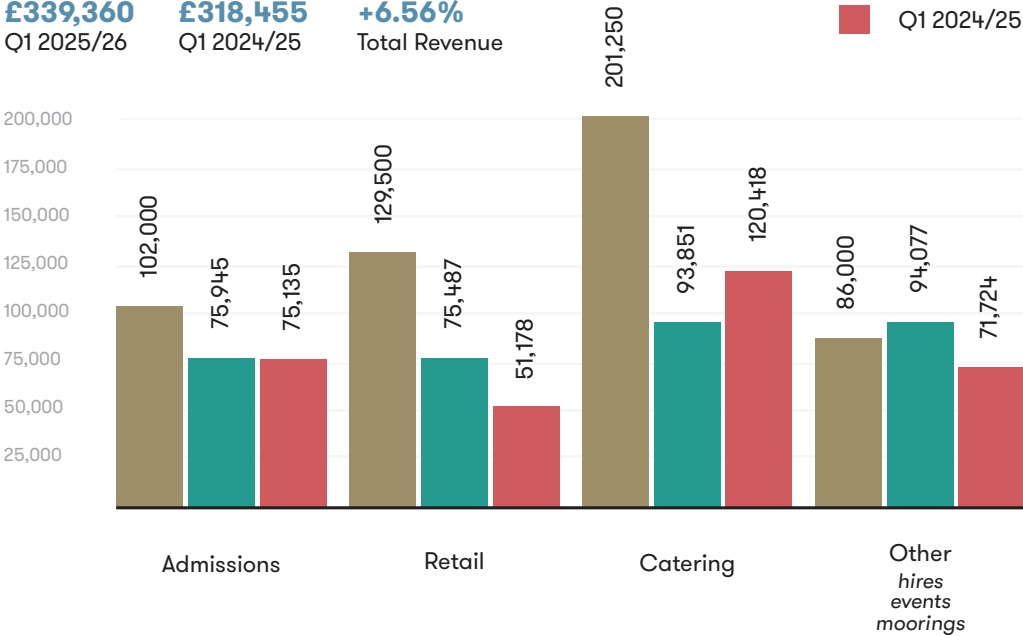
Retail and commercial hire have had a particularly positive start to the year with most sites benefitting from a strong Easter period. The installation of an air source heat pump at Leeds Industrial Museum continues our commitment to environmental sustainability.

ACE IP MET
Dynamism
Environmental
Responsibility

Revenue

£339,360 Q1 2025/26
£318,455 Q1 2024/25
+6.56% Total Revenue

Key
Budget
Q1 2025/26
Q1 2024/25



Q1 25/26 are draft figures due to new LCC finance system.

Headlines

A new Give What You Can donations model has been introduced across Leeds City Museum, Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds Discovery Centre and Kirkstall Abbey. It is hoped that the scheme increases revenue from donations while ensuring our venues remain accessible to all.

Retail income has risen by 116% compared to the same period last year, with significant growth across multiple sites during the Easter holiday period.

The retail offer connected to Leeds City Museum’s miffy’s 70th birthday exhibition continues to perform well. Miffy products contributed to 81% of total sales during Q1.

At Leeds City Museum exhibition related programming has boosted revenue through ticket sales and Give What You Can donations.

Leeds Industrial Museum had a 18% rise in income and a 30% increase in profit in Q1 compared to last year, with an additional 24% increase in average transaction value.

The online shop successfully generated £486 of retail income and an additional £145 through the sales of Picture Library memberships and donations.

The online shop saw 24,000 page views which is a 202% increase on Q1 23/24.

Leeds Art Gallery’s exhibition Peter Mitchell: Nothing Lasts Forever toured to the Photographers’ Gallery in London, generating income and being seen by over 34,000 visitors.

Leeds Industrial Museum has taken part in research by University of Leeds to explore how people interact with waterways and engage with environmental change. The project, Waterways: Living with the River – comparing the River Aire in West Yorkshire and the Brahmaputra in India runs until May 2028.



In Focus

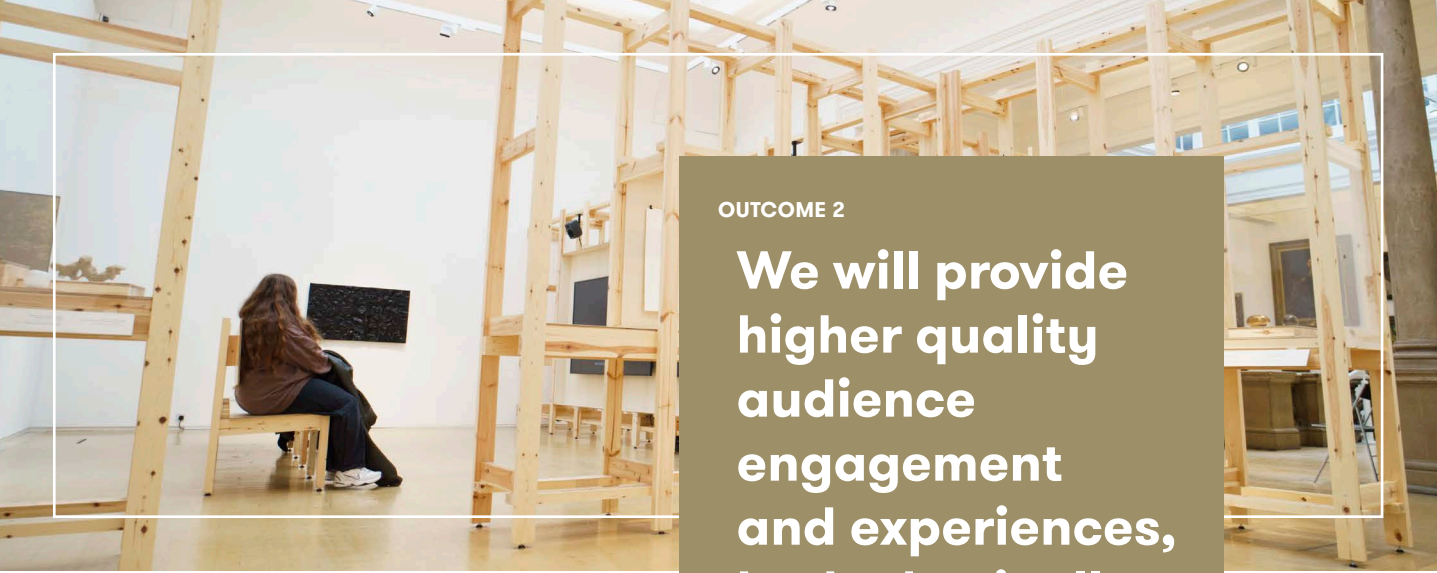
Leeds Museums and Galleries are enhancing environmental sustainability across their sites by securing external funding to support green initiatives.

In spring 2025, an air source heat pump was installed at Leeds Industrial Museum, replacing gas boilers and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. This project, funded through national decarbonisation grants, also improved environmental conditions for collections by providing more consistent temperature and humidity levels.

The heat pump is visible to visitors, linking the museum's energy evolution - from waterwheels to steam engines and now modern heat pumps - into the site's interpretive narrative with the aim of informing visitors about decarbonisation and inspiring climate-conscious behaviour.

This initiative complements other capital works, including the ACE-funded MEND scheme at Leeds Industrial Museum and similar decarbonisation efforts at Temple Newsam House, as well as city centre sites via the Leeds Pipes heat network.





OUTCOME 2

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

ACE IP MET
All

At a glance

This quarter we saw an increase in online engagement, some very positive findings in a study of community engagement and wellbeing, recognition for exhibition programming at national sector awards, and more fun with Miffy!

Press Highlights

Rich Seam of Culture - Yorkshire Evening Post, frontpage print edition

[Children's outlandish dress showcased in Leeds display](#) - BBC News

[Goddess work displayed at Leeds Art Gallery after restoration](#) - BBC News

[Leeds museum visitors asked to 'give what you can'](#) - BBC News

[Discovery Centre vintage clocks stand the test of time](#) - BBC News

To Improvise A Mountain curated by leading contemporary artist Lynette Yiadom-Boakye received great press coverage with coverage in the Sunday Times, Guardian, Art Rabbit and EFlux.

1,200 year old Saxon cross acquisition makes international news in the [Miami Herald](#), [Archaeology Magazine](#) and more.



Visitors

272,119
2025/26

231,230
2024/25

+18%
Venue
visitors



Socials

357,482
2025/26

341,336
2024/25

+4.73%
Social media
followers



Website

233,751
2025/26

157,945
2024/25

+48%
Website
visitors



Views

2,022,899
2025/26

563,055
2024/25

+260%
Webpage
views

Headlines

Karanjit Panesar's exhibition *Furnace Fruit* at Leeds Art Gallery was highly commended by the reviewing panel of the Association for Art History in their annual curatorial prize for exhibitions.

The Preservative Party launched season 2 of *'Whose Power?'*, a podcast that explores participatory practice in museums in collaboration with Prof. Abigail Harrison Moore.

Leeds Community Choir performed at the Kirkstall Abbey Wellbeing festival.

To celebrate the re-opening of Lotherton's medieval chapel, a series of community-led events took place over Easter. Volunteers from the community delivered 17 events, ranging from concerts, tours, talks and crafts with 4,105 people attending.

During this quarter we had the highest amount of wellbeing surveys completed from community engagement programme, results show that the average score out of 5 for statements such as 'I felt welcome' (4.81) 'I felt safe' (4.92), and 'I felt happy' (4.71) were up again on last quarter.

At the national Museums and Heritage Awards in May, *Living with Death: An exhibition exploring death, dying and bereavement*, was highly commended in Temporary or Touring Exhibition of the Year (Budget under £80K).

To Improvise a Mountain: Lynette Yiadom-Boakye Curates in partnership with Hayward Gallery Touring opened at Leeds Art Gallery, including Walter Sickert paintings and drawings from the collection.

In June, Leeds City Museum held an after-hours event for adults themed around their current temporary exhibition *miffy's 70th birthday*. The sold-out event included exhibitions tours, adult crafting, face painting, and food and drink.

Miffy's official birthday was celebrated at Leeds City Museum in June with a family fun day. The free, ticketed event included the opportunity for visitors to meet Miffy herself along with other family-friendly activities across the day.



2025/26 Q1

In Focus

Throughout the month of May for Mental Health Awareness Month we ran a series of Wellbeing Walks themed around a different artist from our exhibitions and collections each week.

The sessions focused around the five ways to wellbeing; offering the opportunity for people to **connect** with one another, be **active** exploring different walking routes, slowing down to **take notice** of the city, **learning** a new artistic approach and technique meanwhile **giving** time to support and encourage one another.

Alongside members of the public, the walks were offered out to staff at the gallery, encouraging people to invest in their own wellbeing and guest artists such as Hannah Platt shared their own practice and process through their curated routes of the city. The sessions were so warmly regarded that we are looking at extending this offer to a monthly workshop through summer, autumn and spring.

“My mental health feels better, getting outdoors and walking together has lifted my spirits, this was a really good day”

– Participant





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

We have continued our national research with Early Years, neurodiverse practice and sector evaluation, run family activities during school holidays and weekends, engaged schools, and continued to support the sector through conferences and mentoring.

MyLearning
82,174
Unique Users
Q1 2025/26

145,081
Page Views

1,305
Downloads

1,389
Watched Videos



Pupils

11,027
Q1 2025/6

9,695
Q1 2024/5

+13%
Engaged through workshops, self led and outreach



Family

32,300
Q1 2025/26

22,255
Q1 2024/25

+45%
People engaged in family activities



SEND

51
2025/6

31
2023/4

+65%
Workshops differentiated for pupils with SEND needs

*MyLearning analytics: The apparent drop in user numbers is due to a shift in how we report analytics, moving from total event counts to meaningful metrics like active users and page views. This change avoids inflated figures caused by tracking minor interactions such as scrolling or clicking.

Headlines

Abbey House Museum has been shortlisted for the national Kids in Museums Family Friendly Award in the Best Museum category. The winner will be announced in October.

We have been assisting in the national inclusive redevelopment of the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs).

MyLearning.org exhibited at the Museums and Heritage Show and hosted two talks on use of AI and the inclusive Generic Learning Outcomes.

We contributed to the Art Fund roundtable around engaging teachers, presented at Next Steps for Cultural Education and the Sensory Public History Conference. We mentored three people nationally and internationally.

330 pupils from Whitkirk and Colton Primary Schools have been developing art skills and building cultural capital at Temple Newsam House, leading to an intervention of pupil work within the house. This is the first year of a programme funded by Arts Scholars Enriching Lives Grant from the Group for Education in Museums.

Lotherton Hall have concluded Year 1 of a longitudinal research programme with Blueberry Academy, a specialist college for young adults in York with learning differences, autism, social, emotional and mental health needs.

The Primary School Membership scheme opened for academic year 2025-26 in April. We have 19 member schools signed up, generating £20,800.

Leeds Art Gallery is working in partnership with Launchpad to provide open mic opportunities for young adults in Leeds known as The Sound Gallery.

The Youth Engagement Curator at Leeds Art Gallery supported three young artists from the Youth Collective into their first art shows, internships and art residencies.



In Focus

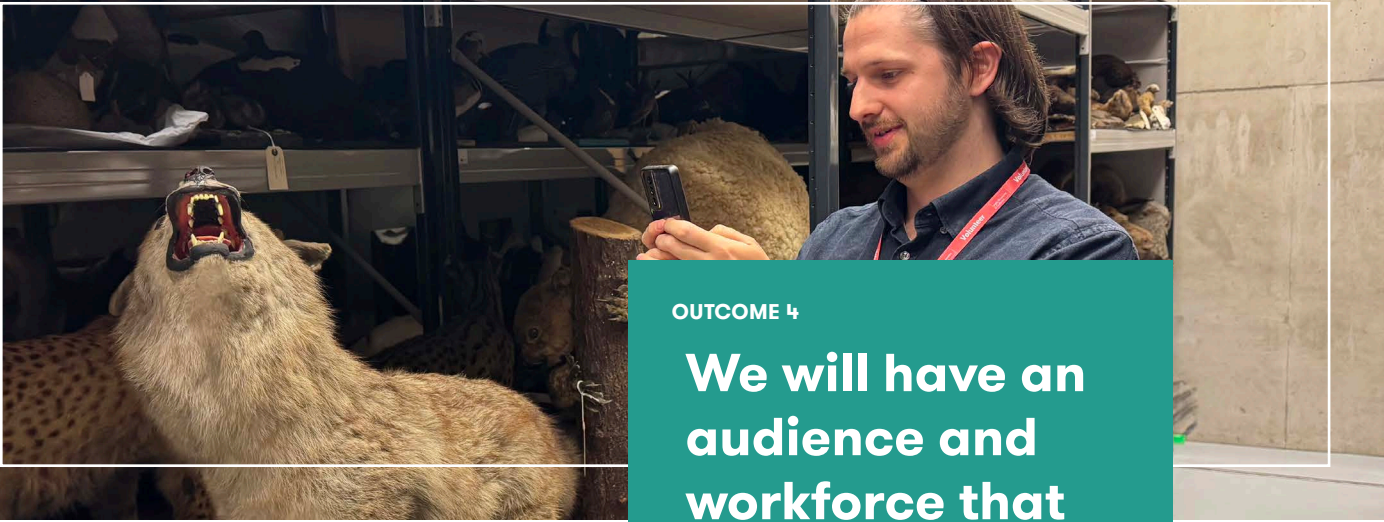
Leeds Industrial Museum is a lead museum with Nesta and Art Fund on the Mini Wonders Early Years Innovation in Museums two-year research programme.

We have worked with the Children's Centres, libraries and nurseries in Armley (LS12) to support three cohorts of eight families through an eight-week programme to develop parenting support, deepen family connections and prepare children for school. Families have done bug hunts, made wet felting and played with magic sand. The first cohort had a high proportion of participants with English as an additional language, who were using the parenting classes as a way of making connections and accessing wider services. The second cohort had a high proportion of families awaiting neurodiversity diagnoses. The third cohort has focused more on parental mental and physical health alongside that of their children.

The research is confirming that museums give people a sense of place, a sense of trust and the programme provides a sense of regularity. Families have said they feel grounded, connected and welcome, and they feel comfortable enough to try stuff out (which some have said is unusual for them) and they feel there's no judgement, just support.

The research builds on our universal and targeted Early Years programming for families and settings including Playground and Atelier Leeds Art Gallery, Little Lotherton and Tiny Tigers at Leeds City Museum. We are restarting under-fives work at Abbey House Museum in autumn 2025.





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

New volunteers have joined LMG this quarter and recent placements have gone on to new steps in their development. We've collaborated with communities on a range of events and hosted a conference supporting the wellbeing of community participation colleagues in the sector.

- 10** -10%
Co-curated displays
- 150** +10%
Community creative sessions
- 116** +50%
Generous hostings

 Volunteers	 Hours
134 2025/6	2,300 2025/26
73 2024/5	1174 2024/25
+45% Volunteers	+96% Hours contributed by volunteers

86 co-produced events with our community partners



Headlines

We hosted the **GLAM Cares national conference at Leeds City Museum on 26 June 2025 for 75 delegates.** The network supports the wellbeing of community participation staff. LMG staff are on the GLAM Cares board.

Over 40 volunteers, aged between 17 and 70, with a diverse range of experiences are co-curating a display about music in Leeds at Leeds City Museum. Several have applied for other volunteering or paid roles within LMG or more widely in Leeds.

A new installation at Leeds City Museum, Pride and Place, with Swarthmore College celebrates South Leeds through art practice. With 18 months' work resulting in a creative display and a launch event which celebrated their achievements across the project with choir performances, art installations, creative workshops and presentations.

Leeds Industrial Museum is working closely with Migration Yorkshire to welcome Refugees and Asylum Seekers to the city and its heritage. In June around 200 free admissions were taken up, including translated tours and opportunities for 'panel members' from within their own communities to come together.

Former Leeds Art Gallery volunteer Madeline Brace has been appointed Exhibition Assistant at Ferens Art Gallery, Hull and former Leeds Art Gallery Visitor Assistant, volunteer, project placement and Trainee Registrar Nicola Christoforou has been appointed Assistant Registrar at the Royal Armouries.

A student from Pinc College completed a six-month Careers for All placement, which are designed to provide opportunities for young people with SEND. The placement with the archaeology collection was used to to support the student's successful UCAS application.

In June, Kirkstall Abbey Chapter House saw the launch of a zine made by the Trans Saints Project, created by a group of artists who were exploring the history and legends of saints and figures who may be interpreted as trans today. The event was kindly supported by the Kirkstall ward councillors and drew 218 attendees.



In Focus

The International Goth Day pop-up market and redevelopment of the Who's Who wall at Leeds City Museum was a wonderful showcase of how powerful it can be to hand over the controls of curating to our community partners.

Working with partners from the community, the museum was able to give them space to share their experiences and voices to create a Who's Who wall curated entirely by the community themselves, through

nominations and an expert panel of peers. The launch day was widely attended and acted as a celebration of the sub-culture and recognising how pivotal Leeds was to the emergence of Goth music and culture. It was also about making people feel special and valued. High-profile guests including members of Sisters of Mercy, Jim Keenan and local heroes including Claire Shearbsy and the Blogging Goth. The event was reported by various news outlets including BBC Radio, local BBC News and Look North.

who's who



OUTCOME 5

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



At a glance

It's been a busy quarter for collections work across conservation, database records, enquiries, researchers and projects. Over 800,000 people have seen LMG's collections on loan.



ACE IP MET
All

155 +55%
Objects conserved

299 +2%
Objects condition checked

504 +41%
Enquiries answered

7340 +52%
TMS records updated

257 +57%
Records amended as a result of community input

1199 +100%
New records created

92 +138%
Researchers accessing collections

Visitors to objects on loan out

811,134

Q1 25/26

436,500

Q1 24/25

+86%

Long Loans (12 months+)

182 out +0%

1001 in from 70 lenders +1%

Short Loans (up to 12 months)

283 out to 31 venues, 3 international +177%

1135 in from 151 lenders -27%

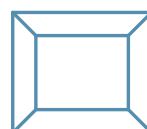
The Picture Library

Members Loans

442 567
2025/26 2025/26

389 492
2024/25 2024/25

+14% +15%
Members Artworks
on loan



Headlines

Leeds Discovery Centre hosted sensory biologist Dr Robyn A Grant from the University of Manchester to undertake research into whiskers. Dr Grant said, "We are looking at hippo whiskers for the very first time. Working with zoos and museums such as Leeds Discovery Centre, we are trying to understand how the whiskers are arranged, and what the animals use them for."

Visits to Temple Newsam and Lotherton led by the Curator and Assistant Curator of Decorative Art, formed part of a three-day study visit by members of the Furniture History Society in May.

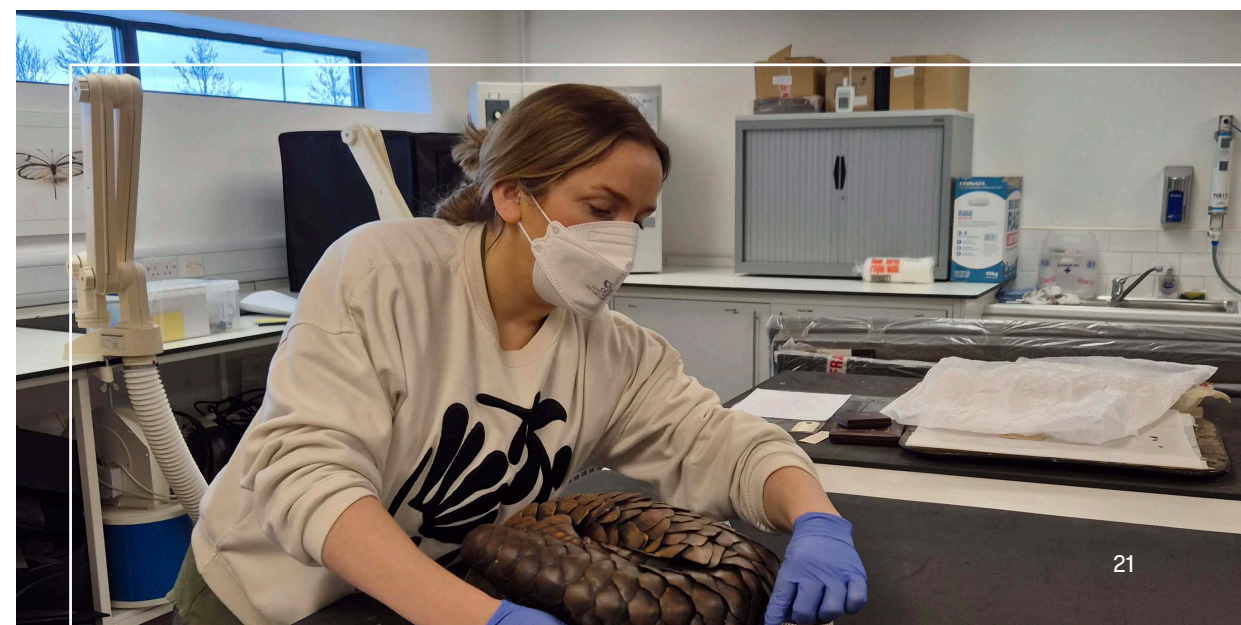
Environmental conditions at Leeds Industrial Museum have been improved through new heating systems, with further collections storage improvements planned to be funded through the facilities improvement allocation from ACE NPO funding.

Karanjit Panesar's *Double Fruit*, 2024 has been acquired from his exhibition *Furnace Fruit* with support from Leeds Art Fund.

Thanks also to support from Leeds Art Fund, Temple Newsam was able to acquire a group of watercolours painted by former owner Emily Meynell Ingram (1840-1904) and her sister-in-law, Lady Mary Wood, documenting a trip down the River Nile in 1889/90.

Leeds' historic collection of critically endangered pangolins is being used to help their wild counterparts.

Researchers from the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre are using isotope analysis of scales from these mammals in our collection to help curb the trade in them. This research will help develop a robust system to determine the locations from where confiscated scales were poached, and work towards putting an end to the plight of the pangolin, the most trafficked mammal in the world.



In Focus

LMG's collections have been at the heart of inspiration for new creative outputs this quarter with Leeds Fine Artists at Temple Newsam and Leeds Irish Health and Homes poetry anthology, *The Holdings*, at Leeds Industrial Museum.

Inspiring Temple Newsam showcases 13 artists presenting 15 new artworks made in response to the house, landscape and collections. The themes covered range from childhood memories to highlighting historical colonial legacies.

Some quotes from visitors include, "was well put together; the contemporary art with the old was very well done"; "very impressed with the portraits of the of the enslaved people, uncovers the connections with slave trade (shares in South Sea Company & East India Company) a fact that is covered up"; "a marvellous take on Temple Newsam House and its wealth & history".

At Leeds Industrial Museum, we partnered with Leeds Irish Health & Homes (LIHH), an organisation providing culturally sensitive support to the Irish and wider community. With generous financial support from LIHH, award-winning poet Ian Duhig was recruited to lead a series of poetry workshops at Leeds Industrial Museum with people of Irish heritage who live and work in Leeds.

LMG curators selected a range of Irish heritage collection objects for inspiration at one of the workshops. These included 19th century cartoons, an Orange Order sash and a cosh reputedly taken from 'an Irish rioter'



by a Leeds police officer. Participants also drew on their personal experiences in creating poems.

An anthology of the poems 'The Holdings', edited by Laura McDonagh and Ian Duhig, was published in May 2025 with a launch event at Leeds Industrial Museum. The launch was attended by Sarah Mangan the Consul General of Ireland for the North of England. The publication of the anthology was featured in the Irish Times.

A copy of the 'The Holdings' anthology and a hand-written copy of Ian Duhig's poem 'Beater' have been acquired for the Leeds Museums & Galleries permanent collection. Ian's poem is, in part, a cultural reclamation of the 'Irish rioter' cosh in our collections. A copy of the anthology has also been requested by the National Library of Ireland for inclusion in their catalogue.





OUTCOME 6

We will have international reputation and reach

ACE IP MET
All

At a glance

We have welcomed international visitors to research our collections and a VIP visitor to miffy’s 70th birthday exhibition alongside the continuation of our international loans out programme.

To *Improvise A Mountain*, our latest exhibition at Leeds Art Gallery has brought work by renowned international artists to the city.

Headlines

Members of the Fan Circle International made a study visit to Lotherton Hall in May to see fans in the collection with the Curator of Dress and Textiles.

A PhD candidate at the University of Technology Sydney in Australia came to Leeds Discovery Centre, in June, to look at garments from the dress collection for her research on the dressing of the dead for burial.

The Head of Department Culture, Health, Education and Communication from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the UK visited the Miffy exhibition at Leeds City Museum with the Head of Collections & Programmes.

Headlines

Three international loans out this quarter, to Italy, Germany and USA:

The Head of LMG visited our loans in Lanuvio, Italy, in June. Eight sculptures excavated at the Sanctuary of Juno Sospita in the 1880s and gifted shortly afterwards to Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, are now on display nearby the excavation site. As part of an ongoing partnership with Leeds, the Head of LMG was shown around the Museo Civico Lanuvio sites and found out about their plans for development.

European Realities: Realism Movements in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s at Museum Gunzenhauser in Chemnitz, Germany features three paintings from the collection: The Resting Acrobats (1924) by Glyn Warren Philpot, The Jazz Party (The Dance Club) (1921) by William Roberts and The Sisters (c.1940) by Stanley Spencer.

Henry Scott Tuke’s The Bathers (1889) is included in The First Homosexuals at contemporary art gallery Wrightwood 659 in Chicago.



In Focus

To Improvise a Mountain: Lynette Yiadom-Boakye Curates, Leeds Art Gallery's major international exhibition opened in May. Yiadom-Boakye, one of the most important figurative painters today, has selected an exhibition of works critical to her way of seeing and thinking, inviting audiences on a personal journey through art past and present.

The exhibition features both historic and contemporary international artists including, Bas Jan Ader (1942-1975, Netherlands) Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947, France), Lisa Brice (born 1968, South Africa), Barbara Chase-Riboud (born 1939, United States) Samuel Fosso (born 1962, Franco-Cameroonian), Peter Hujar (1934-1987, United States), Zoe Leonard (born 1961, United States) Toyin Ojih Odutola (born 1985, Nigeria), Jennifer Packer (born 1984, United States), Walter Sickert (1860-1942, Germany) and David Wojnarowicz (1954-1992, United States). Loans for the exhibition have come from Amsterdam, Switzerland, France, Netherlands, New York and Chicago and feature alongside works from the Leeds collection and UK-based loans.

The project is a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition developed in partnership with Leeds Art Gallery, MK Gallery, and Nottingham Castle, with Leeds being the opening venue. By working in partnership, we have been able to bring an exhibition to the city which we would not otherwise have been able to deliver.



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