Annual Survey of Museums 2016-17

West Midlands Museum Development

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

WEST MIDLANDS MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

DELIVERED BY

Ironbridge BIRTHPLACE OF INDUSTRY

Summary of findings

Response rate

- 69 museums responded to the WMMD Annual Museums Survey, which equates to a 49% response rate amongst Accredited museums in the region

Audiences

- There were a total of 4,298,099 visits to museums in 2016/17 based on responses received
- Museums held a total of 8,966 activities and events that engaged 358,859 participants

Economic impact

- Visits to museums represented around £32,746,606 million of gross visitor impacts
- There was at least £17,455,755 of direct, indirect and induced impacts as a result of spend on goods and services by museums
- At least 1,319 full time equivalent direct, indirect and induced jobs were supported by museums

Online engagement

- 75% of respondent museums have their own website and 92% used social media to engage with audiences

Educational engagement

- Museums delivered 7,279 learning and outreach activities that engaged 413,031 participants

Financial operations

- £19,869,482 was generated by museums in earned income (including admissions, retail, catering, events, hospitality, educational and other earned income from trading, e.g. property rental)
- £15,508,412 received in regular public funding (including ACE MPM/National Portfolio funding)
- £3,478,392 received in grant funding
- £1,163,465 received in contributed income (including all money received in donations, friends members/schemes, any sponsorship income, corporate membership, or other non-earned income)

Workforce – volunteers

- There were 4,519 active volunteers in 2016/17
- This ranged from 2 to 928 volunteers per museum
- Volunteers contributed a total of 266,521 hours to museums in the region

Workforce – paid staff

- Museums employed 1,678 paid staff which equated to 916 Full Time Equivalents
- 11% (8) of museums were entirely volunteer-run with no paid staff

Equality, diversity and inclusion

- 39 of the respondent museums have an Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- 27 museums have a Diversity Champion within their organisation
- On average 70% of paid staff are female
- An average of 54% of volunteers are aged over 65
- 8% of visitors to museums in the West Midlands consider themselves to have a disability

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the first West Midlands Museum Development (WMMD) Annual Survey of Museums.

The survey has been created in the West Midlands to establish a baseline of data on museums in the region which will be used to analyse and report on trends over the coming years.

Findings will contribute to estimates of the social and economic impacts of museums and help inform how West Midlands Museum Development delivers support to its museums. In future, the results will also enable museums to benchmark themselves against a range of comparators.

The survey has been commissioned from South West Museum Development (SWMD) with the intention of providing consistent data capture across multiple regions to enable more effective advocacy and benchmarking.

This 2016/17 survey followed the same format as surveys developed for other regions, with an added focus on equality, diversity and inclusion in museums in the West Midlands. Questions are based on the survey carried out in the South West since 2012/13, which was developed in consultation with museums and local authorities and from old data collection exercises including Fast Forward West Midlands.

Questions were also adapted to align with Arts Council England's annual survey of Major Partner Museums and National Portfolio Organisations.

Survey method

The survey was sent to all 140 museums in the West Midlands that are Accredited and formally Working Towards Accreditation, as well as being promoted via the WMMD website and targeted e-bulletins. Museums were given the option of either online completion or a hard copy of the survey. Museums were asked to provide data for the 2016/17 financial year.

The survey was divided into five sections:

- Audiences
- Educational engagement
- Financial operations
- Workforce
- Equality, diversity and inclusion

Multi-site organisations were given the option to either provide a response as a whole organisation or by individual site. A number of multi-site museums submitted mixed responses with some data provided on a site-by-site basis and other data provided at a whole organisation level; where this is the case it will be highlighted.

Sample and response

49% (69) of museums responded to this inaugural survey in 2016/17. There are 140 Accredited museums (including eight formally Working Towards Accreditation) in the West Midlands and although the response rate is average, the spread of responses from the various sub-regions, and the different types of museums within them, means that the results can be considered as broadly representative of the region as a whole.

Five museum providers offered service-wide responses to the survey, but there are slight variations in how these responses have been presented between each organisation:

One representing nine museums gave service-wide responses for financial operations, engagement as well as workforce and equality and diversity. Each of its museums has been included in the overall percentage of responses because they have entered individual figures for visitor numbers and admission charges

A second provider gave service-wide responses for its three Accredited museums in all areas of the survey, except for questions on equality and diversity where the results have been entered for each individual museum. Because of this the three sites have been included in the overall response rate

Two further providers submitted a single response for their Accredited sites (seven and four museums); their non-Accredited sites were not included

The fifth provider aggregated the data for its five museums to submit a service-wide response

One museum submitted a return which has been included in this report even though it was closed all year and received no visitors; it was however still present online, financially active and offered opportunities for educational engagement.

When considering the response, the following should be kept in mind:

- Not all museums responded to every question
- Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number
- 'Respondents' or 'Museums' is every museum who submitted a response
- Where differences are small and response levels low, care must be taken when interpreting the data
- Budget data must be viewed as approximate or indicative as different methodologies are used by museums and a number of museums operate a different financial year than April – March

Two main categories of museum are used for analysis throughout the report:

- Type of museum – determined by funding source and governance model
- Size of museum – determined by annual visit figures
- In some calculations museums who report 100,000+ visits per annum are re-categorised to be included alongside 'Large' museums (e.g. 50,000 – 99,999 visits)

Profile of respondents

A full list of the museums who returned the survey in 2016/17 is included at the end of this report. Across the museums that responded to the survey the National Trust is underrepresented in the sample relative to the type of Accredited museums in the West Midlands overall. The very small number of English Heritage and National museums in the region are not represented in the survey at all, as they opted not to submit a return.

Museum opening arrangements

Museums were asked to provide details on their typical opening arrangements:

- 56% (39) reported that they were open all year round
- 26% (18) reported that they were closed part of the year as regular seasonal closure
- 14% (7) of museums open by appointment only – 1 for just part of the year, and 6 all year round
- 10% (5) of museums were closed for the year/part of the year for redevelopment, refurbishment and/or repair

Figure 1: All Accredited WM museums by type

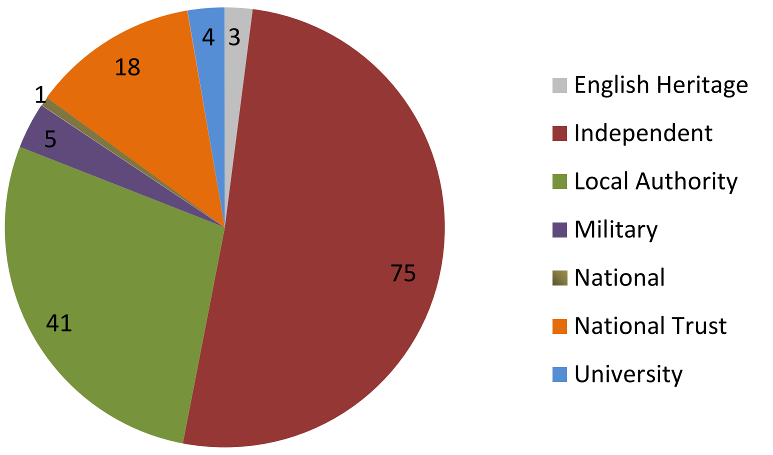
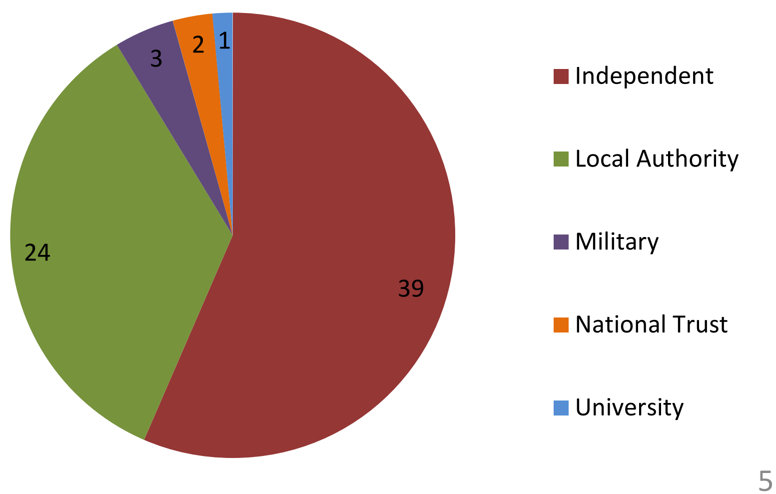


Figure 2: All respondent museums by type



Respondents by size

Museums in the West Midlands range from large national museums to small volunteer-led organisations; the size of a museum has been determined by its visit numbers in 2016/17. Figure 3 shows that the highest response rate came from those museums with 10,000 – 49,999 visits per annum, with responses from museums with 9,999 or less visits per annum coming in a close second. Amongst the respondent museums there are a total of 25 museums with 9,999 or less visitors per annum; 26 with 10,000 – 49,000 visits per annum; 9 with 50,000 – 99,999 and 9 with 100,000+ visits per annum.

Geographic distribution

In each sub-region marked with an asterisk a museum classed as Formally Working Towards Accreditation (WTA) has been included in the overall number of Accredited museums (ie. 17 in Birmingham includes 16 fully Accredited and 1 formally WTA). Two WTA museums have been included in Worcestershire. The WTA museum in Birmingham did respond to the survey and has therefore been included in the response rate figure for Birmingham; this museum was the only WTA museum in the West Midlands to respond to the survey.

Figure 3: Respondents by museum size

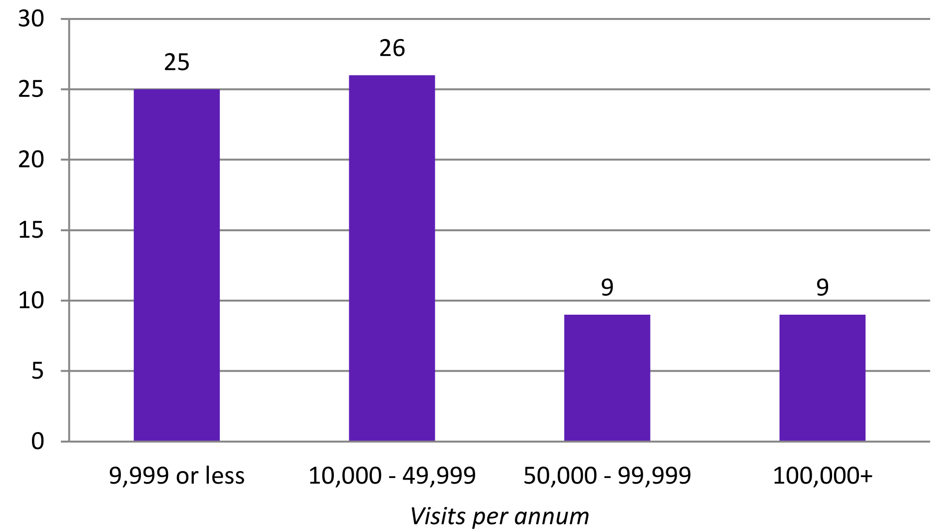


Figure 4: Respondents by sub-region

Sub-region	No. of responses/Accredited museums	Percentage return rate
Birmingham	15 of 17*	88%
Black Country	7 of 15	46%
Herefordshire	7 of 12*	58%
Shropshire	7 of 25	28%
Staffordshire	19 of 25*	76%
Warwickshire	8 of 27*	29%
Worcestershire	6 of 21*	28%

Audiences

This section looks at overall visitor figures, visits by children and online engagement.

Total visit figures

Based on the responses received there was a total of 4,298,099 visits to museums in 2016/17. Visit figures are heavily influenced by a number of large museums with 100,000+ visitors per annum, with 9 museums accounting for 68% of all visits.

Museums were asked whether the visit figures they provided were actuals or estimates; all respondent museums answered this question, with 81% (56) providing actual figures and 18% (13) providing estimates.

Museum opening hours

Museums reported opening hours as follows:

- 88% (61) of museums reported opening hours which totalled 95,515 in 2016/17
- The least amount of hours a museum opened in 2016/17 was 58 hours
- The most amount of hours a museum opened in 2016/17 was 7,080

Figure 5: Visit figures by museum size

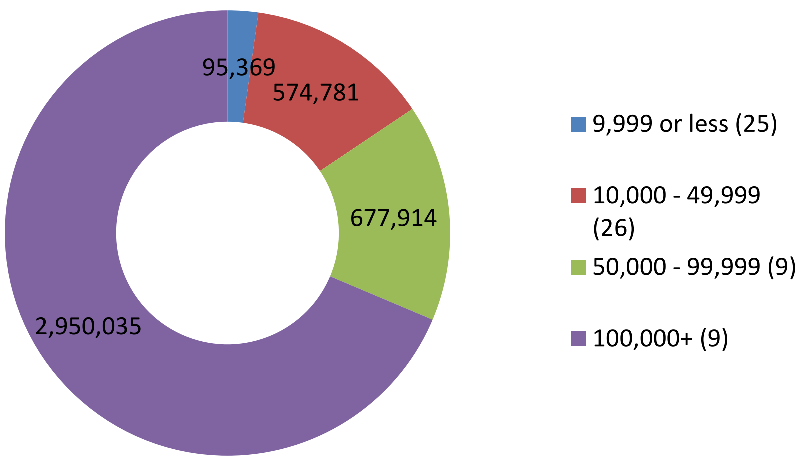
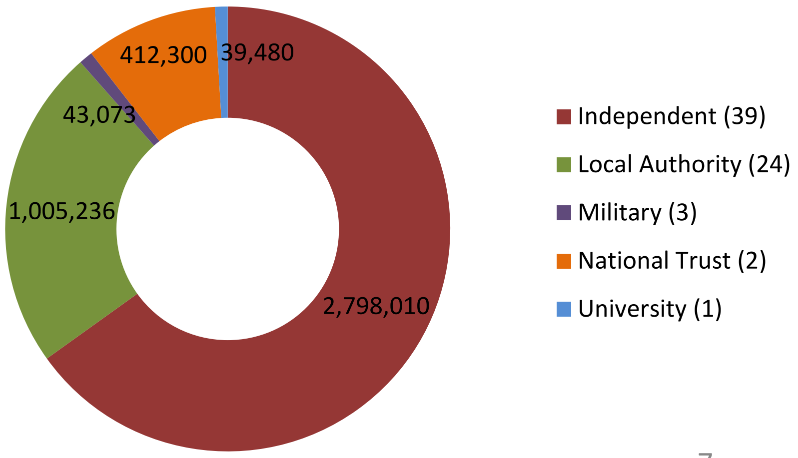


Figure 6: Visit figures by museum type



Visit figures by sub-region

Figure 7 details the breakdown of visits per sub-region. Warwickshire received the highest number of visitors in 2016/17 by over 140,000. This is because one museum organisation received the highest number of visitors in the West Midlands in 2016/17 (832,242) and is ranked within the top 40 most visited paid for attractions in the UK. Herefordshire received the fewest number of visitors but, although it is geographically a sizeable county, it is sparsely populated (Herefordshire has the fourth smallest population in England) with a total of 12 Accredited museums, 7 of whom provided visit figures as part of their response to this survey.

Visits by children

The survey asked museums to provide a breakdown of visits into adults and children (under 16). 73% (51) of respondents provided this information.

There were a reported 747,896 visits by children to museums in 2016/17. Based on these responses, children accounted for 17% of all visits. Museums with 10,000 – 49,999 visits per annum reported the highest percentage of visits by children in the West Midlands, whilst museums with 9,999 or less visits per annum reported the lowest.

Figure 7: Visit figures by sub-region

Sub-region	Total visit figures	Percentage of regional visit figures
Birmingham	928,828	21%
Black Country	559,942	13%
Herefordshire	126,486	3%
Shropshire	590,447	13%
Staffordshire	762,135	17%
Warwickshire	1,069,597	24%
Worcestershire	832,242	6%

Figure 8: Child visits by museum size

Museum size	Total visits by children	Sample	Percentage of total visit figures by size
9,999 or less	13,219	18 of 25	13%
10,000 – 49,000	132,344	20 of 26	23%
50,000 – 99,999	142,643	7 of 9	21%
100,000+	459,690	6 of 9	15%

Highlights

Lapworth Museum of Geology, Birmingham

The Lapworth Museum of Geology at the University of Birmingham re-opened its doors in June 2016 following a HLF funded £2.7 million redevelopment project. Since then visitors have been able to enjoy a state-of-the-art museum with new interactive displays and innovative interpretation showcasing Lapworth's exceptional collection of minerals, rocks and fossils.

The 18-month project has helped increase visitor numbers and has raised the profile of the museum enabling new cultural partnerships to develop, including hosting 'Raising Horizons', a touring exhibition of photographic works by Leonora Saunders in partnership with Trowelblazers, which examines women's history in the fields of archaeology, palaeontology and geology.

The museum was recognised for its redevelopment work and was shortlisted as a finalist in the Arts Fund's 'Museum of the Year 2017' awards.

Economic impact of visits

Museums make an important contribution to the regional economy, generating a range of economic benefits, particularly helping to attract tourism. In 2017 fifteen of the top 20 most visited free attractions in the West Midlands were museums and historic properties according to Visit England's *Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions.* Twelve of the fifteen top 20 visitor attractions are Accredited Museums.

The Association of Independent Museums (AIM) has published an Economic Impact Toolkit, which was developed by consultants DC Research, to help museums express the gross impact of visits to their museum in terms of economic value. This toolkit can be used by individual museums but can also help provide an idea of this economic value at an aggregate level.

Using this toolkit the gross visitor impact was £32,746,606 in the West Midlands Economy based on the visit data provided by museums:

- There was a reported £10,853,773 in 'local' visitor spend in 2016/17
- There was a reported £321,892,832 in 'day' visitor spend in 2016/17

Economic impact calculation

- This calculation takes the number of adult visits to a museum, establishes the proportion of local and day visits and multiplies these by average visitor spend assumptions developed by DC Research from regional and national tourism datasets.
- Total adult visits is estimated to be 2,599,087, based on the adult/child ratio of 76/24 for small museums; 56/44 for medium; and 61/39 for large. For this purpose museums with 100,000+ visitors are classed as 'Large'
- Actual ratios for local, and day visits were not available from museums so the average ratios developed by DC Research have been used. No data for overnight visits was available so visits have been divided into 'local' and 'day' visits only. This means that the overall economic value of visits is likely to be higher due to the higher levels of visitor spend associated with overnight visits.

Figure 9: AIM Economic Impact Toolkit assumed 'Local' and 'Day' visitor spend by sub-region

Sub-region	'Local' visitor assumed spend	'Day' visitor assumed spend
Birmingham	£14.40	£28.80
Black Country	£14.40	£28.80
Herefordshire	£13.23	£26.45
Shropshire	£15.70	£31.41
Staffordshire	£17.00	£34.00
Warwickshire	£13.16	£26.31
Worcestershire	£16.12	£32.25

Online engagement

Advances in digital technology in recent years offer museums great opportunities for potential new forms of engagement beyond the physical visit. This survey asked museums about their online and social media presence.

Websites

The survey asked museums if they had their own website; 75% (52) of respondent museums said that they did. 13% (9) of museums reported that they did not have their own website although 1% (1) museum is represented online via it's local authority's website.

Museums were also asked to provide data on the number of unique visits to their websites; 47% (33) of respondents to this section of the survey provided this data and reported an estimated total of 3,699,405 unique visits in 2016/17.

Birmingham Museums Trust, Wolverhampton Arts and Culture , Sandwell MBC, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and Shakespeare Birthplace Trust provided service-wide responses to this section of the survey.

Social media

Museums were asked to provide information on whether they used social media to engage with audiences and the number of subscribers or followers that they had across their social media platforms.

92% (64) of museums stated that they did use social media to engage with audiences, with platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram being cited, and an estimated 745,865 subscribers or followers.

The 2016 Visit England *Visitor Attraction Trends in England* report showed that Facebook and Twitter continue to be the two main social media platforms, with 82% of attractions using Facebook and 68% using Twitter.

4% (3) of museums stated that they did not use social media; 2 of these museums did, however, report that they had their own website, although the third museum reports that it has neither social media presence or its own webpage.

Highlights

Newman Brothers at the Coffin Works, Birmingham

This year, Newman Brother’s Coffin Works created a new tour of its factory for visitors on the autistic spectrum. The tours, which were the idea of volunteer Adam Sutcliffe-Brown, were developed with support from museum staff using his own knowledge and experience of autism. The Relaxed Tours are planned for smaller groups of visitors and have also been made suitable for people with a learning disability or sensory and communications disorder.

Specially trained tour guides use Picture Exchange Communication Systems to help communicate with everyone on the tour, which run at the end of each day to enable flexibility and to suit participant’s needs.

The tours are planned with less background noise and make machinery demonstration an optional rather than standard part of the tour, ensuring that visitors experience the museum in a more relaxed and peaceful environment. The museum also provides a quiet room where visitors can have some space if they need to during the tour. Following the success of the tours, Adam went on to win the Special Award for Young Volunteer, as well as the overall Excellence Award at the WMMD’s Volunteer Awards 2016.

Education, activities and events

Learning and education are important functions of all museums. 'Advancement of education' is one of the main purposes of museums established as charities.

Learning opportunities are not just provided onsite at museums. Figure 10 details the number of educational outreach/off-site sessions delivered by museums in 2016/17 along with the number of participants engaged.

Museums in the West Midlands engaged with an estimated 2,489 schools and educational organisations in 2016/17.

73% (51) of respondents provided information on the number of on-site educational sessions, and 72% (50) provided information on on-site activities and events. However, it is worth noting that existing recording varied between capturing participants and events as not all museums capture both.

Figure 10: Educational sessions in the West Midlands

	Totals	Sample
No. of on-site sessions in the WM	6,727	51 of 69
No. of participants to on-site sessions	353,500	52 of 69
No. of off-site sessions in the WM	552	19 of 69
No. of participants to off-site sessions	59,531	21 of 69

Figure 11: Activities and events in the West Midlands

	Totals	Sample
No. of on-site activities and events in WM	7,948	50 of 69
No. of participants to on-site activities and events	320,446	48 of 69
No. of off-site activities and events in WM	1,018	28 of 69
No. of participants to off-site activities and events	38,413	24 of 69

Financial operations

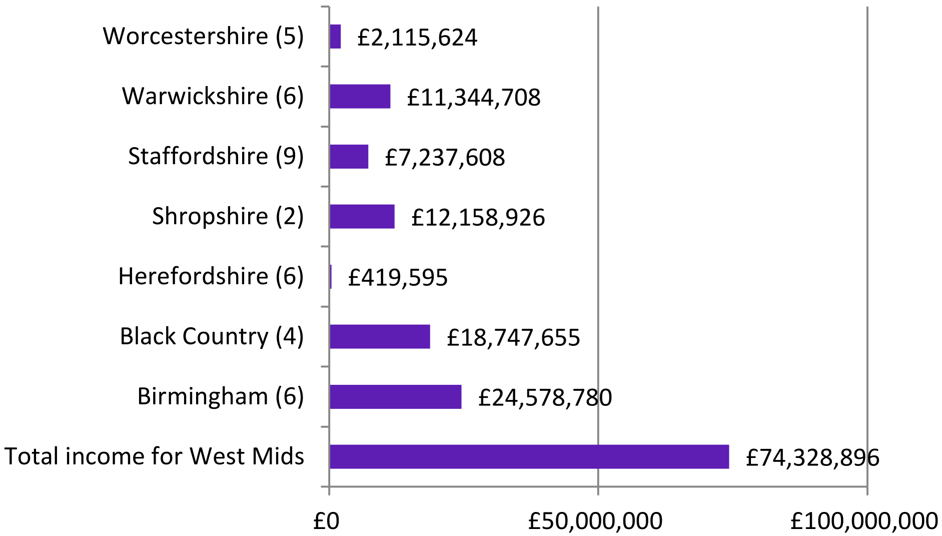
Museums were asked to provide a range of financial information covering sources of income, overall expenditure and expenditure on staff. This information was provided in varying degrees of completeness and there was some variation on the financial periods that museums provided data for – for example, 11% (8) of respondents stated that their financial year runs the calendar year, whilst 10% (7) operate under different financial terms such as the academic year, 1 November – 31 October, to name but two. Therefore the data presented here should be considered a guide, rather than being representative of a specific financial period.

Income

The total income generated and received by museums was £74,328,896, which breaks down as follows:

- £19,869,482 in earned income (including admissions, retail, catering, events, hospitality, educational and other earned income from trading, e.g. property rental)
- £15,508,412 received in regular public funding (including ACE MPM/National Portfolio funding)
- £3,478,392 received in grant funding
- £1,163,465 received in contributed income (including all money received in donations, friends members/schemes, any sponsorship income, corporate membership, or other non-earned income)

Figure 12: Total income by sub-region



55% (38) of respondent museum provided information on their income in 2016/17. Figure 12 offers a breakdown of the total income of sources (as listed on the left of this page) by sub-region . Breakdown by museum type is as follows:

- £4,339,337 generated by museums with 9,999 or less visits per annum (sample of 15)
- £3,506,413 generated by museums with 10,00 0 – 49,999 visits per annum (12)
- £15,454,084 generated by museums with 50,000 – 99,999 visits per annum (6)
- £53,243,062 generated by museums with 100,000+ visits per annum (6)

Admission charges

Museums were asked whether they charged for admission:

- 97% (67) of museums responded to this question
- 42% (29) reported that they did charge for admission in 2016/17
- 50% (35) offered free entry all year round
- 4% (3) said that they charged seasonally/for some exhibitions

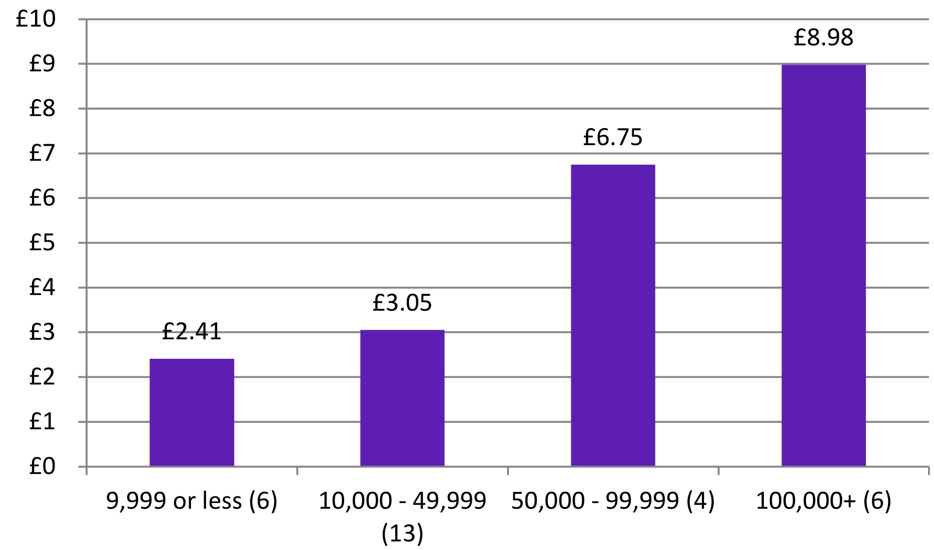
There was a reported £4,871,933 generated in admissions income, based on the reporting's of 26% (18) of museums who reported that they charge for admission or charge for some exhibitions/seasonally.

The admission charge for an adult ticket ranged between £2 and £25; the admission charge for a child ticket ranged between £0.50 and £15.

The figure on the right shows the average admission charges for museum by size. 46% (32) of museums provided information on their adult admission charges, and 42% (29) provided information on admission charges for children.

Figure 13: Average adult admission charges by museum size

Figure 14: Average child admission charges by museum size



Retail income

Retail is an key source of income for many museums. 72% (50) of the respondent museums in the West Midlands have a shop or a retail space. The reported total retail income for 2016/17 was £1,081,618 based on the response of 49% (34) of museums who reported on their retail revenue.

To understand the effectiveness of their retail offer, museums can look to their retail spend per head figures, and the aforementioned 49% provided sufficient detail for this to be measured. The table below show the average spend per head by museum size and charging model.

The shop at Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Shropshire

Figure 15: Average retail spend per head by museum size and charging model

	Average	Lowest	Highest	Sample
9,999 or less	£0.95	£0.05	£4.47	12
10,000 – 49,000	£0.62	£0.02	£1.45	10
50,000 – 99,999	£0.92	£0.74	£1.11	2
100,000+	£0.50	£0.24	£0.76	3
Free admission	£0.40	£0.05	£1.74	15
Charged admission	£1.25	£0.20	£3.06	11

Donations

Financial donations play an important role in supporting museums fundraising activity. Although for many museums they account for a relatively small percentage of overall revenue the visibility of donation boxes can help reinforce the charitable nature of museums.

There are many variables in determining what a good level of donations is although the AIM *Guide on Donation Boxes* suggests that ‘organisations that have experimented with the position and communications around their donation boxes and measured performance were more likely to be reaping the higher returns’.

Museums were asked to provide information on their donations so that an average per head could be given. There was a 49% (34) response to this question asking for donation figures, with a reported total for donations at £689,358.

Similarly to retail, museums that charged admission show a higher per head income from donations than free entry museums, although this may not be reflective of other factors that may influence the level of donations. Museums who did not charge for admission have an average per head income of £0.37, based on a sample of 21; museums who did charge for admission have an average per head income of £0.99, based on a sample of 12.

Figure 16: Average spend donations per head by museum size and charging model

	Average	Lowest	Highest	Sample
9,999 or less	£0.92	£0.09	£7.11	13
10,000 – 49,000	£0.30	£0.01	£1.56	12
50,00 – 99,999	£0.98	£0.02	£2.85	3
100,000+	£0.24	£0.03	£0.72	5
Free admission	£0.37	£0.02	£1.56	21
Charged admission	£0.99	£0.07	£7.11	12

Highlights

Leominster Museum, Herefordshire

As part of a group of six small museums across England, Leominster Museum completed its 18-month partnership with the Creative Museums project in April 2017. Developed and run by Battersea Arts Centre, and funded by the Arts Council's Museum Resilience Fund, the museum participated in this programme of experimentation using a process called 'Scratch'.

The Scratch programme encourages cultural organisations to share their ideas with audiences at an early stage by asking for their suggestions and feedback, helping to shape ideas and inspire inclusivity and participation amongst the arts and its audiences.

Leominster Museum used the Scratch framework to explore new opportunities for more creative and innovative audience engagement, dynamic programming as well as fresh business prospects, and representatives from the museum were asked to speak at both the Creative Museums conference and the AIM conference about the success of the project.

Impact of spend on goods and services

Direct, indirect and induced impacts

Using the AIM Economic Impact Toolkit we can estimate the economic value of museum spend on goods and services.

- There was at least £17, 455,755 of direct, indirect and induced impacts in the West Midlands as a result of spending on goods and services by museums.

This calculation is based on museum expenditure figures, excluding staff spend, from 40% (28) of respondent museums and takes into account 'leakage', 'displacement', 'deadweight' and multiplier factors using estimates developed by DC Research.

- **Deadweight** – value or impact that would have occurred anyway.
- **Displacement** – the proportion of museum value or impact accounted for by reduced value or impact elsewhere in the local area.
- **Leakage** – the proportion of value or impact that benefit those outside the museum's local area.

Capital investment

Capital investment is important in enabling museums to improve or expand their business in order to ensure that they can provide engaging spaces for audiences and respond to changing visitor demographics and expectations.

While you would not expect capital investment to be consistent year on year it can provide a useful indicator of the long term strategic investment in the sector.

This year 23% (16) of museums specified that they had received capital investment in 2016/17, totalling £2,122,835.

Expenditure and staff costs

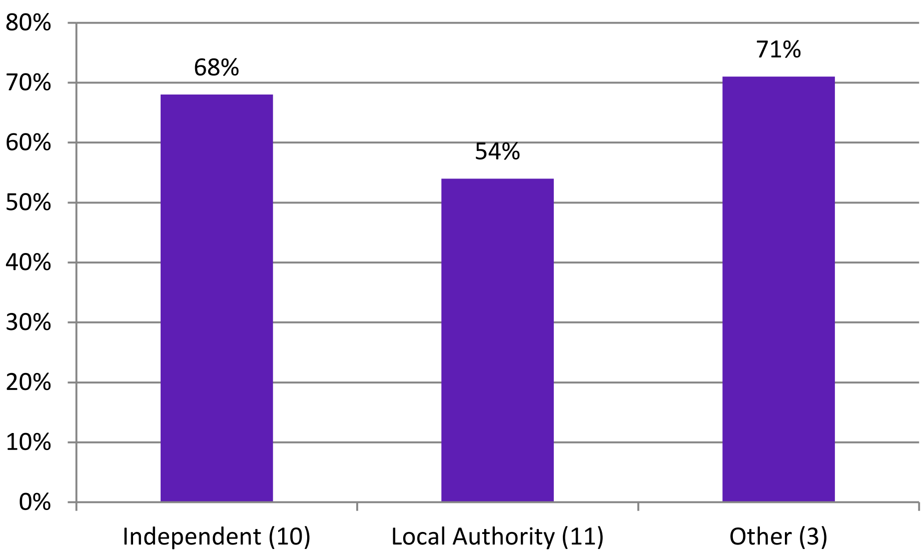
34% (24) of responses were received from museums and museums services that employ staff and provided both total expenditure and expenditure on staff costs. On average, spending on staff accounted for 62% of total expenditure, which breaks down as follows:

- 14% (10) of museums spent between 30 % - 50% of annual expenditure on staff costs.
- 13% (9) of museums spent between 51% - 70%.
- 5% (4) of museums spent between 71% - 100%.

The most notable finding is that staff costs make up a higher percentage of costs for independent museums than they do for local authority museums. In comparison to other regions, the West Midlands is unusual in this; for example, in the North East's Annual Survey of Museums 2015/16 and also in the following years' 2016/17 survey the local authority museums had significantly higher percentages on costs than the independent museums who provided responses. This was also the case in SHARE Museums East Annual Survey of Museums 2016/17.

However, it is worth noting that local authority museums may not have included staff costs that are related to services provided centrally such as finance, HR, legal and IT support. Therefore the real cost of staffing as a percentage of total expenditure is likely to be higher for those museums.

Figure 17: Average percentage on staff costs by museum type



'Other ' in the chart above includes Military, National Trust and University, with one museum out of the sample reporting that they spent 100% of their expenditure on staff costs in 2016/17.

Workforce

Paid staff

Museums were asked to provide information on both the total head count of staff employed by the museum at its peak in the year and the number of Full Time Equivalents (FTE). A sample of 59% (41) of museums provided data on both these questions have been included within the findings detailed below:

- Museums employed 1678 paid staff
- Museums employed 916 FTEs
- 82% (34) of the sample museums reported actual figures for paid staff, whilst the remaining 17% (7) reported that their figures were estimates
- 48% (41) of the sample museums employ between 1 – 15 members of staff, based on figures provided for total head count
- 26% (11) reported that they employed between 16 – 35 members of staff
- 9% (4) reported that they employed between 36 – 60 members of staff
- 12% (5) reported that they employed over 100 members of staff, with the highest figure being 282
- One of the sample museums reported that they employed 1 member of staff

Employment impacts

Using the AIM Economic Impact Toolkit we can estimate the value of museum employees to the West Midlands regional economy:

- These sample museums created 1,319 full time equivalent direct, indirect and induced jobs across the region

This calculation is based on FTE employment data, taking into account ‘leakage’ (those that do not live locally), ‘displacement ’, ‘deadweight’ and multiplier factors using estimates developed by DC Research.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of the museum workforce; their involvement makes a huge difference to museums and encompasses everything from enhancing the visitor experience, caring for and documenting the collections, business planning and managing finance. Many museums also rely on voluntary trustees to help guide the governance of a museum and ensure they are sustainable in challenging times.

A sample was taken from the 76% (53) of museums who provided data on volunteer workforce, with their outcomes detailed below:

- Museums reported a total of 4,519 volunteers
- This ranged from 2 to 928 volunteers per museum
- 11% (8) of respondent museums reported that they are entirely volunteer run
- The total number of volunteer hours recorded was 266,521
- This is an average of 5,922 volunteer hours per museums per year
- 43% (23) of the sample museums reported actual figures, whilst 56% (30) reported that their figures were estimates
- It could be assumed that the higher proportion of estimated figures relates to the question on volunteer hours, which may be difficult for museums to accurately record

Equality, diversity and inclusion

West Midlands Museum Development recognised equality, diversity and inclusion as a priority mission in 2016/17. They have been supporting museums in the region to embed it into organisational practices and helping them understand what equality, diversity and inclusion means within the museums sector. You can read more about WMMD's work on this on page 26 of this report.

In the survey, museums were asked additional questions about which of the nine protected characteristics they monitored and collected data on. They were also asked to provide percentage breakdowns for gender, age and disability amongst their staff, volunteers and visitors, as well as provide details on their Equality and Diversity Action Plans:

- 56% (39) of respondents reported that their museum did have an Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- 30% (21) reported that their museum did not have an action plan.
- 13% (9) did not provide an answer to the question or stated that they did not know
- Out of the 56% (39), 33% (19) of museums had last reviewed their action plan between 2014 – 2017
- 7% (4) reported that their action plan was reviewed annually or as an ongoing process
- 1% (1) said that their action plan was in development
- The remaining 26% (15) did not provide an answer

Museums were asked how they worked to support inclusive practices within their organisations, below is a selection of such examples:

'We ensure all staff and volunteers receive 'access training' which focuses on disability awareness, including awareness around everything from visual impairment, hearing loss, autism and dementia. This ensures the visitors experience for all people is as inclusive as possible.'

'To eliminate barriers […] we will ensure we maintain buildings and facilities that are as physically accessible as possible […] We aim to provide information and services to meet the needs of a wide range of learning styles […] [and] aim to ensure people with learning difficulties can engage with and enjoy our collections and services […] We aim to provide excellent standards of customer service and ensure all visitors feel welcome and comfortable.'

'We have visited a number of local community centres to discuss with their users what barriers there are to them visiting our museums […] Through these visits we have also expanded our Community Panel […] Our Learning team and our volunteering teams have worked with a wide range of groups including home educated, Asperger's Group, care homes, Polish groups […] We have also made good progress with our Access Guides and these have now been updated for all sites and are widely used by visitors with positive feedback.'

The 19% (11) of local authority museums who responded to this question stated that they were guided by their council's internal policies and procedures.

Data collection

Museums were asked to provide information on what data they collected regarding the nine protected characteristics in relation to their paid staff, volunteers and visitors. The table below details the percentage of museums who do collect data on the nine characteristics out of the 49% (69) of museums in the West Midlands who responded to this survey. These percentages must be taken as a guide and some caution applied, particularly with the high percentages relating to the question 'None of the above'. It is the case that some museums answered 'Yes' to this question as well as answering 'Yes' to the question on age or disability, for example. It is possible that some respondents were using this last box to indicate that they only collect data on some of the protected characteristics, not all of them. In this section overall, it is important to note that not all respondents answered all questions, nor were questions answered consistently.

Figure 18: Percentage breakdown of data collection on protected characteristics.

	Paid Staff	Volunteers	Visitors
Sex	33% (23)	26% (18)	13% (9)
Religion and belief	17% (12)	7% (5)	2% (2)
Race	24% (17)	13% (9)	13% (9)
Sexual orientation	18% (13)	7% (5)	1% (1)
Age	26% (23)	20% (14)	24% (17)
Marriage and civil partnership	23% (16)	4% (3)	0% (0)
Pregnancy and maternity	24% (17)	5% (4)	0% (0)
Disability	30% (21)	24% (17)	14% (10)
Gender reassignment	13% (9)	4% (3)	1% (1)
None of the above	47% (33)	59% (41)	57% (40)

Gender, age and disability

A further percentage breakdown for gender, age and disability was asked of museums with the outcomes detailed as averages , with the sample number in brackets, in figures 19, 20 and 21. The last column in each, 'Not collected', is an actual percentage based on the 49% (69) respondent museums.

Figure 19: Average percentage breakdown of gender for paid staff, volunteers and visitors

	Female	Male	Gender Unknown	Data not collected
Paid staff	70% (30)	31% (25)	1% (1)	39% (27)
Volunteers	50% (25)	40% (25)	14% (2)	49% (34)
Visitors	55% (10)	43% (10)	6% (1)	73% (59)

Figure 20: Average percentage breakdown of age for paid staff, volunteers and visitors

	25 and under	25 - 44	45 – 64	65+	Age Unknown	Data not collected
Paid staff	20% (12)	43% (20)	42% (20)	13% (10)	50% (2)	47% (33)
Volunteers	14% (8)	11% (11)	23% (16)	54% (18)	100% (1)	53% (37)
Visitors	16% (8)	23% (7)	32% (9)	27% (8)	9% (2)	69% (48)

Figure 21: Average percentage breakdown of disability for paid staff, visitors and volunteers

	Consider themselves to have a disability	Consider themselves to be non-disabled	Unknown	Data not collected
Paid staff	12% (11)	93% (20)	63% (3)	46% (32)
Volunteers	13% (10)	85% (16)	100% (3)	57% (40)
Visitors	8% (5)	87% (3)	100% (2)	76% (53)

Equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring

Finally, museums were asked to provide information on their future plans for monitoring diversity in order to have data relating to the nine protected characteristics. Percentages in the table below are for those who answered ‘Yes’ to each of the nine questions out of the 49% (69) of West Midlands museums who responded to the survey.

Figure 22: Percentage breakdown for monitoring the nine protected characteristics

	Paid Staff	Volunteers	Visitors
Sex	31% (22)	36% (25)	27% (19)
Religion and belief	15% (11)	13% (9)	10% (7)
Race	27% (19)	30% (21)	28% (20)
Sexual orientation	18% (13)	15% (11)	7% (5)
Age	28% (20)	34% (24)	37% (26)
Marriage and civil partnership	17% (12)	14% (10)	4% (3)
Pregnancy and maternity	20% (14)	10% (7)	4% (3)
Disability	28% (20)	37% (26)	31% (22)
Gender reassignment	13% (9)	13% (9)	5% (4)
None of the above	49% (34)	50% (35)	46% (32)

Highlights

West Midlands Museum Development Diversity Champions

In response to Arts Council England’s ‘Creative Case for Diversity’, in 2016 West Midlands Museum Development developed a new approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, aiming to ensure that it is embedded within individual organisations.

The scheme, developed in partnership with Equality and Diversity UK, launched with a cohort of representatives from eight different museums.

The scheme is a unique way of mainstreaming the best practice and work that is already being achieved, with Diversity Champions becoming conduits for disseminating information and driving behavioural and cultural change in museums. The Champions received training, legal updates and met to share ideas and opportunities. The scheme was showcased at the WMMD annual conference in March 2017, with four of the Diversity Champions presenting alongside their mentor from Equality and Diversity UK.

Five of the original champions are now mentors to a cohort of six new Diversity Champions.

WMMD support

Museums were asked about support or advice they had received from West Midlands Museum Development, here is a sample of what they said:

'We have had outstanding support from WMMD again this year, through the EDI initiative, the small grants that helped us with our access videos and the blog project. Our sincerest thanks to everyone on the team for all the constructive new ideas and the hard work that makes it happen.'

Royal Birmingham Society of Arts, Birmingham

'The Almonry was fortunate to receive assistance through the Expert Eyes programme. This was a great opportunity for us to help explore and understand our archaeology collections better. It also helped us to forge a closer relationship with our regional museum which has led to new loans and the opportunity to explore new ways of working together.'

Almonry Museum and Heritage Centre, Worcestershire

Hugely helpful and positive. We have been funded with donation boxes which are all in place and we have received support with an Access Audit Report which we are acting on.'

Weston Park Foundation, Staffordshire

'We have been supported through advice from different officers and also involvement in projects. Our relationship with WMMD is positive and supportive.'

Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, Warwickshire

'[Our MDO] has been a great help to us. I also speak to a number of people at WMMD and everyone is fully supportive when we call for advice.'

Lichfield Museum at St. Mary's in the Market Square, Staffordshire

'Some excellent training has been offered – we have been very glad to have taken up the Access Audit and have already made changes in line with the recommendations.'

Hereford Cider Museum Trust, Herefordshire

'The museum has been supported by [our MDO] throughout the 'Ready to Borrow' bid period which was successful early in 2017. [She] also drew our attention to appropriate training courses, seminars and useful information to our particular circumstances.'

The Lace Guild Museum, Black Country

'WMMD helpfully grant aided a project for the Museum to extend its audience through new technology.'

Chasewater Railway Museum, Staffordshire

'We got involved in the Mystery Shopper Programme, which was a very positive experience. We are now keeping an eye on the training available, for courses which would benefit us.'

Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre, Worcestershire

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With thanks to the following museums for participating

Birmingham
Aston Hall
Birmingham Back to Backs
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
Blakesley Hall
Lapworth Museum of Geology
Museum Collections Centre
Museum of the Jewellery Quarter
Newman Brothers at the Coffin Works
Royal Birmingham Society of Arts
Sarehole Mill
Selly Manor Museum
Soho House Museum
The Pen Museum
Think Tank, Birmingham Science Museum
Winterbourne House and Garden

Black Country
Bantock House
Bilston Gallery
Black Country Living Museums
Red House Glass Cone
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
The Lace Guild Museum
Wolverhampton Museum and Art Gallery

Herefordshire
Berrington Hall
Butcher Row House Museums
Hereford Cider Museum Trust
Herefordshire Light Infantry Regimental Museum
Kington Museum
Leominster Museum
Waterworks Museum, Hereford

Shropshire
Acton Scott Historic Working Farm
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Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
Ludlow Museum Resource Centre
Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery
Shropshire Regimental Museum
Whitchurch Heritage Centre

Staffordshire
Ancient High House
Brampton Museum
Chasewater Railway Museum
Claymills Victorian Pumping Station
Erasmus Darwin House
Etruria Industrial Museum
Ford Green Hall Museum
Gladstone Pottery Museum
Izaak Walton's Cottage
Museum of Cannock Chase
Potteries Museum and Galleries
Raven Mason Collection at Keele University
Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum
St. Mary's in the Market Square
Stafford Castle and Visitor Centre
Staffordshire County Museum Service
Staffordshire Yeomanry Museum
The Staffordshire Regimental Museum
Weston Park Foundation

Warwickshire
Alcester Heritage Trust
British Motor Museum
Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery
Royal Regiment of Fusiliers (Royal Warwickshire)
Rugby Art Gallery and Museum
Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
Warwickshire Museum
Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum

Worcestershire
Almonry Museum and Tourist Information Centre
Avoncroft Museum of Historic Building
Bewdley Museum
Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre
Malvern Museum of Local History
Transport Museum, Wythall

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