

SOMERSET ANNUAL

OUTCOMES REPORT 2017 - 18



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Front Page Image: Visitors at the Museum of Somerset – summer 2018

Section 1. Introduction

1.1 Content of the Report

This report covers the South West Heritage Trust's period of operation from 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018.

The report comprises:

- A statement of our key performance figures achieved during the year.
- A narrative report detailing the activities of the Trust, focusing on Somerset and including organisational achievements.
- Extracts from the Business Plan outlining proposed actions in support of the Agreed Activities.
- The Trust-wide Exhibition Plan for the coming year.
- A summary of how the Trust is undertaking the Agreed Activities.
- A summary of qualitative feedback.
- A summary of the key meetings undertaken during the year.
- A financial summary of the core activities of the Trust.

1.2 Context

Patrons

The Trust has as Patrons three people who are prominent in the communities of Somerset and Devon:

- Mrs Annie Maw, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset
- Mr David Fursdon, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Devon
- Lady Elizabeth Gass, DCVO

The South West Heritage Trust

The South West Heritage Trust (the Trust) vested on 1 November 2014 as an independent company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The company is governed by its memorandum and articles of association. Its charitable objects are set out in the articles of association as follows:

- the advancement of education;
- the promotion of arts, heritage, culture and science including by the preservation and safeguarding of such land, buildings, structures, archaeology, objects, records or books as may be of historic or educational interest or significance; and
- to provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, financial hardship or social circumstances with the object of improving their conditions of life.

The Trust has the heritage service responsibilities previously carried out by Devon County Council (comprising the Archives and Local Studies Services) and Somerset County Council (comprising the Archives and Local Studies, Museums and Historic Environment Services).

A subsidiary trading company, South West Heritage Trust Trading Company Ltd (registered company number 09222720), was also formed on 1 November 2014.

In its early years the Trust has sought to establish itself as an innovative and sustainable independent organisation with greater entrepreneurial and commercial freedom to develop services and partnerships.

The legal agreements which underpin the operation of the Trust are the Transfer Agreements, Grant Agreements and Collections Management Agreements between Devon County Council (DCC), Somerset County Council (SCC) and the Trust. The Trust demonstrates its independence in line with Charity Commission guidance as set out in RR7.

Strategic Aims

In 2017, the Trustees and Senior Management Team developed a new five-year business plan to set the strategic direction of the Trust to 2022. The plan identifies five strategic ambitions to shape the work of the Trust. The Trust will be:

Resilient – By providing strong and responsible leadership we will champion heritage in Somerset and Devon, contributing to the prosperity of the region. We will seek new sources of funding and use digital means to develop and improve our services. We will stand up for the heritage of Somerset and Devon.

Enterprising – We will use our sites, collections and resources in new ways, working with communities, businesses, charities and public sector partners on innovative projects. Use of new technology will be at the heart of what we do, through initiatives including digital preservation for the long-term care of digital archives.

Collaborative – We will work in partnership with many stakeholders to expand access to heritage through new exhibitions and by bringing collections to communities. We want to work with cultural partners locally, regionally and nationally to ensure that heritage and the arts make their full contribution to wellbeing, prosperity and community identity.

Inclusive – We will reach more people through temporary and touring exhibitions, pop-up events, open days and outreach. We will work with them to understand what they want and to help them engage with a wide range of heritage stories and experiences. We will communicate in clear and accessible ways.

Inspiring – We will care for, record and interpret our collections so that they are available to inspire people. Through the passion and expertise of our staff and volunteers we will tell heritage stories in ways that are challenging, engaging and enriching. We will strengthen and extend our work with school-age children and families to capture their imaginations and provide unforgettable experiences.

Section 2. Our performance in numbers

Key Performance Indicators 2017 to 2018			
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	Variance
Visitors to our sites	106,149	107,375	1.2%
Children attending formal learning sessions	9,879	14,495	46.7%
Formal learning sessions	382	544	42.4%
People at informal learning sessions	7,753	11,157	43.9%
Informal learning sessions	91	149	63.7%
Visitors to our websites	699,115	848,244	21.3%
Days of volunteer time	4,000	4,214	5.4%
Volunteer hours	30,265	31,190	3.1%
Heritage events held	494	462	-6.5%
People attending our heritage events	17,725	15,788	-10.9%
Cubic metres of archives accessioned	18	19	5.6%
Archive documents repaired	1,377	2,817	104.6%
Formal external requests for information	14,615	9,347	-36%
Service complaints received, satisfactorily dealt with	14		
Service complaints received, unsatisfactorily dealt with	2		
Combined social media review (out of 5)	4.66	4.6	-1.3%

Section 3. Somerset Annual Outcomes Report

1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018

3.1 Somerset Museums Service

Somerset Museums Service entered a new phase of leadership during the year. **Steve Minnitt** retired from the Trust as Head of Museums at the end of November 2017 following 43 years of service. A national recruitment campaign subsequently took place and Sam Astill became Steve's successor on 1 February 2018. Shortly after his appointment Sam was accepted on the nationally-recognised '**Museums and Resilient Leadership**' (MRL) course. MRL is a unique year-long continuous professional development programme which aims to help in creating resilient and entrepreneurial cultural leaders for the 21st Century.

The Somerset Museums Service was successful under the Arts Council England Scheme in its applications to achieve **Accreditation** for The Museum of Somerset, Somerset Military Museum and Somerset Rural Life Museum. The Accreditation Scheme sets out nationally-agreed standards and enables museums to assess their current performance as well as supporting them to plan and develop their services. Accreditation is a major achievement for the Trust and reflects the intensive work of the Museums Service team in preparing and submitting the applications.

Extensive work has been undertaken to shape a new approach to the collection, evaluation and use of **visitor data**. Working with the South West Museums Development Programme, visitor insight surveys were conducted at the Museum of Somerset and the Rural Life Museum in August and September to inform future strategy and programming. A successful funding bid is also supporting the installation of new technology to measure footfall and dwell times.

The Trust is among a small group of organisations nationally to have been selected for the British Museum's '**Museum Futures**' programme funded by the National Lottery. A trainee will be hosted for a year within the museum curatorial team.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/skills-sharing/museum_futures.aspx

The Trust is the host organisation for the delivery of the **Portable Antiquities Scheme** in the counties of Somerset, Dorset and Devon. This is among the largest Scheme areas in the country and is covered by the equivalent of three officers. Our delivery partners are South Somerset District Council, Dorset County Council, Exeter City Council and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter. Among the most notable finds recorded during the year was a remarkable Roman gold ring, found in South Somerset by a metal detectorist. The ring will be the subject of a coroner's inquest. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-45028623>

The exhibition '**MUSE: Makers in Museums**' opened on 11 November. It celebrated the work of eight artists based in community museums in Somerset and Devon and was generously funded by Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The exhibition was the culmination of the MUSE project which took place in the previous year.

From June 2018 to March 2020 the **Museums Development Officer** will be supporting delivery of a new initiative called **Rural Proofing**. Designed to help small volunteer-run museums to thrive in the current economic climate, Rural Proofing will offer museums in Somerset, Devon and Dorset training in financial resilience, fundraising, business planning, leadership, marketing and audience intelligence.

Since **Weston Museum** re-opened to the public in August 2016, the Trust has continued to provide curatorial support to enable its successful operation. Curators from the Trust assisted the museum staff to achieve full Accreditation under the Arts Council England Scheme in June 2018. Other activities included developing and installing the high-profile temporary exhibitions detailed in section 3.9. The Trust has regularly met representatives of Weston Town Council to discuss future plans and partnership.

Weston Museum was one beneficiary of funding secured by the Trust from Arts Council England through the **Ready to Borrow** scheme. The funding has provided specialist display cabinets and environmental monitoring equipment for use at each of the museums supported by the Trust.

3.2 The Museum of Somerset

The Museum of Somerset has had a busy and successful year, maintaining its strong appeal to visitors. Visitor numbers have remained consistent with previous years despite the declines reported by many visitor attractions across the south of England.

There were **73,434 visits** to the site during the year, a decrease of 6% against the previous year. A review of the previous three years shows the numbers in context:

November 2015 to October 2016: 72,085

November 2016 to October 2017: 78,322

November 2017 to October 2018: 73,434

Based on a major **visitor survey** which took place over the summer it is estimated that 47% of visitors are new to the museum. For a visitor attraction which has been open for nearly seven years this demonstrates very significant engagement with new audiences.

Visitor **reviews** are consistently in the highest range:

- Trip Advisor – average of 4.67 out of 5
- Facebook – average of 4.6 out of 5
- Google – average of 4.6 out of 5

The museum hosted several high-profile **temporary exhibitions** during the period under review:

- 'Colours of Exile: the Art of Hans Schwarz' opened on 21 October and comprised paintings generously loaned from a large number of private, local and national collections - <https://youtu.be/la6f2fyaoyl>.

- 'Henry VII: the First Royal Portrait' also opened on 21 October as part of the 'spotlight loans' series. The portrait was loaned by the National Portrait Gallery. On 14 November one of the best-attended talks yet held at the Museum of Somerset told the story of Henry VII, Perkin Warbeck and their association with Taunton Castle.
- 'The World Before Yesterday: the Photography of Stanley Kenyon' opened on 17 February and highlighted the remarkable and wide-ranging collection created by a Wellington photographer. The collection was rescued from destruction by the Trust and fully digitised.
- The Trust's family-focused charged exhibition, 'Michael Morpurgo: A Lifetime in Stories', opened on 17 March and was very well received.
- The summer exhibition, 'From Spinning Tops to Space Hoppers', opened on 28 July. It focused on childhood in Somerset over the last 150 years and was especially popular because of its strong hands-on emphasis.

Other **events** at the Museum of Somerset included Dino Day on 22 October. A total of 1,350 people visited on what was an exceptionally busy and popular occasion. There were many first-time visitors.

Key statistics:

- 72** regular volunteers
- 8,025** volunteer hours provided (1,084 working days)
- 103,758** website visits
- 73,434** visits

3.3 Somerset Rural Life Museum

The period from November 2017 to October 2018 was the museum's first full year of operation and visitor numbers grew steadily. Feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive and the income generated is the highest ever achieved at the site.

A targeted **marketing** campaign is ongoing to increase visits from local people and tourists. Measures have been implemented to increase the physical visibility of the site and more are planned.

There have been positive discussions with **Glastonbury Abbey** about joint marketing and cross-promotional opportunities. More than 80% of Glastonbury Abbey's paying visitors are non-local and a principal aim for the Rural Life Museum is to increase the number of visits by seasonal tourists in order to build sustainability. The museum is also seeking to build its family audience.

A significant number of **reviews** of the museum are now available and the consensus is a very positive one. A summary of on-line reviews is as follows:

- TripAdvisor - 92 reviews, averaging 4.5 out of 5
- Facebook - 19 reviews, averaging 4.8 out of 5

- Google - 25 reviews, averaging 4.4 out of 5

Somerset Rural Life Museum received its first **TripAdvisor** Certificate of Excellence in May.

A small number of **complaints** have been received since the museum re-opened. They have related to subjects including Gift Aid, signage, the lighting scheme in the Abbey Barn and customer care in the café. Admission charging has remained controversial with some people from the Glastonbury area.

Temporary exhibitions at the site have enhanced the museum and served as attractions in their own right:

- The inaugural temporary exhibition, 'FARM', curated by Kate Lynch, was very popular selling exhibition.
- 'Echoes of War: the Somerset Countryside 1914–1918' opened on 16 December and drew on both the museum and archive collections cared for by the Trust.
- 'Processions' opened on 16 June and marked the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918. The Act gave the first British women the right to vote. The exhibition displayed a rare original suffrage banner created by the Weston-super-Mare branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies alongside a contemporary banner created by students from Strode College under the guidance of the artist Dorcas Casey. The new banner was one of many which were commissioned to form part of the national PROCESSIONS mass participation artwork.
- 'The Art of Self Expression', was an exhibition which explored the history of facial hair and tattoos. It opened on 8 September and made use both of the Mapstone Gallery and the Abbey Barn.

Other activity at the museum included completion of the 'Believing' and 'Creating' galleries, a busy family-focused summer programme and an attendance of more than 700 for Heritage Open Day on 8 September.

In September the museum received the **William Stansell Historic Building Award** for 2018 from Somerset Building Preservation Trust. The award praised 'a dramatic transformation, successfully integrating several disparate elements with clarity, and with excellent materials and workmanship.' It added that 'new spaces and the new building are beautifully designed and detailed to enhance the setting of the barn where the repairs and lighting scheme are exemplary.'

The museum was also named Best Educational Building in the Local Authority Building Control Awards.

Key statistics:

- 14** regular volunteers
- 1,172** volunteer hours provided (158 working days)
- 33,751** website visits
- 15,895** visits

3.4 Brick and Tile Museum

The **partnership** with Discovery (Somerset Adult Learning Disability Services) has continued and both organisations are strongly committed to their involvement with the site. Work is now starting to develop a project related to the museum and Bridgwater's industrial heritage.

Meetings have taken place separately with **Arts Council England** and the Heritage Lottery Fund to share the vision for the site and its importance for Bridgwater and its communities. Three meetings took place during May and June with Somerset Libraries Service in connection with proposals for Bridgwater Library and potential heritage components.

The **Learning** Team have continued to provide events at the Brick and Tile Museum and visitors are positive and engaged with the site.

Key statistics:

- 6 regular volunteers
- 1,867 volunteer hours provided (252 working days)
- 658 visits

3.5 Somerset Archives and Local Studies

The Somerset Archives and Local Studies Service continued to provide **public access** to the Somerset archive collections at the Somerset Heritage Centre.

Both Somerset and Devon Archives Services have been involved with a major project to implement a **digital preservation** solution for archives that are received in digital form. The new system, called Archivematica and hosted by Arkivum, will enable the Trust to care for such archives long-term and make them available to researchers. A detailed survey of all existing electronic archives has been undertaken in preparation for the new system. All electronic collections at the Somerset Heritage Centre, including the Somerset Studies Library, have been surveyed. The project marks a significant development and paves the way for the Trust to be able to accept digital archives more easily in future.

The Trust has also been working with the developer Metadatis on a new **collections management system** for the archive services in Somerset and Devon. This integrated system will manage cataloguing and accessions data relating to all archive collections cared for by the Trust and will have greatly enhanced functionality. Working directly with the developers is enabling us to create a system that closely meets our needs. It will be integrated with the digital preservation system to provide seamless management of digital archives and associated metadata.

To celebrate completion of the project to digitise and catalogue **Stanley Walter Kenyon's photographic collection**, a temporary exhibition was installed at the Museum of Somerset. Opening on 17 February 2018, the exhibition displayed highlights of the extensive photographic record captured by Kenyon and a short film to tell the story of the collection's preservation. A volunteer and stakeholder event to celebrate the completion of the project was held at Castle House on 20 April.

The **Somerset Studies Library** serves both customers and staff, and during the year a major focus has been on reorganising the library. Nearly 1,000 books were classified, labelled and evaluated for conservation or archival storage. The entire collection was re-ordered by subject and shelf markers were printed to ease the process of responding to enquiries and supporting research projects. Following the success of an event held at the Devon Heritage Centre in April, to raise awareness of local studies collections, a similar event was held at the Somerset Heritage Centre on 8 October.

A series of **events** was held in November at the Somerset Heritage Centre for the national Explore Your Archives campaign. The events included searchroom help sessions, a local studies day, tours behind the scenes and promotion on social media (<http://www.exploreyourarchive.org/category/south-west/>).

A Supporters' event called 'Explore Your Ancestors: How to Start' was held at the Somerset Heritage Centre on 4 December.

The annual Archives and Local Studies **closed period** took place at the end of January and allowed a great deal of collections-based work to be completed. The major focus was on the re-sorting and re-boxing of the Wyndham collection. The Wyndham collection is the largest private estate archive held at the Somerset Heritage Centre and is a foundation stone of West Country history. The Wyndham family settled near Williton in 1520 and acquired major estates in Somerset, Devon and Wiltshire. The archive contains material from the 12th century onwards and includes papers about the development of Watchet.

The pop-up **archive exhibition**, 'Cheese and Charabancs: Historic Holidays in Devon and Somerset', was featured in several venues in Devon and Somerset throughout the summer.

The partnership between the Trust and **Ancestry** has continued to operate very successfully. During the year, there have been more than 8 million on-line text and image views of Somerset archive data.

Key statistics:

- 48** regular volunteers
- 9,485** volunteer hours provided (1,281 working days)
- 67,229** website visits
- 593** accessions and new deposits received totalling 9.17 m³
- 4,018** searchroom visits
- 3,575** enquiries and research requests received

3.6 Historic Environment and Estates

The Trust estate of **landscape sites** totals more than 400 acres and is actively managed. At Charterhouse-on-Mendip scrub and some trees were removed from the Scheduled Ancient Monument to ensure that the earthworks are better protected. Measures have also been put in place to prevent further damage by unauthorised off-road vehicles. Discussions have taken place with the Mendip AONB team for a partnership agreement between the AONB

and the Trust concerning management of the Trust's sites at Charterhouse and at Deer Leap, Westbury-sub-Mendip. New **interpretation panels** have been prepared for installation on the Trust's heritage sites at Marston Magna and Nether Adber.

The Service won the contract for delivering a project called 'Valuing Environmental Capital and Services' within the **Blackdown Hills AONB**. The contract started on 28 March and lasted for 6 months.

Discussions have taken place with Taunton Deane Borough Council and Historic England concerning a strategy for bringing the prehistoric **hillfort at Norton Fitzwarren** fully into public stewardship.

A private foundation awarded £26,000 towards the cost of new learning facilities at the **Avalon Marshes Centre**. The result of a related bid for £87,000 was awaited during the period under review and was subsequently successful.

Having acted as archaeological advisers to the **Bridgwater Gateway project**, Trust staff were on duty at an exhibition held on 14 June to highlight the discoveries made. Excavations revealed the largest Bronze Age landscape yet investigated archaeologically in Somerset, including a settlement with four large ditched enclosures and a rare Bronze Age cemetery containing about 60 cremation burials.

Following successful completion of a phase 1 report for creating a museum and replica Romano-British villa on the **Hadspen** estate, the Trust secured a phase 2 contract to cover the implementation phase of the project. Recent work undertaken by the Trust has included research and advice concerning building materials and discussion with the appointed museum designers on storyline development.

In November the Heritage Lottery Fund gave outline approval to a bid for £1.9 m made to its Landscape Partnership funding stream. The bid has been led by the **Quantock Hills AONB Service** which has developed an ambitious scheme in partnership with the South West Heritage Trust, the Friends of Quantock and others. The scheme seeks to deliver a wide range of projects to provide resilience and protection for the Quantocks. The Trust, through the Historic Environment and Estates Service, will lead on heritage-related components. A detailed bid is due to be submitted in 2019.

The Service has worked closely with Historic England and Taunton Deane Borough Council concerning the seriously-deteriorating condition of **Tonedale Mill, Wellington**. The Borough Council has appointed a project officer to develop proposals for action.

Towards the end of the year, it was confirmed that the Trust had been successful in its bid to supply Historic Environment services to **Bath & North East Somerset Council**. A contract for the temporary supply of such services to South Somerset District Council is now also in operation.

Volunteers have continued to add tithe map data to the **Somerset Historic Environment Record** (<http://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/#>). During the course of nearly two years,

volunteers have mapped the locations of 69,000 fields in 132 parishes (a third of the total) and linked them to the information contained in the tithe apportionment books of c. 1840.

A guided walk around **Bridgwater's historic built environment** formed part of the Trust's contribution to Heritage Open Day on 8 September.

The first revision since 2012 of the **National Planning Policy Framework** was published by the government on 24 July. The revision responded to concerns expressed during consultation about provisions for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and reaffirmed the status and role of the Historic Environment Record.

Key statistics:

- 19** regular volunteers
- 2,838** volunteer hours provided (383 working days)
- 215,405** visits to the online Historic Environment Record
- 1,162** archaeological and conservation advice requests from local authorities
- 456** agri-environment scheme enquiries from Natural England

3.7 Learning

On 26 February a meeting took place with Sam Rowlands, Relationship Manager (Museums), Arts Council England (ACE), to discuss future co-operation. In the light of the discussions ACE asked the Trust to become a partner in its **Museums and Schools Programme** for 2018-20, to be funded by a grant to the Trust of £124,000 over two years. The Trust has now developed a programme, called 'Adventures in Time', which includes:

- Engaging schools (at ACE's request particularly schools in rurally-isolated West Somerset) with our exhibition programme through interactive workshops and activities
- Working with pupils to co-create exhibition content
- Creating bespoke programmes so SEN and disadvantaged pupils can better enjoy our museums
- Partnership with the British Museum and Somerset Art Works to improve learning materials
- Becoming an Arts Award Centre
- Creating new educational resources
- Providing continuing professional development for teachers

The **Adventures in Time project** is now well under way. Advice and guidance about how to maximise the opportunities presented by the funding and scheme support has been received from colleagues at SS Great Britain and the Real Ideas Organisation. Partnerships are being developed and a co-curation project has been undertaken with West Somerset College to create the 'Faces of Conflict' temporary exhibition.

In February we heard that a project bid for £9,200 to the Heritage Lottery Fund had been successful. The project focused on the importance of wartime agriculture and food production through researching and creating a **First World War** allotment garden in the grounds of Somerset Rural Life Museum. The project also enabled the creation of a range of learning resources for primary and secondary pupils and involved volunteers, museum visitors and a group of adults with learning disabilities.

A **Take One Project**, based on the Hinton House Hospital First World War autograph book, achieved the very successful participation of eight Somerset schools and several hundred pupils. Children's work arising from the project was the focus of a popular event at Somerset Rural Life Museum on 23–24 June.

Very successful **Takeover Days** were held at both Somerset Rural Life Museum and Somerset Heritage Centre in November when the Trust welcomed Year 5 pupils from St Benedict's School, Glastonbury, and Staplegrove Church School, Taunton. There was excellent feedback from the schools as well as coverage on the Museums+ Heritage Advisor website (<http://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/news/hello-can-i-help-staplegrove-church-school-takeover-somerset-heritage-centre/>).

Good progress was made during the year to develop and refresh the **loans** available for learning. An internally funded project improved the quality of loans by re-boxing and repair, creating teacher notes and introducing Trust branding.

The Learning Team, including freelance staff, visited Somerset Brick and Tile Museum on 27 February to understand the site better and to assess the further opportunities it represents for learning and engagement.

Work continued with **Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society** to scope a bid to HLF for opening up the keep gardens at Taunton Castle for learning activities. The bid, for £58,000, was subsequently successful.

The Learning Team continued to engage with **audiences of all ages**, including through regular toddler sessions at the Museum of Somerset and Somerset Rural Life Museum, holiday events at the museums, tailored sessions for specific groups and reminiscence sessions in care homes and day centres. Tours of the Somerset Heritage Centre continued to be popular and special tours were held as part of the annual Heritage Open Days programme.

Key statistics: **533** learning sessions were provided in Somerset for **14,361** school students

148 family learning events were held, attracting **11,148** people

3.8 Exhibitions, Events and Outreach

The Design Team of the Trust provided several complex temporary exhibitions during the year together with promotional materials. Support was also provided to other parts of the Trust to assist with outreach events and activities.

The Museum of Somerset

- *Michael Morpurgo: A Lifetime in Stories* was an exhibition provided by Seven Stories, the National Centre for Children's Books, featuring original draft manuscripts, photographs, notebooks and correspondence together with interactive areas to allow children to explore themes from Michael Morpurgo's books.
- *From Spinning-Tops to Spacehoppers: Growing up in Somerset* featured popular toys and games from the last century to demonstrate how childhood in Somerset has been enjoyed.
- *Faces of Conflict: Somerset and the First World War* featured the Museum Service's portrait of Harry Patch, 'the last fighting Tommy', in an exhibition whose centrepiece was an immersive audio-visual installation created in partnership with West Somerset College.
- *The World Before Yesterday: the Photography of Stanley Kenyon* showcased the photography of Stanley Kenyon.
- *Wild Hares and Hummingbirds*. This exhibition will be installed for the summer of 2019 but was supported by significant development work during the year.

Somerset Rural Life Museum

- *Echoes of War: the Somerset Countryside 1914-1918* revealed how the First World War profoundly changed the county's rural communities.
- *Processions: Two Banners, One Voice* explored how Somerset women today have been inspired by the anniversary marking the centenary of the Representation of the People Act.

Weston Museum

- *The Art of Self Expression: Facial Hair and Tattoos Through the Ages* was an innovative exhibition about facial hair and tattoos through the ages featuring both historical and modern examples. A photographer worked with local people and tattoo parlours to capture contemporary images.
- *That's the Way to Do It: Punch and Judy Through The Ages* told the story of Punch and Judy, the nation's most celebrated puppets, and their development over time.
- *Alfred Leete: The Man Behind the Icon*. Alfred Leete was a Weston-born graphic artist who produced advertising campaigns for companies including the London Underground and Younger's Ale. His original artwork for the famous image of Lord Kitchener seeking army recruits was generously loaned by the Imperial War Museum in London and was the exhibition's remarkable centrepiece.

Touring and external exhibitions

- *Cheese and Charabancs: Historic Holidays in Devon and Somerset* used historic documents to show how people enjoyed their leisure time in the two counties.
- *Devon Remembers Heritage Project*. Support was provided to exhibitions which explored the impact of the First World War in Devon.

3.9 Collections

Following the death in 2017 of Sir Edward du Cann, former Member of Parliament for Taunton, his family have given an extensive group of archives and artefacts to the county collection. They include an important series of 19th-century political posters relating to Taunton, a collection of Somerset Friendly Society pole heads, photographs illustrating Sir Edward's wide-ranging political career, a maquette statue of Brigadier Andrew Hamilton Gault, and a bronze portrait bust of Sir Edward by Antony Dufort.

Two diaries belonging to Edward Phelps MP (1725-1797) of Montacute, dated 1784 and 1789, were acquired by a group of Montacute residents and donated to the archive collections. A handover event to thank the group took place on 26 September.

In consultation with the Blake Museum, Bridgwater, the Trust acquired at auction on 1 March a portrait of Dr John Allen MD, FRS (c. 1660-1741). He was a Bridgwater doctor, writer and inventor who patented but did not put into practice an early form of steam propulsion. The portrait will be displayed in the 'Making Somerset' gallery at the Museum of Somerset.

Having undergone conservation work kindly funded by the Friends of the Museum of Somerset and the Friends of Coleridge, a fine portrait of the Nether Stowey philanthropist Thomas Poole (1766-1837) was unveiled by his descendant Tom Poole at the Museum of Somerset on 15 May. The portrait has been generously given to the county collection.

A painting in oils of Kingston St Mary near Taunton, 1810, has been given to the museum collections by the Kingston St Mary History Society. The painting, which shows the village street over two centuries ago, was presented to the Trust at a special ceremony held in the village. <https://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/news/16950068.208-years-on-villagers-present-for-posterity-1810-picture-at-same-spot-it-was-painted/>

In consultation with the Friends of Coleridge and the National Trust, the Heritage Trust acquired on 14 March the writing table of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834). The acquisition was fully funded by donations. The table, which has an excellent provenance, is evidently old enough to have been at Nether Stowey during Coleridge's residence there in 1797-8. At all events it is likely to be the table at which he prepared the Stowey poems 'Kubla Khan' and 'Christabel' for publication in 1816 and wrote the gloss to 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' in 1815-16. It will be displayed in the 'Discovering' gallery at the Museum of Somerset.

A memorandum of understanding with the Somerset Partnership NHS Trust has now been signed and will govern the basis on which care of, and access to, historic NHS records is managed.

After more than two years of negotiation, it has been confirmed that ownership of the Luttrell of Dunster collection has been transferred to Somerset County Council under the acceptance in lieu procedures. The collection, which extends to 133 linear metres, has been on deposit since 1958 and is one of the most significant of English regional archive

collections. It is rich in medieval and early modern materials. A project to improve the catalogue of the collection is now underway.

The Somerset Heritage Centre received the Wansborough Paper Mill archive from Watchet. The collection has been catalogued by project volunteers as part of a collaborative HLF project.

In December the Trust's officers Bob Croft and Laura Burnett ensured the proper recording of a Roman coin hoard and Roman lead coffin found near Ilminster by a metal detectorist. There was widespread local and national publicity for the finds
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-42430934>.

3.10 Volunteers

Throughout the year, the Trust was supported by an average of 209 volunteers across all areas of delivery. 31,190 hours were recorded, which is equivalent to 4,214 days or more than 19 full-time members of staff. The outstanding commitment of our volunteers means the Trust can undertake far more activity than would otherwise be possible. We are very grateful to them.

Our volunteers include researchers, retired heritage professionals, young people seeking work experience, conservators, craftsmen, story-tellers, curators and historians. Many younger volunteers engage with the Trust while studying a related subject and gain paid employment as a result of their time with us. For retired or older volunteers their participation often helps to maintain physical and mental agility and to address issues of loneliness and isolation.

Events to thank our volunteers for their essential contribution were held at the Somerset Heritage Centre in October and the Museum of Somerset in December.

3.11 Partnerships and Major Meetings

The South West Heritage Trust was represented at or engaged with the following initiatives and partnership activities:

- In December the Head of Archives and Local Studies provided a day of consultancy to **Essex County Council** about the formation of heritage trusts.
- Meetings have been held with **Taunton Deane Borough Council** to discuss the creation of a cultural strategy for Taunton and the potential to pilot a transfer to the Trust of digital records created by the council.
- An open meeting of **Arts Taunton** was hosted at the Museum of Somerset on 24 September when a presentation was given on the museum's achievements, ambitions and civic role.
- A workshop organised by Taunton Deane Borough Council was held on 6 July about the Creative Arts in Placemaking as part of the council's **Garden Town initiative**.

- The collaborative partnership arrangements with the **Somerset County History Trust** continued throughout the year, with work undertaken towards the history of Taunton and surrounding parishes.
- Arrangements continued for the care of collections from **Bath Abbey** and to provide an archive service on their behalf while a major redevelopment project is underway.
- Regular liaison meetings with **Somerset Library Service** continued. Many have related to joint project opportunities at Bridgwater Library and wider initiatives in the town.
- Technical assistance was provided to **Langport Town Trust** regarding the preservation of historic structures in the town.
- The Trust contributed to celebrations to mark the opening of **Trenchard Way**, Taunton, on 15 June.
- The Trust was represented on 19 July at a **ministerial visit** to Taunton by Jake Berry MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- The Trust met representatives of the **Real Ideas Organisation** (a bridge organisation for Arts Council England) on 31 May to discuss the delivery of heritage learning, especially in relation to ACE's Museums and Schools programme.
- A meeting with Colin Drummond, Chairman of **Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust**, took place on 8 August.
- The Trust participated in a meeting on 9 August to discuss proposals for creating a First World War commemorative wood at **Monkton Heathfield**, which was subsequently opened in November.
- The Trust continues to be represented on the committee of the **Museums in Somerset Group** and at its general meetings.
- Partnership contacts with the **Glastonbury Antiquarian Society** have taken place concerning the Society's collections.
- A meeting with Dr Axel Palmer, Chairman of the **Somerset Churches Trust**, took place on 14 August.
- The Trust has continued to report to and meet the Friends organisations as well as partners including **Somerset Military Museum Trust** and **Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society**.
- On 21 August Trust staff contributed to a knowledge-sharing day with staff of the **South West Museum Development Programme** and the British Museum National Programmes.
- The annual meeting between Somerset County Council, **Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society** and the Trust took place on 7 September and was a positive occasion.
- The Head of Archives and Local Studies spoke on 19 June at a national conference in **Hereford** on new ways of delivering cultural services.

3.12 Online Delivery and ICT

During the year a **digital preservation system** for the Trust was commissioned. The system places the Trust at the forefront of Archive service providers which are able to offer facilities for the preservation of digital archives. The contract has been fulfilled by a partnership between Arkivum (<https://arkivum.com/>) and Metadatis (<https://metadatis.com/>) and has required a year of very significant preparation within both the Somerset and Devon Archive Services, to survey digital archive holdings and provide a consistent methodology for cataloguing.

A new unified Trust **website** was successfully launched in July, providing an appropriately tiered single site through which all primary service areas may be independently represented. The new site is highly functional and user friendly and significantly simplifies the process of managing content. The contractor who provided the technical development and design, Surface Impression, specialises in high-quality and versatile websites for heritage organisations and will be a valuable partner for future developments.

The Trust met its target for compliance with the **General Data Protection Regulation** (GDPR) which came into effect on 25 May. Further work will be undertaken as more detailed guidance is issued nationally.

Following much preparation the launch of further mapping on the **Know Your Place** historic mapping site took place in the summer and was celebrated at an event on 9 July. Somerset and Devon are both fully represented on the site which recently won the Best Heritage Research, Interpretation or Recording award at the Historic England Angel Awards 2018. <http://www.kypwest.org.uk/>

Improvements have been made to facilities for visitors to the searchroom at the Somerset Heritage Centre. Further kiosk-style access has been provided to online research resources, and a new reader scanner has been installed.

3.13 Governance

The **Annual Review Meeting** with Somerset and Devon County Councils took place on 11 June. The meeting considered the key achievements of the Trust in the year to 31 October 2017, progress with the in-year Activity Plan and the work of the Advisory Forum. It was agreed that there should be a revised basis for the Advisory Forum.

On 19 June the Chief Executive gave a presentation about the Trust's third year of operation to Somerset County Council's **Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee**. He also summarised the Trust's continuing strategy to ensure services that are enterprising, resilient, collaborative, inclusive and inspiring.

Two meetings of the **Advisory Forum** were planned during the year. The March meeting was cancelled because of bad weather. The meeting in September agreed that Advisory

Forum meetings should be replaced by an annual Stakeholder Conference, the first of them to be held on 25 March 2019.

Supported by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund the Trust organised and hosted a day conference at the Museum of Somerset on 13 November. The conference, called '**Agendas for Change**', was attended by heritage professionals from around the South West and considered the opportunities and challenges faced by the sector. A keynote speech was given by Stephen Boyce, South West Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The annual meeting of the **North Somerset Heritage Panel** took place on 22 March when the Trust reported on behalf of Somerset County Council about archive and museum services provided for North Somerset Council and Weston-super-Mare Town Council. Thanks and appreciation were expressed for the work of the Trust, not least for its role in the creation of Weston Museum.

Darren Henley, **Chief Executive of Arts Council England**, and Simon Jutton, Senior Relationship Manager, visited the Museum of Somerset on 10 May. They were introduced to the museum and the work of the Trust by the Chief Executive and discussed areas for cooperation, including Arts Council England's Museums and Schools Programme. Darren Henley wrote afterwards of the 'terrific insight into Somerset's history' provided by the 'beautifully curated' museum.

3.14 Board

Meetings of the Board of Trustees took place on 11 January, 11 April, 12 July and 11 October.

In addition, the Board deals with specific areas of work through three committees:

- Personnel Committee – 3 meetings in the year
- Marketing and Communications Committee – 2 meetings in the year
- Finance Committee – 3 meetings in the year

Meetings of **South West Heritage Trust Trading Limited**, the Trust's trading company, took place on 5 March and 24 September.

The **annual retirement meeting** for Trustees of the Trust took place on 11 April at which Peter Gunner, Sandy Maberley and Terry Makewell retired from the Board. All three trustees were re-appointed by agreement of the remaining trustees.

Following the retirement from the Board of Cllr Anna Groskop, **Somerset County Council's** nominated trustee became Cllr David Hall.

There are 12 **Trustees** on the Board, as follows:

Peter Beacham	A native of Somerset but resident in Devon for the last 50 years, Peter is a writer on South West England. He was sometime Director of Heritage Protection at English Heritage.
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Cllr Roger Croad	Cabinet Member for Community and Environmental Services, Devon County Council. He is Devon County Council's nominated member (with the same duties and legal responsibilities as other members).
Professor Henry French	Professor of Social History at the University of Exeter since 2009. Main areas of historical research are British social and economic history, 1600–1840; British gender history, 1600–1900; British agrarian history, 1500–1900.
Peter Gunner	A chartered accountant with wide experience of working in the voluntary sector, more recently as a Trustee and honorary treasurer of the Dorset Wildlife Trust and the Community Council for Somerset.
David Gwyther (Chair)	Former Director of Social Services at Somerset County Council and an independent consultant since 2005 working for local authorities, health organisations and businesses. A non-executive director of a Somerset-based community interest company.
Cllr David Hall	Cabinet Member for Business, Inward Investment and Policy at Somerset County Council. He is the Council's nominated member (with the same duties and legal responsibilities as other members).
Sam Hunt	Heritage consultant working across the UK. Previously Executive Director of the Association of Independent Museums, CEO of the South West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and Head of Bath Museums. Currently Trustee of the National Maritime Museum Cornwall and of Lyme Regis Museum.
Sandy Maberley	Artistic Director and CEO of Theatre Mélange, with extensive working knowledge as a leader in the professional arts and culture sector. Former member of the Arts Council's Drama Advisory Panel.
Terry Makewell	Chief Digital Officer with the Office of National Statistics and formerly Head of Digital and Global Media for the Met Office (Exeter). Previous experience working with national museums including the Tate, V&A and National History Museum.
Mike Motum	Regimental Secretary of The Rifles (Somerset and Bristol) and curator of Somerset Military Museum.
Nicola Nuttall	Former CEO of the South Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries; Founder and Director of Tempus Fugit consultancy. Heritage practitioner with 30 years' experience, specialising in advocacy, fundraising and partnerships.

3.15 Challenge Funding

On 8 February the Service presented outline proposals to Emily Estates for creating a replica Romano-British villa on the Hadspen estate near Castle Cary. The plans were warmly

received, and the Trust was subsequently asked to develop the proposals to the next stage. Shortly before the end of the year, the second phase contract was finalised, and the Trust will be providing technical curatorial, archaeological and historic environment services which support the creation of a new Roman museum and full-size replica of a Romano-British villa.

Arts Council England (ACE) have awarded the Trust a grant through their Museums and Schools programme for two years. The opportunity is very welcome and strengthens the relationship between the Trust and ACE.

The Trust has been engaged in negotiations with three local councils about the provision of planning conservation advice on a contractual basis.

- A contract has been secured, for an initial term of two years, with Bath and North East Somerset Council. The Trust will provide planning conservation advice and the Historic Environment Record within B&NES, but excluding the city of Bath.
- An agreement is in place with South Somerset District Council to provide advice and a planning conservation service as an interim measure.
- Discussions are ongoing with Taunton Deane Borough Council about the provision of a contracted service.

During the year a bid for £22,000 was submitted to the Art Fund's Weston Programme in support of the proposed exhibition 'Painter Pilgrim: the Art of Tristram Hillier'. The bid was subsequently successful as was a related bid for £40,000 to Arts Council England.

3.16 Staffing

On 30 November, **Steve Minnitt**, Head of Museums for the Trust, retired after more than 43 years' service. An event was held in the Great Hall at the Museum of Somerset on 30 November when a large gathering of colleagues and friends were able to express their sense of all that Steve has achieved and to wish him well in the time ahead. Following a nationally-advertised recruitment process, **Sam Astill** became Steve's successor on 1 February.

Karen Johnson, the Trust's Facilities Manager, left her post on 28 February to take up a new role at Hinkley C. She joined Somerset County Council in 2001 and worked with the Library Service before joining the Trust on its creation in 2014. She had responsibility for all facilities matters and developed her role with great skill, care and good humour. Her successor is Lisa Miller.

After a long professional association with West Country museums and with the Trust, **Liz Neathey** gave up her post as Museums Development Officer on 31 May for a new role with Arts Council England. She left with the best wishes of her many friends and colleagues.

After 47 years with the Somerset Archives Service **Mervyn Richens** gave up his post as Senior Conservator on 5 September. He was outstandingly the Trust's longest-serving member of staff and the longest-serving staff member in the history of the Somerset Record Office since its foundation in 1935. His dedication to preserving Somerset's archival heritage has left an enduring legacy and future generations will have more reason to be thankful for his work than they can know.

Dennis Parsons, Curator of Natural Science, retired on 3 April after 31 years' service. When he started work with the Museums Service he found geological collections which had suffered long neglect and made it his task not only to put them into excellent order but to reveal them as resources of national and international significance. Dennis had a key role in solving many collections management issues, including the complex decant of Somerset County Museum before its transformation into the Museum of Somerset, the similar challenges at Glastonbury and Weston, and the practical conservation of many museum objects. He also supported volunteers in an exemplary way and maintained strong and important links with scholars and practitioners in national institutions.

Phil Hocking retired as Researcher with the Somerset Archives and Local Studies Service on 28 June. Phil arrived at the old Somerset Record Office 28 years ago, and in the time since then had become a key person in ensuring that the sources of Somerset history were made available to thousands of people. At a leaving event we expressed our great gratitude for everything he contributed.

Laytn Sharp, Exhibition Technician with Somerset Museums Service, gave up his post on 21 September after almost 10 years' service. He had a key role in creating the Museum of Somerset and since then worked on all the Museum Service's increasingly ambitious temporary exhibitions. His skills and quiet dedication have been of great importance to the Trust. He left with the best wishes of all his colleagues.

Some key appointments were made during the year:

- Geoff Flower began work as the Trust's new Formal Learning Officer
- Sarah Cox, Exhibitions and Programme Officer joined the Museums Service
- Lisa Millar became Facilities Officer
- Harriet Moffett transferred from her role as Heritage Learning Assistant to take the role of Researcher in the Somerset Archives Service
- Freya Ward was confirmed as Heritage Learning Assistant

Bob Croft, the Trust's Head of Historic Environment and Estates, was recently appointed a member of the Historic England Advisory Committee. The committee offers expert advice concerning Historic England's functions under the National Heritage Act 1983.

Dan Broadbent and Sarah Cox have both been awarded places on the Museum Transformers programme run by the Museums Association. The programme seeks to engage participants in increasing the social and civic impact of museums.

Average Full Time Equivalent Staff employed on 31 October 2018:

Service provision	61.53
Finance and administration	8.02
Management	5
Total	74.55

Section 4. Looking forward

During 2016–17 the senior management team and trustees prepared a new Business Plan for the period 2017 to 2022. Called ‘Building on Success’, it seeks to define a new focus for the Trust and sets out ambitious plans and aspirations for the future. The Business Plan is aligned with the objectives of our primary partners as well as reflecting the views and priorities of staff, trustees and stakeholders.

The Business Plan action plan is provided below, grouped into five strategic priorities.

1. Resilient: the Trust is dynamic and developmental, and a leading cultural organisation in the South West.

Action		Progress
Financial resilience is essential in order to achieve our wider heritage goals. We will seek to broaden the base of our income through approaches to grant-giving bodies and an openness to opportunities that meet our overarching heritage and charitable aims.	Ongoing	Underway. New income has been secured through Emily Estates and Arts Council England. Contracts for the supply of services to Bath and North East Somerset Council and South Somerset District Council are expected to be in place by 31 October 2018.
A review of current staffing will take place to ensure the correct organisational structure is in place, providing the skills necessary for the Trust to continue to grow and develop.	2018	Arising from a recent Leadership Team (LT) planning meeting.
Focused research will be undertaken with existing and potential audiences to inform the future direction of public programming and services.	2018	In development. Rationalise data collection, new qualitative data gathered. Amalgamate existing work: CIPFA, PSQG, ALGAO, ONS. Small Grant Big Improvement funding secured for the installation of visitor monitoring equipment.
Research will be undertaken to provide better intelligence and quantitative data about the visitors to the landscape sites.	2018-2019	Arising from a recent Leadership Team planning meeting.
The Museum Loans for Learning service will undergo a programme of sustainable development. Loans will be refreshed in line with curriculum changes and more guidance will be provided for teachers on the ways in which loans can enhance learning in the classroom.	Annually	Arising from a recent Leadership Team planning meeting. Targeted investment from the Development Fund is supporting the renewal of resources.
Monitoring of the impact of Hinkley Point C will be continued to ensure	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.

compliance with obligations relating to the historic environment.		
The use of outdoor and indoor spaces at the Museum of Somerset will be reviewed and developed.	2019	Options appraisal to be undertaken.
The use of outdoor and indoor spaces at Somerset Rural Life Museum will be developed.	2020	
The number of visits to the Museum of Somerset will reach a minimum average of 100,000 a year.	By 2022	
The number of visits to the Somerset Rural Life Museum will reach a minimum average of 40,000 a year.	By 2022	

2. Enterprising: with a spirit of enterprise at its heart, the Trust aims to develop new opportunities to deliver rich and diverse heritage experiences to audiences.

Action		Progress
A digital preservation system will be commissioned and embedded in the service as a long-term repository for digital archives.	2018	Due to be operationally launched before the end of 2018. The new digital preservation system will be recognised as a regional hub promoting sectoral expertise.
We will develop our online archival presence through projects to make further digitised content available, including working with commercial providers.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
A new commercial service will provide consultancy expertise and undertake programmes of work where there is no compromising of professional integrity.	From 2018	Underway and ongoing. The Historic Environment Service (HES) will be providing the HER and Planning Conservation service for B&NES (exc. Bath) from October 2018 as a contracted service. HES providing support to South Somerset District Council on a consultancy basis, to establish a new Planning Conservation service.
Income generation will be increased across all sites through traded services, sponsorship and fundraising.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. A new admission fee structure for SRLM has been

		devised, aiming at simplifying the offer.
Loans will be offered in Devon for the first time with the creation of a series of loan boxes which can be borrowed from the Devon Heritage Centre.	From 2018	First loans are planned to be piloted with schools in the academic year 2018-19. £600 Development Fund investment will provide new localised resources.
Themed merchandising will be linked to temporary exhibitions, to increase sales income.	From 2018	Being planned with programming.
The reopening of the Rural Life Museum gives the opportunity to develop our learning subscription service for schools in the north and east of Somerset.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. Enhanced by Adventures in Time project.
New interpretation will be installed at our landscape sites, providing digital content links and cross-promoting the other sites and the work of the Trust.	2019 onwards	To be defined in an action plan for the sites.
A review will be undertaken of the opportunities offered at the Brick and Tile Museums for new forms on engagement and the potential to renew the role and prominence of the museum.	2018-19	To be defined in an action plan for the site. Project development meeting to be convened.
The local studies collections will be significantly developed to make more resources and sources of information accessible than ever before, including Ordnance Survey maps and newspaper collections.	By 2022	
We aim to achieve 150,000 visits to our sites annually through marketing our offer and making increased use of digital platforms.	By 2022	

3. Collaborative: working with others is at the heart of what we do, delivering meaningful experiences and a greater sense of place.

Action		Progress
Trustees bring a range of knowledge, contacts and experience to the benefit of the Trust, acting as ambassadors and contributing to its public profile.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
Support, advice and training will be given to a wide range of local	Ongoing	Database of groups and contacts to be retained.

groups in Somerset and Devon to enable them to develop and deliver heritage-based projects at the heart of communities.		
A long-term and sustainable future for the North Devon Record Office will be achieved, providing vibrant projects with the local community and partner organisations.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. Stakeholder event in October generated new interest, fundraising to continue the service is on-going.
Collaboration with partners and other sectors will support the development of unique and inspirational exhibitions and events and will generate grant funding and sponsorship.	Ongoing	Database of partnerships and targeting to be created and maintained.
We will undertake a developmental programme to maintain the heritage features of the public realm in Somerset, working with parish and town councils and local authorities.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. Annually renewable, with forward year funding confirmed.
We will work in partnership to support the Quantock Hills AONB to deliver the heritage aspects of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.	Ongoing	Stage 2 full project being developed.
The Learning Team will provide learning support for the public programme of exhibitions and events across the Trust.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
The Somerset Archaeological Handbook will be revised and updated.	Biennially	Ongoing.
We will use our leading position and expertise in archive collection development and conservation, working with a wide range of partners and community groups to support archive projects across Devon and Somerset.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
We will work in partnership with Historic England and local authorities to ensure key heritage sites at risk are conserved and protected, engaging local people with the stories and issues that arise.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. Norton hillfort will be the newest addition to managed sites.
A partnership project will be developed to celebrate and recognise the industrial heritage of Bridgwater.	2018-2019	Underway and ongoing.

4. Inclusive: our services are for everybody and activities and events are planned to ensure all people feel valued, connected, respected and included.

Action		Progress
Collections and loans will be used to create temporary exhibitions across our sites and to take objects into the communities of the South West.	Ongoing	Ongoing programme.
An annual programme of courses, events and pop-up exhibitions will create opportunities for people to learn from and be inspired by our archive and local studies collections.	Annually	Ongoing programme.
We will engage with national schemes to increase access and engagement with archives, including Explore Your Archive, Takeover Day and Take One.	Annually	Ongoing programme.
Our schools learning programme will continue to adapt and change to meet the needs of pupils and teachers and the requirements of the National Curriculum.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
A new externally-funded project will be developed to link local communities, groups and schools with our landscape sites, ensuring their full value is realised and future secured.	2018 onwards	Review and revision of the planned activity.
Our long-standing partnership with learning disability service providers will be formalised with Discovery, the provider in Somerset, in order to maintain and develop visitor numbers and experiences at the Brick and Tile Museum.	2018	To be formalised through the new project being initiated in Bridgwater.
Opportunities for further and adult education will be developed at the Brick & Tile Museum, building on pilot work already undertaken.	From 2019	To be extended through the new project being initiated in Bridgwater.
Over 5,000 people will receive direct email marketing about the Museum of Somerset.	By 2022	
Over 2,000 people will receive direct email marketing about Somerset Rural Life Museum.	By 2022	

5. Inspiring: heritage is inspiring, and we will use our amazing collections, together with the creativity and passion of staff and volunteers, to inspire people of all ages.

Action		Progress
Collections will be cared for and interpreted excellently to provide the foundation stone for the deeper understanding of our past and for creating compelling learning experiences both within our museums and beyond them.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
Core work to care for, catalogue and make collections available will continue to be prioritised. This underpins all other activity. Targeted approaches will be made to secure grant and contract funding to support specific projects which develop collections care and improve public access.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
Programmes of learning activities and workshops at Somerset Rural Life Museum will be developed and expanded.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
We will engage fully with regional and national themes and anniversaries, making them locally relevant through the stories of individuals held in our archive collections. Projects, events and activities will bring to life our shared understanding.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. New process to coordinate the public programme being implemented.
The Somerset Historic Environment Record will have new mapping layers added and be promoted as a primary reference source about the heritage of Somerset.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. Development plan for HER to be created. Expansion planned to include B&NES HER.
Our programme of reminiscence sessions will be extended and marketed to increase engagement and the benefits to participants.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing. Strong link to development of wellbeing theme for activity.
We will provide advice to other heritage organisations when requested and play an active leadership role in the heritage community of the South West.	Ongoing	Underway and ongoing.
We will develop a new website as the most important online destination for all that relates to the heritage of Somerset and Devon.	2018	Complete. Forward development plan to be created with Digital Working Group.
We will develop hands-on experiences at the Avalon Marshes historic reconstructions which inspire and excite visitors, making it a viable and well-established visitor destination in Somerset.	2018 onwards	Buildings are nearing completion with host site still being developed.

A new business plan will be prepared to ensure the historic reconstruction buildings at the Avalon Marshes Centre are used to their full potential for schools and visitors. Grant funding will be sought to support new activity.	2019	Business plan to be developed, initiated through Leadership Team meeting at Avalon Marshes Centre in October.
We will work with colleagues across the Trust to develop and implement a learning offer at the Avalon Marshes Centre.	From 2019	
A digital online exhibition space will be created to build an archive of material produced for previous physical exhibitions, including images, films and text.	From 2019	To be hosted on new website.
Our online presence will be optimised to work more interactively with mobile devices and our museums.	From 2019	Website sub-project.
The use of space within the Museum of Somerset will be reviewed to develop opportunities to display underrepresented collections, including fine art.	From 2019	Part of options appraisal project, to be developed.