

GREAT
NORTH
MUSEUM
HANCOCK



The Great North Museum: Hancock

STRATEGIC PLAN



Introduction

Our strongest assets are our people and our partners. We thrive on working in partnership and believe that together we can be agents for change, questioning and challenging and inspiring people towards a better future.

As part of Newcastle University, the Great North Museum: Hancock (GNMH) sits within an organisation committed to advancing knowledge and providing collective solutions to solving global issues. Through world-class academic excellence, innovation and creativity, the university is driven by its mission to exist for public benefit to advance education, learning and research and to shape brighter futures, grow the economy and champion social justice.

As part of a local authority museum service, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM), the GNMH is part of an Arts Council Level Three National Portfolio Organisation, awarded because of its recognised excellence and charged with demonstrating leadership in the cultural sector.

The GNMH is managed by TWAM on behalf of Newcastle University. We are a hybrid. We are driven to maximise the potential of this unique status to bring benefit to the public, lifelong learning, teaching and research.

Our story

We are unique. As part of Newcastle University, the Great North Museum: Hancock is the only university museum managed by a local authority in the country, and possibly the world. This creates an exclusive blend of access to world leading research and live knowledge with a commitment to and understanding of public audiences.

The Great North Museum: Hancock opened on 23 May 2009 following a major £26 million redevelopment incorporating collections from the Hancock Museum, Newcastle University's Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum of Greek and Etruscan Art and Archaeology.

The origins of the Hancock Museum's collections can be traced back to about 1780 when Marmaduke Tunstall began collecting ethnographic and natural history material from all over the world. After Tunstall's death in 1790, his collection was purchased by George Allan of Darlington. Allan's collection was later acquired by the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle. The 'Lit & Phil', founded in 1793, had begun to acquire objects very early in its life and its activities included the formation of a small museum. From 1822, the 'Lit & Phil' museum became known as The Newcastle Museum.

In 1829, the Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne (now the Natural History Society of Northumbria (NHSN)) was founded as an offshoot of the 'Lit and Phil'. This society soon took responsibility for operating the Newcastle Museum.

However, the museum's collections soon outgrew their building and the new 'Newcastle Museum' was opened on the GNMH's present site in 1884. In 1890, the well-known North East naturalist John Hancock, who had been instrumental in the campaign for setting up the new museum, died and in 1891, the museum was re-named the Hancock Museum in honour of him and his brother Albany. From its inception in the early 1800s until 1929 it was the only museum in Newcastle with public access. In 1959, the NHSN entered into an agreement with the University of Newcastle under which the University agreed to care for the building and collections.

At around the same time the collections of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (SANT), the oldest provincial antiquarian society in the country forming in 1813, were the subject of another agreement with what was then King's College (and is now Newcastle University) as it was realised that neither the Castle Keep nor the Black Gate were suitable for the storage or display of delicate artefacts. In 1956, an agreement was signed and reached that a Museum of Antiquities would be opened on the campus and four years later, in 1960, the museum opened. The original plan was for the museum to take only the Society's prehistoric, Roman, and Anglo-Saxon material. Over the years much else has been added from other collections and from excavations in Newcastle and Northumberland. In 1978, the museum's collecting policy was extended to take material up to 1600.

For a number of decades the museums were operated directly by the University, but in 1992, the University sub-contracted the management of the then Hancock Museum to Tyne & Wear Museums (TWM).

From the 1880s to the 1960s the displays at the Hancock Museum remained almost unchanged, although the stored collections continued to grow, with an estimated half a million objects and specimens in store. Although there had been a series of gallery improvements throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, by the mid-nineties, the museum was in desperate need of renovation following more than 100 years of wear and tear.

By the early 2000s a partnership, led by Newcastle University and the then Tyne & Wear Museums service began to fundraise for a major programme of redevelopment; the Great North Museum: Hancock Project. Over £26 million pounds was raised and the new museum opened on 23 May 2009.

A key aim of the Great North Museum: Hancock Project was to combine the collections from Newcastle University's Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum of Greek and Etruscan Art and Archaeology (which takes its name from Professor Brian Shefton, who established the Collection in the 1950s to support teaching and research) into a single museum with the NHSN Collections in the transformed Hancock Museum and to create an accessible off site store at the Great North Museum Resource Centre based at the Discovery Museum.

As a result of the above the GNMH has five key partners/stakeholders:

- Newcastle University
- Natural History Society of Northumbria
- Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne
- Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums
- Newcastle City Council (as lead authority for TWAM)



Our Mission

We do this

Inspire curiosity, learning and debate through a stimulating, innovative and provocative science and cultural engagement programme with cutting edge university research at its heart.

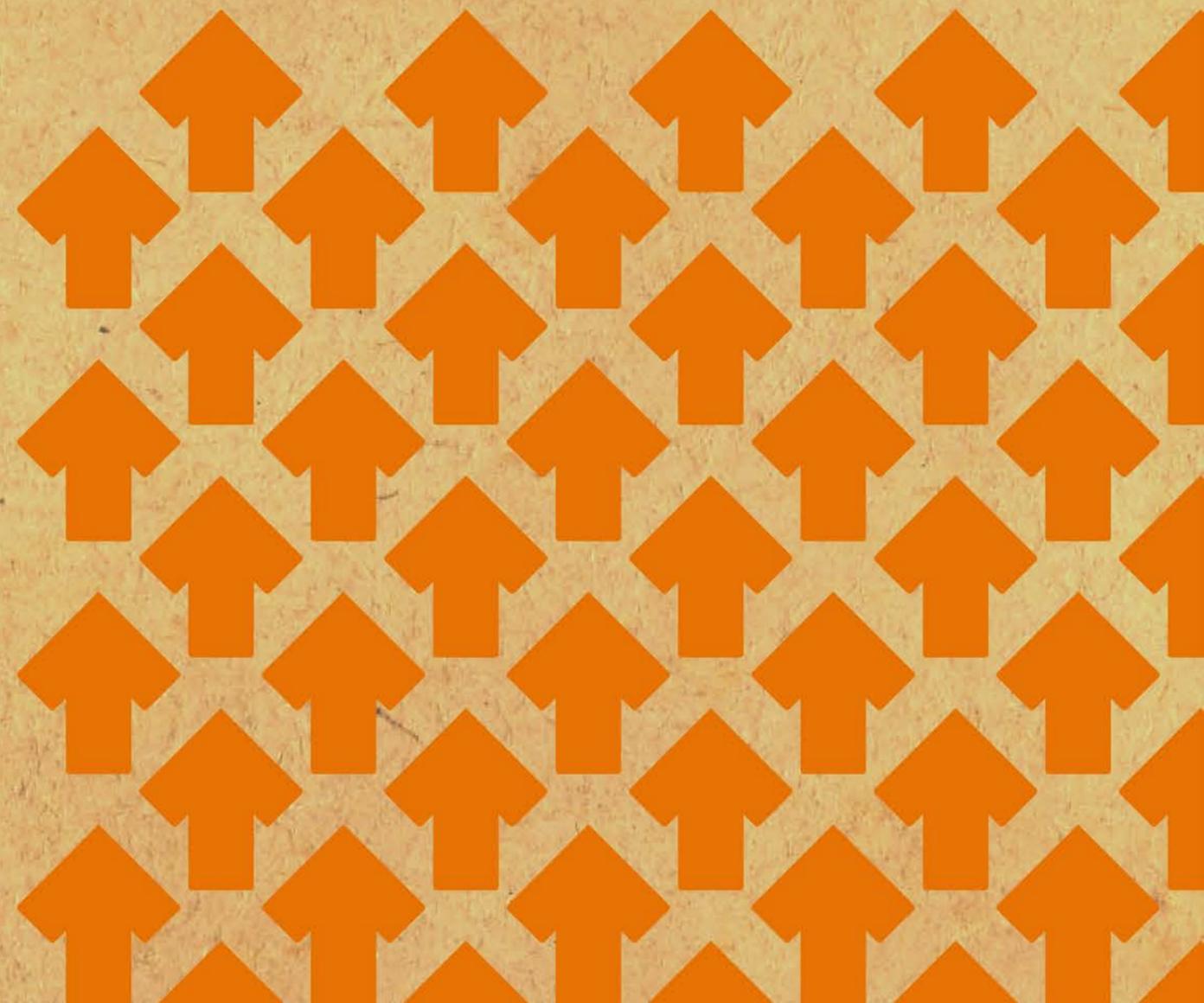
Our Vision

So that

Inspirational access to science and culture enriches everyone, providing children and young people with a better chance of getting on in life, giving people from all walks of life the confidence to change the world around them.

Our Strategic Aims

- To be a world leading university museum welcoming to all
- To facilitate powerful learning
- To create strong partnerships
- To increase our social impact
- To lead at all levels and be fit for purpose



AIM 1

To be a world-leading University welcoming to all

As part of Newcastle University we share in the aspiration to support education for life, support excellence in teaching, learning and research, and demonstrate how research delivers powerful impact and engagement that makes a difference to how we all live.

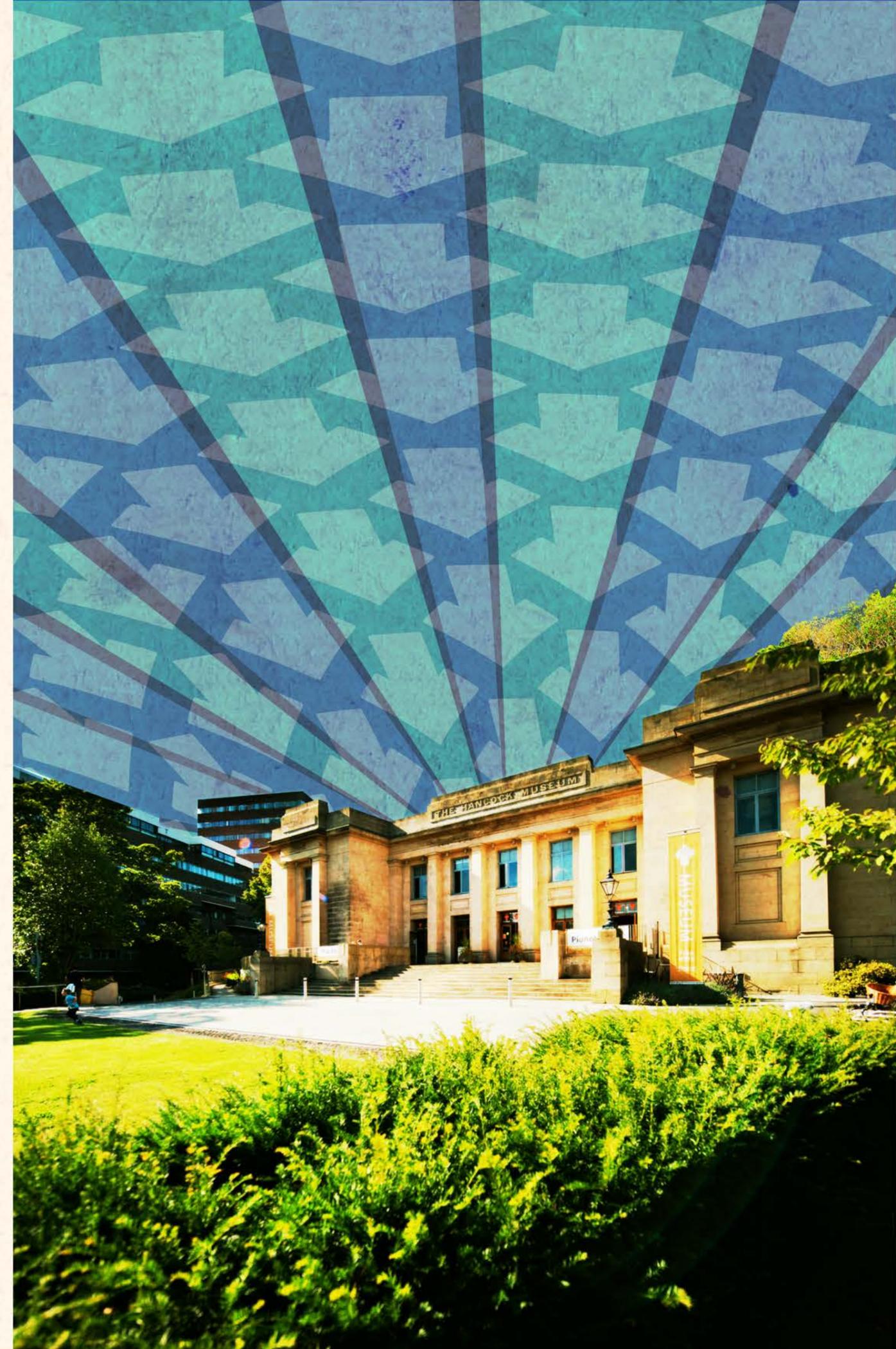
We want to utilise our unique and special assets to enhance the student experience so that we become a positive force in their career development and a powerful memory of their time in Newcastle.

As a much loved visitor attraction we seek to turn access to cutting edge research and an array of experts into inspiring, engaging and unique opportunities and experiences for visitors.

We are also invested in raising our own national and international profile as a university museum, contributing to the influence of Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums and our client institution.

Our objectives:

- Support and deliver excellence in teaching, learning and research
- Support university engagement and impact
- Contribute to a unique student experience
- Maximise the unique benefits of the University/TWAM relationship to visitors
- Increase our profile and partnerships



AIM 2

To facilitate powerful learning

We have access to a diverse range of knowledge assets that not only include collections, archives data and libraries but also people and their expertise. By deploying these assets creatively and opening them up to external, creative collaboration we have the potential to transform museum visits and learning into extraordinary experiences that embrace diverse disciplinary practices.

Through collaborative partnerships we aim to extend the impact and reach of our learning practice and expertise across the sector nationally and internationally.

We are committed to raising standards in education and evolving best practice. Of equal importance is our push into next practice, stretching our thinking and experimenting with our own outputs and supporting education practitioners to expand learning potential through engagement with museums.

It is important that we are also learners. As part of Newcastle University we have exceptional access to the latest teaching practices and have created partnerships with schools and learning trusts that allow us to collaborate in the development of outstanding practices in the teaching sector. We have declared ourselves a Learning Museum and through this assert our commitment to exploiting every opportunity to learn by example, know more, to support staff with personal development and to maximise our outputs for the benefit of the public.

Knowledge is power and by creating a love for learning and seeking to raise aspiration in children and young people we believe we can positively affect life chances. We know we cannot do this in isolation so seek to work with others who share our commitment to support a range of initiatives and create impact collectively.

Our objectives:

- Maximise our knowledge assets
- Extend learning impact through collaboration
- Promote best practice
- Champion next practice
- Be a Learning Museum
- Raise aspiration



AIM 3

To create strong partnerships

At its core the Great North Museum: Hancock is a series of partnerships between Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, Newcastle University, the Natural History Society of Northumbria and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. It is important that the stewarding and growth of these relationships remains as important as any external partnerships so that they continue to flourish for the health of the organisation and to benefit the public.

The museum also enjoys partnerships with national museums and international partners and these are essential for organisational growth in terms of benefits to the public, benefits to the key stakeholders and to enhance our reputation. Working together at this scale we can improve the quality of our work and respond to current and global challenges.

New partnerships and cross-sector collaboration will expose us to new learning, extend our reach to more people and offer the potential for more creative ideas. By sharing and consolidating expertise we can expand our public offer, create more impact and be even better in future.

We also understand our role in making partnerships work and creating an environment and spaces to bring people together so relationships can start and grow.

Our objectives:

- Nourish and deepen existing partnerships
- Create new partnerships
- Provide strong facilitation of partnerships



AIM 4

To increase our social impact

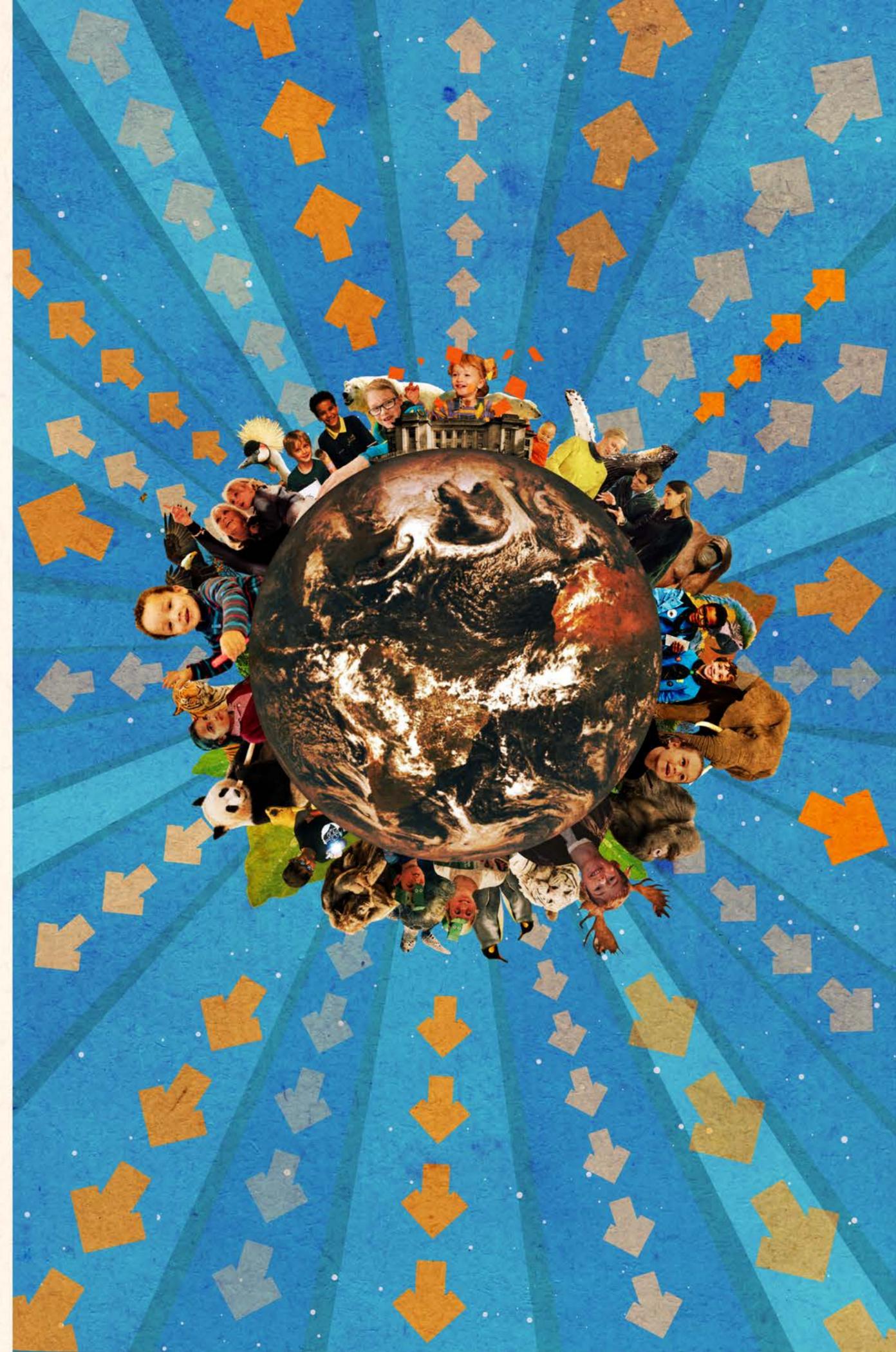
Our unique content gives us a platform to speak directly about the challenges of the future and societal issues. Diverse partnerships create an opportunity to make a difference locally, nationally and globally. We need to be brave and find our voice and to take a position on what matters most to us and our communities.

We believe that the museum is a power for good but that we will achieve more, reach further, become more relevant to audiences and create more impact by working in collaboration with other expert organisations who are already embedded and working within diverse communities. The capacity for real change comes in understanding we are better together.

We also understand that we have an obligation to reach communities beyond our walls, not only reaching out but encouraging others to reach in and to influence our practice so that it serves them better. We aim to be active contributors in our communities, supporting health and wellbeing, economic success and pride of place.

Our objectives:

- Face the future, find our voice
- Support existing initiatives
- Be better together
- Extend our reach



AIM 5

To lead at all levels and be fit for purpose

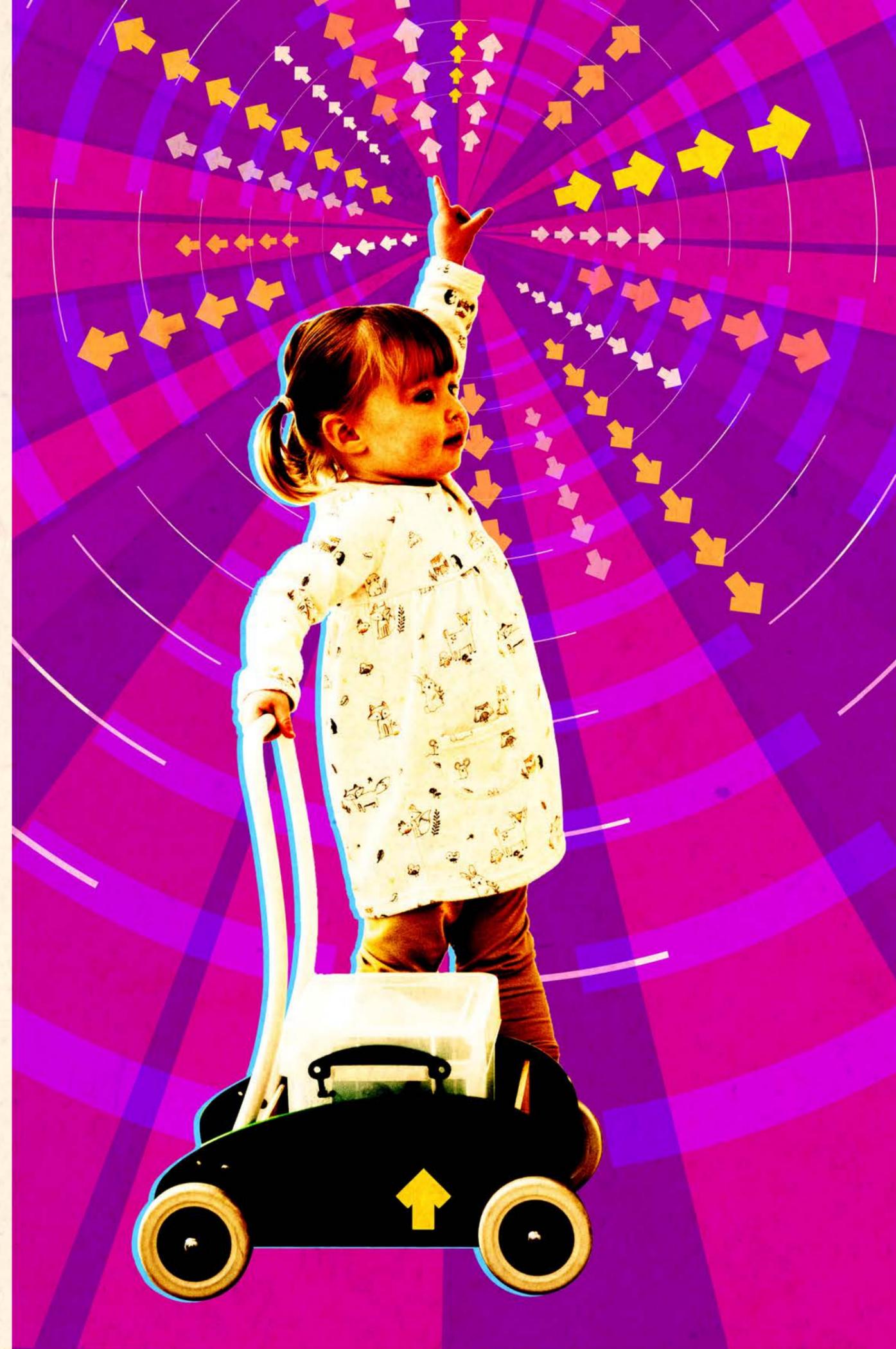
We believe that leadership can be demonstrated at every level of our organisation and that we should actively support every team member to develop leadership potential. In doing this we create a robust and resilient organisation that is equipped to face future challenges and to seek opportunity.

To ensure that resources are in place to support our ambition and that staff are supported to deliver our vision for public benefit, organisational sustainability is key. It is essential that we become ever more financially self-sufficient, expanding and creating income opportunities and working with others who can help us achieve this. We remain committed to working with our partners to support global issues of sustainability through our environmental practices.

As a partnership between Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, Newcastle University, the Natural History Society of Northumbria and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, we have a cohort of senior leaders who are equipped to guide organisational success through the GNMH Board. However it is essential that the museum reflects on its own management practice to ensure that the day to day running of the organisation is efficient and flexible to create more business agility.

Our objectives:

- To be visibly leading
- Working towards a sustainable future
- Working towards environmental sustainability
- Good management



AIM 1: To be a world-leading University welcoming to all

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Support and deliver excellence in teaching, learning and research	Support Newcastle University and other external HEIs with module courses, student placements, collections for teaching and research consultancy	Museum staff will teach on taught course modules as invited, offer at least 12 student placements per year and provide collections for teaching and offer research consultancy on request.
	Create a museum-university liaison role to develop structural links and ensure research is embedded in museum activity	Create the role of Project Manager: Learning, Engagement & Research
	Seek joint external academic funding to both further research and improve museum content and spaces	Work with the School of Arts & Cultures towards an interdisciplinary AHRC funded project with regards the Mouse House and its associated early years programme. It will identify at least one other potential project in this period.
	Maintain the highest standards of collections management to ensure the integrity of the collections for future generations and to promote easier access for public programming	Staff will ensure good standards of documentation and improve records through exhibition and project activity. Stores and galleries will be organised, maintained and cleaned. Pest management will be maintained.
	Create dedicated area for research activity and collections use	Adapt Explore space into a Collections and Transit store
	Engage academics and students in work with cultural partners	Create opportunities for engagement with the British Museum through the TH100 project and the Natural History Museum through Dippy on Tour
	Support Regional Doctoral Training Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-supervise Northern Bridge AHRC CDA regarding Shefton Collection • Support broader training and placement programme
Support university engagement and impact	University research is embedded into the exhibition, events and learning programme and other outputs	Research will be visible and evaluated in the forward programme
	Contribution towards impact case studies	Contribute to at least 2 Newcastle University Impact Case Studies for REF2022

AIM 1: To be a world-leading University welcoming to all

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Contribute to a unique student experience	Support the graduate ambassadors scheme	Engage with the SaGE GAs with Dippy on Tour and HaSS GAs around the First Cities exhibition
	Offer opportunities for student volunteering	Host at least 12 student volunteers per year
Maximise the unique benefits of the University/TWAM relationship to visitors	University research is embedded into the exhibition, events and learning programme and other outputs	University research will feature in Great Exhibition of the North (2018), Dippy on Tour (2019), First Cities (2020) and exhibitions and their associated engagement programmes TBC (2021/2022)
	Audience development through the museum engagement programme	Seek to engage and grow its identified audience segments
Increase our profile and partnerships	Partnerships are made with organisations nationally and internationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further relationship with PUCRS MTC, Brazil and Harvard Museums of Science and Culture, USA. Establish one further international partnership. • Create national partnerships through the SUMs network.
	Undertake profile raising through conferences, publication and media	Present and/or publish at least 20 papers/blogs per year .

AIM 2: To facilitate powerful learning

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Maximise our knowledge assets	The annual exhibition, events, learning and digital engagement will have collections and data at their heart and use these opportunities to improve documentation and collections management	Heart of the Matter (2018) Great Exhibition of the North (2018), Dippy on Tour (2019) and First Cities (2020) and their associated events programmes will utilise the GNM:H's collections and it will be the aim that future exhibitions (TBC) will follow suit. The Learning programme will continue to hold the collections at its core.
	Host a major, annual family friendly exhibition and associated events and learning programme	Host or create Heart of the Matter (2018) Great Exhibition of the North (2018), Dippy on Tour (2019) and First Cities (2020) and TBC (2021/2022)
	Host minor exhibitions in the Mithras Space, Natural Northumbria Display case, Galleria	Content is programmed and delivered as minor displays and exhibits
	Allow capacity for ad hoc minor displays, exhibits and events that are related to Newcastle University research in the autumn period	Mutually beneficial projects are explored and delivered on an agile, smaller scale
	Install new planetarium and incorporate new shows into learning programme	Planetarium installed
	Deliver core Learning and Under 5s programme	Term time and Saturday programme delivered for schools and families
	Deliver a core school holidays events programme	Programmes delivered during half terms, Easter and Summer holiday periods
	Deliver programme of SEND activities	Build in relaxed openings to exhibition and events programmes
	Deliver a programme for home educators	Deliver one activity per term
	Create case studies to share our knowledge and practice	The museum will create and share 12 case studies per year
Maximise our knowledge assets	NHSN and SANT Society knowledge shared via Volunteering.	Volunteers recruited and supported for Dippy on Tour (2019) and First Cities (2020) (and beyond)
	Support staff to grow interpretation, collections and data expertise to benefit audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The museum will support a curatorial application to the Headley Trust Staff benefit from knowledge exchange with the British Museum as part of the TH100 project Each staff member will attend at least one subject specialist conference (or similar opportunity) per year.

AIM 2: To facilitate powerful learning

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Extend learning impact through collaboration	Work with partnership schools on cross-curricular subject areas	Engage with existing partner schools through Dippy on Tour, TH100 and Real World Science and ensure forward programme builds in partner schools as standard.
	Partner with PUCRS MTC on further British Council projects centred on science learning	Meet with PUCRS MTC and British Council representatives in Brazil to discuss future projects
	Support schools with Arts Award and Arts Mark Applications	Continue to act as an Arts Mark Partner and Arts Award Supporter
Promote best practice	Develop collaborative teacher/educator CPD in partnership with the Natural History Museum and British Museum	Deliver the Real World Science Teacher CPD programme. Deliver teacher CPD as part of the TH100 project
	Embed learning practice in Newcastle University's PGCE Secondary and Primary Initial Teacher Training Courses as appropriate	Provide annual on site opportunities for PGCE students to engage with museum staff and collections as part of their taught programme
	Further develop KS3 Science, English and Art	Create plan for subject transition from KS2 to KS3 in consultation with partner schools
Promote best practice	Expand the reach of the Early Years programme	Work with Community Family Hubs to reach low and non museum users through collaboration with family practitioners and then use this work as a foundation towards the AHRC Mouse House funding bid.
	Further develop the family learning offer	Incorporate family learning outcomes into Mouse House AHRC project proposal.
	Further develop the SEND offer	Work with Percy Headley Trust and Great North Children's Hospital to identify needs and opportunities. Identify further partners.
Champion next practice	Embed the Learning Engagement and Research Manager's museum education research and practice in the museum's outputs	LER Manager will embed academic research and practice into the delivery of the Learning Programme
	Continue to champion enquiry/project based learning across all museum collections	This approach is embedded in partner school programmes and will impact on each collection area
	Embrace new technologies to deliver learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create VR tours of the stores and Prehistory Gallery • Develop Google Expeditions School Resources • Google Cultural Institute

AIM 2: To facilitate powerful learning

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Be a Learning Museum	Work with Newcastle University and outstanding schools and teaching schools to learn about educational practice	Create at least two opportunities per year to share new knowledge and practice between schools, academics and museum staff
	Undertake a programme of museum staff CPD	Work with external facilitator and staff to collaboratively form CPD programme year on year
	Continue to improve our evaluation of our outputs to track impact across different audiences	Build in evaluation and reflection in to all outcomes delivered
Promote best practice	Develop collaborative teacher/educator CPD in partnership with the Natural History Museum and British Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Real World Science Teacher CPD programme. • Deliver teacher CPD
	Embed learning practice in Newcastle University's PGCE Secondary and Primary Initial Teacher Training Courses as appropriate	Provide annual on site opportunities for PGCE students to engage with museum staff and collections as part of their taught programme
	Further develop KS3 Science, English and Art	Create plan for subject transition from KS2 to KS3 in consultation with partner schools
Raise aspiration	Work with Newcastle University's Student Recruitment Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the annual sleepover. • Seek other opportunities to support the SRT.

AIM 3: To create strong partnerships

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Nourish and deepen existing stakeholder partnerships	Work with NHSN and SANT when devising content and engagement activities to promote a deeper understanding of their areas of interest	The museum will host a small exhibit about the work of the Societies libraries NHSN/SANT activities will be folded into the Dippy on Tour and First Cities events programme and for future exhibitions as appropriate.
	Create a public facing explanation of stakeholder relationships	Use external façade of new Collections and Transit Store to explain relationships and history through an engaging art work
	NHSN and SANT Society knowledge shared via Volunteering.	Volunteers recruited and supported for Dippy on Tour (2019) and First Cities (2020) (and beyond)
	Draw on existing Newcastle University local and regional partnerships	Work with University Engagement Manager to map university partners to understand partnership potential
Create new partnerships	Create mutually beneficial partnerships with organisations that can help diversify our audience and offer	Use Dippy on Tour as an opportunity to work with digital designers and to present opportunities through the Dippy Symposium to create interdisciplinary HEI partnerships. Take this ethos into the forward programme.
	Seek out opportunities for co-creative partnerships that will expand our offer and reach to audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract digital design/experience company for Dippy on Tour exhibition and seek to work with other creatives on future exhibitions • Work with OpenLab on Dippy on Tour • Create at least 1 major co-creative partnership for First Cities (2020) and future exhibitions • Develop Partnership with Abandon Normal Devices to explore a virtual reality experience for the GNM • Established calendar of 'Great North Nights' late events to reach 18-30 year olds that draws on creative collaborations
	Continue to work with National Museums and international partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with BM on TH100 project • Continue to host a Finds Liaison Officer as part of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (funding dependant) • Seek a British Council funded opportunity with PUCRS MCT, Brazil • Create at least 1 non-London based national museum partnership • Create display area at the Great North Children's Hospital
Provide strong facilitation of partnerships	Act as a shared space for exchange and collaboration	Host at least two annual conference and/or museum showcase events

AIM 4: To increase our social impact

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Face the future, find our voice	Take a position on societal challenges through our outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dippy on Tour and its associated programme to have clear message and position around climate change and environmental sustainability • Where appropriate, make clear our position on issues as part of our continued outputs
	Promote public understanding of science	Continue to host European Researchers Night as a main focal point alongside promotion of science through core programme
	Promote public understanding of culture and its importance	Advance understanding of culture through outputs from the Headley Fellowship project/TH100 project alongside promotion of culture through core programme
Support existing initiatives	Work with partner schools	Support the development of TWAMs research schools initiative
	Work with TWAM outreach team	Support the Live Well programme with agreed activities
	Work with NGI and NGCV to support local pride for NewcastleGateshead	Contribute to the Great Exhibition of the North and its legacy
	Work with Skimstone on their young artists wellbeing initiative	Create and deliver collaborative project
	Work with City of Dreams to support ambition for children and young people in NewcastleGateshead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Make Something Brilliant campaign by promoting our programmes • Learning, Engagement and Research Manager to sit on Champions Group • Contribute to annual Family programme and other activities as they are agreed
Be better together	Seek joint funding with partners that creates a civic outcome	The museum will work with the School of Arts & Cultures towards an AHRC funded project with regards the Mouse House and its associated early years programme.
	Work with partners with diverse experience of community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Community Family Hubs to reach low and non museum users through collaboration with family practitioners and then use this work as a foundation towards the AHRC Mouse House funding bid. • Work with Young Carers Trust to deliver at least one engagement opportunity per year • Connect with Voluntary Groups and Social Enterprise network created by Newcastle University • Work with Dean of Social Justice to seek opportunities to connect with refugee groups around the First Cities exhibition

AIM 4: To increase our social impact

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
Extend our reach	Work towards opening up the organisation to external influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement informs programme and gallery creation as part of Mouse House AHRC project • Community engagement informs additional interpretation of Hadrian's Wall Gallery through WallCap project • Expand volunteering through opportunities presented by Dippy on Tour, First Cities and future programming • Identify Autism charity to advise on the growth of the Autism Friendly programme
	Content reaches beyond the museum's walls	Creating display at the Great North Children's Hospital

AIM 5: To lead at all levels and be fit for purpose

Objective	Outcome	Deliverable
To be visibly leading	Create a culture of leadership at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with external facilitator and staff to collaboratively form CPD programme • Broaden recruitment criteria to encompass candidates with diverse work experience • Contribute to Hadrian's Wall education forum • Contribute to Hadrian's Wall Education and Interpretation Group (as delivery group to Hadrian's Wall Management Committee) • Take a leadership role in the University Museums Group • Take a leadership role in the wider museum sector • Take a leadership role in local education sector
Working towards a sustainable future	The museum continues to deliver an excellent customer experience and maintains footfall above 450,000 per year	Staff exemplify Customer Service Standards and visitors rate their experiences highly. Footfall is maintained.
	Manage finances in a sustainable way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with TWAM Enterprises Ltd to improve and develop retail and catering sales • Work with the TWAM development team to raise income • The museum will work with the School of Arts & Cultures towards an AHRC funded project with regards the Mouse House and its associated early years programme.
	Create opportunities for chargeable activities	Consideration of charging policy for exhibitions and engagement opportunities
Working towards environmental sustainability	Manage operations in an environmentally stable way	Work within NCC environmental sustainable working practice
Good management	Review management working practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with senior leadership to review management functions • Work with Chair of Great North Museum Board to review board TORs and working practice • Innovate meetings to improve internal communication • Monitor strategic plan quarterly • Review plan



Get in touch

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