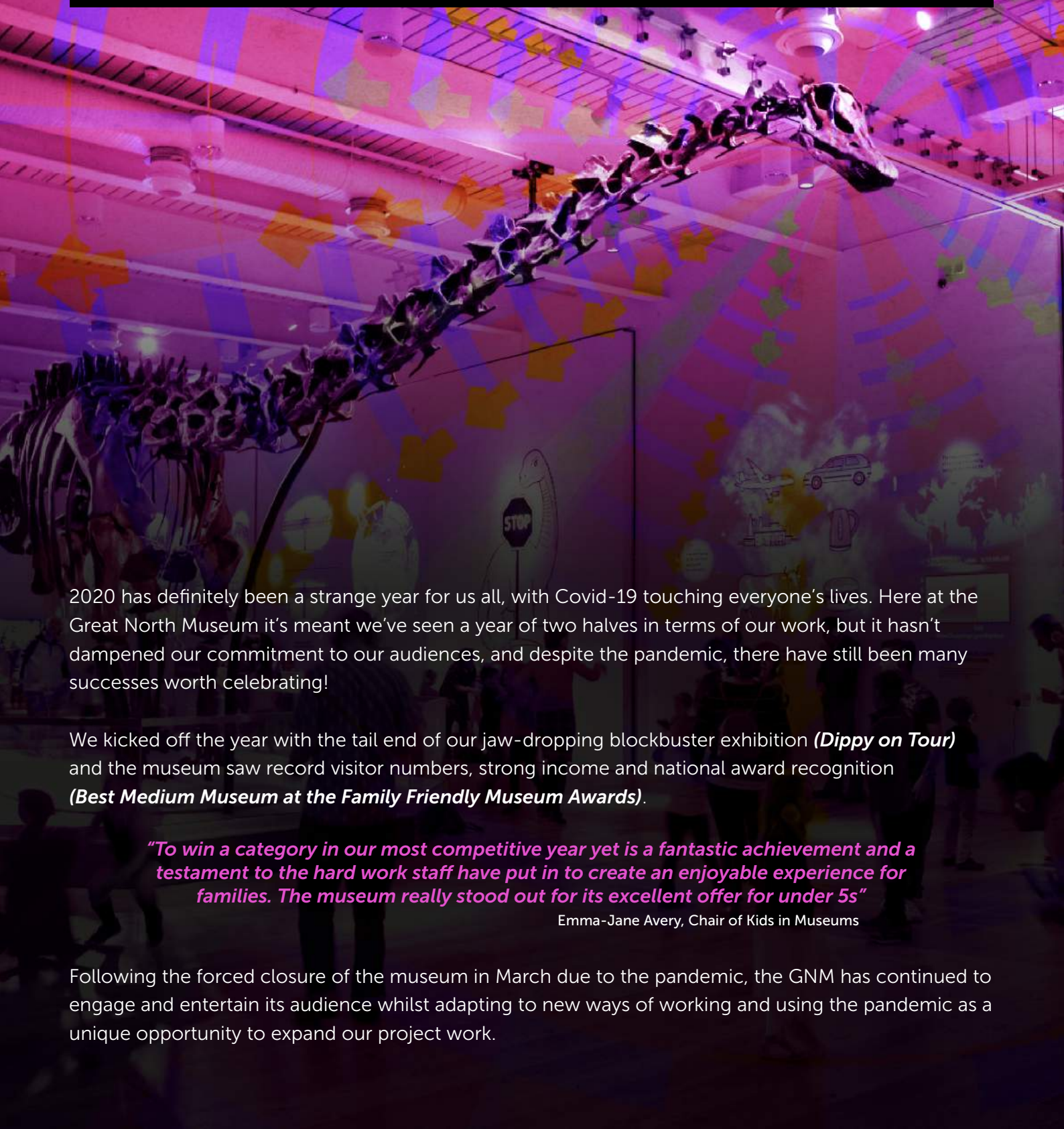




# The Great North Museum: Hancock

A Year in Numbers: 2019/20



2020 has definitely been a strange year for us all, with Covid-19 touching everyone's lives. Here at the Great North Museum it's meant we've seen a year of two halves in terms of our work, but it hasn't dampened our commitment to our audiences, and despite the pandemic, there have still been many successes worth celebrating!

We kicked off the year with the tail end of our jaw-dropping blockbuster exhibition (***Dippy on Tour***) and the museum saw record visitor numbers, strong income and national award recognition (***Best Medium Museum at the Family Friendly Museum Awards***).

*"To win a category in our most competitive year yet is a fantastic achievement and a testament to the hard work staff have put in to create an enjoyable experience for families. The museum really stood out for its excellent offer for under 5s"*

Emma-Jane Avery, Chair of Kids in Museums

Following the forced closure of the museum in March due to the pandemic, the GNM has continued to engage and entertain its audience whilst adapting to new ways of working and using the pandemic as a unique opportunity to expand our project work.

*"Everyone in my party really enjoyed visiting Dippy, from age 2-62!  
Information provided was well organised and in manageable chunks  
to keep children engaged and to get them thinking / asking questions"*

Visitor Feedback, Dippy on Tour

## Delivering World Class Exhibitions

From dinosaurs to dodos, Parthian slingshots to cyanobacteria, we continue to successfully engage audiences with our ambitious and captivating work. The iconic Dippy attracted over 300,000 visitors and boosted retail sales to £169,000, both of which represent significant increases – 82% and 273% respectively - compared to 2018. Despite the numerous obstacles imposed by Covid-19, we've maintained our reputation for research excellence and trailblazing science.

**£51,326**  
raised in donations

**6 SPECIAL  
EXHIBITIONS**  
attracting **62,447** visitors to the museum\*  
\*250,638 estimated visitors without closure

**241,500\***  
visitors through the door  
\*430,038 estimated visitors without closure

## Inspiring the Next Generation

This year saw our regular programmes continue to inspire and meet a broad range of learning needs for visitors of all ages. Further to this, our formal learning programmes proved successful in engaging schools from areas of low cultural engagement and, crucially, in encouraging children and young people less likely to participate in higher education to aspire towards better educational outcomes. In 2019/20 we programme was accessed by young people from areas ranking highly in the government's indices of multiple deprivation in terms of unemployment, education and health.



**12,934**  
children from over 250 visiting schools

**808**  
under 5s engaged  
via the family programme

*"Dippy on tour was brilliant, very well put together.  
I was not expecting it to have information about  
human impact on the world but I think  
it's very important that it did"*

Visitor Feedback, Dippy on Tour

*"Loved that it extended through the whole museum.  
Our 3 year old asked to visit again and again."*

Visitor Feedback, Dippy on Tour

*"Through our partnership with the GNM:Hancock  
we have been demonstrating what exemplar  
curriculum provision and creative homework looks like,  
valuing pupil and parent creativity and attaining the highest standards of art,  
creative writing and science in a purposeful context."*

Executive Head Teacher, West Jesmond Primary School

*"I've been coming since I was little and have brought my own little boy to the museum several times. It's a fantastic museum and we always love a visit. Today we came for something slightly different, the silent disco with Dippy the dinosaur. What a fantastic event! Our little boy absolutely loved it. Really well organised, excellent value for money and a wonderful atmosphere. Can't wait for the next one!"*

TripAdvisor review

## Engaging Audiences

Visitors enjoyed a packed programme of events across 2019 culminating in a sold-out Silent Disco. Despite having to close the museum in March we've continued to engage audiences through online content and programming, including a hugely popular drawing competition inspired by the exhibition Other Worlds: The Art of Atomhawk. Garnering close to 300 entries, the winning entries were transformed into fantastic concept artwork by Atomhawk themselves! To help drive engagement we've created Instagram stories around some of the quirkier items in our collections, including the UK's first wombat. We also included regular contributions to the #MuseumsUnlocked hashtag on Twitter.

**31,481**

followers on social media

**17,777**

participants at 54 events

**32** Researchers

delivering public engagement and developing event content

## Developing Access to our Collections

Drawing on our treasure trove of stories, our curators have produced blogs on samurai armour, heritage in Iraq, famous local naturalists and archaeologists through history, the geology of Northumberland's beaches and the Naga people of India and Myanmar. We were awarded funding to research and showcase our collection of ostracods and, in partnership with Beacon Films, object-focused short films were produced by our film intern. Most importantly, we developed our Repatriation policy to ensure we act equitably when it comes to our World Cultures Collections.

**7,995**

visits to our online tours

*"The large number of visitors to the Great North Museum were a perfect audience for communicating this kind of research as they visit the museum hoping to learn something. The impact of our research was greatly increased by communicating topical and relevant information to such an audience."*

Professor Hayley Fowler, Newcastle University

**17** BLOG PUBLICATIONS

**13** NEW PAPERS & PUBLICATIONS

*"Working with the staff over the summer was a great experience for both me and the three MA students who gained a lot from running the engagement activities. The final exhibition of work was a particular highlight and drew many more visitors than we expected to consider a subject not often in the public eye."*

Dr Kenneth Taylor, Newcastle University

## Embedding Research Impact

In 2019/20 our Assistant Keeper of Archaeology completed her Headley Fellowship with Art Fund. Creative Power was a six-month research sabbatical that vastly improved our knowledge about our fascinating Native North American Collections.

We've worked alongside a number of experts to create a dynamic programme of events for schools, families, young people and adults, providing valuable opportunities to open up dialogue around their research with the public.

## Supporting Students and University Teaching

**1,518**  
**STUDENTS**  
supported through 82 courses

**22 STUDENT**  
**PLACEMENTS**  
amounting to 1,491 hours of contact time

Prior to the impact of COVID-19, we continued to support university teaching and worked with academics and students from across Newcastle University, providing a unique resource and supporting graduate employment, supervising postgraduates and PhD students. We've spent this summer considering how we can adapt our practices to support students and university colleagues returning to campus under very different conditions so that we can continue to provide additional benefit to the learning experience.

*"The opportunity to do an internship at the GNM and experience such a different working environment to what I was used to has been one of the highlights of my doctoral training. I was able to build on my existing skills and develop new ones, widening my horizons for when I finish my PhD"*

Amy Tooke, PhD student, Sheffield University

## Extending our National and Global Impact

Connections and collaborations made with museum and research communities in **AUSTRALIA, GERMANY, USA, IRELAND, JAPAN and CZECH REPUBLIC**

As founding members of the Science in University Museums group we continued to engage with colleagues from Brazil, Portugal and South America, and we continue to engage in virtual discussions with researchers from around the globe. These partnerships continue to play a crucial role in extending the impact of our work and creating opportunities for collaboration remotely, and (hopefully) in person, once day-to-day life for our museum, our audiences, and the world can move beyond the challenges imposed by Covid-19.

## Thanks

We'd like to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their energy and commitment, and also all of our partners, funders and friends for their ongoing support!

We now enter a new phase in our thinking that provides us with the focus and the opportunity to connect with audiences in different ways, and to act as spaces where we can reflect on extraordinary shared experiences.

With strategies clearly focused on outcomes for people, we're well placed to continue to deliver our mission and vision in a post-Coronavirus world. We are confident that as creative storytellers and collaborators, we will find diverse solutions for impactful and meaningful engagement.