

# BARNSLEY MUSEUMS ANNUAL REVIEW 2019–2020



BARNSELY MUSEUMS







**WELCOME  
TO ELSECAR**  
The Earls' village  
of iron and coal

Gift  
Shop

**VISITOR  
CENTRE**  
Gifts &  
Souvenirs  
Guides &  
Information  
Open daily  
10.00am - 4.00pm



# Welcome to a year at Barnsley Museums

It has been another inspirational year from Barnsley Museums. With over 1.3 million visitors they have had their busiest year to date. The Council is extremely proud of its cultural offer and the work that Barnsley Museums do to strengthen our visitor economy and improve life for our residents, their creativity and innovation knows no bounds. Much of this work is in partnership and we must thank our many partners for their willingness to engage with us and support the transformational power of culture and our belief in the **#museumschangelives** campaign.

Barnsley Museums have continued to deliver inspirational programmes across our borough working with communities old and new. Working with refugees, young carers, Mothers Who Make, care home residents, schools, families and many more – the work is powerful and the impact demonstrable.

This year has seen a number of funded programmes come to completion including the Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership (DVLP) – but strong legacy planning means the work goes on. The Goldthorpe Embankment project in which the DVLP were a key partner has shown what can be achieved by council teams working together across services and with our communities.

Major planning has continued at Elsecar as we approach the culmination of the three year Heritage Action Zone project supported by Historic England, with amazing new research revealing just how important a role the model village played in the Industrial Revolution. A new High Street Heritage Action Zone has been announced for Eldon Street in Barnsley town centre, linking the new town centre regeneration development to the historic conservation area, home to the Civic, Experience Barnsley Museum and the Cooper Gallery. The major restoration project in the park and gardens at Cannon Hall has seen extensive works to the landscape, as well as to the walled garden and numerous follies.

This summer will see the launch of a fantastic new visitor offer on site. The Great Place programme in partnership with Rotherham Council and Wentworth Woodhouse continues to deliver exciting opportunities for young people in both boroughs, as well as focusing on developing our tourism offer. Wentworth Castle has been re-launched in partnership with the National Trust and Northern College, it is proving extremely popular with visitors old and new.

We are grateful for the continued support of our funders, especially Arts Council England, Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund who continue to help us deliver our vision.

**Councillor Tim Cheetham**  
**Cabinet Spokesperson,**  
**Regeneration and Culture**



# All Working Together: In Partnership for our Communities

Barnsley Museums have a strong community focused programme engaging more people, promoting diversity and fostering a sense of pride. We have worked with communities across the borough bringing the Caravan Gallery to Wombwell High Street and an artist residency to Barnsley Age UK's Men in Sheds project. Our Feels Like Home project has delivered weekly ESOL provision with cultural experiences for refugees and asylum seekers.

Residents in Elsecar have continued to make history and contribute ideas for the future, through a series of consultation events. An archaeological dig of our New Colliery Engine House, as part of our Great Place and Heritage Action Zone projects, was designed by local young people, and responded to by artists and local communities.

Volunteering across our venues has continued to grow and feedback shows volunteers have a great sense of pride in what they do and come from a variety of backgrounds, including young people, the retired, corporate businesses, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and ex-offenders.

At Experience Barnsley the exhibition Tins! Tins! Tins! told the incredible story of the Barnsley Canister Company.

Links to the ex-workforce helped us make sense of archive material and objects as we visited people at home, recording their stories. Alongside the exhibition The Second World War: Barnsley's Story, we ran an ambitious community heritage programme taking collections to people who would struggle to get to our museums.

Our archives team have contributed towards the research and content of exhibitions. This included working with Berneslai Homes on the '100 Years of Council Housing in Barnsley' exhibition which premiered in the new Library @ the LightBox and toured independent living housing schemes.

Our Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership team were a key partner in the Goldthorpe Embankment Scheme which has been shortlisted for the 2020 Community Involvement LGC Award.

As part of our commitment to be accessible for everyone we have undertaken audits and held a series of focus groups, covering both physical and sensory access. We have developed an access policy and action plan to inform future work.



**Brilliant to see the Barnsley Spitfire today! My grandad used to work on them when he served in the RAF during WW2. We must never forget those who gave so much for our freedoms today."**

**Stephanie Peacock**  
MP



# 1,323,321

people have visited museums



# 18,151

Volunteer hours given



Sandford Awards  
achieved



ESOL  
sessions



objects in our new  
Handling Collection



38,018



43,154



5,534

social media followers

# Exciting Future for our Proud Past: Transforming Barnsley's Heritage

Barnsley Museums excel in the research, management, conservation, and development of our collections and heritage assets. 'Venice, Paradise of Cities' at the Cooper Gallery celebrated the light, colours and architecture of Venice. At the core of the exhibition were nine paintings from the Cooper Gallery's own collection, three of which were conserved for the exhibition.

Funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund delivered by the Museums Association and DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund has allowed us to refurbish the ceramics galleries at Cannon Hall Museum.

Community outreach work has generated hundreds of donated objects which tell the story of the borough and its people. These diverse and fascinating collections increasingly reflect the diversity of our communities, old and new.

Thanks to a grant from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust we have conserved the antiquarian Dransfield Collection – a collection of national importance because it includes 19th century correspondence relating to the establishment of the earliest football clubs in the country.

A grant from the UK National Archives is allowing us to catalogue and make accessible the historic archives of over 100 nonconformist places of worship across the Borough of Barnsley.

Cannon Hall Parks for People Project has seen the renovation of three Grade II listed cottages, the renovation of a Georgian Ice house and midden, and the restoration of a walled garden and pleasure grounds.

The winding wheel and associated metal work at Barnsley Main Colliery received a face lift. This was no mean feat as it involved intrepid abseiling and magnificent detective work by contractors to ensure that the paint was the exact colour of the original (RAL 5014 Pigeon Blue for the curious) which not only brings the visual identity of the headgear back to its former glory, it will also protect it for many years to come.

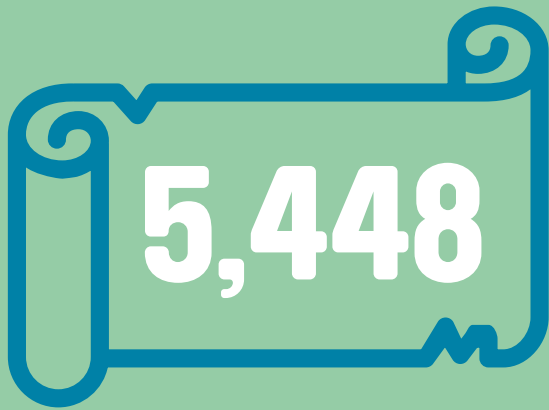
Work has started on the National Lottery Heritage funded Wet Woodlands project at Worsbrough Mill. This scheme will see the development of habitat for key species and improve the walking and visitor experience of the country park.



**The conservation works afforded a once in a lifetime opportunity to delve into the history of this important site.”**

**James Thomson**

Jessops, Project Archaeologists,  
Cannon Hall

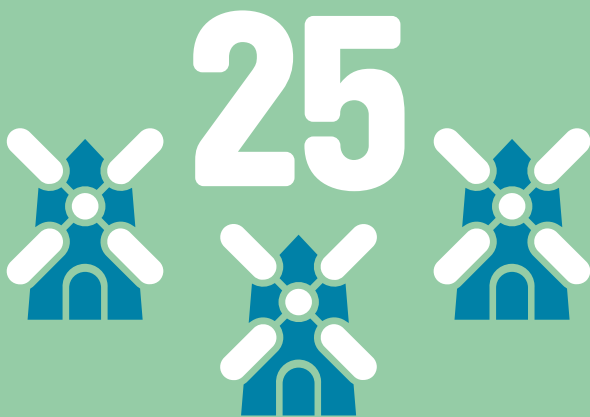


people engaged in  
community arts & heritage

13,840



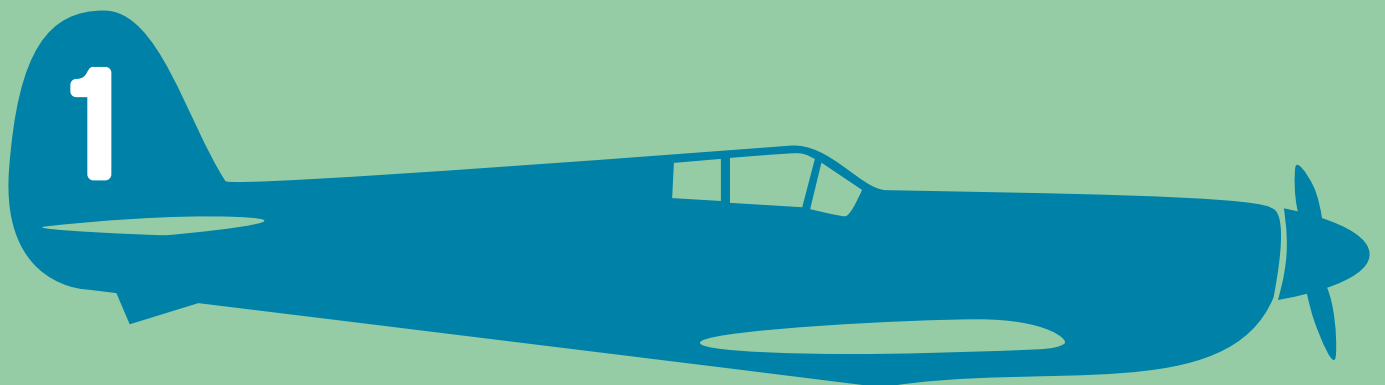
family participants in  
organised activities



tonnes of  
flour milled



Georgian cottages  
refurbished



Spitfire outside the Town Hall



# Inspiring our Future: For Families and Young People

Barnsley Museums create aspirational and educational opportunities for families and young people. Our National Portfolio funding from Arts Council England has enabled us to do so much more of this over the last year.

From outdoor trails at Cannon Hall and Worsbrough Mill, to craft activities and role play areas, the museums offer opportunities for families to spend valuable time together.

Barnsley Museums under 5s offer developed further with the introduction of the 'Teeney Time Travellers Club' and 'Story Makers' at Experience Barnsley bringing families together to interact with collections through imagination and creative play. 'Art Babies' takes our offer out to branch libraries across the borough, making connections and building relationships with new audiences.

Elsecar Heritage Centre and Cannon Hall Museum have achieved Sandford Awards for the high quality of our formal learning offer.

A teacher consultation panel has been established to advise on and co-create future engagement opportunities with schools. Two Teach Meets sessions have been delivered through FUSION, Barnsley's Local Cultural Education Partnership, linking teachers with cultural providers in the area.

An in-depth project funded by Waterloo200 has explored the 'Age of Revolution' with a local primary school, using projection mapping to investigate the workings of the Newcomen Beam Engine.

The Great Place Enterprise Programme has successfully piloted dynamic, engaging and relevant ways of mobilising the ideas and aspirations of young people in their teens – over 1500 of them have been involved in the pilot that will be taken forward as part of our core offer.

This year saw us begin a SEND volunteer offer, supporting young people with a range of learning and physical health conditions to volunteer with us, learning new skills and building confidence. A partnership with Qdos Creates, Opening Doors and Greenacre School has seen this volunteer group go from strength to strength.

WE Great Place commissioned a climate change inspired dance performance from QDOS Creates working with young people from Horizon Community College. The young people gained valuable experience and new skills from their involvement, performing the piece under Luke Gerram's artwork Gaia.



**Because this was such an interesting project, I decided to go with a less experienced group and I think the benefits to them have been dramatic. Some of them have never been out of Barnsley so performing at the Elsecar Heritage Centre and Wentworth Woodhouse was a really special experience."**

**Jade Hunt Horizon**  
Teacher





990



secondary  
school pupils  
engaged

2448



primary school  
children in formal  
sessions



new digital curator



ceramics digitised



APPRENTICESHIPS

supported



1,600

soundcloud / podcast  
listeners



4,500

archive items  
catalogued

# Effective, Resilient and Impactful: For our Economy

Barnsley Museums are driven to be commercially effective, financially resilient and increase our economic impact for the borough and South Yorkshire as a visitor destination. We have continued our successful approach to financial resilience focusing on external investment to boost our visitor economy, income generation through our commercial services and working closely with our charity, Barnsley Museums & Heritage Trust.

Our impact on the local economy is huge and growing, supporting local businesses and job creation. At Elsecar, we continue to support over 40 businesses and organisations on site through providing a quality business and trading environment and bringing footfall and spend to South Yorkshire.

Wentworth Castle Gardens reopened in June 2019, through a partnership between The National Trust, Barnsley Museums and Northern College. The site wonderfully complements the high-quality cultural offer of museums and visitor attractions in Barnsley.

Our WE Great Place project is working with the cultural leads in the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities to create a robust and credible case for culture, art and heritage as drivers of the South Yorkshire economy.

Funding from the Arts Council England under their Small Capital Grants Scheme helped us transform an empty cottage at the Cooper Gallery into artist studio space, alongside a new café and additional selling space for regional artists. The new facility launched as part of the Barnsley Bright Nights event, a spectacular three night festival of light across the town centre. As part of this Barnsley Museums and WE Great Place brought artist Luke Jerram's artwork Gaia to Barnsley College.

Barnsley Museums and Heritage Trust has enjoyed a great year embedding its new strategy and seeing income, to support the wonderful projects at Barnsley Museums, rise from £88,000 in 2018/19 to over nearly £400,000 this year. This incredible growth has been achieved through a greater focus on making applications to grant funders, the encouragement of on-site donations and the strengthening of their partnerships with Barnsley College and NPS Barnsley.



“

**Over 5,000 people came into college to see it over the three nights of Barnsley's Bright Nights. It was amazing to see so many different reactions; small children dancing underneath it, adults marvelling at how much of the globe is water. We wouldn't have had the opportunity to have Gaia if it wasn't for the work of Barnsley Museums.”**

**Liz Leek**

Vice Principal Curriculum and Culture  
at Barnsley College



# £28.5M

economic impact value



external funding secured



individual  
volunteers



work placements  
supported

# Digital, Virtual, Transformational: Embracing a Digital World

We appointed our first Digital Engagement Curator in May 2019, to provide new paths for audiences to engage with us. Our newly expanded digital offer includes regular podcasts and blogs, and lots more opportunities to talk to us on social media.

We've been experimenting with virtual reality. Virtual Vessels inspired by the ceramics collection at Cannon Hall Museum, and Virtual Venice at the Cooper Gallery, have both grabbed the imagination of visitors young and old, and brought new audiences to our sites.

Our first digital artwork was unveiled in November at the Cooper Gallery as part of the Bright Nights Festival. 'Garden of Light' takes visitors on a journey through the garden space using music, sound and projection inspired by our art collections.

We've used Whatsapp to create our first online exhibition for Inktober, and for people to add their own stories to our Second World War exhibition. We have invested in an overhead digital scanner for staff and volunteers to digitise and share the collections in our care.

Some of the unique sound collections held by Barnsley Archives were made accessible online for the first time as we embraced the world of podcasting. There have been 8 episodes uploaded during 2019–20. These have included memories of Barnsley Market, the Barnsley Canister Company, and of working down coal mines.

Our marketing team have fully embraced digital platforms, using them to reach and engage with new and existing audiences. This has allowed us to experiment with how we communicate with our visitors (and non-visitors), and to help improve how we evaluate the impact of our work.

We have incorporated new technology into marketing material (such as interactive brochures), invested in digital collateral such as film and imagery to better represent the diversity of our offer and communities.



“

**We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to the gallery today, we attended for the VR Venice sessions and loved the drawing group downstairs, Jake the tutor was excellent, staff were really welcoming and encouraging. Michael with the VR was excellent, really passionate and interesting”**

**Visitor**  
Venice exhibition



# Case Study:

## Digital Engagement Curator

Michael Hardy has been on an amazing journey from Future Jobs Fund placement to Barnsley Museum's first Digital Engagement Curator. He is a great example of what hard work, dedication and technical know-how can do!

By 2013 Michael was a full-time member of the archives team and increasingly showed interest in developing the sound and film archive collections, and in developing the services' social media output boosting followers massively. He played a key role in 2017–18 in the lottery funded Joy of Sound and Vision project, helping to source archive film material and overseeing conversion to modern formats.

After this Michael started to take the lead on discussions about how to manage and safeguard our digital collections. In 2019 he was successful in being appointed to a new role within the culture team – Digital Engagement Curator. The role was designed to lead on our digital plan and strategy to make our service as digitally advanced as possible.

Michael's success is down to hard work and pride in his hometown. He has always gone above and beyond, thought out of the box and inspired others. He has got behind the council's #digitalfirst agenda in a huge way – becoming a digital persona and helping others to embrace and enjoy the brave new world!

My speciality has always been anything digital, from sourcing and scanning all the images on display at Experience Barnsley, and the creation of Barnsley's first film and sound archive which led to the exhibition Barnsley on Film in 2018.

So in 2019 when the opportunity of Barnsley Museums' first Digital Curator arose I jumped for it. In just under a year I've been up and down the country developing my skills and making new networks across the sector. I've had a lot of fun expanding Barnsley Museums' digital offer, helping the museums find their voice through social media.

I've ensured that digital is embedded throughout everything that Barnsley Museums do. I've already launched the museums first podcast and blog, started making audio guides to make our venues more accessible. I have dressed as a superhero to record a video showing that Experience Barnsley and The Cooper Gallery are within walking distance of each other. I'm looking forward to the year ahead as I continue to put Barnsley Museums on the digital map!

**Michael Hardy**



# Transforming Lives: For Health and Wellbeing

Barnsley Museums make a strong contribution to the happiness and health and wellbeing of the Borough. A pilot project at Cannon Hall Park with the NHS Veterans Mental Health Complex Treatment Service, offering a wellbeing course for ex-service personnel with Post Traumatic Stress was shortlisted for a national award by the Nursing Times. Our weekly dementia-friendly Forget-me-Not Café at the Snap Tin in Goldthorpe has created a valuable peer support group combatting the fear and isolation felt by all affected by a dementia diagnosis.

Wellbeing engagement includes storytelling trails and activities to get families outdoors or feeling creative together are a key part of our offer, and new outdoor learning workshops allow school children the opportunity to connect with nature. A creative writing workshop developed at Wentworth Castle Gardens, in partnership with the National Trust, gives children the opportunity to be inspired by the beautiful landscape.

Our volunteer programme continues to encourage people of all abilities to take part in physical activity in green spaces, learn new skills, enjoy their surroundings and boost confidence in their abilities. The wide variety of opportunities is having a positive impact on participants physical and mental health.

Our regular guided walks and tours, over a variety of lengths and routes to suit participants from across our communities, have been attracting an excellent response, including from those who mention how they're 'not used to getting out and about', and don't enjoy green spaces or walking regularly. 'This has been brilliant, I haven't done anything like this for years, I didn't know I could walk so far.'

Through the Barnsley Cares project we have worked with Age UK, Alzheimer's Society, Barnsley Hospice, Churchfields Care Home Butterflies Dementia Support and Weavers Court Residential Home. These community-based well-being sessions have included reminiscing, dancing, singing and lots of laughter. Butterflies Dementia Support have been on several fully supported 'club trips' to all our museum sites. We are very proud of our new partnership with Be-Friend social isolation charity in the Dearne who have also been on some heritage adventures with us. The Feels Like Home group continues to support members, from helping with university applications, school places and making community links vital for people's well-being in difficult times.

Events such as the Puddlers Fair and Elsecar by the Sea have brought our sites to life with live performance, street theatre, creativity and lots of laughter and enjoyment.



**Thank you for making me feel  
like a human being again."**

**Member of Feels Like Home**







**Dearne Valley**  
Landscape  
Partnership

**4,280**



**metres of  
footpaths improved**

**13,750m<sup>2</sup>**



**roadside verges seeded  
with wildflowers**



**young people achieved  
their Arts Awards**

**60**



**community groups  
supported**

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