INTRODUCTION

Derby Museums is an independent trust that operates three museums, the Museum and Art Gallery, Pickford’s House and the Silk Mill. It cares for the collections of cultural heritage on behalf of Derby City Council for the people of Derby. It also houses the 9th/12th Royal Lancers museum.

Derby has unique cultural assets. The Silk Mill is the site of the world’s first factory and is situated in the Derwent Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is undergoing a £16.5m transformation to become the UK’s first Museum of Making. Derby Museums has the finest collection of work by Joseph Wright of Derby, the 18th century artist of the Enlightenment and is Designated by Arts Council England as a collection of national significance.

Derby’s identity was 300 years in the making, and the Enlightenment spirit of creativity and invention resonates today. The heritage of the city is used to frame ambitions for the future both as one of the UK’s top hi-tech cities and a principal centre for manufacturing and sustainable engineering.

We believe the best museum is a place of encounters. Somewhere people can look at the world differently, form new friendships and be active. Our visitors must feel they are entitled to participate and be encouraged to do so.

For Derby Museums to thrive, to have a positive impact on local people and to promote the city to the outside world, it needs to be a sustainable enterprise. As an independent trust we are able to pursue opportunities, to form unusual partnerships and to generate more income from the organisation’s assets.
THE DERBY MUSEUMS’ STORY

Derby Museums consists of three sites; between them they inspire us to appreciate our world, our city and our homes.

At the Museum and Art Gallery, the works of Joseph Wright of Derby are the crown jewels of our collections. Wright’s paintings and sketches embody a spirit of discovery, stimulated by the 18th century Enlightenment. He painted scenes of science, experimentation and exploration. He painted enlightened men of industry and learning.

Through observing nature and manufactured items from the past, enlightened people questioned received wisdom and superstition. They thirsted for knowledge of the world around them, which they used to understand their place in the Universe. Derby Museum and Art Gallery should elicit pleasure and joy from curiosity. It should encourage visitors to take notice of their surroundings, to marvel at the complexity of nature and to think differently about their world.

Derby Silk Mill is the site of the world’s first factory, built in the valley that changed the world. Industry brought prosperity to some and poverty and wage slavery to others. Yet it shaped Derby as a city of making and creativity. Industrial society led to the creation of civic institutions and stimulated a civil society in which people campaigned for social and political rights.

In 2020, The Silk Mill will re-open as the Museum of Making. The first of its kind to be entirely co-produced with the public, inspired by the makers of the past, made by the makers of today and empowering the makers of the future.

Pickford’s House was the home of an Enlightenment family. The home is where we have our closest relationships, where we eat, sleep, and find comfort and love. Behind the doors we express our most intimate feelings, and gather possessions that identify us. Pickford’s House should help us reflect on our own lives. To understand the world and our city, we could first try to know ourselves.

The 9th/12th Royal Lancers Museum is located within Derby Museum and Art Gallery, and is accredited in its own right. It displays the best objects associated with the regiment as an integrated part of The Soldiers Story gallery. This gallery also features material relating to the Sherwood Foresters and Derbyshire Yeomanry Regiments. Derby Museums sees the 9th/12th Royal Lancers museum as integral to its future plans.
WE ARE DERBY

- We run three museums, and host a fourth.
- We care for 250,000 objects, including an internationally renowned fine art collection of works by Joseph Wright of Derby and Designated by Arts Council England.
- By 2020, 100% of our collections of making will be accessible at the Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill.
- Just over 400 works by Joseph Wright of Derby are on display or available to the public in the Joseph Wright Study Centre.
- We welcome 120,000 people to our sites each year.
- Over 15,000 children and young people use our organised services.
- We work with 10 universities, supporting undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral students each year.
- In 2016-17, over 800 regular and ‘informal’ volunteers participated in Derby Museums contributing 13,700 hours to the value of over £200,000.
- As a Major Partner Museum, and now a National Portfolio Organisation, we are an exemplar organisation, and a leader in the museum sector in participation, innovation, well-being and sustainability.
- We connect with museums all over the world; we have partnerships in the US, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe. Delegations from museums in Germany, Sweden, the US, Canada, Japan and New Zealand have visited us to find out about what we do.
- Since 2014 our ratio of earned income to turnover has increased fourfold.
In 2012, Derby Museums was a department of Derby City Council. It was almost totally reliant on subsidy from the Council and the Arts Council. There were few ways for the public or businesses to support or help shape the future of Derby Museums.

**In five years, there has been a transformation.**

**Enterprise**

Since 2014, investment from Derby City Council and Arts Council has reduced by some 30%. We have significantly improved our ability to generate our own funds, through commercial activities, fundraising and awards from Trusts and Foundations. As a result, the ratio of earned income to turnover has increased from 3% in 2013-14 to 26% in 2016-17.

**Participation**

Upon becoming an independent trust, Derby Museums committed to embed participation in every aspect of its work. We have welcomed a breadth of participants; makers, hackers, artists, specialists, enthusiasts and supporters, to help make displays, conduct research, run activities and be hosts in our museums. This approach has hugely enriched the content of our programmes and has bred a new generation of supporters and makers.

**Reciprocity**

We want to encourage civic philanthropy, so that we continue to create social and cultural impact for our community. Donations large and small help preserve and develop our cultural heritage and provide opportunities for everyone in our community to learn about their place in the world. Like our founding forerunners in the 1880s, we passionately believe that museums should be ‘for people of all sorts’. Generous donations help keep our museums free for everyone. In late 2017, we launched an endowment campaign supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. If we raise £1m by 2022, the HLF will double it.

**The Vision**

*Derby Museums is for the thinker and maker in all of us*

**The Cause and Values**

Together we make museums for the head, heart and hands. We will do this by:

- Being independent
- Fostering a spirit of experimentation
- Pursuing mutual relationships
- Creating the conditions for well-being (helping people connect with others, keep learning, take notice of the world and give back to the community)
- Proving that we are doing it
THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Know your Wrights
2. Be relevant to our citizens
3. Stand on our own feet
4. Always in front
5. Every child a maker

By 2022

- Every school in Derby will engage with Derby Museums.
- We will transition to a mixed and sustainable funding model with a 45:55 mix earned income and public investment.
- Through exhibitions and programmes all the communities of our city will recognise they have something to say about the story of our city.
- We will lead an international programme to promote the work of Joseph Wright of Derby – the ‘painter of light’.
- We will be regarded as one of the world’s most innovative and resourceful regional museums.
1. KNOW YOUR WRIGHTS

Derby Museums has the largest and most comprehensive collection of work by Joseph Wright of Derby anywhere in the world. Its collection of oils, watercolours and works on paper was designated a collection of outstanding national significance by Arts Council England in 2011. The Joseph Wright Study Room was opened in 2014, enabling us to share over 300 drawings, along with prints ‘after his work’, and a range of associated objects in one purpose-built space.

We continue to expand the collection. In the last few years, a pair of portraits of the Hurt family and two landscapes around Cromford, were purchased at auction with significant grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Art Fund.

Through conversations with the public in our ‘project labs’ in the museum there is much interest in ‘getting to know’ Wright, on a more personal, human basis, as well as in his reputation and legacy both locally and nationally. ‘Pride in Wright’ was a recurrent theme that emerged through dialogue, supporting our ambitions for Wright to be a catalyst for change and regeneration in Derby.

Derby Museums has ambitions to lead an international programme to enhance the study and understanding of the artist. We will build on the memorandum of understanding with the Tate and the National Gallery, and the good relationship with the Mellon Centre for British Art at Yale in the US. We propose a range of activities involving the digitisation of the whole collection, a number of ‘Wright in-focus’ exhibitions, the hosting of doctoral students to extend knowledge and understanding of Wright and the curating of a major international touring exhibition of his work.

Objectives

- Make 100% of the collection available digitally by 2020.
- Raise awareness of Joseph Wright of Derby amongst Derby people through three significant exhibitions and programmes during 2018-22.
- Explore the nature and feasibility of an international Joseph Wright touring exhibition by the end of 2018.
- Become recognised globally as a premier institution for the study and understanding of the life and work of Joseph Wright by 2022.
2. BE RELEVANT TO OUR CITIZENS

The heritage of our city is explicitly used to frame its future ambitions. We’ll help people in Derby to recognise their city as one of the UK’s centres for innovation and advanced manufacturing.

Many of Derby Museums’ collections were amassed at a time when Britain was an imperial power. Human-made objects and natural history specimens were acquired from all over the planet to promote edification and learning and to project imperial and civic pride. Derby Museums has to take into account its imperial past, recognising privilege and injustice.

Derby has global ambitions but within its neighbourhoods there is diversity and local pride. 24% of its population self-identify as non-white British and 15% of its people are Muslim. Whilst Derby may project itself as a thriving economic hub, it also has some of the poorest wards in England. Market Research commissioned in 2016 shows that low income and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) visitors are underrepresented in our museums.

We will improve the digital experience of Derby Museums, putting more of our collections online and increasing the number of 3D scanned objects available. We will continue to develop our excellent social media profile on a range of platforms addressing a breadth of audiences.

A comprehensive Audience Development Strategy will target activities in places where there is low participation. We will take objects to the places where people meet, develop a Mobile Museum of Making and build relationships with neighbourhood and community organisations.

We have long term capital development plans to enhance the experience of our museums.

The new Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill will be the first large scale co-produced museum in the UK. In addition, we will continue to co-produce and create plans to redevelop the 138 year-old Derby Museum and Art Gallery as a showcase of art and natural science.

A museum’s role is to use the long view of the past to understand the complexities of the present and to explore the community’s hopes and ambitions for the future.

Objectives

- Co-produce the Museum of Making to public and industry acclaim. In its first full year of operation it will welcome 140,000 visitors.
- Reach more people by diversifying our activities and making them more relevant to attract new visitors. Visitor numbers will increase by 100% by 2021.
- Continue the phased refurbishment of the current Derby Museum and Art Gallery and develop the former Central Library space as a mixed use activity space for public activities and private hire during 2018-21.
- Develop a full scheme to redevelop the entire Derby Museum and Art Gallery complex, with an outline scheme by 2021 and full HLF stage one submission in 2022.
- Increase the diversity of ways in which people can participate through volunteering and co-production.
- On behalf of the Derby Vibrant City partnership create The Derby Story as an advocacy and education resource by 2019.
3. STAND ON OUR OWN FEET

Derby Museums is a social enterprise – business-like, opportunity seeking, but with a profound sense of social purpose.

Derby Museums cannot survive without some form of public investment but we do not believe we are entitled to subsidy. As an organisation, we must continually make the case for investment by demonstrating our impact on our city via robust research and evaluation. We will place great emphasis upon sustaining reciprocal relationships with Derby City Council, Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and University of Derby.

Our business must diversify its income streams to spread risk. We must continue the great progress we have made in financially optimising our intellectual, cultural, social and physical assets, through commercial activity such as hires and functions, catering and retail and consultancy.

We will increase our fundraising capability, ensuring there is a fundraising culture embedded within the museums from the board to frontline staff.

We will deepen our partnerships with existing industry partners such as Rolls-Royce and Toyota and seek new relationships with local SMEs and start-up businesses.

Objectives

- Establish a ratio of 45:55 of earned income to public investment in Derby Museums’ turnover by 2022.
- Raise £2m for the new Derby Museums Endowment by 2022.
- Improve the quality of impact research and evaluation, showing clear social value to better make the case for public investment from our main stakeholders by 2019.
- Ensure that by 2020, Derby Museums’ Board is more diverse and representative of our city. Ensure there is more balance in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and disability.
- Produce a strategy and implementation plan (with our landlords Derby City Council) for the long term storage needs of the museums’ assets and collections by 2021.
4. ALWAYS IN FRONT

Derby Museums has punched well above its weight within the museum sector. It has been recognised for its inventiveness and innovation by museums around the world. It welcomes a large number of study visits to see its practice at first hand, and its staff are regularly asked to speak at national and international conferences.

Programmes such as the Arts Science Prize, Launch into Engineering and new galleries such as Notice nature feel joy and Your place in the world, stretch our thinking and the public’s appreciation of what a museum is, what it can be and what it can do.

Invoking the Enlightenment spirit of experimentation, rationalism and curiosity, Derby Museums has developed a Human Centred Design approach to its activities. This involves sharing in the development, testing and production of programmes at the museum. This approach has been used in gallery development, community activities, school sessions, and on a much greater scale, the co-production of the Silk Mill project.

We are committed to enhancing our reputation for innovation and participation. We will create the conditions to experiment and take risks, to promote environmental sustainability and well-being. This approach applies to every area of the organisation, from programming and display to fundraising and commercial development.

To facilitate this we will form mutually beneficial partnerships with civic society groups, businesses, other cultural organisations and the education sector.

Objectives

• For Derby Museums to be recognised as a leading organisation, exploring the role of civic museums nationally and at regional level.

• Develop international collaborations with museums, especially those in the US and Canada.

• To be a generous organisation which supports people to take risks and realise their own ambitions.

• Develop a consulting arm of Derby Museums which maximises a return on our skills and intellectual property during 2021-22.
5. EVERY CHILD A MAKER

Until recently, Derby’s schools had some of the worst records for attainment in the country. In 2017, Derby was designated as a government ‘Opportunity Area’, to be provided with targeted support to encourage social mobility. Inspired by the Arts Council’s Cultural Learning Challenge, we believe every child in Derby should have at least one cultural heritage learning experience a year.

Museum learning is very different from formal learning. It’s curiosity driven, non-judgmental; non-compulsory; engaging; informal; and fun. The people needed in the future will be resilient, creative, resourceful and empathetic, exactly the kind of capacities museum learning can support.

We believe that creativity is an essential quality in problem solving and an enhancement to technical skills. Through the Institute of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) based in the Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, we will inspire the next generation of makers and thinkers.

Objectives

• Derby Museums will engage children in every school in Derby by 2022.
• Develop a Derby STEAM curriculum with local education providers from early years to further and higher education by 2022.
• Create new partnerships with industry in order to deliver three targeted vocational programmes for vulnerable children and young people by 2021 (building on the Launch into Engineering project).
• Develop and implement a strategy for early years learning in our museums by 2020 – working with the Derby Cultural Education Partnership.
• Increase the ways in which children and young people can participate on an ‘everyday’ basis in our museums through activities and volunteering, measured by an increase in the numbers of families visiting our museums.