



**Leicester City Council
Arts & Museums
Service
Vision & Strategic
Priorities
2025-29**



Context & Challenges

Through capital investment Leicester Museum & Art Gallery and Jewry Wall are being transformed to increase access to world class collections & to deliver an excellent visitor experience.

We recognise the need to change how we deliver our services so we can continue to provide a high-quality museum service.

Currently we run 8 buildings. Some are costly to maintain, have a low usage & displays are outdated which impacts upon visitors' experience.

Scope to reduce costs through operational changes to opening hours at some sites.

Jewry Wall opening enables operational staff from these sites to relocate.

New strategy and ambitious targets can still be delivered.

Context & Challenges

- Through a hub and spoke model part of the service which we provide can be delivered outside of museum buildings. This develops target audiences & makes collections more accessible.
- The 2021 census highlighted that 41% of Leicester's population was born outside the UK. Making the city's museums & galleries more relevant & meaningful to & more representative of our diverse communities, reflecting and sharing their lived experiences & perspectives is a key priority.
- Leicester has a relatively young population compared to the average in the UK. The museum service has an important role to play in supporting children and young people's development.



A man in a checkered shirt is pointing at an exhibition board in a museum gallery. The board displays various informational panels with text and images. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in the gallery.

Arts & Museums Service Vision 2025-29

Connecting people & communities with the *Story of Leicester*, unearthing 2,000 years of the city's rich history & heritage.

Inclusive museums & collections which reflect and share the lived experiences of our diverse local communities.

Taking museums into communities to increase access and widen audiences.

Creating exceptional visitor experiences through capital investment at Leicester Museum and Art Gallery & Jewry Wall.

Using Leicester's global collections to play our part in addressing the climate crisis.

Supporting the development of the city's future generations, sparking children & young people's imagination and curiosity, developing their skills & tackling the inequalities which many of them face.

Developing the financial sustainability of both paid for and free museums.



Strategic Priorities

Leicester Museum & Art Gallery

The capital investment at the city's flagship museum, Leicester Museum & Art Gallery will improve the visitor experience, involve the community in their local museum, support the service's sustainability and increase access to world class collections.

Work is underway on new café and art galleries.

Heritage Fund stage 1 investment of £411k secured to develop new co-produced Story of Leicester & environment galleries.

Target: By 2029 visitor numbers will have increased to 300,000 per year.

Baseline: (Visitor numbers of 249,079 2023/24).





LMAG

Phase 3

- Completed – Creation of Leicester Stories Gallery

Phase 4

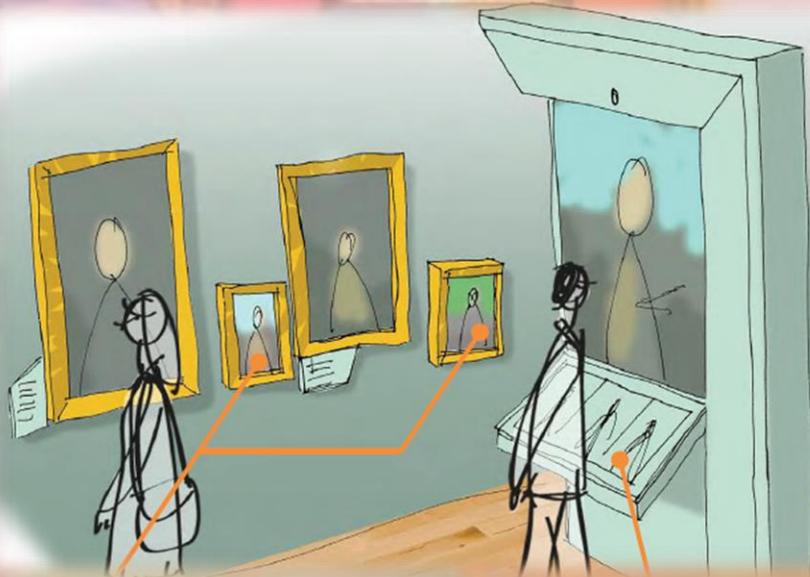
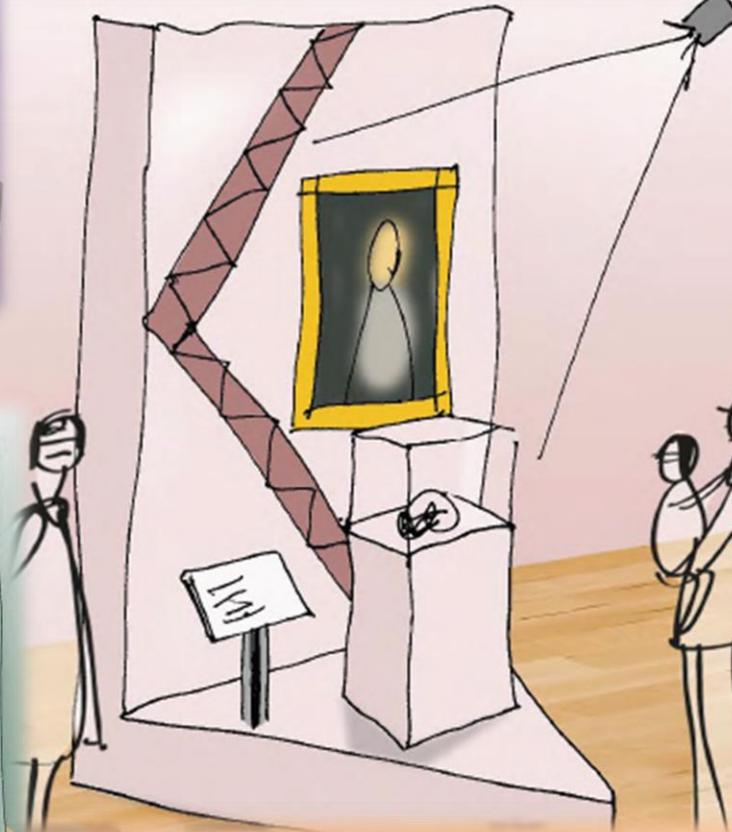
- Improvements to visitor flow routes
- Relocation of Victorian Art Gallery stage
- Creation of new art galleries
- Creation of new café
- Creation of new reception & shop
- Maintenance work to roof and ventilation systems (Arts Council MEND funded)

Phase 5

- Creation of new Story of Leicester Galleries & new Environmental Galleries.



Leicester Museum & Art Gallery – Art Gallery Redisplay



Designs by PLB

Jewry Wall: A Real Roman Experience

Jewry Wall will open in 2025. Leicester City Council has revitalised the site creating a new 21st century visitor attraction which will use cutting edge digital technology to create an immersive visitor experience.

The city's unique Roman collection, including stunning mosaics discovered by archaeologists in Leicester will be used to tell the stories of Roman Leicester and its people.

Supporting the visitor economy & the Old Town.

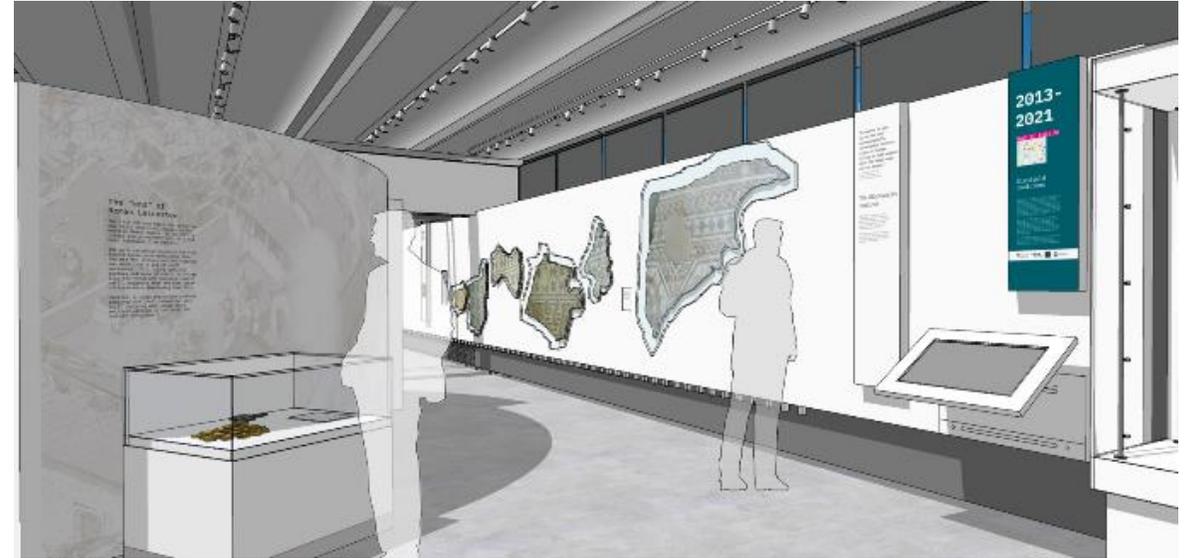


Jewry Wall Project

- Major building restoration and refurbishment Project
- New Pedestrian Bridge from St Nicholas Circle to the Museum
- Multi-media interpretation of Roman Leicester Objects & Exhibits
- New Reception, Shop, Café, Meeting and Learning facilities.



Exhibition





Jewry Wall Café



Income Generation

We will maximise and diversify income streams, managing Jewry Wall & KRIII Visitor Centre as successful charged for attractions which are financially self-sustaining.

Target: Increase commercial, learning & collections income to £480k at free museum sites by 2026/2027.

Target: Secure £350k of external funding by 2026. (This is in addition to securing stage 2 Heritage Fund grant funding for LMAG).

At KRIII we plan to move the café in front of the pay barrier through capital investment.

Hub & Spoke Model: Offsite Activities

Museums & collections taken offsite to locations across the city. In the last year **Doorstep Museums** locations have included:

- The Brite Centre (Braunstone)
- St Barnabas Library (North Evington)
- Pork Pie Library (Eyres Monsell)
- Hamilton Library (Humberstone & Hamilton)
- Highfields Centre (Wycliffe)
- Beaumont Leys Library

- The **Pop-up Museum** has been held at Beaumont Leys Shopping Centre

- **Popping to the Shops exhibitions:**
 - Narborough Road Library (Westcotes)
 - Saffron Lane Centre (Saffron & Aylestone).

Curiosity



Hub & Spoke Model: Offsite Activities



- **Library cases with displays at:**
- Brite Centre
- St Barnabas
- New Parks
- Highfields
- Hamilton Road

- **Cabinet of Curiosities at Festivals:**
- Riverside
- Mela
- Pride
- Light Up Leicester

There has been a 28% increase in offsite engagement since 2018/19:

- **2018/19: 61,609**
- **2023/24: 79,017**



Young Leicester

We will support the development of our city's future generations, providing programmes which spark children's and young people's imagination and curiosity, developing their skills and tackling the inequalities which many of them face.

By 2027 we will have developed Leicester Museum & Art Gallery as an exceptionally family friendly museum.

As a Holiday Activities & Food Programme Provider we will deliver 720 participation sessions by 2026, enabling children to enjoy free learning activities and nutritious meals within inspirational museum settings during school holidays.

Cost Per Visitor

Leicester Museum & Art Gallery	£2.68
Leicester Guildhall	£2.95
Abbey Pumping Station	£5.91
Newarke Houses Museum	£6.14
Belgrave Hall	£12.22

Operational Change Abbey Pumping Station



Reduction of site opening days to peak visitor times

- 32.5% (13,259) of visitors attend on event days.

Future opening days:

4 steam days

16 railway days

3 Steam with the team bookable days.

13 Monday Leicester school holidays (not Christmas).

Total: 36 days

School visits will continue to be provided

On average 426 school pupils visit per year.

Total number of days of public access: 48. (Site visits 36 days) & (school visits 12 days).

Volunteer access & work programme to continue on Mondays. Total number of volunteer only access days 37. (On Monday school holiday days access will be provided to volunteers – these days are not included in this figure because the site will be open to the public).

Saving £112k



Operational Change Abbey Pumping Station. Public Access

Access Type	Access Numbers
Retained existing event visitors	13,259
New events, e.g. beer festival	2,000
Events transferred from Belgrave Hall (Top 10)	5,000
20% of APS visitors from non-event days transfer to event days	5,548
Schools	426
LMTA volunteers – Monday access	1,350
Gardening volunteers – Monday access	240
Total	27,823
% of existing visitors	67.9%

Assumptions:

- Closed days offer opportunity to generate additional commercial income through new events and hires.
- Relocate events from Belgrave Hall – Food Fair & Workshops.
- 20% of existing APS visitors from non-event days will make visits on retained event days
- LMTA volunteer access on Mondays – average. 27 vols x 50 weeks.

Operational Change Newarke Houses Museum

- Reduction of site opening days. Continued access during **Saturdays May- Aug – summer school holiday period.**
- **School visits will continue to be provided.**

On average 1,757 school pupils visit per year.

Total number of days of public access – 84 (museum 18 days) & (school visits 66 days).

- Visitor figures forecast to reduce from 41,000 to 3,000 but there are other forms of public access which can be provided.
- Garden will continue to be maintained
- Regular checks on building & collections to continue.
- **Saving £134k.**



Operational Change Newarke Houses Museum

- Average annual visitors by day:

Mon	5257
Tues	4797
Wed	5923
Thurs	5644
Fri	5168
Sat	6875
Sun	6609
Total	40271

- Industry standard for seasonal openings to focus on summer months & school holidays.
- Highest four month run of visitor numbers is May to August



Operational Change

Newarke Houses Museum – Public Access

Access Type	Access Numbers
Retained existing visitors (Saturdays May – Aug)	3,000
Commercial events	2,000
20% of NHM visitors from other days transfer to Saturdays (May – Aug)	7,600
Schools	1,757
Total	14,357
% of existing visitors (41,000)	35%

Assumptions:

- Closed days offer opportunity to generate additional commercial income through new events and hires.
- 20% of existing NHM visitors from non-event days will make visits on retained event days.



Operational Change Newarke Houses Museum

- Improved access to Leicester's social history collection - new Story of Leicester Galleries to provide social history content at Leicester Museum & Art Gallery – Flagship museum – 250,000 visitors + per annum. NLHF stage 1 funding secured.
- More Leicester related stories at Leicester Museum & Art Gallery in a new suite of art galleries & a new Environmental Gallery.





Operational Change Belgrave Hall

- Suspension of the heritage venue site.
- Currently open 32 days per year.
- Site with lowest visitor numbers, c9,000 per annum & highest cost per visitor £12.22.
- Popular events (food fair, workshops, performances) to be transferred to Abbey Pumping Station to provide continued access to these events.
- EBS looking at alternative uses which provide more cost-effective use of the site.
- Grounds will continue to be maintained..
- **Saving £42k**
- **Total savings across 3 sites: £288k**

Museums Service - Access

The rearrangement of the service is not an overall reduction of the museum service.

Visitor numbers across all sites and for offsite activities are currently 515,241. Once we have made capital improvements at key sites visitor numbers are forecast to increase to 560,140 which means more people will access the museum service.

These future figures include decreased visitor numbers at sites where operational changes will be implemented.



Implementation

To mitigate the impact upon staff:

- Customer Service Assistant & Ops Officer posts left vacant as staff have left.
- Holding vacancies means not enough staff for Jewry Wall opening.
- Organisational review will take c.6 months – too late for Jewry Wall opening.

Solution: Interim change

- Relocate staff from sites where there are operational changes to Jewry Wall from 1st May 2025.
- Followed by an Organisational Review for Operations Team Members.
- Create an access and progression route for Front of House team.

