

Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CULTURE AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 3 APRIL 2025 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Mohammed – Vice Chair in the Chair

Councillor Aldred
Councillor Haq

Councillor Chauhan
Councillor Halford

In Attendance:

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin
Assistant City Mayor Councillor Dempster
Assistant City Mayor Councillor Whittle

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121. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.
Apologies were received from Cllr Joshi.

122. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have had in the business to be discussed.

There were no declarations of interest.

123. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission held on 27 February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.

124. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that the response on Public Space Protection Orders had been circulated by email, and that members could contact officers with any queries.

125. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

126. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

127. MUSEUM SERVICE VISION & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Chair agreed an agenda variance. The item on Museum Service Vision and Strategic Priorities was taken first.

The Director of Tourism - Culture and Inward Investment submitted a report on the new Museums Service Vision and Strategic Priorities for 2025-29, to be implemented on 1st May 2025.

The Assistant City Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres introduced the item. It was hoped that the report would address and alleviate concerns raised. Points to note were as follows:

- Investment was ongoing.
- The success of the service was reflected in the funding secured from avenues such as Arts Council England
- A mixed model was being developed which meant that some venues would be accessed free of charge, and some would require payment.
- Museum venues would remain open, some sites would be open at different times across the year.
- There was a strong commitment to the Hub and Spoke model whereby Leicester Museum and Art Gallery (LMAG) remained as the Hub.

The Head of Arts and Museums provided an overview of the report noting that:

- In terms of capital investment, there had been significant investment at both LMAG and Jewry Wall Museum.
- A need to change delivery of services was recognised.
- Eight buildings were in operation, some of which were costly to maintain, impacting on the visitor experience.
- There was scope to reduce costs by changing visiting hours at some sites.
- The opening of Jewry Wall meant that operational staff could transfer over from the other sites, so there would not be cause for redundancies.
- The ambitious strategy aimed to continue to deliver a thriving museum

service.

- The Hub and Spoke Model reduced the entire reliance on buildings-based work and made collections more accessible.
- There was a focus on relevance for the diverse community and supporting the development of future generations.
- The vision was to connect people and communities with the story of Leicester.
- Global collections could help to address matters of climate crisis.
- Financial sustainability would be developed through the mixed model of paid and free museums.
- Strategic priorities and key areas of focus consisted of the improvements at LMAG and New Café and Art Galleries. Stage One National Lottery Heritage Funding of £411k had been secured to develop The Story of Leicester and Environment Galleries.
- The target was for visitor numbers at LMAG to have increased annually to 300,000 by 2029.
- Phase 3, The Leicester Stories Gallery, had been completed at LMAG.
- Funding for phase 4 coming from Arts Council England's MEND Fund, (Museum Estate and Development funding), had enabled improvements and access to the LMAG building.
- Phase 5 would be funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Designs for the LMAG art gallery aimed to make art more accessible to the public.
- Jewry Wall – A Real Roman Experience would open in 2025, playing an integral part in the Leicester Old Town visitor economy, alongside the Richard III Visitor Centre, Leicester Cathedral and Leicester Guildhall.
- New access routes, a shop and café were incorporated within the Jewry Wall improvements.
- Income Generation was an important aspect of work. There was a target to increase commercial, learning and collections income to £480k at the free museum sites by 2026/2027.
- A further £350k of external funding needed to be secured by 2026 to qualify for the stage two National Lottery Heritage Grant Fund for LMAG.
- The Richard III Visitor Centre café would be situated in front of the pay barrier and could attract more customers and visitors.
- The Hub and Spoke model had generated pop-up museums and Popping to the Shops exhibitions throughout the city. Content had been created with local people and businesses. Collections had been taken out to different locations to develop audiences, e.g. to Libraries and Neighbourhood Centres, festivals and shopping centres.
- There had been a 28% increase in off-site engagement since 2018/2019 which was forecast to increase over the following year with more of the Arts Council England, National Portfolio organisation funded work funding the activities.
- The Young Leicester work aimed to support future generations. LMAG developments would create a family friendly museum.

- As a Holiday Activities and Food Programme Provider, 720 participation sessions would be delivered by 2026. Free nutritious meals would be provided within the museum setting during school holidays, to those entitled to free school meals.
- The cost per user at the different sites ranged from £2.68 at LMAG to £12.22 at Belgrave Hall.
- There would be a reduction of opening times at Abbey Pumping Station to peak visitor times as of 1st May 2025. The total number of public access days, including school visit days, would be 48. Volunteer access and work programme would equal 37 days. This would lead to a revenue saving of £112K.
- Some events could be transferred from Belgrave Hall creating another 5000 visitors. It was thought that 20% of Abbey Pumping Station visitors from non-event days would transfer to event days, leading to a further 5500 visitors. School visits would continue.
- The total access numbers for Abbey Pumping Station was predicted to be 27,823 which was 67.9% of existing visitor numbers.
- The reduction of site opening hours at Newarke Houses Museum would allow continued access on Saturdays between May and August. The total number of public access including school visits would be 84.
- Visitor figures were forecast to reduce from 41,000 to 3,000 with other forms of public access being provided. A revenue budget saving of £134k was expected.
- Work with other organisations could result in the Newarke Houses site being opened for commercial events. The assumption that 20% of existing non-event days visitors would transfer to event days would mean a total of 14,357 visitors which would be 35% of existing visitor numbers.
- There would be improved access to Leicester's social history collection with new Story of Leicester galleries being developed at LMAG. This would increase access to these collections.
- Belgrave Hall had not been a museum since 2012 and was currently open for 32 days of the year. This heritage venue site would be suspended from 1st May. It was the site with the lowest visitor numbers at c9,000 per year and with the highest cost per user at £12.22. With transfer of events to Abbey Pumping Station A revenue saving of £42k was predicted. The Estates and Building Services team is looking at alternative uses which provide a more cost-effective use of the site. The grounds would continue to be maintained.
- The total saving across the 3 sites was estimated at £288k.
- On completion of the improvements, total visitor numbers across the sites were expected to rise from 515,241 to 560,140.
- To mitigate the impact on staff, posts had been left open as staff had left. An organisational review would take place, but as an interim measure, staff from the 3 affected sites would relocate to Jewry Wall as of 1st May 2025.

The commission were invited to comment and raise questions. Key points to note were as follows:

- A visit to Jewry Wall would be arranged for the commission prior to the reopening.
- Reservations were raised by the commission relating to the reduction of opening days at Newarke Houses and the lack of provision for school holidays. In response it was noted that:
 - Investment was being made in the purpose-built museums. Other sites presented problems with access and layout, but new proposals could come from external investors.
 - Funding for the King Richard III Visitor Centre Café came from a capital investment loan. There would be a saving on operational costs and an increase on income.
- A benefit of sites remaining open, with less opening times, was that a re-examination of opening days could take place further along.
- Investments at Abbey Pumping Station had included moving the main entrance and making improvements including fire escapes which had increased the capacity of the building. This had enabled more visitors to be inside the building at any one time since it is very busy on event days with visitors wanting to see the beam engines in steam. Increased access and work was continuing with a Changing Places facility which enables everyone to enjoy the site and makes it more accessible.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be
- 3) Taken into account.
- 4) That an update would come back to the commission in 12 months.

Cllr Aldred joined the meeting during the consideration of this item.

128. LEICESTER TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2020-2025 UPDATE REPORT

The Director for Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment submitted a report providing an overview of the progress made on the actions outlined in the Leicester Tourism Action Plan 2020-2025 since the last report tabled in April 2024.

The City Centre Director presented the report. Key points other than those on the slides (attached) included:

- Progress had been made in positioning the city as a sustainable and attractive destination.
- There had been more focus on people since the last report.
- The Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) included both the city

and county and was an opportunity to promote the region nationally and opened up opportunities for future grant funding.

- The new destination management plan would start in 2026.
- STEAM collected information from attractions, so there was a delay on when figures were available. Therefore, the figures for 2024 would not be available until Summer 2025.
- The value of Leicester tourism had surpassed its target. This was particularly positive considering the disruption that had been caused by Covid-19.
- In terms of overnight stays, there were an additional 47% of bed spaces with five new hotels opening.
- In terms of visitors to Leicester, there was confidence that figures would be met in the data from 2025 once it was available.
- External factors such as Brexit had affected job figures.
- New attractions such as the Jewry Wall museum would help the city become stronger as a destination.
- The Old town festival would be an interactive participatory initiative and would hopefully attract a lot of media attention.
- The Cathedral was an important location due to the tomb of king Richard III and there had been a civic event celebrating ten years since the reinterment.
- Festivals brought people together and promoted a sense of belonging and community as well as promoting cultural heritage and unity and boosting the local economy. Examples included the Monsters trail, Diwali, the Storm Puppet, which attracted the largest footfall seen on a Saturday, Light up Leicester and the Brew Beat beer festival.
- The Blue Tower street art was the tallest street art in Europe.
- The city had a safe night-time economy and had accreditation on Purple Flag (surpassing excellence) and Best Bar None.
- The 'Walk Away' campaign was funded by the Home Office and was delivered by the Violence Reduction Network, this aimed to reduce violence by changing behaviours and had led to a 16.4% reduction in incidences in the city between 2023-2024.
- St John's Ambulance night time service located in the city centre reduced pressure on emergency services and hospitals.
- Place marketing had established Visit Leicester as the go-to website for tourist information in the city.
- It was important to have character areas such as the Old Town and the Cultural Quarter, and guides had been produced for such areas.
- The 400th interpretation panel was being installed.
- There had been a good response from local people with regard to volunteer tourism ambassadors. This initiative focussed on the 'visiting family and friends' market, and was done in partnership with Leicester College.
- An additional scheme for Tourism Ambassadors for employees in the city centre with customer-facing role had been set up. All those training

as ambassadors had passed their training with a 99% success rate.

- With regard to the skills network, Leicester College had strong industry links. De Montfort University had two programmes designed with input from tourism forum members. The Leicester & Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership (LLBSP) had partnerships with schools, colleges and business networks.
- Future priorities included a Leicester management plan for 2026-2031, which stakeholders would help to shape. This would line up with Visit England Priorities.
- Additionally, a ballot for an Accommodation Business Improvement District (ABID) would be considered, led by the city's hotel and serviced apartment providers to help create new events and additional activities that will attract more people to stay and visit Leicester. The additional room per night charge would go into a fund managed by a private company and would be put into initiatives such as large events to bring people into the city, or cleanliness in the city centre, or on conference and business events.

The Committee were invited to ask questions and make comments. Key points included:

- It was suggested that in future it might be better to hold Light up Leicester outside of Ramadan to increase attendance.
- With regard to points made about the closure of businesses in the city centre, such as Marks and Spencer (M&S) and Blunt's Shoes, it was noted that in the case of M&S, the closure of the Leicester store was part of their survival strategy. The Leicester store had received little investment, and they had an additional store in Fosse Park. With regard to Blunt's Shoes, it was suggested that this could be to do with business continuity.
- It was noted that from March 2020 there had been a net gain of 39 businesses and the vacancy rate was at its lowest.
- It was recognised that online sales were growing, and consumer behaviour was changing. Leicester was a young city with a high birth rate, this put the city ahead of the curve for the future. The reasons behind business decisions did not necessarily reflect badly on Leicester.
- With regard to M&S operation in Fosse Park, it was necessary to acknowledge different retail habits. Fosse Park was sub-divided, so units were smaller. Leicester was a multi-experience city which involved more than retail. Attractions included food and drink and heritage and culture. It was important to acknowledge challenges, and as such businesses would be worked with and supported in changes.
- The methodology behind obtaining visitor numbers was a system known as STR, which hotels used to gain monthly figures.

The Chair state that areas such as Granby Street had recovered having faced

challenges, and as such he was confident that the city could also recover from challenges.

AGREED:

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.

129. TREE STRATEGY

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a report incorporating the 2025-2030 Tree Strategy, 2019-2024 Tree Data and Communications Launch Information.

Key points included:

The Head of Parks and Open Spaces outlined the structure of the strategy. Key points to note were as follows:

- The first Leicester tree strategy was adopted in 2018 to sustain and increase tree stock, and the quality of the city's trees. It also promoted the important role of trees for the environment and flood risk management.
- An annual review monitored the delivery of the strategy.
- The five key strategic objectives were:
 - Promoting amenity
 - Promoting habitat and wildlife
 - Responding to global obligations
 - Managing pressure on trees in other ownerships
 - Delivering a strategy
- 22 actions were devised in line with these aims.
- A five-year review had taken place.
- The strategy had worked well and a refresh had taken place to include nine targets for Education and Community Engagement.
- A section on Ash dieback was now included within the strategy.

The Trees and Woodlands Manager gave an overview of the outcomes over the five years. It was noted that:

- There were 1290 sites with trees. The aim was for 20% of the sites to be surveyed annually. This was almost met, with an average of 19% and currently this was at around 24%.
- The total for large planting was 2000 trees, small planting amounted to over 36,000 trees.
- The Forestry Commission ran government schemes which assists with mass planting.
- On average, almost 600 trees were felled annually and the number of

re-planting was on par with this figure.

- Formal complaints were relatively low.
- Work was divided between proactive and reactive work. Proactive being the cyclical surveys, and reactive work responding to storm damage. Work was in line with planned targets.
- There was a successful establishment rate for young trees, despite a drought year. Any trees that failed would be taken account for, a further tree would be planted the following year.
- Vandalism and dog attacks contributed to loss of trees.
- Ash dieback continued to have an impact, this had taken hold but was still in the early stages. 45% of felled trees were due to Ash dieback.
- Bio-mass was created from wood chip and logs, meaning that there was zero waste.
- The Trees and Woodland Team worked alongside the Planning Team.
- Work included:
 - The planning applications process involving trees
 - Tree Preservation order and conservation applications, which averaged out at around 150 protected trees within the city.
 - Emergency call out work, there was a duty of care for any tree falling which resulted in a highway blockage.
 - Planning contraventions for illegally felled trees.
- The Trees and woodland team underwent significant training to comply with health and safety legislation.
- Full details of annual reviews were available on the council website.
- There would be a main communications launch in late May 2025 to include more information.
- Work would be ongoing with the Tree Wardens and the Environment teams.
- A celebration on the city's veteran trees would come.
- Competitions run at schools had met with success.
- Activities such as Mapping Edible Leicester and Tree Trails were also taking place.
- A replacement tree planting ceremony was planned to take place in Abbey Park.

The Committee were invited to ask questions and make comments. Key points included:

- The trees and Woodlands team were thanked for their work.
- All Council trees are managed by the Trees and Woodlands team, these are mainly on Parks, Housing or Highways land. There were 189,600 trees on the database. Any issues with newly planted trees should be reported to Trees and Woodlands. Trees would be formed and pruned as they got older but were often best left alone for the first few years due to post-planting stress.
- With regard to issues surrounding a tree in Thurncourt in need of

maintenance, this tree would be visited to ascertain what action would be needed.

- In response to a query about trees and planning issues and replacing removed trees, it was noted that trees could be an issue in relation to subsidence due to the clay underneath the city. For every significant tree that was removed, it was aimed to plant more than one more, sometimes this could be more than two more. In some cases, trees could not be planted in the same place due to damage caused or due to underground services such as cables and/or drains. In these cases, it was aimed to plant in the same Ward, or if this was not possible, elsewhere in the city. If another tree was not planted, there would be a very good reason for it.
- If a private tree was not in a conservation zone or subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), it was up to the private resident as to what to do with the tree. If a tree was protected, it came under planning law and the resident would need to say what they were doing with the tree and provide tree reports.
- Some planning applications caused trees to be removed, and sometimes re-planting needed to occur under planning conditions. Any application needed a 10% biodiversity net gain, and trees were a part of this.
- With regard to points made about engagement with schools and education, it was noted that Tree Wardens were voluntary, but it was recognised that engagement with schools and children was good. It was noted that children had been involved in the Tiny Forests scheme and the Leicester Volunteers scheme.
- With regard to a query about staffing figures, figures could be provided on this. It was noted that there were more staff than there previously had been. Whilst there had been significant reductions in the wider Parks & Open Spaces budget, the Trees and Woodlands budget had been protected. It was further noted that the service had not been outsourced as it had in other Councils and that authorities that outsourced may not have a tree strategy.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a report be brought to the Commission on the involvement with schools and education.
- 3) That members of the Commission be invited to the launch.
- 4) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account.

Councillor Cutkelvin left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

130. WORK PROGRAMME

It was requested that a report on museums come back to the Commission, including information on visitor figures during the School Holidays.

The work programme was noted.

131. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no further items of urgent business, the meeting finished at 19:28pm.



Minute Item 127

**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 a display board in a museum. The board has several panels with text and images. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and museum displays.

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

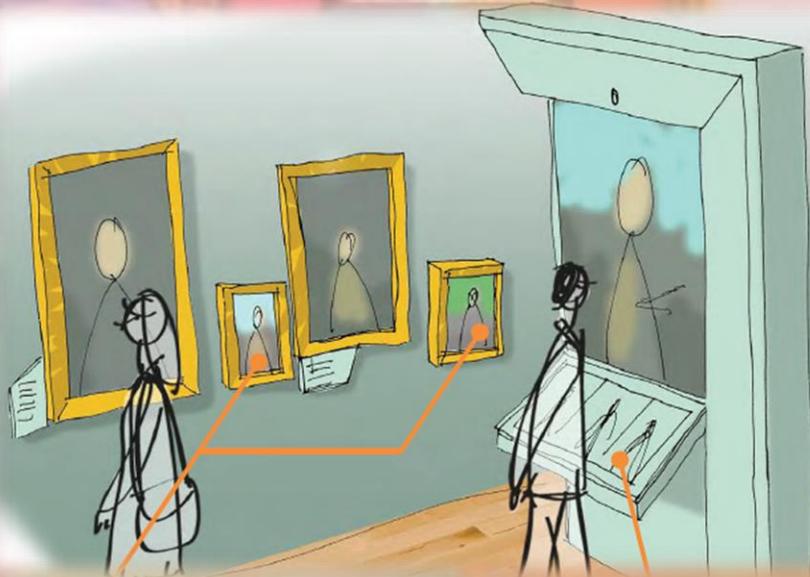
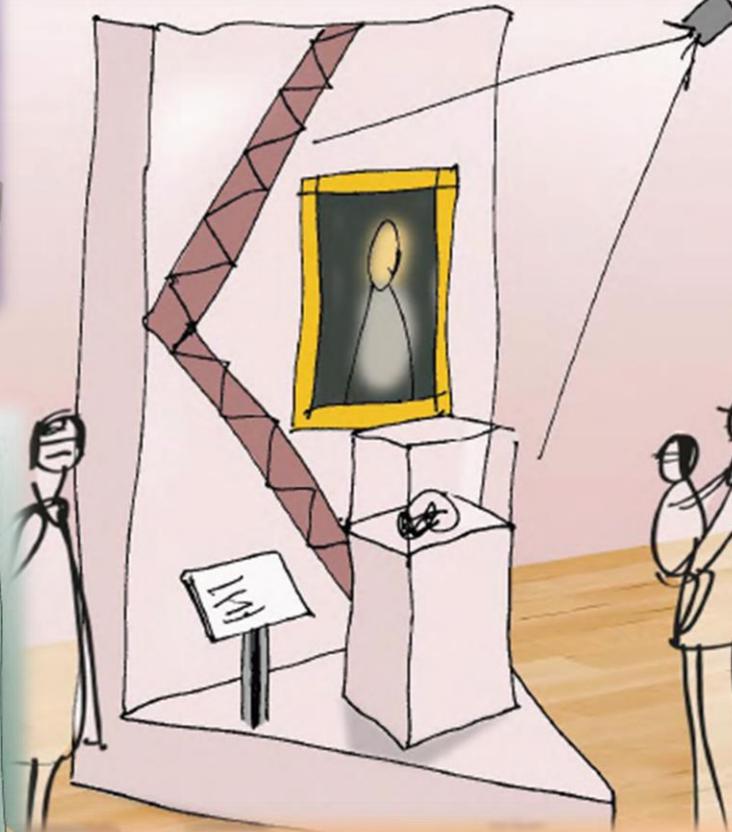
Phase 4

- 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.

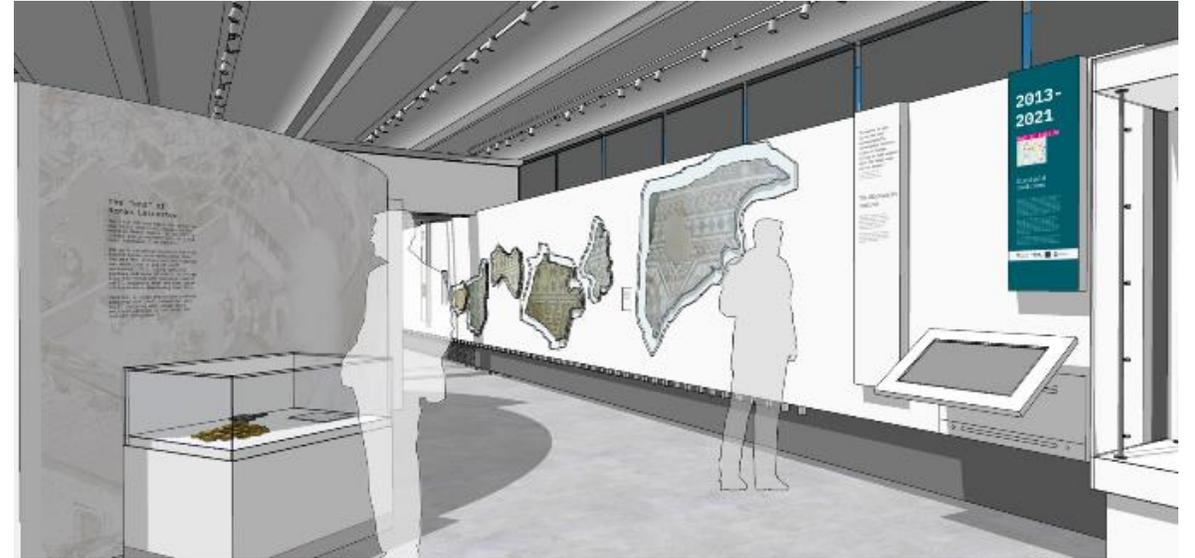


Jewry Wall Project

- 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.





Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission 3 April 2025

Sarah Harrison, City Centre Director

Tourism
Action Plan

2020–2025

Minute Item 128

Leicester Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP Accreditation)

- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Visit England (VE) introduced a 2-tier structure of accredited tourist boards
- Leicester and Leicestershire successfully secured LVEP accreditation in January 2024
 - Direct and strategic relationship with Visit England
 - Opportunity to promote Leicester nationally with government recognition, inclusion in national marketing and travel trade activities.
 - Partnership includes key visitor economy businesses
 - Opportunities for skills development, commission and access to grant funding



Delivery Partnerships

LVEP Advisory Board set up with public/private sectors city and county to shape delivery of the new Destination Management Plan.

Leicester Tourism Forum – public/private sector advisory body to inform strategic decisions and initiatives and delivery of new Tourism Action Plan

**Leicester
Performance
Indicators**
Source: STEAM
(Scarborough Tourism
Economic Activity)

2024 STEAM figures available in the summer. 2025 PIs will also be added to provide final PIs against 2025 target

Performance Indicator	2022	2023	Target 2025	2023 vs 2025 target
Value of Leicester Tourism (£m)	724	844	792	+6.6%
No of overnight stays inc VFR (m)	5.0	5.2	5.6	-7.7%
No of visitors to Leicester (m)	9.9	10.24	14.0	-26.8%
No of jobs created and safeguarded (000)	7.2	8.0	9.2	-12.8%

Summary of activity since April 2024 – Product

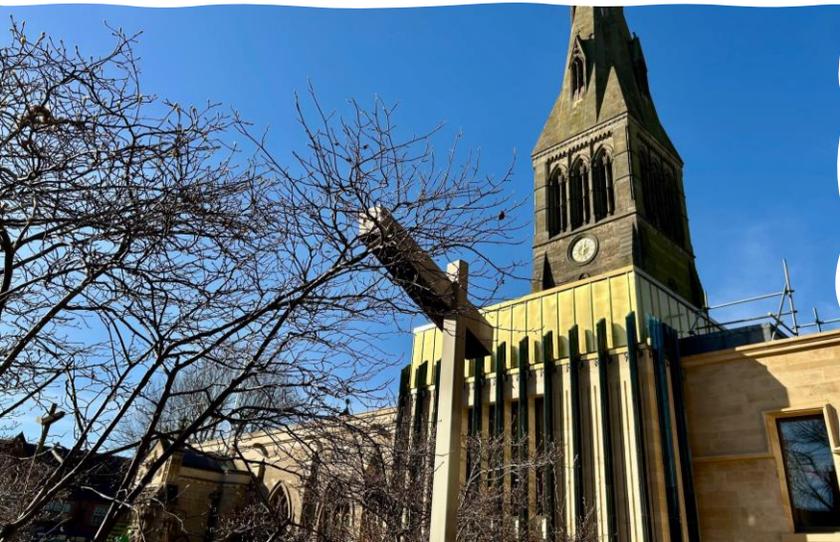
- **Jewry Wall: A real Roman experience**
 - Museum telling the stories of Roman Leicester associated with city archaeology
 - Cutting edge interactive multi-media displays
 - New shop, private hire and education facilities and public café with views over Jewry Wall
 - One of the tallest surviving sections of civic Roman masonry in Britain, standing 9m high
- **Old Town Festival: Roman Edition April 26/27**
 - Building of a Roman encampment of re-enactors, a roman chariot tricycle race,
 - Community will be building a Roman Triumphant arch by artist, Olivier Grossetete
- Jewry Wall is due to reopen to the public for Summer 2025





Leicester Cathedral and Heritage and Learning Centre

- First full year of the Cathedral reopening has seen over 120,000 visitors.
- Hosted a full programme such as the Journey's Festival Swing Installation and the stunning projection lighting up the Cathedral for the Light Up Leicester festival.
- Luke Jerram's installation Mars will be in May.
- Works are due to finish on site end of March and Cathedral Gardens will be reurfed.
- A confirmed opening date is yet to be shared.





Leicester Museum and Art Gallery

- Work is continuing to carry out improvement works at LMAG inc a suite of new art galleries and creation of a café
- Funding of £411k awarded by National Lottery Heritage Fund to support development of new gallery designs inc two new Story of Leicester Galleries and an Environment Gallery
- The LM team was nominated as a VisitEngland Tourism Superstar 2025 finalist

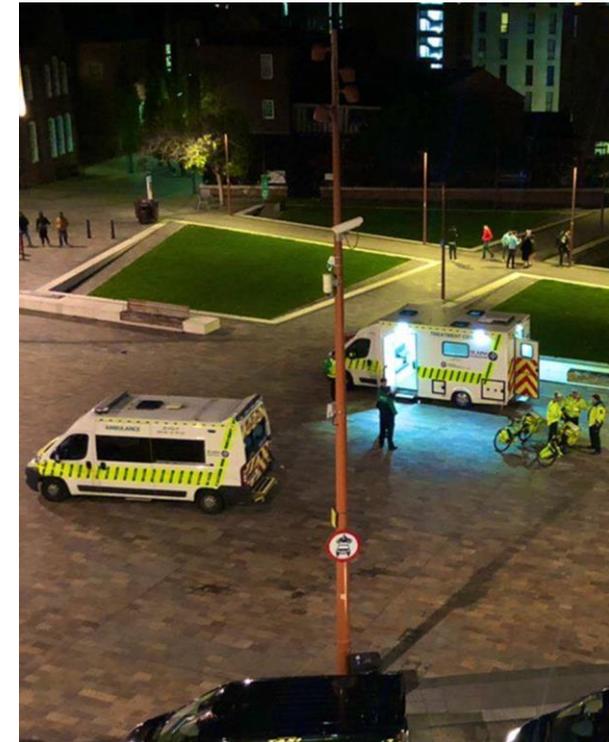
King Richard III Visitor Centre

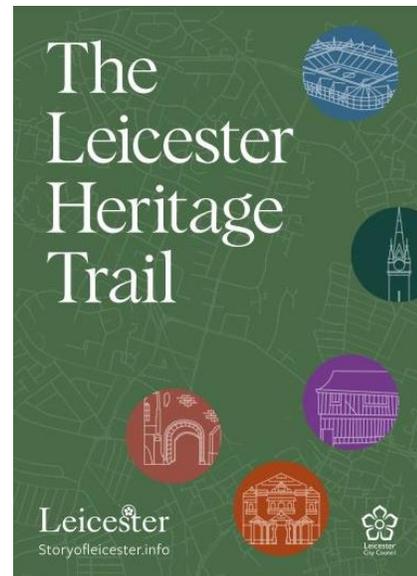
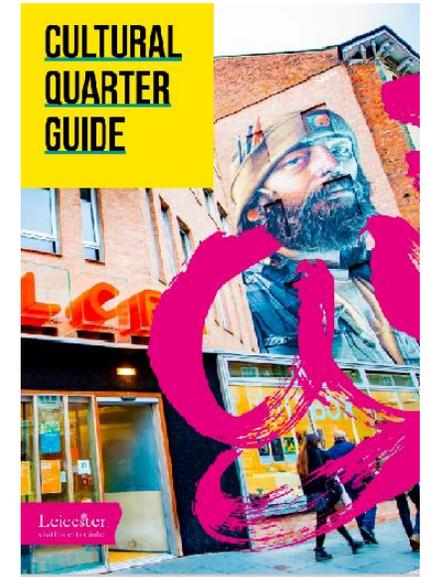
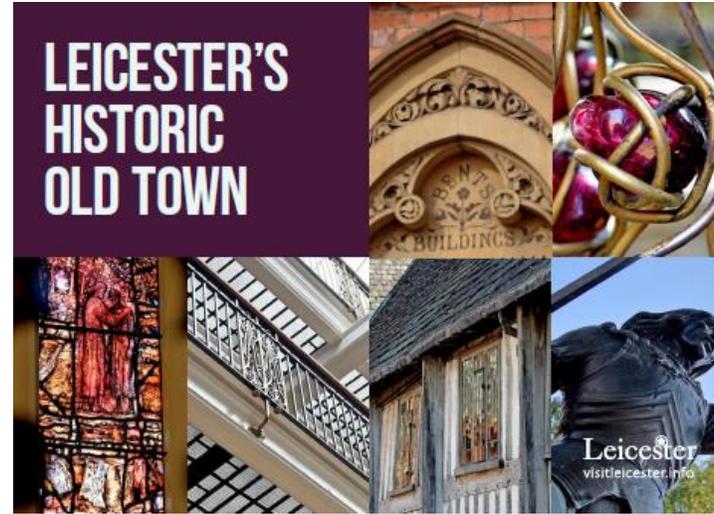
- 10th Anniversary celebrations of the rediscovery, identification and reinterment of Richard III end in 2025
- Voice of Richard project soon to be unveiled
- Celebrating their 70th award since opening in 2014





Safe Night Time Economy





Effective Place Marketing

- Number of visitors to the Visit Leicester website grew by 196.6% from 2020-2024.
- Trails and itineraries downloads are now more than 7,000 with nearly 40,000 views.



- Welcome to Leicester for leisure and business tourism
- Focus on Visiting Family and Relatives (VFR) market
- Recruited an initial team of 15 local volunteer Tourism Ambassadors from Leicester’s neighbourhood areas to support tourism venues and festivals and events.
- Training programme supported by Leicester College.
- Partnership working – Leicester City Council, Voluntary Action Leicestershire, Leicester College.
- Training for customer service staff in the city centre. First successful session with 50 individuals representing variety of sectors including hotel staff, taxi drivers, bus drivers and shopping centre staff.


**leicester
tourism
ambassador**

Skills, Networking, Support and Engagement from Tourism Businesses

- Leicester College
 - Tourism and Travel industry courses
 - Strong industry links for real-world insights for students and practical skills
- De Montfort University
 - BA (Hons) International Tourism and Hospitality Management
 - L6 top Up International Tourism and Hospitality Management
- Leicester & Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership (LLBSP)
 - LLBSP Careers Hub leads partnership of schools, colleges, LAs, business and careers providers
 - World of Work Leicestershire guides
 - Building the workforce of the future
 - Skills Bootcamps
 - Employment Hub
 - DWP offers

Future Priorities

- Destination Management Plan 2026-31
- Leicestershire Visitor Economy Partnership working closely with stakeholders to shape plan. Launch in January 2026
- New strategic direction aligning with VisitEngland's priorities – accessibility and sustainability.
- Leicester Tourism Action Plan 2026-31 - Aligns with strategic direction outlined in DMP
- Focus on the unique aspects of the city's tourism and visitor economy offers
 - KRIII, Jewry Wall, National Space Centre, Leicester Museum and Art Gallery, Canals and Riverside, Golden Mile, World Cuisine
 - Rich, diverse culture and heritage – Leicester Leading Creative and Cultural Strategy
- Accommodation BID (ABID) - ABID focuses on improving areas where hotels are located
 - Operates similar to a traditional Business Improvement District (BID) model
 - Property owners in a defined geographic area agree to pay into a fund
 - Funding to support activity to enhance the visitor experience and increase overnight stays
 - Funded through a supplementary charge per room, per night for guests of, say, £2
 - Decision whether to proceed to ballot will be made later in 2025.

Key Challenges to the Tourism and Hospitality Sector and Tourism Trends

Priority Key Challenges

- Sustainability and accessibility
- Changing consumer preferences
- Rising operational costs and staffing shortages

Priority Trends

- Sustainable and eco-tourism
- BLeisure /Digital nomadism
- Authentic and local experiences
- Food tourism
- Cultural and heritage tourism
- Micro trips

