



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Wessex Museums Trust

Evaluation Report

Lost & Found: Redefining the folk arts and traditions of Wessex NM-23-00475

Anna Bryant, MA, AMA, Museum & Heritage Consultant
M: 07974363532 E: annabryant@live.com
10/07/2026

Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Introduction	6
2.1 Project Background.....	6
2.2 Project Outline	6
2.3 Aims, Objectives, Outputs & Impact.....	7
3. Impact	9
3.1 Social/Audience	9
3.1.1 A wider range of people will be involved	10
3.1.2 Heritage will be identified & better explained	15
3.1.3 People will have developed skills.....	25
3.1.4 People will have learned about heritage.....	26
3.2 Collaboration	27
3.2.1 Heritage will be in better condition	27
3.2.2 People will have developed skills.....	28
3.2.3 People will have learned about heritage.....	29
3.2.4 Supporting collaboration & achieving economies of scale	30
3.2.5 Project management & leadership.....	32
3.3 Reputation/Quality	38
3.3.1 Digital exhibition	38
3.3.2 Marketing & communications.....	39
3.3.3 Exhibition quality	40
3.4 Environment.....	42

3.5 Finance/Governance.....	44
4. Methodology	46
5. Conclusions	48
6. Recommendations	49
7. Appendices	51
Appendix A Evaluation Framework for Partnership Exhibitions	51
Appendix B Evaluation for Impact Framework	56
Appendix C Balanced Scorecard	58

1. Executive Summary

The impact *Lost & Found* had on delivering Wessex Museums and The National Lottery Heritage Fund priorities includes:

Social/Audience

- 94 underserved community participants engaged in co-production of ‘new folk’ artwork *“It has helped with confidence, voicing my opinion to a team and working with others”* (M&AS participant)
- Feedback from participants was very positive, building confidence, self-esteem and a sense of belonging *“How communication goes beyond words and images – making with our hands; real contact with real nature, evokes feelings nothing else can and these feelings can unite us in sharing an ‘identity’”* (DM&AG participant)
- Creative and practical skills were developed by participants in projects, as well as by staff *“confidence has also grown in running creative projects to support refugees and asylum seekers, that are both creatively productive and emotionally supportive. Adaptability, empathy, and a student-centred approach are required”* (Salisbury Museum)
- Film, photography, music and artist commissions produced new work that captured intangible folk heritage with local communities
- *Un/Common People* toured four museums across 396 days, reaching 34k people and showcasing the new work *“I particularly enjoyed the quilt and poetry created by ESOL students. A beautiful nod to folklore around the world and how it makes us richer”* (Salisbury visitor)
- Exhibition very well received overall by audiences, with 90% rating their overall experience as excellent or good, and 77% having had their expectations met or exceeded, *“Thoroughly enjoyed this exhibition - it gave me an affirming sense of continuity in folk practice”* (Wiltshire visitor)
- Overall, there are signs (although not evenly spread) that the exhibition did engage a wide audience, and that it was reaching both locals and tourists. Wiltshire Museum, with the youngest and newest of audiences, stands out
- Overall, the exhibition was successful in conveying a better understanding of folk and its contemporary relevance to a majority of survey respondents, *“So good to see such a thoughtful presentation of folklore, recognising it as living/continuing - something that belongs to us all - Thank you!”* (Wiltshire visitor)
- Museum staff gained a new perspective on folk heritage in Wessex, *“collaborative working with external partners has allowed a more holistic view of what folk culture can be”* (M&AS)

Collaboration

- Project delivery supported by nearly 1,500 volunteer hours across community engagement, collections research and documentation, and exhibition stewardship

- An exhibition bigger than the sum of its parts *“Collaborative show meant that visitors will experience a mass of material, with the material on loan, that offers a real wow factor that each museum would not be able to muster by itself”* (M&AS)
- *“Pulling together the collections of the partner museums – the first time we have successfully shown a story of Wessex in a coherent narrative across museums”* (Salisbury Museum)
- However, *“we need to think very carefully about working with external curators, and the impact that this will have on staff time and the planned exhibition. Bear in mind that we have a lot of expertise in the Wessex teams, and to utilise this where possible, perhaps drawing in consultants to advise on content and help shape exhibitions, but perhaps not deliver the whole exhibition?”* (M&AS)
- Mixed responses to relationships with partnership colleagues during the project
- A joint marketing strategy implemented by WMT and museum staff, with support and joint assets creating an economy of scale and consistency
- Unsuccessful joint merchandise strategy and creation of joint retail stock
- Challenges to managing partnership delivery: sustaining momentum; staff changes; capital projects; working with external curators; and collections administration

Reputation/Quality

- Structure, content and interpretation for a digital *Un/Common People* exhibition created, securing its future once launched (summer 2026)
- By headline measures partners are skilled in managing exhibition communications with all outcomes being met apart from exhibition webpages, and some are increasing their confidence in newer areas such as TikTok
- More meaningful measures of communication success that can be read across the partnership as a whole are lacking
- Exceeding the quality metric for audience’s exhibition experience with a combined response to IIT of 75
- Not meeting the quality metric for staff exhibition experience, with a combined response to IIT of 77 on opening and 66 on closing
- Staff responses to how did the exhibition compare to expectations being overall positive (exceeded/met 6/9)
- *Un/Common People* positively peer reviewed for *Museums Journal* (May 2026)

Environment

- Using Julie’s Bicycle CCT Tour Project Footprint to create a baseline to improve on for net zero ambitions (from 3.67 tonnes CO2e)
- 1:1 training on CCT process and methodology should have increased partners’ knowledge about ways of contributing to higher standards

Finance/Governance

- A decent budget for ‘new folk’ community engagement raised its ambitions, improving its quality and outcomes

LOST & FOUND: PROJECT IMPACT IN NUMBERS

SOCIAL/AUDIENCE

COMMUNITY & CO-PRODUCTION

-  **5** community-led programmes create 'new folk' artwork
-  **94** community participants engage in co-production
-  **4** new folk objects collected
-  **6** narrator-participants of new folk traditions films
-  **40** people participate in new folk traditions films
-  **10** new recordings of songs & stories
-  **11** community musicians aged 11–80 years

EXHIBITION & VISITORS

-  **4** museums host Un/Common People exhibition
-  **34,000** people visit Un/Common People exhibition
-  **90%** rate overall exhibition experience as excellent or good
-  **77%** have their exhibition expectations met or exceeded
-  **85%** would attend a similar exhibition in the future
-  **14%** 16–34 age group represent 14% of visitors
-  **54%** of visitors are aged 50+
-  **70%** of postcodes are local
-  **93.5%** agree exhibition improved knowledge & understanding

PROGRAMME ENGAGEMENT

-  **62** associated activities programmed including storytelling
-  **3,724** people engage in the programme
-  **887** people take part in family events

COLLABORATION

-  **7** objects conserved &/or remounted
-  **114** objects photographed for digital exhibition by volunteers
-  **1,500** volunteer hours support delivery

REPUTATION/QUALITY

-  **75** combined audience IIT response
-  **77** combined staff IIT response on opening
-  **66** combined staff IIT response on closing

ENVIRONMENT

 **3.67**
tonnes CO₂e
exhibition footprint

 **6**
private lenders
loaning 25 objects

FINANCE/GOVERNANCE

 **£145,666**
total project spend



2. Introduction

Wessex Museums Trust (WMT) received a grant of £61,630 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, match funded by £65,500 from Arts Council England as an NPO, and £10,000 from the Swire Charitable Trust. Partner museums on the exhibition tour contributed up to £10,000 of their own costs, creating a total project budget of £147,130. The project, *Lost & Found: Redefining the folk arts and traditions of Wessex*, started September 2023 with recruitment of the external Curators and Designer, led by Museum of British Folklore. As part of the Heritage Fund grant WMT has undertaken an evaluation process with a freelance evaluator (who was also the freelance Project Manager), to measure progress towards and success of the project in meeting its aims, objectives, and impact, for the benefit of WMT and the Heritage Fund.

2.1 Project Background

The initial plan for *Lost & Found: Redefining the folk arts and traditions of Wessex* came out of a 2019 Wessex Museums workshop with Interpretation consultants Iona Keen and Maria Blyzinsky. The exhibition proposal was developed by Curator Harriet Still and Project Officer Jo Wiltcher before being presented to and accepted by the Wessex Museums Programming Working Group in January 2022. A draft interpretation strategy was then developed by Harriet Still in summer 2022, in consultation with curators, collections staff and community curators of the museums across the partnership. The initial exhibition scoping included identifying and approaching a number of expert advisors, as well as focus group research with audiences in each partner museum locality. This background work fed directly into the application to the Heritage Fund (August 2023), the contents of which is being evaluated here.

2.2 Project Outline

Lost & Found aimed to **reconnect people to the rich and dynamic folk heritage of Wiltshire and Dorset, the Wessex landscape and their local communities**. Through the process, local people would be invited to share and express their own heritage and creativity, and to explore broader themes and contemporary issues such as conflict, belonging and climate.

It would do this through **rediscovering, reinterpreting, and reconnecting people to the folk heritage of our region**. Working together with curators, folk experts and local communities, it would undertake **collections and regional research** into folk material and what it means to people today, that would **shed new light on this heritage** and open new avenues for **contemporary collecting and co-creation** of ‘new folk’ led by diverse local communities. As a result, *Lost & Found* would **break down stereotypes and pre-conceptions of folk heritage**.

Lost & Found would improve the **research, interpretation and condition** of folk collections in partner museums. It would also **extend the museums’ collections** through **contemporary collecting, film and photography** to include contemporary and **intangible folk heritage**, which might otherwise be lost, showcasing the dynamic nature of folk traditions.

These **outputs** would be publicly platformed and **celebrated through a touring exhibition** across four (originally five) partner museum sites between November 2024 and May 2026, bringing Wessex folk heritage to a broader estimated audience of 40,000 people. In the process, **recapturing the definition of folk as of the community, for the community.**

This evaluation report seeks to understand the extent to which this project outline has been met, through analysis of specific aims, objectives, outputs and impact.

2.3 Aims, Objectives, Outputs & Impact

As part of the Heritage Fund application, it was laid out how the project would support WMT's **overarching exhibitions aim** (*Wessex Museums Strategic Plan 2023-26*):

To create partnership exhibitions that unite us, tell the stories of Wessex, respond to contemporary issues, and engage more diverse audiences.

Part way through the project (September 2024) an NPO output of an *Evaluation Framework for Partnership Exhibitions* (working with Iain Watson and Catherine Hearne) was finalised, with *Lost & Found* specific measures included (Appendix A). This resulted in five slightly revised **specific exhibition aims and impacts**:

SOCIAL/AUDIENCE

Partnership exhibitions provide social value, contribute to museum audience development priorities and deliver positive outcomes for audiences, staff and volunteers.

Partnership exhibitions become more responsive to contemporary issues rooted in Wessex, engaging audiences that are increasingly more diverse.

COLLABORATION

Partnership exhibitions encourage and support staff collaboration and achieve economies of scale.

A culture of greater mutual respect among colleagues will emerge, increasing recognition of individual and collective benefits of delivering partnership exhibitions.

REPUTATION/QUALITY

Partnership exhibitions are high quality and contribute to the positive image/reputation of the partner museums.

Partners' skills and confidence in managing exhibition communications increase.

ENVIRONMENT

Partnership exhibitions contribute to local and regional net zero ambitions.

Partners' knowledge increases about ways of contributing to higher environmental standards for exhibitions in the museums.

FINANCE/GOVERNANCE

Partnership exhibitions contribute positively to museums' strategic ambitions and financial sustainability.

Increased recognition by partners of the value and quality of partnership exhibitions.

The Heritage Fund Outcomes (Impacts) have been incorporated under Wessex Museums' framework structure where applicable in this report as the NPO's desired impact is wider.

They are:

- A wider range of people will be involved
- Heritage will be identified and better explained
- People will have developed skills
- People will have learned about heritage
- Heritage will be in better condition

Project Outputs would include:

- New research, reinterpretation and conservation of folk collections held by the partner museums
- Film/photography commission capturing the living folk calendar and traditions of the region
- Contemporary collecting of folk heritage from our diverse Wessex communities into our museums' collections
- Community-led, new folk commissions in each museum locality
- Touring exhibition and associated public programme
- New digital exhibition and Collections Showcase of Wessex folk
- Evaluation and case studies

3. Impact

3.1 Social/Audience

Partnership exhibitions provide social value, contribute to museum audience development priorities and deliver positive outcomes for audiences, staff and volunteers

Partnership exhibitions become more responsive to contemporary issues rooted in Wessex, engaging audiences that are increasingly more diverse.

The social/audience impact *Lost & Found* had on delivering Wessex Museums and Heritage Fund priorities includes:

- 94 underserved community participants engaged in co-production of ‘new folk’ artwork *“It has helped with confidence, voicing my opinion to a team and working with others”* (M&AS participant)
- Feedback from participants was very positive, building confidence, self-esteem and a sense of belonging *“How communication goes beyond words and images – making with our hands; real contact with real nature, evokes feelings nothing else can and these feelings can unite us in sharing an ‘identity’”* (DM&AG participant)
- Creative and practical skills were developed by participants in projects, as well as by staff *“confidence has also grown in running creative projects to support refugees and asylum seekers, that are both creatively productive and emotionally supportive. Adaptability, empathy, and a student-centred approach are required”* (Salisbury Museum)
- Film, photography, music and artist commissions produced new work that captured intangible folk heritage with local communities
- *Un/Common People* toured four museums across 396 days, reaching 34k people and showcasing the new work *“I particularly enjoyed the quilt and poetry created by ESOL students. A beautiful nod to folklore around the world and how it makes us richer”* (Salisbury visitor)
- Exhibition very well received overall by audiences, with 90% rating their overall experience as excellent or good, and 77% having had their expectations met or exceeded, *“Thoroughly enjoyed this exhibition - it gave me an affirming sense of continuity in folk practice”* (Wiltshire visitor)
- Overall, there are signs (although not evenly spread) that the exhibition did engage a wide audience, and that it was reaching both locals and tourists. Wiltshire Museum, with the youngest and newest of audiences, stands out
- Overall, the exhibition was successful in conveying a better understanding of folk and its contemporary relevance to a majority of survey respondents, *“So good to see such a thoughtful presentation of folklore, recognising it as living/continuing - something that belongs to us all - Thank you!”* (Wiltshire visitor)
- Museum staff gained a new perspective on folk heritage in Wessex, *“collaborative working with external partners has allowed a more holistic view of what folk culture can be”* (M&AS)

3.1.1 A wider range of people will be involved

Lost & Found set out to engage local communities, including those who have felt excluded from the folk arts and traditions of the region, or those who have migrated to the region, by inviting them to connect with the folk stories and traditions of Wessex through the lens of shared human experience. Working with artists, curators and storytellers, community members were invited to creatively express their own stories and traditions through the creation of Wessex ‘new folk’. It was community-led with participants developing creative and practical skills along the way, making connections between Wessex ‘folks’ past and present, whilst creating greater wellbeing, a sense of place and belonging for diverse local communities. The ‘new folk’ output formed a unique part of the exhibition in each partner museum venue, was collected into the museum’s permanent collection where possible, and is part of the digital legacy. The museums sought to sustain and grow the relationships fostered through the project.

New folk objects were collected through community engagement before and during the project, leading to the museums accessioning a range of additional material into their collections, also accessible to more people through the partner museums and the partnership’s virtual collections. Both these outputs support the aim of *Wessex Museums Contemporary Collecting Strategy (2020-25)* which is to work with local audiences to co-create projects and create new content for future displays, as well as strengthen the collections where there are gaps.

Project Output: Community-led, new folk commissions in each museum locality

Approved Purposes: 5x11 month community co-creation programmes at each museum, to engage targeted community in an exploration of folk heritage, resulting in the creation of a piece of ‘new folk’ artwork

Plus: ‘New folk’ added to exhibition, digital showcase, accessioned into museums’ permanent collections

All five community-led programmes were delivered and resulted in the creation of ‘new folk’ artwork which went on display in the museums, online, and in some cases were added to the museums’ permanent collections. The targeted communities were identified **underserved audiences**, and the target of 40 community participants being engaged in co-production was **exceeded (94 took part)**. Feedback from participants about their **involvement was very positive**. Each programme in some way contributed to outcomes of building **confidence** and **self-esteem**, and a **sense of belonging**. An **ongoing relationship** between participants and the museums was developed at most of the sites within the project timeline. All five were evaluated in depth using Wessex Museum’s *Evaluation for Impact* framework (Appendix B), and the final reports are available on request. Only key metrics for *Lost & Found*, reported using the framework, have been included here due to space.

1. Museum & Art Swindon

Museum & Art Swindon (M&AS) worked with six Young Artists aged 16-20 to co-create a piece of ‘new folk’ for the exhibition in Swindon – A’nu. Most of the young people had a previous connection with a M&AS project, so this aimed to strengthen that trusted relationship which contributed to its

success. Twelve two-hour workshops were held from September-November 2024, with the Artists at the core of decision making throughout the project including commissioning, selecting and working with artist Amy Peck. They decided what the artwork should look like, and every aspect was decided democratically. They wrote interpretation for A'nu and planned its role in the launch (leading a procession to the gallery).

With funding from another grant, the Artists were trained and supported to deliver Family Workshops for the exhibition, using skills they had learned including making mini wreaths and creating polyprints. Five of the six led and supported these.



The Artists reported feeling welcomed, valued, seen and heard, and that their work was valued too. The process exposed them to different art practices, helped them develop patience and resilience, increased self-esteem and confidence in themselves and in working as a team, and enabled them to make connections to others. The Artists have developed knowledge, skills and experience that will help in their future and everyday life (they particularly identified barriers to work experience and employment). This includes leadership, decision making, problem solving, critical thinking, communicating, active listening, and time management skills.

Elements of A'nu and its creation are being accessioned into the collection.

“It has helped with confidence, voicing my opinion to a team and working with others. An appreciation for folk culture and different art mediums I never would have otherwise tried. Valuable skills learnt from a professional artist. This project has taught me a lot about team work and communication skills. It has helped me to learn a lot about folk culture and create new ideas, to interview artists, to work with other people. This project was a boost to my confidence and an opportunity”. Young Artist

Five of the Young Artists with Amy Peck, Community Curator Stephanie Howell and the co-created artwork, A'nu

2. Wiltshire Museum

Wiltshire Museum worked with 12 Nepali women to create ‘nanglos’ – flat baskets used across Nepal – as ‘new folk’. The museum previously worked with the Nepali Ladies Craft Group for a World Wars project, and they were eager for another. They were particularly interested in crafts, expressing an interest in basket making after seeing an image of a Wiltshire basket seller. This group of older women with language barriers were happy to allow community curator Amy Hammett to recruit weaver Mollie McMillen to work with them, facilitated through a translator, images and written Nepali (although most were illiterate, a learning outcome). The project adapted to the group’s disabilities too.

The ladies felt they learnt skills during the project, with one saying, *“I have a newfound respect for the people that make these - they make it look so easy!”* with further comments about paying more to makers in Nepal as they had a greater appreciation of their skills. The basket making was challenging and the final session of macrame was much more manageable, which they loved.



During planning Amy showed pictures of the Wishing Tree at Avebury, explaining its significance in local folk culture. This generated interest from the group who wanted to see it, so with project money they were taken to Avebury where they tied ribbons on the tree and offered prayers. It cemented trust in the museum that it is interested in them, rather than just taking their creativity for its own purposes.

In the ‘nanglos’ display in Devizes, there was space to show different uses, from serving tray to religious display, and the ladies were very happy to have this layer of their culture presented. The museum hopes to accession a ‘nanglo’ but currently all the makers wish to keep them. The group has asked the museum to come back and do craft sessions at their regular group, to help support its running.

Weaving the bases of the ‘nanglos’

3. Dorset Museum & Art Gallery

Dorset Museum & Art Gallery (DM&AG) worked with South West Dorset Multicultural Network (SWDMN) to co-create four workshops on the theme of folk objects and experiences – with celebrations and seasons as a strong preference. SWDMN was part of focus groups for *Lost & Found* in 2023, other events, and the Chair is a volunteer at the museum, which helped embed successful contact and communication. Artist and writer Sarah Acton, a specialist in folk stories and narratives, was appointed along with three other artists to provide different experiences. Twenty people (15 adults, one young person, four children, including refugee families) took part, some each week and others once or twice.

Folk objects and those with a multicultural connection were chosen to inspire the workshops, which ran on Thursday evenings through July 2025. It was open to all ages, so people could bring families. Each workshop incorporated different techniques and forms of expression such as dance, ceramics, costume, flower sculpture, as well as storytelling and sharing of ideas and insights. ‘New folk’ creations included totemic head modelling and stave making; Morris dancing, and creating their own dances, which was particularly enjoyed by children and the young person; mask and head dress making; flower garland and wreath making. The workshops were very well received:

“How communication goes beyond words and images – making with our hands; real contact with real nature, evokes feelings nothing else can and these feelings can unite us in sharing an ‘identity’.” Participant feedback



The 'new folk' was shown as a "Dorset Hands and Heart" display in the museum's Community Space December-February 2026 with the group invited for a celebration of the project and display. The museum did not accession any of the 'new folk' objects. A legacy is that the young person from the group is now a museum volunteer.

Members of the South West Multicultural Network, Morris dancers Festus Derriman, and volunteers from the Museum

4. Poole Museum

Poole Museum worked with Nottingham-based artists INSTAR who led a series of lino print making workshops, where 27 participants created original mythical creatures and narratives. These were developed by the artists into a *Book of Charms* and series of silver charms, inspired by the prints, that were displayed in the *Un/Common* exhibition. Museum staff shared selected objects at the workshops to inspire participants and connect the activity to the exhibition themes. The Bollan Cross charm in the museum's collection was used as inspiration for the project.



The project was initially designed to engage young people and underrepresented groups but was later adapted to include a broader range of participants including families and adults, as the museum had staffing continuity challenges during this period and there was no single owner or champion for the project, so it involved the 'best efforts' of a number of staff.

A positive participant experience and skills development was evident: *"Each individual spoke about their character and the folklore - specifically relatable to habitat and wildlife protection, care and connection. Individual voices and creative ideas were given a spotlight, and each participant became a fully-fledged printmaker by the end. The depth of storytelling was inspiring! The imagination and range was pretty brilliant from our perspective. All participants created multiple prints, leaving one behind for the exhibition"* Trish and Nick, INSTAR.

Some accessibility considerations, particularly around lino cutting, required adaptation.

As a series of one-off workshops, participant impact was inherently reduced and opportunities to re-engage participants with the exhibition launch were limited, reducing potential for deeper impact. This was largely because of resources and priorities with a major opening post-redevelopment. The museum recognises that post-project engagement is essential and that time and budget needs to be ringfenced for this going forwards.

The charm bracelet has been accessioned into the museum's permanent collection as a piece of 'new folk'.

5. Salisbury Museum

Over four months Salisbury Museum worked with 16–19 year-old ESOL students from Wiltshire College to create an artwork exploring what 'folk' meant to them. Sessions around music, song, dance, costume, celebrations, and crafts looked at folk traditions from this country and their countries of origin. The students chose to make illustrated manuscripts, using word and text to tell stories about their lives. Working alongside artist-printmaker Hannah Cantellow, they used traditional crafts and materials – woodcuts, ink and quills.



The manuscripts told the personal stories of 28 students, many of whom were refugees or asylum seekers from countries such as Afghanistan and Sudan. Themes explored their journeys to the UK, traditional cultures, and life in England. There were challenges, however running a project over 14 sessions allowed for a depth of engagement that would not have been possible with a shorter project, and all but one finished a manuscript.

A project strength was its multilingual expression. The students could write their stories in English or their first languages or a mix. This supported understanding and celebrated the group's cultural diversity, resulting in richer, more authentic creative outcomes.

The students were quite shy with the museum team and artist to start with, but there was a development of confidence throughout, with students being able to speak in front of the class and communicate with the wider team.

Six students attended the Private View with friends and families. They expressed pride in their work and spent time having their photographs taken with it, discussing it with friends and other attendees. 14 visited the exhibition as part of a college visit.

A Wiltshire College ESOL student with their illustrated manuscript

Students rated the course 78% Great or Good and positive feedback included *"The experience of doing and learning something new, making it by our own"*. College staff felt the project made their students *"feel seen when revealing information about their culture"* and gave them *"a chance to share their stories as a group...A much needed outlet in a stressful world"*.

Three students requested work experience linked to the project, unfortunately due to a change in college rules it appears unlikely, but the Museum plans to work with the College again. The finished artwork will be accessioned into the collection.

Project Output: Contemporary collecting of folk heritage from our diverse Wessex communities into our museums' collections

Plus: Minimum of 5 objects into permanent collections



(Left) Chioma 'Joy' Abalogu, oil on canvas, about 2021. As a result of the exhibition and event programmes, **four new folk objects were collected** before and during the project, extending the partner museums' collections. This new folk material includes: a portrait of Zoe by Chioma 'Joy' Abalogu, her caseworker as a refugee, collected by M&AS and toured in *Un/Common People*; a concealed shoe and Devizes Moonrakers Morris Dancing banner for Wiltshire Museum; and a blackwork table cloth for Salisbury Museum.

In addition, the newly commissioned **film and photography of contemporary, intangible folk traditions has been collected** by Salisbury Museum (who have storage for digital), Dorset History Centre and Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre – ensuring these outputs are available to the museums as well as a wider audience.

3.1.2 Heritage will be identified & better explained

Curators from across the partnership shared their expertise and worked with the exhibition curators (Museum of British Folklore) and local communities to undertake collections and regional research. This opened avenues for contemporary collecting and new layers of interpretation and relevance that enhanced museum collections and their understanding of folk heritage. A small number of objects were loaned from Museum of British Folklore (MoBF) and six private lenders for the exhibition, *Un/Common People, Folk Culture in Wessex*, including their stories of making.

Through a film and photography commission the regional folk calendar was captured and displayed in the exhibition, showcasing community participation in current, vibrant, intangible folk heritage. A musician and artist were appointed to create a reimagined folk song map of the region, re-recording folk songs with local groups, which was extended to include folk stories. The film, photography and map are part of the digital legacy.

Collections research, new interpretation, and community engagement culminated in the creation of a multi-faceted touring exhibition which visited four partner museums between November 2024 and May 2026, reaching an audience of 34k people. Each venue (including non-exhibition venue of DM&AG) delivered a linked events programme to further animate and engage more people in the exhibition and its content. Programming included storytelling, talks, walks, and participatory events, including activity specifically for families and young people.

Project Output: New research and reinterpretation of folk collections held by the partner museums

Approved Purposes: Appointment of an exhibition curator, designer, photographer, filmmaker, musician, and artists; production of a song map and re-recording of folk songs with local community groups and choirs



As a result of appointing **exhibition curators** and **designers** (from MoBF and London College of Fashion, UAL), new research and reinterpretation of folk collections held by partner museums was enabled, in tandem with the expertise of partnership curators. This was enhanced by **six loans from the community**.

Commissioning a **filmmaker and photographer** (Create Studios), **musician** (Chloe Herington), and **artist** (Bridie Cheeseman) to produce new work capturing intangible folk heritage with local communities, including Sarum Morris, reinterpreted folk for a new audience. The song map resulted in **10 new recordings** of songs and stories (with Kirsty Hartsiotis and Martin Maudsley), with **11 community participants**, aged 11-80 years.

Project Output: Film/photography commission capturing the living folk calendar and traditions of the region

Approved Purposes: Photography/film commission to capture intangible seasonal folk traditions

Plus: Adding to museums' permanent collections and digital legacy



The film/photography commission captured **five seasonal folk traditions** of the region, bringing to life aspects of folk heritage that the museums' collections could not in the exhibition, and providing a legacy for the collections and digital exhibition. The traditions are May Day at Cerne Abbas; Great Wishford Oak Apple Day; Stonehenge Summer Solstice; Wassailing at Richard Jefferies Museum; Diwali in Poole and Bournemouth. The films allow **six narrators** to share their perspectives in their own words and **feature over 40 other participants**.

Project Output: Touring exhibition and associated public programme

Approved Purposes: Creation of a multi-faceted touring exhibition, to visit all partner museum venues (reduced from 5 to 4)

The **temporary exhibition**, *Un/Common People, Folk Culture in Wessex* **toured 30 November 2024-10 May 2026** with 396 open days, reaching **34k people** (a target of 40k was set for five museums, so it was missed by 6k across the four remaining sites). It opened on time and within budget, delivering on being **multi-faceted through commissions and different perspectives** included. This approach is reflected in the introduction to the exhibition:

Folk culture is created by and for people and their communities. Festivals, songs, stories and art form part of this rich living culture. Folk celebrations in Britain include Bonfire Night, Diwali and Oak Apple Day. A corn dolly and a customised skateboard are both examples of folk art.

From around the 6th to 11th centuries, the counties of Dorset, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somerset constituted the Kingdom of Wessex. It was also the term used by Thomas Hardy to describe southwestern England in his novels. This exhibition explores folk cultures in the Wessex counties of Dorset and Wiltshire through three overlapping themes: Place, Making and People.

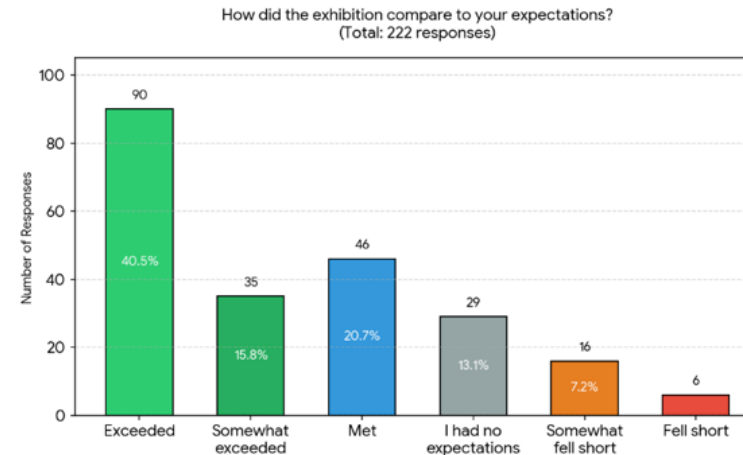
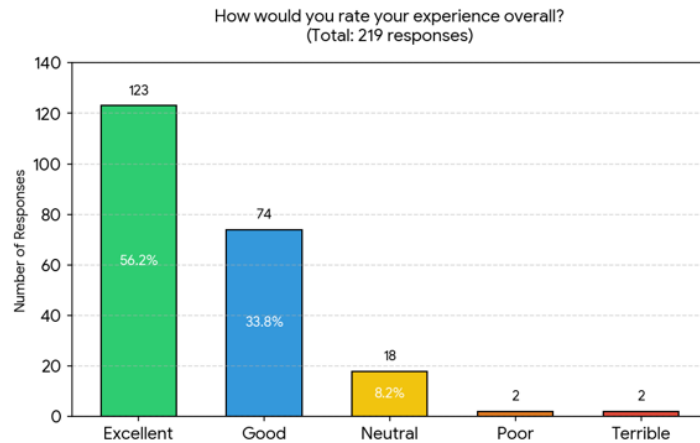


Historically, the term 'commoner' was used by those in power, to describe the working population. Individuality and creativity were qualities associated with socially privileged people. Un/Common People: Folk Culture in Wessex explores a very different story!

The objects displayed form part of the collections of the five Wessex Museums, the Museum of British Folklore and private lenders. Newly commissioned films, stories, music and a song and story map celebrate Wessex folk cultures today and reveal our shared experiences as In/Common People.

Audience response to and engagement with *Un/Common People* was captured with visitor surveys (using Culture Counts *Impact and Insights Toolkit*, IIT) in each museum except Poole. In total **227 surveys** were completed (153 of them from Wiltshire Museum), **representing 1.6% of total visitors**, excluding Poole (a 95% chance that the *real* value is within $\pm 6\%$ of the *surveyed* value). The results are combined here, other than when there are outlier responses which have been highlighted.

How well received the exhibition was overall is captured in these two questions:



Respondents were also asked to 'write three words to describe your Un/Common People experience' which are summarised here:



Respondents were asked ‘If you have any further comments about the exhibition?’ A **majority sentiment** sample are:

- *“Really enjoyed this and learnt some new things. The tale from Highworth was also hilarious!”* (M&AS)
- *“Thoroughly enjoyed this exhibition - it gave me an affirming sense of continuity in folk practice”* (Wiltshire)
- *“I am an artist and feel quite inspired to new folk related work”* (Wiltshire)
- *“I loved this. The involvement of musicians and storyteller adds a dimension”* (Wiltshire)
- *“Very much enjoyed it, especially the story telling board”* (Salisbury)
- *“I particularly enjoyed the quilt and poetry created by ESOL students. A beautiful nod to folklore around the world and how it makes us richer”* (Salisbury)

A **minority sentiment** includes:

- *“So many aspects of folk art missed. Pretty disappointing”* (Wiltshire)
- *“Full of interesting exhibits, a good theme but just needed a bit more cohesion and pulling together”* (Wiltshire)
- *“I’ve been to good exhibitions at the museum but they let themselves down by putting on something as terrible as this. Felt like something a school would put on”* (Salisbury)
- *“There were some interesting stories (e.g. Oak apple day), but it felt somewhat incoherent. Not sure why ships in bottles and old shoes were included”* (Salisbury)

With **90% of respondents rating their overall experience as excellent or good, and 77% having had their expectations met or exceeded**, it can be judged that the exhibition was **very well received overall**.

At individual museum level, a difference is that respondents at Salisbury Museum were less satisfied overall. M&AS and Wiltshire Museum scored 94-95% excellent/good, with less than 1% poor/terrible. Salisbury Museum was 63% excellent/good, with 9% poor/terrible – although this is only three people.

Although Poole Museum did not do a specific survey, they did capture some comments from their general visitor survey, including:

- *“The folk art was fun”*
- *“Adults in group enjoyed the folk art, children enjoyed the interactives”*
- *“Folk stories wall had interesting stories”*
- *“Floor 2 - not keen on parts of the exhibition due to lack of interest in Diwali”*

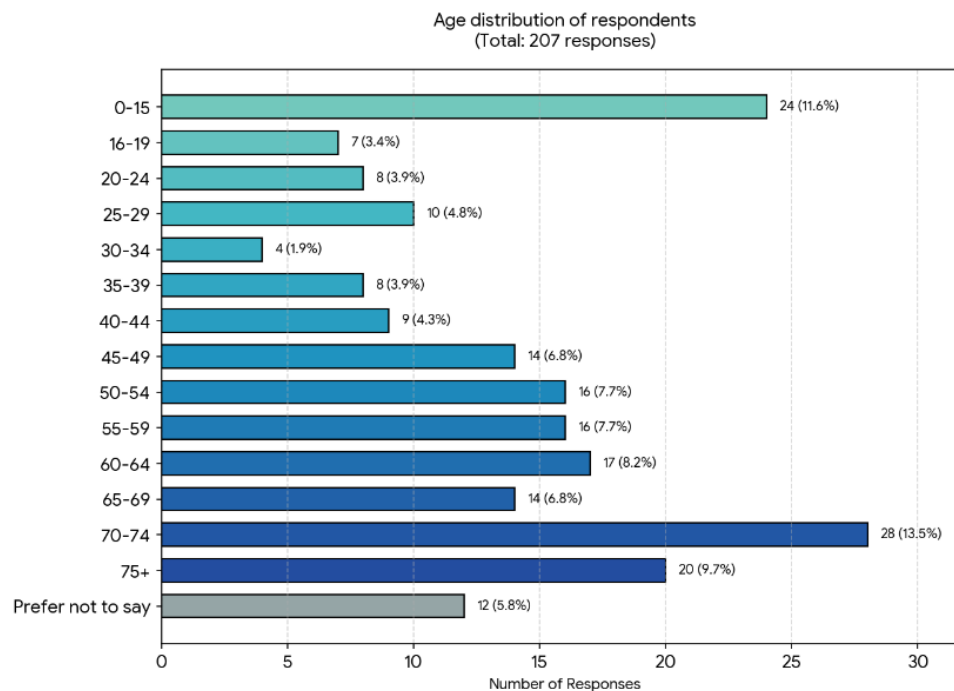
The number of people saying they would return is also a strong measure of success:

Would you attend a similar exhibition in the future? **85% answered Yes (186)**, 11% Maybe (25), and 3% No (7).

The exhibition's *Evaluation Framework* (Appendix A) aimed to use IIT to measure the success of four metrics of audience engagement, grouped below.

1. Engaging a wider audience

The plan was to deliver and showcase an exhibition (and linked events programme) that would engage a wider audience, specifically defined as local people, tourists, young families, younger audiences (16-35), folk interest groups, and diverse community groups. To understand if the audience is wider than the museums normally engage, it would require analysis of each museum's existing data and profiles, which is beyond scope here. Also, it is not possible to know from IIT data if all the audience types specified did attend. However, some IIT questions give an indication of who did attend:



Age (to help understand if **'young families/16-35'** were likely to be attending).

There are two prominent age clusters, one of them being **0-15 years (12%)**. This is the age of the survey respondents, so they are likely to be at the top end of the range and not representative of 'young families'.

This group is more likely to be found amongst **parents in the range 25-44 (15%)**, but as there is not a question about if they have children with them, we cannot know how many did.

Ages **16-34 represent 14%** of the total. However, older adults (aged 50 and above) still make up 54% of the total surveyed audience (111 responses).

At individual museum level, there are some prominent differences: 22 of the 24 0–15-year-olds were at Wiltshire Museum, as were 22 of the 16-34 group (with five at Salisbury and two at M&AS). Salisbury Museum's respondents are heavily represented by those who are 70+ (52%).

Location (to help understand if **'local people'** and **'tourists'** were attending).

The maps below show 126 postcodes recognised by Google (from 144 provided), with the three partner museums who did the survey in red (all in Wiltshire). As can be seen, there is **a wide 'tourist' area, extending as far as Glasgow**. There are also non-UK locations of USA (3) and one each from France, Argentina, Afghanistan and Poland.

However, **70% of the postcodes are from Wiltshire areas SN, SP, BA** (101/144) although BA goes beyond Wiltshire too (13/144).



First time visitors to the museums (to help understand if **new audiences** are attending), are best illustrated separately. M&AS had 37% new audiences to the exhibition (11), which might be unexpectedly low as the museum had only recently reopened. **Wiltshire Museum had 60% (70) first time visitors**, indicating it was successfully reaching new audiences.

Salisbury Museum had no new audiences responding – most likely because their survey was sent to volunteers, event attendees, members who had checked in during the exhibition, and online sales and gift aid ticket holders who had opted in to being contacted, therefore representing an already engaged cohort (with some potential impact on their other results too).

These sample comments indicate **engagement by folk interest groups**/audiences:

“A pretty broad sweep of things. It is such a vast subject area but a lack of much about Morris dancing and its myriad of styles was noticeable”
(Wiltshire)

“I already have a long-standing interest in folklore so some of the exhibition wasn't 'new' to me, but I was interest to see how Wessex folklore was displayed in the exhibition. I enjoyed it tremendously and am glad I made the journey to see it” (Wiltshire)

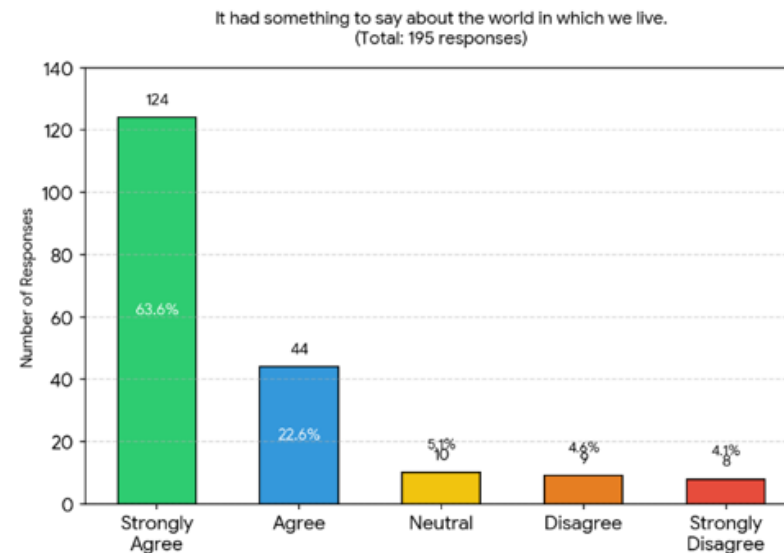
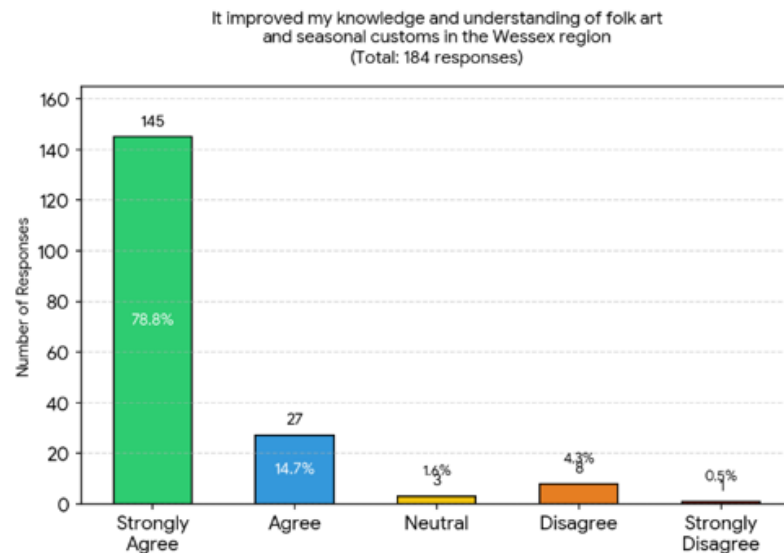
“The Stonehenge druids who are over the moon that we’ve perfectly captured their relationship with the landscape for future generations” (Wiltshire staff comment)

Overall, there are signs (although not evenly spread) that **the exhibition did engage a wide audience** (to understand if it was *wider*, results would need to be compared with previous data). And that it was reaching both locals and tourists. **Wiltshire Museum, with the youngest and newest of audiences, stands out.**

2. A better understanding of folk and its contemporary relevance

It was anticipated that as a result of improved interpretation and explanation of the heritage, including collating a cohesive narrative, audiences would have a better understanding of the story of folk in the region, and its relevance to contemporary Wessex.

This is captured in these two questions:



A massive **93.5% (172)** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the exhibition improved their knowledge and understanding of folk art and seasonal customs. Fewer than 5% of respondents felt that the exhibition did not fulfil this purpose. Salisbury museum's individual results are different, with much more of a spread between strongly agree and disagree.

A significant **86% of respondents (168)** agreed or strongly agreed that the exhibition felt relevant to the modern world. The combined disagree and strongly disagree represent less than 9% of the total. Again, Salisbury has much more of a spread between strongly agree and disagree.

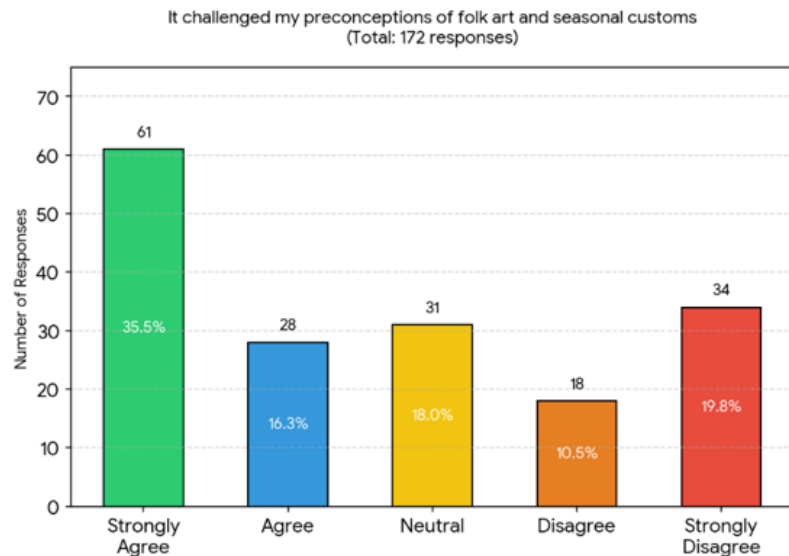
These sample comments illustrate its contemporary relevance to some visitors:

"Really clever. 21st century culture with ancient roots" (Wiltshire)

"So good to see such a thoughtful presentation of folklore, recognising it as living/continuing- something that belongs to us all - Thank you!"
(Wiltshire)

Overall, **the exhibition was successful in conveying a better understanding of folk and its contemporary relevance** to a majority of respondents.

3. Challenging preconceptions



The museums wished to challenge preconceptions of folk, as well as those about their local communities, by platforming folk heritage that has adapted and been readapted to respond to contemporary communities and issues in their areas.

This question split respondents more than other questions. While a majority (**52%**) **agreed or strongly agreed that their preconceptions were challenged**, a noticeable 30% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The relatively high volume of **negative responses might suggest that many respondents arrived with a high level of pre-existing knowledge** in the topic or held accurate preconceptions. This would suggest a level of success in attracting folk groups/audiences to the exhibition.

Those who did have their preconceptions challenged is illustrated by these sample comments and word cloud:

“Well done to the curator, didn't expect this in Swindon” (M&AS)

“When I heard about the exhibition I expected more folklore, however was pleasantly surprised by the folk art and culture highlighted in the exhibition. I especially liked the community project the museum did with Wiltshire College” (Salisbury)

“It is very beautiful I was not expecting this” (Wiltshire)



4. Breaking down stereotypes

An aim was to break down stereotypes surrounding folk so more people would see themselves in the stories shared through the museums. There was no direct question for this, and there are elements of cross over with challenging preconceptions, but these comments help to support the aim:

“Loved it. Felt represented” (Wiltshire)

“Just so well curated and great to see so many different Wiltshire cultures celebrated” (Wiltshire)

“Vernacular culture less represented in museums so good to see this addressed here” (Salisbury)

An **associated public programme** was delivered by **five museums** (including DM&AG), which included **folk storytelling** as a foundation for the programme. Touring venues also programmed a **curator’s talk** from MoBF. In total **62 activities were programmed**, including 15 talks, four walks, and 43 participatory events, reaching **3,724 people** (1,850 of them at Salisbury Museum’s Spring Fayre).

No museums provided audience demographics for their programmes to measure if a wider audience were engaged, but **34 events were aimed specifically at families** and young people, **reaching 887 people**.

Qualitative examples of the success of the programme are M&AS adding extra storytelling sessions due to selling out, and their use of young people to deliver (see 3.1.1). Wiltshire and Salisbury Museums also held celebratory days (Let’s Celebrate Wiltshire and a Spring Fayre). On the other hand, Wiltshire Museum had to cancel a family craft session due to poor sales.

3.1.3 People will have developed skills

Opportunities for new creative and practical skills were specifically developed through co-creation of new folk for participants, but also museum staff and volunteers. Learning from the project more broadly has been collated for knowledge transfer.

Project Output: Evaluation and case studies
--

This evaluation of *Lost & Found*, ‘new folk’ *Evaluation for Impact reports*, as well as **three case studies** (*Case studies - Wessex Museums on Young Folk, Charms and Tracking Carbon Emissions*) further the development of knowledge and skills through sharing experience, for the partnership and the wider sector. ‘New folk’ **creative and practical skills** were clearly developed **by participants in the projects** (3.1.1), as well as skills being developed by **staff and volunteers** at all the partner museums.

The Community Curator at M&AS felt it gave her opportunities for learning, for example, *“the importance of being explicit and recording for the young people what skills and experience they are gaining, has been an important point of learning for me”* to support employment.

The Community Curator at Wiltshire Museum reported *“this was my second project with a community of Nepali people, and I learnt significantly more about the culture and realised that I had made assumptions, particularly around literacy, which could also be the case for many other community groups that I would be working with”*.

The Community Curator at DM&AG built on previous Wessex Museums’ training, reporting *“one of the biggest successes was the linking of the objects from the collection and incorporating the Multaka training of engaging diverse communities with museum objects”*. A volunteer at DM&AG said *“I learned more about the museum collections and enjoyed volunteering alongside museum staff. My highlight was meeting lovely new people, learning new skills, scents, textures, sounds and new connections.”*

Staff in Poole reported for them *“the project demonstrated the potential of artist-led, collection-inspired co-creation to produce high-quality outputs. It also offers a strong, replicable model for future delivery, particularly within creative health and wellbeing programmes and participatory strands such as ‘Meet the Maker’ in our Activity Plan”*.

At Salisbury Museum, *“confidence has also grown in running creative projects to support refugees and asylum seekers, that are both creatively productive and emotionally supportive. Adaptability, empathy, and a student-centred approach are required”*.

3.1.4 People will have learned about heritage

The impact of people having learned about heritage as part of the *Lost & Found* project has been evaluated regarding ‘new folk’ in 3.1.1 and local communities and exhibition audiences in 3.1.2. In addition, museum staff **gained a new perspective on folk heritage in Wessex**. At M&AS *“collaborative working with external partners has allowed a more holistic view of what folk culture can be”*. *“Looking at objects with folklore lens improved our understanding of what folk is”* at Wiltshire Museum, and *“highlighting and research of folk related objects in the museum’s collection”* was an overall success of the project for DM&AG. Poole Museum felt that *“There is always merit from collaborative working with Wessex Partners and an external curatorial team in terms of broadening working practices and depth of knowledge”*. At Salisbury Museum a member of staff *“Saw a new perspective regarding the Folk related objects in the museum collections, and objects that deserve more attention. I recorded gaps in the collection where objects could be acquired to support contemporary collection”*.

Folk heritage’s **relevance to contemporary culture**, and the role of **collecting with local communities**, was appreciated by museum staff, particularly at M&AS: *“while the material collected by museums in the past has been not been noticeably multicultural for a number of reasons, the loans in and these additions [films, music, story map] to the core exhibition have allowed it to be a more textured and varied show”* and that *“it has been exciting to tackle ‘folk culture’ as a concept, particularly as it’s currently fashionable”*. One of Wiltshire Museum’s lesson learned was *“there is an interest in the topic, especially from Young People”*. Salisbury Museum commented that *“having a contemporary piece created for our collections is exciting – especially as it came from a diverse group”*.

3.2 Collaboration

Partnership exhibitions encourage and support staff collaboration and achieve economies of scale

A culture of greater mutual respect among colleagues will emerge, increasing recognition of individual and collective benefits of delivering partnership exhibitions

The collaboration impact *Lost & Found* had on delivering Wessex Museums and Heritage Fund priorities includes:

- Project delivery supported by nearly 1,500 volunteer hours across community engagement, collections research and documentation, and exhibition stewardship
- An exhibition bigger than the sum of its parts *“Collaborative show meant that visitors will experience a mass of material, with the material on loan, that offers a real wow factor that each museum would not be able to muster by itself”* (M&AS)
- *“Pulling together the collections of the partner museums – the first time we have successfully shown a story of Wessex in a coherent narrative across museums”* (Salisbury Museum)
- However, *“we need to think very carefully about working with external curators, and the impact that this will have on staff time and the planned exhibition. Bear in mind that we have a lot of expertise in the Wessex teams, and to utilise this where possible, perhaps drawing in consultants to advise on content and help shape exhibitions, but perhaps not deliver the whole exhibition?”* (M&AS)
- Mixed responses to relationships with partnership colleagues during the project
- A joint marketing strategy implemented by WMT and museum staff, with support and joint assets creating an economy of scale and consistency
- Unsuccessful joint merchandise strategy and creation of joint retail stock
- Challenges to managing partnership delivery: sustaining momentum; staff changes; capital projects; working with external curators; and collections administration

3.2.1 Heritage will be in better condition

Seven objects received conservation treatments and/or were remounted for display in the exhibition, leaving them in better condition and ready to be seen by more people. 114 objects were photographed for display in the digital exhibition.

Project Output: Conservation of folk collections held by the partner museums

Approved Purposes: Conservation of selected historic objects by specialist conservators



Five of the **seven objects receiving conservation treatments, assessments or remounting** for display in the exhibition were from Wiltshire Museum. This included a condition survey of a mid-18th century seed picture made up of about 20 different seeds, including its suitability for travel and display, advice on mounting and environmental parameters. This led to the creation of a bespoke transport box. Other items were also assessed for suitability for travel and display.

Four pictures were framed or reframed, including portraits painted on board by a Dorchester Prison prisoner and donated to DM&G when the prison closed.

Thirteen mounts and bookstands were purchased for specific objects, as well as polyester roll and board for mounting. A bespoke cushion was made to display Salisbury's bobbins.

All **114 objects featured in the exhibition were photographed** in two tranches by volunteers at MAS and Salisbury for the online exhibition (and any further uses).

3.2.2 People will have developed skills

Delivery of the project was supported by nearly **1,500 volunteer hours** across the partnership. This included supporting community engagement activity, collections research and documentation, and exhibition stewardship. There was to be a placement opportunity for a student to work on the digital exhibition, but that did not happen (all in addition to 3.1.3).

Project Output: Working with a minimum of 25 volunteers to support delivery of the project (specifically x5 supporting community engagement activity (30 hours); x5 supporting collections research and documentation for the exhibition (50 hours); x15 exhibition volunteers to steward the exhibition, speak with visitors and administer IIT surveys (2,000 hours). Digital student placement opportunity to work on digital exhibition.

In total **six volunteers supported community engagement** activity (54.5 hours) at Wiltshire Museum and DM&AG, **exceeding the targets** by one person and 24.5 hours. **At least five volunteers supported collections research and documentation** (195 hours) at M&AS, Wiltshire, Poole and Salisbury Museums, **exceeding the target hours** by nearly four times. **Volunteers undertook exhibition stewardship** at Poole and Salisbury Museums, **contributing 1,240 hours, missing the target** by 760.

A placement for a student to work on the digital legacy exhibition did not happen due to changes in staff at Wessex Museums. It would have been managed by the Marketing and Digital Lead, but that role was held by two people during the project including a gap of a couple of months during recruitment, as well as the role being made redundant before the end of the project.

3.2.3 People will have learned about heritage

Museum staff became more knowledgeable about their folk collections through new research, reinterpretation, and community engagement, leading to better documentation and interpretation of relevant collections (somewhat covered in 3.1.4 too), although they do not specifically ascribe this to the expert curator's folk expertise.

Project Output: The expert curator will share their folk expertise with museum staff and volunteers through collection research and exhibition development

Due to *“anecdotally many objects shown for the first time or first time in decades”* (M&AS) it is inevitable that **curators became more knowledgeable about their folk collections**, and it being a *“huge win for lesser-known social history collections to be presented in an exciting and thought-provoking way”* (M&AS) supports **more knowledge through reinterpretation. Touring the collections required better documentation** of those objects too. Developing folk collections knowledge was not always straightforward, *“it was a challenge for the collection team to identify folk related objects as the museum does not have very many and there were conflicting views about what is a folk object”* (DM&AG). Salisbury Museum felt *“more could have been done in terms of really exploring our collections, as I am not sure we knew exactly what we might have and I wonder if we have accidentally missed some interesting objects”*, reflecting the challenge of the scope of the project for the expert curator. At Poole Museum some of the learning will have been lost due to curatorial redundancies during the programme and the use of freelance support.

However, the museums **do not specifically ascribe this knowledge development to the expert curators**. M&AS, who have significant internal folk expertise learnt *“that we need to think very carefully about working with external curators, and the impact that this will have on staff time and the planned exhibition. Bear in mind that we have a lot of expertise in the Wessex teams, and to utilise this where possible, perhaps drawing in consultants to advise on content and help shape exhibitions, but perhaps not deliver the whole exhibition?”*. Salisbury Museum recognise the external input as a success in *“pulling together the collections of the WMP museums – a theme that pulls it all together, along with loans from other places that have that Wessex relevance”* but also comment that *“there were obvious mistakes in the interpretation and captions which showed holes in research. There was too much change during the process to deal with this or contribute to research before install”*, perhaps reflecting that the Museum was delivering a capital project at the same time external research was taking place, with a gap of over two years before install.

On the other hand, the expert curators felt they had *“gained specialist knowledge for having worked with such a broad range of colleagues and their collections”*, although *“we would have liked to have been able to spend longer with the collections and archives. It would have been nice to have had longer to establish relationships with museum colleagues”*.

3.2.4 Supporting collaboration & achieving economies of scale

Wessex Museums did try to encourage and support staff collaboration and to achieve economies of scale, with mixed results. Museums’ collections and expertise were shared across the partnership, although it is hard to assess if museum teams became more motivated, skilled and confident in curating partnership exhibitions as a result. Working Groups were overall effective, and a joint marketing strategy was created and implemented, supported by Wessex Museums. A joint merchandise strategy did not come to fruition.

Project Output: Joint marketing and merchandise strategies created and implemented for the exhibition
--

A successful example of collaboration between museum staff was **collections being shared to create a touring exhibition** that was bigger than the sum of its parts, *“Collaborative show meant that visitors will experience a mass of material, with the material on loan, that offers a real wow factor that each museum would not be able to muster by itself”* (M&AS). Salisbury Museum consider *“pulling together the collections of the partner museums – the first time we have successfully shown a story of Wessex in a coherent narrative across museums”* a success too.

Expertise between curators was shared in the creation of interpretation (especially between M&AS and Wiltshire Museum), and **between community engagement staff** through Wessex’s LEX forum (Learning Exchange) where lessons learned on the ‘new folk’ projects were shared. No museum provided evidence that they had become ‘more motivated, skilled and confident curating partnership exhibitions’, with these factors not making an appearance in their qualitative feedback.

However, it is possible they **lacked full confidence in the exhibition** from their IIT scores (M&AS, Wiltshire and Salisbury Museums) – with museum staff rating (combined and averaged) the exhibition’s rigour, concept, distinctiveness, thought provoking, and captivation strengths around 10 points lower than visitors by the end (see 3.3). Although they were all scoring the exhibition nearer to visitors’ experiences on opening than they were on closing.

They did feedback on the **experience of putting the exhibition together in partnership**. Wiltshire Museum felt it was positive that the *“relationship with Swindon has been established”* (as a new NPO partner), and as the first two museums in the tour, this became a key relationship for both. Although Wiltshire Museum felt that a *“cohesive relationship and communication was lacking across partnership and with guest curators”*, they did conclude that *“some members of the partnership will step up, be reliable, and help. Others won’t - we now know who to trust and who we would*

prefer to work with for future projects” e.g. having seen M&AS do a lot of the problem solving for the exhibition. Salisbury Museum judged “good communication with partnership colleagues during development and install” as a success.

Poole Museum know that *“Poole wasn’t a good partner in this exhibition for a range of reasons, a lack of wider engagement and buy in was the result of no senior level ownership or responsibility with no strong lead able to make decisions – this meant that the exhibition was an afterthought to be accommodated rather than something that could be proactively and strategically shaped collectively with partners to fit the museum, our messaging, and our programme”.*

The project lent on existing Working Groups to help deliver it collaboratively, including those for Collections, Learning and Engagement, Marketing and Digital, and Programming. A task and finish **Working Group for Lost & Found** was created that drew regularly on Collections, Learning and Engagement, and Programming staff, with external consultants as necessary, and regular input from Wessex’s Marketing and Digital Lead. **The format was effective in delivering the project on time** and creating a regular channel of communication and actions designed to ensure everybody knew what stage the project was at and expectations of them in delivering it. However, one of the downsides of this comprehensiveness was highlighted by Salisbury Museum: *“been to almost all meetings and they should have been to sub groups much earlier on – marketing, community, objects – the majority wasn’t relevant to all attending. As the last venue, it was very repetitive to attend all meetings”.* A specific weakness was participation of the newly created Merchandising Group, which is covered below.



A **joint marketing strategy** was created by Claire Brown, Marketing and Digital Lead, and implemented by her, marketing staff in the museums, and by her successor Kate Turnbull (up until she was made redundant in March 2026). The strategy had several joint **quantitative objectives** (reported under 3.3) as well as **target audiences** and some **geographical targets** (reported under 3.1.2).

Each partner museum was responsible for promoting the exhibition to its audience, with £800 towards targeted marketing, while Wessex Museums provided **overarching support and assets**, creating an economy of scale and consistency. For example, Wessex Museums’ YouTube channel hosted a trailer the museums could embed into their event pages and share on social media. It also provided photos; exhibition copy; design assets; design templates; and marketing packs to the museums. Wessex Museums also supported M&AS in launching the exhibition by promoting the partnership and full exhibition tour. This resulted in coverage in articles e.g. BBC – *Fun and affordable things to do this ‘Twixmas’*.

The museums' experiences of marketing *Un/Common People*, both individually and jointly, reflects where they were in their own programming cycles as well as that of the tour. M&AS had recently reopened and launched with other Wessex shows too (Frink and Hardy), so felt that it *"made for a heavy marketing ask very early on in our programming – and as the first venue, there were also naturally new tasks and challenges that were unexpected"*. Wiltshire Museum, coming after M&AS felt that *"promotion...was a struggle as Swindon got exposure of the BBC but we had nothing new to convince people to visit us, especially as we are so close geographically"*.

Marketing was prescribed by other factors too, notably Poole Museum (third) was undergoing a redevelopment project, and due to delay in reopening dates *Un/Common People* became a launch exhibition. This had a positive effect on footfall – *"it benefitted from the excitement surrounding the new spaces and redevelopment story"* – but also meant it was overshadowed, *"with so many competing stories around the launch, the exhibition didn't receive any sustained visibility, making performance tracking difficult from a marketing perspective"*.

The tour then returned to Wiltshire at the Salisbury Museum, who were positive that *"branding was strong and the promotional videos were really helpful for marketing the exhibition and the museum"*, but that a challenge was *"on social media as the last venue, it is highlighted that we are the last venue and it is positive feedback but comments are that people have already seen it"*.

A **joint merchandise strategy** and creation of joint retail stock was not successful, despite being conceived as an opportunity for economies of scale. It may have been that the new Merchandising Group were too early in their relationship to be able to work together on the project, and a lack of engagement and ownership of it from the beginning stalled progress. There was little buy in to the idea of spreading cost and risk across bespoke joint stock, and the lack of additional budget for this was seen as a barrier. There was a period where the group were waiting for extra exhibition outputs in addition to Create Studios' photography (e.g. song map and graphic design assets) to proceed. However, once received, despite enthusiasm for these from Working Group members as magnets and coasters, the Merchandising Group were less enthusiastic about their potential, feeling that retail had not been born in mind in their conception. Once M&AS did not proceed with bespoke stock, the joint opportunity decreased for other museums. Joint stock was given another push before it opened at Wiltshire Museum, in discussion with Poole and Salisbury Museums, but this resulted in just four bespoke postcards. More successful was the sharing of information on books purchased and some sharing of sale or return stock.

3.2.5 Project management & leadership

The project was managed by the Wessex Museums team and a freelance Project Manager (Partnership Exhibitions), with all posts funded by NPO funding from Arts Council England. External experts were successfully commissioned to help deliver elements of the project, with the critical contracts of external curators and 3D exhibition design and build being delivered by MoBF. Key challenges to effective project management included sustaining momentum over a long planning and delivery window; changes in staff at WMT and partner museums; the number of capital projects just completed, in delivery, or in the pipeline at partner museums; a new way of working with external curators; and collections administration issues

highlighted by this way of working together. This resulted in some museums rating the effectiveness differently depending on project stage, meaning it fluctuated from ‘very poor’ to ‘very good’ with some settling on ‘good’ or ‘neutral’ overall.

Project Output: Commission external experts to help deliver elements of the project where we lack the necessary expertise within the partnership
Wessex Outcome: The project is managed effectively through WMT

Broadly, this was a challenging project to manage due to several factors highlighted by partner museums and the external curators, many of which were beyond the scope of the project to change, although some lessons learned could be applied in the future to a similar project to mitigate them (see 6. Recommendations).

Sustaining momentum

Lost & Found had a long planning, development, and delivery period (2.1 Project Background) backdating seven years at a high level and four at a detailed level. Sustaining project momentum and communicating its vision consistently through inevitable structural changes was a challenge, and inevitably knowledge was eroded or lost in the process.

There is a sense from some partners that the **project vision** was **not ‘owned’** by them:

“This project was no one person’s idea - projects like this need someone to drive and champion it!” (Wiltshire Museum)

“The concept came from work the partnership did looking at themes across the museums, but a lot of staff involved in these conversations at the museums are no longer around” (Salisbury Museum)

M&AS were not in the partnership at the planning stage.

Sustaining **communication of the vision** during the length of the project and through change was also a weakness, even though the project was being delivered to the Heritage Fund grant application from autumn 2023, leading to these perceptions:

“Create clear and defined purposes of the exhibition rather than changing and developing as the process goes on” (Poole Museum ‘top tip’)

“The vision changed as well as the personnel” (Salisbury Museum)

The **distance (or level of involvement) between project planning and delivery** was an issue for some partners:

“Ensure that capacity of each museum is discussed and acknowledged before the project starts so that roles and capacity needs are laid out clearly and expectations managed throughout the project” (Salisbury Museum ‘top tip’)

Poole Museum *“had to bring in some significant project management and curatorial support quite late in the day to ensure it was delivered which meant higher external costs rather than using staff on the payroll”*, due to changes in their circumstances since project planning.

However, not all planning knowledge was lost: *“The folk focus groups in preparation for the project as suggested by Wessex were very helpful for planning the community project”* (DM&AG).

A significant factor underlying these weaknesses can be attributed to staff changes: *“I have sometimes felt that the changeover in staff and development of ideas over such a long development period, made things a little confusing at times and communication and coherence could have been better”* (Salisbury Museum).

Staff changes

The **impact of staff changes** was on communicating the project vision and erosion or loss of knowledge, for example:

“I found the staff changeover quite challenging, though I don’t think this was a fault of the individuals. I was very involved at the start as I know a lot about folk and by the end I think staff weren’t aware of my expertise or that I was involved in the early development stages, so a lot of those early learnings were lost” (Salisbury Museum).

This is a fair reflection of the changeover from the first WMT Project Manager (Nov 23-Aug 24) to the second (Aug 24-Jul 26), as well as the change from the first Partnership Manager to the second (started May 25), and the first Marketing and Digital Lead (left Jun 25) to the second (Aug 25-Mar 26). This meant when the second Project Manager (Anna Bryant) picked up the reins there were just 14 weeks to opening at M&AS and a large number of tasks to coordinate and deliver, meaning **some assumptions were made about existing knowledge about the project** within the partnership, for example its vision, or staff understanding about how they would input at each museum.

Despite this weakness, **moving forwards from this point was seen as more successful:**

“Anna taking over the project management and getting it organised has been a real success as it was an “utter shambles” before and she “saved” the project” (Wiltshire Museum)

“The importance of responsive and succinct project manager – Anna has been very effective at making this work given the circumstance of staff and WMP staff change and curators who needed strong management” (Salisbury Museum ‘top tip’)

MAS identified a challenge as *“Communication – on various levels – with external curators and with Wessex teams, though the latter turned around with the appointment of the second project manager, the former issue remained throughout the process”* (see Working with external curators below).

The impact of staff changes within a partner museum were most keenly felt with Poole Museum, which exacerbated the challenge of communicating the project and eroded knowledge being passed from WMT to the museum. Although they mitigated this with freelance support, this was still reliant on organisational input. They recognise that lack of a strategic lead or owner for the project within their organisation impacted on their experience of it. However, they were in the throes of a second factor underlying the weakness of sustaining momentum – capital projects.

Capital projects

During *Lost & Found*, M&AS reopened their museum in a new location (Jul 24), the same month Salisbury Museum delivered a major redevelopment project. Poole Museum's capital project had a delayed reopening to November 2025, and all the while Wiltshire Museum have a capital project in the pipeline. Although positive for the museums, these obviously created an **unavoidable clash of priorities and further stretched museum staff capacity** to engage in the planning and development phase in particular.

Working with external curators

The output of commissioning external experts, where the partnership lacks the necessary expertise, was achieved with a significant role being played by MoBF who were contracted to deliver expert curation (sub-contracting Amy de la Haye from UAL) and 3D design and build. Although it's not the first time the partnership has centralised curatorship (*Hardy's Wessex* employed a Project Curator for three years), it seems that **working with external curators in this way really challenged the partners' way of working** and appears to highlight tensions between capacity to deliver, ownership of the process, and what the final result could have been. MoBF acknowledge the challenge when they say of such a project *"be sure to allocate enough time for relationship building and research"* but highlight that *"to fulfil the brief to our standards required many more hours than had been budgeted for"*.

Although the museums' capacity was often stretched during the project, some had **more ambitious goals for the exhibition** than they felt were delivered:

"At the different locations there should have been more changes in the content and the opportunity taken to display more of our collections that aren't usually on display – that would then make the exhibition more distinctive to visitors. Each venue should have had a stronger input into the content with the curators" (Salisbury Museum) and *"The exhibition needs to be more tailored to each museum from the start"* (Poole Museum)

Although M&AS and Wiltshire Museum incorporated additional folk objects into their *Un/Common* exhibitions, Poole and Salisbury Museums did not. Salisbury Museum felt they had run out of time to create the additional interpretation, and Poole Museum did not have curatorial capacity.

There was also concern around the **flexible and organic working style** of Simon Costin of MoBF who was also responsible for the design and build, although he did (mostly) deliver in the eyes of the partners, for example:

“Final layout and object choices weren’t decided until the last minute” and “Curators didn’t quite consider the visual hang of the exhibition until in the space and then it needed tweaking” (Salisbury Museum)

“Object lists, interpretation plans, and a workable gallery design for a non-white-box space weren’t forthcoming. Last minute installation decisions occurred as objects were coming in. It was also problematic to receive so many objects that we were not displaying” (Poole Museum)

There was a knock-on impact of this working style from Wiltshire Museum’s perspective *“Due to the lack of experience/expertise of guest curators this created extra work as they didn’t understand the practicalities of making an exhibition and what work needed to be done which then overspilled and unexpectedly significantly added to the museum workload”*.

This experience leads the museums to comment on how they would mitigate this in the future, for example:

“Really do homework on curators and their previous outputs – this type of evaluation would have been helpful for setting ways of working moving forward” (Salisbury Museum) and *“Agree the terms of engagement fully with the external curators and each individual museum they are working with so that expectations are managed and roles understood”* (MAS)

Nevertheless, as summed up by Wiltshire Museum, the *“exhibition looked good once installed”*, even if the process to get there was challenging.

Collections administration

Although the partners (except M&AS) had shared collections before for a joint exhibition (Hardy’s Wessex), there were more objects on the move from each museum for this project, leading to comments about the administrative **challenge that posed for partnership curators:**

“Partner museums all used different paperwork, and it took considerable time to streamline the information” (Poole Museum)

“A lot of extra work was created than expected due to lack of sufficient condition reports, had to repack objects in our own storage boxes as they hadn’t been packed properly, objects not clean” (Wiltshire Museum)

This was sometimes compounded by the challenges of accessing WMT resource files on Teams (with its own quirks) and working remotely.

The project is managed effectively through WMT

As the project was delivered this outcome was broadly achieved, but how effective WMT was in getting there was rated by the partner museums. Some rated the effectiveness differently depending on project stage, meaning it **fluctuated from ‘very poor’ to ‘very good’ with some settling on ‘good’ or ‘neutral’ overall**. For example:

“Neither Good nor Poor – This is very difficult to answer as under the first project manager the effectiveness of the project management unfortunately not as good as it could’ve been and we felt that the project was in danger of not happening in a timely fashion, thus endangering our part of the overall run of the exhibitions in particular both in exhibition delivery and kick-starting the various strands with other external parties, such as the community, film, and song map projects. This was turned around exceptionally well by the second project manager, who managed to pull together all strands of the project delivery in double quick time from a standing start” (M&AS)

“Neither Good nor Poor” (Poole Museum); “Good and stayed Good after [launch]” (Salisbury Museum)

“Good communication and feedback, regular updates, effective training and sharing of ideas. Strong and exciting final exhibition and community projects across the partnership. Good involvement of everyone for all aspects of the project” (DM&AG)

3.3 Reputation/Quality

Partnership exhibitions are high quality and contribute to the positive image/reputation of the partner museums

Partners' skills and confidence in managing exhibition communications increase

The reputation/quality impact *Lost & Found* had on delivering Wessex Museums and Heritage Fund priorities includes:

- Structure, content and interpretation for a digital *Un/Common People* exhibition created, securing its future once launched (summer 2026)
- By headline measures partners are skilled in managing exhibition communications with all outcomes being met apart from exhibition webpages, and some are increasing their confidence in newer areas such as TikTok
- More meaningful measures of communication success that can be read across the partnership as a whole are lacking
- Exceeding the quality metric for audience's exhibition experience with a combined response to IIT of 75
- Not meeting the quality metric for staff exhibition experience, with a combined response to IIT of 77 on opening and 66 on closing
- Staff responses to how did the exhibition compare to expectations being overall positive (exceeded/met 6/9)
- *Un/Common People* positively peer reviewed for *Museums Journal* (May 2026)

Project Output: New digital exhibition and Collections Showcase of Wessex Folk

Approved Purposes: Creation of a digital exhibition

Wessex Outcome: Successful marketing and communications from Wessex Museums and partners, measured by:

- 160k (c. 30-40k per museum/WMT) reach on social media platforms with exhibition related content
- 80k (c. 15-20k per museum/WMT) website visits to exhibition pages during exhibition run
- 20k (c. 4-5k per museum/WMT) views across all video content platforms (YouTube and social media)
- 5-10% increase in social media follower growth on all social media channels over the exhibition period at each venue
- Exhibition visitors' response to IIT above 70
- Self / peer IIT response to IIT above 80

3.3.1 Digital exhibition

The **structure, content and interpretation for a digital *Un/Common People* exhibition has been created**, securing its future. It includes high quality photography of all objects in the tour taken by trained volunteers. This is supplemented by a digital version of the song and story map created for the exhibition's launch. Adding this to the Wessex Museums website has been delayed due to redundancy of the Marketing and Digital Lead before the end of the tour but has been planned into the Admin Officer's role to **deliver summer 2026**.

An unexpected outcome was the **opportunity for volunteers at Salisbury Museum to be trained on object handling and photography**, to complete the object photography that began at M&AS, leaving a legacy of skills development and equipment to be shared with other museums in the partnership.

3.3.2 Marketing & communications

Some marketing and communications challenges are captured in 3.2.4, with a focus on working collaboratively. Here the focus is on quantitative results, as well as skills and confidence. **By headline measures, it can be concluded that the partners are skilled in managing exhibition communications with all the outcomes being met apart from exhibition webpages**, and some are **increasing their confidence in newer areas such as TikTok** with great success. A weakness is more meaningful measures of success that can be read across the partnership as a whole are lacking.

Unfortunately, metrics from WMT are an incomplete picture as the first Marketing and Digital Lead stepped down June 2025, with her replacement starting in August, but being made redundant in March 2026. Poole Museum did not contribute to the specific measures here, commenting *“with so many competing stories around the launch, the exhibition didn’t receive any sustained visibility, making performance tracking difficult from a marketing perspective”*. Therefore, the results below are not a complete record.

160k (c. 30-40k per museum/WMT) reach on social media platforms with exhibition related content

Due to variations in platforms used, measurement terminology (TikTok does not have ‘reach’) and the supply of ‘views’ in place of reach, this is an imperfect figure, but as it stands **‘reach’ is over 565,000 across four sites** (M&AS, Wiltshire, DM&AG, Salisbury).

80k (c. 15-20k per museum/WMT) website visits to exhibition pages during exhibition run

Combined visits to exhibition pages from M&AS, Wiltshire and Salisbury are **6,382**. WMT’s web page views relating to folk content had **1,970 visits** Sept-Dec 2024. These do not come close to the target, but this was acknowledged by WMT Lead Claire Brown early on: *“the target was set very high for a single page when visitors wouldn’t necessarily need to see that page to visit”*.

20k (c. 4-5k per museum/WMT) views across all video content platforms (YouTube and social media)

The reported figures (from M&AS, Wiltshire, DM&AG, Salisbury) total **92,734**, but again it is a very varied reporting figure and includes 71,790 of Wiltshire Museum’s TikTok views. WMT’s TikTok account set up specifically for the exhibition (static since April 2025) has had **7,767 views of the Create Studios trailer**.

5-10% increase in social media follower growth on all social media channels over the exhibition period at each venue



Social media growth data was reported by M&AS, Wiltshire and Salisbury Museums. On **Instagram M&AS and Wiltshire reported growth of 8% and 10%**, but Salisbury 455% - although all but one of the peaks was down to the launch of their *Landscape Open Art* Exhibition where a sponsor caused an uptick. **Facebook growth was reported as 2.5% for M&AS; 19% for Wiltshire; 20% for Salisbury**. Wiltshire Museum also saw a huge increase by developing its TikTok content.

It cannot be gleaned if partners' skills and confidence in managing exhibition communications increased, but Wiltshire Museum took the opportunity to develop its presence on social media for the exhibition, with a folk specific campaign which included Phil Harding reading folk tales. These posts reached impressive audience numbers across all platforms, in particular leading to 987 new TikTok followers (with 56k views of one video alone), although the success was not translated into visits.

3.3.3 Exhibition quality

Visitors' combined experience of the quality of the exhibition, as measured through an IIT score, met the metric set and aligned with staff perceptions on opening, although staff perceptions were lower on closing.

Using the Culture Counts IIT survey, **exhibition audiences** surveyed across the three Wiltshire museums were asked the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with these statements [dimensions] relating to their '**experience of the exhibition**':

- [Rigour] *It was well thought through and put together*
- [Concept] *It was an interesting idea*
- [Distinctiveness] *It was different from things I've experienced before*
- [Thought Provoking] *It was thought provoking*
- [Captivation] *It was absorbing and held my attention*

The quality metric for Wessex Museums was to have a combined response above 70. This was achieved as **the averaged result was 75** (a score of 55-79 being 'agree').

Within this there was some variation between the museums. **Visitors to M&AS were most positive with a response of 86, and Salisbury's least positive at 65** (but still correlating with 'agree'). Collectively they were all **most impressed with the Concept** (85) and least with the Distinctiveness (70).

Staff were asked the same, prior to opening and on closure of the exhibition. The quality metric was to have a combined response above 80 ('strongly agree' 80-100). This was not achieved as **they scored it 77 on opening and 66 on closing**, moving them from being in alignment with visitors to nine points below (although still within 'agree').

Again, within this there was variation:

- M&AS were most positive on opening (89 average), with Wiltshire and Salisbury 'agreeing' (72 and 69 average)
- M&AS were most positive about Distinctiveness (99), which Wiltshire agreed with (77) unlike audiences (70)
- Salisbury were most positive about it being Thought Provoking (74), unlike Salisbury audiences who scored it the lowest dimension (59)
- Combined, the museums scored Rigour the lowest (69.5), with M&AS and Salisbury scoring it their lowest overall (75 and 59.5)
- M&AS were still most positive on closing but dropped 13 points (76), Wiltshire dropped 8 points (64) and Salisbury 11 points (58)
- Rigour scored the lowest on closing too, dropping to an average of 50 (from 69.5) a 'neutral' response (46-54 scale), which may reflect the 'distance' created by working with external curators

Responses from M&AS were from two people directly involved in the exhibition, which might influence their higher scores. Wiltshire Museum had the largest number of respondents (10 on opening, six directly involved; five on closing, three directly involved) but positive and negative comments were spread between those involved and not. Responses from Salisbury Museum were from one person directly involved and one not.

When staff were asked on closing, as part of IIT '**How did the exhibition compare to your expectations?**' the responses were overall positive:

- Somewhat exceeded x3
- Met x3
- Somewhat fell short x3

The **external curators** completed the survey on opening. Their **average result – 94** - was much higher than both audience and staff scores, most likely reflecting their closer ownership of the exhibition.

Peer results are not recorded here as after M&AS it proved difficult to achieve this element of IIT, which was fed back to Culture Counts. However, the exhibition iteration in Salisbury was reviewed positively for the *Museums Journal* (May 2026).

3.4 Environment

Partnership exhibitions contribute to local and regional net zero ambitions

Partners' knowledge increases about ways of contributing to higher environmental standards for exhibitions in the museums.

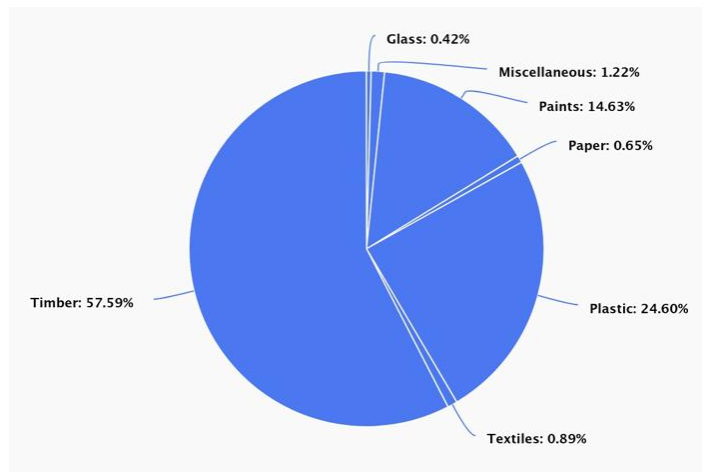
Wessex Museums embedded environmental responsibility into the production of the exhibition and created a way of measuring and sustaining that for future exhibitions. It drew largely on the collections of partner museums, minimising the need for external loans and therefore reducing transport emissions. It required exhibition contractors to consider impact in the selection and use of materials, and graphic and build elements were designed to be robust and reusable at each of the four museums, to minimise waste and the need for reprinting. Existing equipment was reused wherever possible, including cases and AV.

Project Output: 100% of exhibition build materials are recyclable; less than 10% of object loans from external institutions; develop logistics plan that minimises transport loads and carbon emissions

Plus: (From NPO Action Plan) Develop methodology to track carbon emissions of partnership touring exhibitions, using Folk as a case study (Spring 2026)

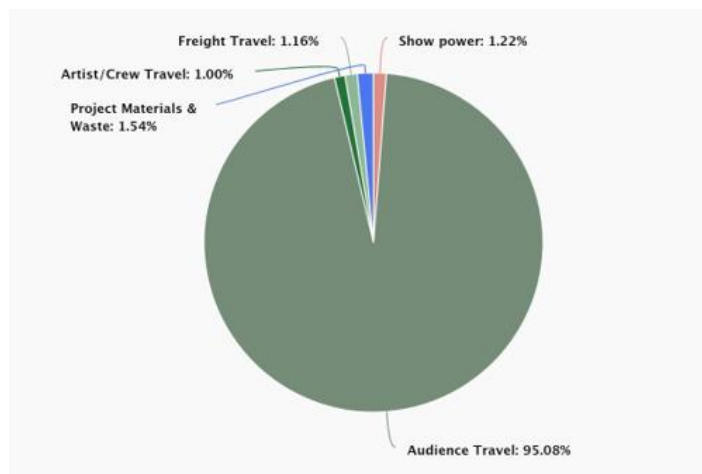
Although the target was **100% of exhibition build materials being recyclable**, the exhibition **improved on that through its level of reuse of materials** (being higher in the waste hierarchy). Except for 'direct use' of paint; recycling of 114 cardboard labels; and 70 graphics used on packing cases, a vinyl sign used at M&AS, and 16 MDF interpretation boards going to landfill, **everything else sourced specifically for the exhibition will be reused by partners and others**. It was planned that the interpretation boards would be reused by M&AS too, but they had changed their format by the end of the tour. The impact of this timber, plastics and paint can be seen in the chart below (*Breakdown of Project Materials and Waste*). The result of this is that of the **3.67 tonnes CO2e footprint** for the exhibition (excluding Audience Travel), **Project Materials and Waste makes up 1.15 tonnes CO2e of the total, or 37.5%**.

Of the 114 objects on tour, 25 were on loan from beyond the partnership, or 22% of the total. However, these were from **just six lenders**, with 17 objects coming from MoBF alone (based in Cornwall). The other nine were from five lenders local to the museums. Therefore, **although not expressed as 'less than 10%' the impact of these loans on transport emissions was minimal**. The impact was reduced further by transporting exhibition infrastructure and other items with the MoBF loans, which formed part of the **logistics plan to minimise transport loads and carbon emissions**. Another example of logistics planning was utilising a potentially empty Crown Fine Art van delivery returning from Poole to London, separate from the project, to take the exhibition to Salisbury. **Freight Travel** (excluding Audience Travel), *as far as could be accounted for, makes up 866kg CO2e of the total, or 28%*.



The development of a **methodology to track carbon emissions of partnership touring exhibitions** is detailed in a case study, but headlines are the partnership used **Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools (CCT)** inputting data into a '**Tour Project Footprint**'. CCT measures the biggest impacts of transport/travel; building energy (excluding gas); and materials. The **goal was to create a baseline for the partnership to improve on**. As the methodology was not in place when there was a change in Project Manager less than four months before the tour launched, there was a level of (imperfect) retrospective data gathering in some areas. It was also too late (or too complicated) to calculate the impact of film making and story map creation, as well as the 'new folk' community engagement activity as they were one (management) step removed. Freight was a challenging category, and there are data gaps around deliveries outside of the partnership e.g. of new equipment. As can be seen from the chart below (*Total environmental impacts of touring exhibition*), **the biggest impact has been allocated to Audience Travel (95%)**, a data

point collected directly from the museums (excluding Poole, although their own data reflects the findings). The result is extrapolated by CCT from 199 responses (0.6% of total attendees). It is also the impact over which the museums have the least control. This is why Audience Travel has been separated from reporting above.



The footprint **can now contribute to net zero ambitions** (even if imperfect) as it gives a baseline to improve on and there is a tool in place for gathering the relevant data. Additionally, the process of gathering and recording had the effect of focussing minds on efficiency in decision making.

Partners' **knowledge about ways of contributing to higher environmental standards for exhibitions should have increased** because of rolling out the Tool, as all four museums in the tour were give **1:1 training on the process and methodology** behind it. Poole Museum did not contribute 'show power' as they do not support the methodology. Therefore their 'show power' was an average of the other three. On the other hand, **Wiltshire Museum participated in testing the methodology** from the beginning of their *John Piper in the South Country* exhibition development, which is touring to M&AS, with the aim of building on the learning from rolling out the tool with *Un/Common People*.

3.5 Finance/Governance

Partnership exhibitions contribute positively to museums' strategic ambitions and financial sustainability

Increased recognition by partners of the value and quality of partnership exhibitions

Project Output: £73k in external fundraising secured for the project; partner museum contributions do not exceed £2,500 each

Income		Expenditure	
NPO	£65,500	New staff costs (exhibition curator; musician; 'new folk' artists)	£40,202
NHLF	£61,630	Professional fees (exhibition design 3D; exhibition build; graphic design 2D; storytellers for map; song map artist; copy editing)	£32,197.73
Swire Charitable Trust	£10,000	Repair & conservation work (conservation/mounting of selected objects)	£2,450.10
<i>Partner Museums Contributions in kind</i>	<i>£10,000</i>	Event costs (storytellers x1 event/museum)	£1,500
		Digital outputs (exhibition photography; film & photography commission to capture intangible seasonal folk traditions)	£30,805
		Equipment & materials (5x community co-creation of 'new folk' artwork programmes; printing new photography; song/story audio hardware; interpretation panel production; print of song map)	£14,706.07
		Other (<i>object transport; insurance; packing; gallery painting</i>) <i>in kind</i>	£10,000
		Publicity & promotion (exhibition marketing)	£3,506.15
		Evaluation	£2,000
		Contingency (condition checking; transport of exhibition structure)	£2,785
		Additional film & photography (Create Studios)	£960
		Diwali film donation	£200
		Expenses (Museum of British Folklore team)	£4,354.02
Total	£147,130	Total	£145,666.07

Additional Income		Additional Expenditure	
NPO	£64,858.50	Project management	£63,358.50
		Extra marketing	£1,500

The project was **completed slightly under budget** (by £1,463.93). It missed its target for external fundraising, but by less than 2% (actual **£71,630**), **thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Swire Charitable Trust**. Partner museum contributions (from the four tour sites) were under £2,500 for MAS, Wiltshire, and Salisbury against specified in-kind items, but Poole was over by some way (£5,450) due to technician, materials and equipment costs (in part due to being unable to draw on existing staff and volunteers due to the capital project). It is not evidenced if the partners have increased recognition of the value and quality of partnership exhibitions (although quality is covered in 3.3.3), but Salisbury Museum commented a strength was *“use of the trust to fundraise effectively for the whole project, rather than individual museums having to find the budget for each project”*. **A contribution of £2,500 would represent less than 2% of the final expenditure** on the project (excluding project management and extra marketing costs), suggesting good value for the partners.

An area particularly strong in quality and associated value thanks to the budget, was the ‘new folk’ programme, as summed up by Salisbury Museum: *“The community element had a very decent budget behind it which made it a much longer project than we would usually do which helped the programme. The project was really embedded in it because it was a well-developed project, it also helped with some working with the language barriers and bridge building with the refugees and asylum seekers. The budget completely underpinned it”*.

4. Methodology

The approach to evaluating *Lost & Found* was guided by Wessex Museums' *Evaluation Framework for Partnership Exhibitions*, with *Lost & Found* specific measures included (**Appendix A**). The evaluator aligned Heritage Fund Differences/ Outcomes to this Framework to be able to report to both the Heritage Fund and the NPO under specific and wider NPO aims and impacts.

The *Evaluation Framework* was supported by a Wessex Museums' *Balanced Scorecard* (**Appendix C**) which identifies how each output will be evaluated, evidenced and by whom, mostly a range of quantitative measures but some qualitative.

A **range of tools** were used by Wessex Museums to gather relevant information from **different stakeholders** (partner museums, audiences, communities, consultants):

- 'New folk' community engagement projects were evaluated by Community Curators at each museum using Wessex Museums' *Evaluation for Impact Framework* (**Appendix B**)
- Partner museum questionnaire (*Evaluation Report Data Collection*) including:
 - Quantitative data e.g. visitor numbers; marketing metrics; volunteer numbers
 - Qualitative feedback on launch and on closure (e.g. biggest successes; biggest challenges; lessons learned; effectiveness of WMT project management)
 - Public programme data (event; numbers attending)
 - In-kind costs
- Carbon footprint data spreadsheet based on (CCT) Creative Climate Tools (for partners key metrics: days open; electricity consumption; paint consumption; journeys to collect objects)
- Insights and Impact Toolkit (IIT) from Culture Counts – exhibition surveys for audiences (tablet/paper/emailed); staff; external curators (included adding audience travel to make work for CCT)
- Project management records e.g. object lists; contractor communications; strategies; board reports; photographs; income/expenditure

All underpinned by 1:1 awareness sessions with key contacts at each museum who would have responsibility for collating the feedback. This was particularly challenging at Poole Museum as these sessions had to be delivered to new staff several times as people left (and in the end Poole did not provide IIT or CCT data). As a new partner, M&AS were new to IIT, so that required extra support. Across all the museums there was confusion about the relationship to Illuminate, and it had to be clarified that Illuminate was still to run for general museum visitors, with IIT for exhibition audiences – not a clear-cut solution (which risked survey fatigue on both sides).

Strengths

- *Evaluation for Impact* Reports, which provided rich qualitative evidence to support reporting against the *Evaluation for Partnership Exhibitions Framework*, and allowed DM&AG's participation in *Lost & Found* to be reported
- Qualitative feedback on launch and closure by museum staff fills out their *experience* of the project and helps steer recommendations
- Carbon footprint data spreadsheet, as an experiment in what's possible
- Results from audience surveys as an indicator of how well received the exhibition was, including personal comments

Weaknesses

- Marketing metrics inconsistently reported and hard to compare, compounded by no WMT Marketing and Digital Lead to support
- Qualitative feedback from staff did not always answer the questions the *Framework* wanted answering, so specific questions would help
- Gaps in carbon footprint and IIT data from Poole Museum
- Small IIT survey samples from M&AS and Salisbury Museums (and possibly skewed selection method in Salisbury)
- Asking the museums to continue with both Illuminate and IIT surveys at the same time – fatigue
- Link between Balanced Scorecard/Marketing Strategy and audience survey was not comprehensive enough, especially for 'wider audience'
- IIT as a survey tool was not useful in the final evaluation, and its reporting appears overly complicated. To combine results the evaluator downloaded csv files and merged the data, creating her own graphs

5. Conclusions

This evaluation sought to understand the extent to which the project outline (2.2) was met, through analysis of specific aims, objectives, outputs and impact. The weight of evidence demonstrates that **The Heritage Fund outcomes and project outputs have been met and delivered** (2.3), and **to a greater or lesser extent so have WMT's specific exhibition aims and impacts**:

Social/Audience It can clearly be demonstrated that this exhibition provided social value, contributed to museum audience development priorities, and delivered positive outcomes for audiences, staff and volunteers. This exhibition responded to contemporary issues and engaged more diverse audiences.

Collaboration There are areas in which this exhibition has encouraged and supported staff collaboration (e.g. sharing collections/marketing strategy/LEX) and achieved some economies of scale (e.g. tour/assets). A culture of greater mutual respect among colleagues has not emerged (except recognition of folk expertise), nor consistently increasing recognition of individual and collective benefits of delivering partnership exhibitions (hindered by challenges to effective project management).

Despite this, there emerges from this evaluation a desire to be *more* involved in planning and delivery of more tailored partnership exhibitions and increasing use of internal expertise.

Reputation/Quality For most audiences this exhibition was a high-quality experience across several measures, contributing to the positive image and reputation of the museums. From a staff perspective they moved from agreement with audiences to less so (although still in agreement). Exhibition communications were managed skilfully and confidently, with the support of the Wessex Marketing role, the lack of which was felt towards the end of the project.

Environment This exhibition contributed to net zero ambitions by implementing a tool and creating a baseline measurement of its CO₂e, and increasing partners' knowledge about ways of contributing to higher environmental standards for exhibitions - together or individually.

Finance/Governance Using WMT to fundraise successfully for this exhibition, including a decent budget for community co-creation, contributes positively to the museums' strategic ambitions and their financial sustainability, although this could be more explicit. Planned contributions up to £2,500 each represent less than 2% of final expenditure, suggesting good value for money.

6. Recommendations

Social/audience

- Fund community co-creation projects well to enable positive outcomes for participants and staff
- Engage external expertise to provide new and diverse perspectives

Collaboration

- Mitigate challenges to effective project management (to increase recognition of individual and collective benefits of delivering partnership exhibitions)
 - Sustaining momentum - have a clear 'contract' communicating the project's ambitions and expectations with each partner from the outset that transcends staff changes and allows each organisation to hold WMT, as project manager, to account to the original vision, and vice versa; have someone 'own' and advocate for the project within each organisation at a senior level
 - Staff changes – a 'contract' would mitigate assumptions about the level of knowledge and understanding within the partnership by new staff
 - Capital projects – although the burden is on the first venue, be aware of team capacity and requirements of a genuinely shared enterprise across the whole length, and how that intersects with other projects
 - Working with external curators – find out the working style of consultants and match them accordingly e.g. a firm PM with a flexible curator, or avoid a mismatch
 - Collections administration - plan an approach from the earliest stage (e.g. a list of accession numbers of shortlisted/final objects from external curators), supported by proactive engagement between partner museum curators as to how the administrative process could best work (and minimum standards). On site collections expertise is beyond scope of WMT team
- Establish what being more involved in planning and delivery of more tailored exhibitions (including use of external expertise) looks like (should lead to a culture of greater mutual respect among colleagues as its clearer to all the role each one is playing)
 - Ask questions and be proactive from the beginning about implications of outputs and outcomes
 - Weigh up production values and personalisation vs time/cost and what minimum standards are
 - Consider implications of bringing more in-house (e.g. editing of *Un/Common* text done by M&AS and Wiltshire Museum out of hours)
 - Allow time for relationship building with external expertise (and other partners)

Reputation/Quality

- A shared Marketing role for exhibitions creates cohesion, economies of scale, and can measure shared impact

- If possible, rotate an exhibition in and out of county to increase audience opportunities

Environment

- Continue reuse success story in footprint
- Continue to draw on and pool partner collections
- Using partnership knowledge and experience, create individual footprint baselines using CCT

Finance/Governance

- Continue to jointly fundraise for financial sustainability and value for money
- Be more explicit about how exhibitions can contribute to actual financial sustainability targets

7. Appendices

Appendix A Evaluation Framework for Partnership Exhibitions

Evaluation Framework for Partnership Exhibitions: Un/Common People: Folk Culture in Wessex

OVERARCHING AIM: To create partnership exhibitions that unite us, tell the stories of Wessex, respond to contemporary issues, and engage more diverse audiences.

NLHF Difference/Outcomes added/highlighted

Inputs Things the museum/s can contribute to achieving the impact/outputs/outcomes of the exhibition. The headings are a guide for areas to be considered but are not exclusive.	Impact The difference we are aiming to achieve by delivering the exhibition. Impact is organised under key indicators which are commonly used by organisations.	Outputs Specific targets or KPIs we are aiming to achieve through the exhibition. The headings are a guide for areas to be considered but are not exclusive.	Outcomes The <i>headings</i> are the key outcomes that the partnership wants to achieve by delivering partnership exhibitions (these could differ for individual museums). The points under each heading are specific to the exhibition being evaluated.
Fundraising: *Consultancy support through Wessex Museums to secure external fundraising to deliver project <u>Partnership Interpretation Strategy:</u> *Links to Wessex Myth & Legend and Wessex People themes in interpretation strategy *Folk Interpretation Strategy by Harriet Still (2022) Collections:	FINANCE/GOVERNANCE: Partnership exhibitions contribute positively to museums' strategic ambitions and financial sustainability	*£73k in fundraising secured for the project *Partner museum contributions do not exceed £2500 each	<i>Increased recognition by partners of the value and quality of partnership exhibitions</i> *Touring exhibition created for 4x partner museums *External funding secured by WMT to deliver the project
	ENVIRONMENT: Partnership exhibitions contribute to local and regional net zero ambitions Environmental Impact	*100% of exhibition build materials are recyclable *Less than 10% object loans from external institutions	<i>Partners' knowledge increases about ways of contributing to higher environmental standards for exhibitions in the museums</i>

*Folk related collections from the 5x partner museums. *Loans from the MoBF and other lenders <u>Audience Data:</u> *From <i>Audience Finder</i> reports 2021-2022 *<i>Illuminate</i> audience data 2023 *Partner museum visitor numbers *Partner museum visitor numbers for previous temp exhibitions <u>Volunteers:</u> *Administering IIT survey during temp exhibitions *Invigilation *Supporting community engagement activity & collections research <u>Staff:</u> *Project lead - Wessex Museums Exhibition project manager *Curatorial teams in partner museums *Community Curators in partner museums <u>Collaborative Planning:</u> *Folk Working Group - membership from across partner museums *Marketing Working Group - membership from across partner museums		*Develop logistics plan that minimises transport loads and carbon emissions	*Environmental responsibility is embedded into the production of the exhibition *Temporary touring exhibition created from the partner museums' collections, thus minimising the need for external loans
	REPUTATION/QUALITY: Partnership exhibitions are high quality and contribute to the positive image/reputation of the partner museums	*160k (c. 30-40k per museum/WMT) reach on social media platforms with exhibition related content *80k (c. 15-20k per museum/WMT) website visits to exhibition pages during exhibition run *20k (c. 4-5k per museum/WMT) views across all video content platforms (YouTube and social media) *5-10% increase in social media follower growth on all social media channels over the exhibition period at each venue *Digital legacy of exhibition created *Exhibition visitors response to IIT above 70 *Self / peer IIT response to IIT above 80	<i>Partners' skills and confidence in managing exhibition communications increase</i> *Successful marketing and communications from Wessex Museums and partners
	SOCIAL/AUDIENCE: Partnership exhibitions provide social value, contribute to	*40k visitors to the exhibition across 4 venues	<i>Partnership exhibitions become more responsive to contemporary issues rooted in Wessex engaging</i>

*Merchandise Working Group - membership from across the partner museums <u>Curatorial Skills:</u> *Curatorial expertise from partner museums *MoBF curatorial team commissioned to deliver exhibition <u>Previous Evaluations:</u> *Hardy's Wessex <u>Previous Partnership Exhibitions:</u> *Hardy's Wessex *Alchemy *NPO funding used as match for NLHF	museum audience development priorities and deliver positive outcomes for audiences, staff and volunteers A wider range of people will be involved Heritage will be identified and better explained People will have developed skills People will have learned about heritage	*Delivery of an exhibition and linked events programme that will engage local people, tourists, young families, folk interest groups and diverse community groups *5 x folk storytelling sessions delivered across 5 venues, as foundation of a public programme for the exhibition *5x objects accessioned into the collections through contemporary collecting as a result of the exhibition project, community activities and events *5x community co-created 'new folk' commissions with underserved audiences and potentially accessioned into the collections *40 community participants engaged in co-production (8 per museum) *5x underserved / diverse perspectives are captured through the film *100% positive feedback from participants about their involvement in co-creation for the exhibition *Information available is collated into a cohesive narrative to tell the story of folk in the region	<i>audiences that are increasingly more diverse</i> *Exhibition and events programme showcase Wessex folk heritage to a wider audience *Partner museums' folk collections are extended through contemporary collecting *New film/photography of contemporary, intangible folk traditions is accessioned into the collections *Community-led co-created 'new folk' work produced and featured in the exhibitions with potential to be accessioned into the collections *As a result of improved interpretation and explanation of the heritage, audiences will have a better understanding of folk in the region and its relevance to contemporary Wessex *Community participants will feel empowered to share and interpret their stories through the lens of folk; have agency in creating and interpreting 'new folk'; gain new creative and practical skills through co-creation; building confidence and self-esteem, and a sense of belonging; develop an
--	--	--	---

		*We will challenge the preconceptions of folk, as well as those about our local communities themselves, by platforming folk heritage that has adapted and been readapted to respond to contemporary communities and issues in our area	ongoing relationship with museums which has the potential to lead to opportunities for volunteering/ employment/ apprenticeships; have learned about some of the career opportunities *We will break down stereotypes surrounding folk and more people will see themselves in the stories shared through our museums *Our museums will gain a better understanding of folk heritage in Wessex and how it is relevant to contemporary culture, to support more active and coordinated collecting with local communities in future
	COLLABORATION: Partnership exhibitions encourage and support staff collaboration and achieve economies of scale Heritage will be in better condition People will have developed skills People will have learned about heritage	*Joint marketing & merchandise strategies created and implemented for the exhibition *Exhibition curated and designed for all 4 venues *Objects from partner museums conserved for the exhibition *Staff report increased confidence engaging underserved audiences in co-creation *Digital student placement recruited to develop digital legacy *5x volunteers support community engagement activity across the partnership (30 hours)	<i>A culture of greater mutual respect among colleagues will emerge increasing recognition of individual and collective benefits of delivering partnership exhibitions</i> *The project is managed effectively through WMT *Shared marketing strategy developed and delivered, supported by WMT <i>Teams become more motivated, skilled and confident curating partnership exhibitions</i>

		*5x volunteers support collections research and documentation for the exhibition (50 hours) *15x exhibition volunteers to steward the exhibition, speak with visitors and administer IIT surveys (2000 hours) *The expert curator will share their folk expertise with museum staff and volunteers through collection research and exhibition development	*Museums' collections and expertise are shared across the partnership *Museum staff and volunteers are more knowledgeable about folk collections through new research, reinterpretation, and community engagement, leading to better documentation and interpretation of relevant collections *Some objects will therefore be in a better condition as a result of this project
--	--	--	--

Appendix B Evaluation for Impact Framework

Evaluation for Impact Framework (WMT, March 2022)

Outcomes	Signs of Change	Sources of Evidence
1. Our underserved audiences, especially children and young people (CYP), know they are welcomed and valued in our museum spaces.	• Museums are lively, noisy spaces where children and young people feel welcomed and valued. • Children and young people see their interests and needs reflected in museum programmes and activities.	• Numbers and profiles of participants • Direct observations of engagement • Feedback from schools, families, networks/groups • Stories shared via range of media/ platforms (photos, social media, videos, journals etc.)
2. Museums spaces and collections represent the voices of their communities and reflect their diverse interests.	• Activities and programmes are co-created with communities that reflect the diversity of their lives and interests. • Museums are spaces where work created by young people are displayed with pride.	• Feedback from audiences/participants • Stories shared via diverse media/ platforms • Numbers and profiles of participants • Footfall through spaces/ places • Content of museum offers, displays and exhibits
3. Staff and volunteers are confident, knowledgeable and inclusive in their approach.	• The LEX network is vibrant, mutually supportive and actively shaping future delivery. • Our capacity to work with underserved audiences is increasing, supported by relevant training and CPD opportunities.	• Feedback from staff and volunteers • Content of induction/appraisal programmes • Evaluation feedback from training/ events

4. Our museums are leaders for organisational change, embedding inclusion into our policies, frameworks and practice.	• Inclusion is a shared understanding across the partnership and is guided by robust policies and frameworks. • Our museums champion inclusivity, demonstrated by their welcoming and empathetic approaches across all areas of work.	• Feedback from staff and volunteers • Use of existing measures e.g. ACE annual Insights Survey monitored via the Diversity Working Group
5. Learning and engagement is supported and enabled across all four partner museums.	• Our learning programmes are contemporary, challenging and relevant to the curriculum being delivered in schools and colleges. • Greater number/diversity of external relationships and partnerships. • Our LEX network enables and empowers colleagues across the four partner museums to share and learn from each other. • Digital engagement and learning opportunities strengthen and support museum programming on site.	• Numbers and profiles of participants • Direct observations of engagement • Feedback from schools, families, networks/groups • Stories shared via range of media/ platforms (photos, social media, video, journals etc.)
6. Underserved audiences are working in and contributing to Museums.	• Work placement participants feel valued through learning new skills required to conduct museum work. • Work placements enhance the awareness of opportunities and pathways into museum careers.	• Distribution and delivery of different placements • Recruitment of underserved audiences to placements • Stories/follow up interviews and focus groups

Appendix C Balanced Scorecard

Balanced Scorecard: Un/Common People: Folk Culture in Wessex

The Balanced Scorecard identifies how each of the outputs will be evaluated, evidenced and by whom.

Output	Plan	Evidence/Tool	Who
Finance/Governance			
£73k in fundraising secured for the exhibition	Fundraising pipeline	Grant acceptance letters, budget, evaluation reports to funders	Wessex Museums
Partner museum contributions do not exceed £2500 each	Exhibition budget. Partners to keep track of any spend in their venues	Partners to provide breakdown of spend in their venue from their own exhibitions budget at the end of the show	Partner Museums
Environment			
100% of exhibition build materials are recyclable	Exhibition designer to provide detailed specifications of materials to be used in exhibition build to Wessex Museums	List of materials used in the exhibition build with environmental credentials (recorded on spreadsheet for Julie's Bicycle CCT calculation and reuse list)	Wessex Museums/ MoBF
Less than 10% object loans from external institutions	Review final object list to determine loans	Final object list	Wessex Museums/ MoBF
Develop logistics plan that minimises transport loads and carbon emissions	Review transport requirements in line with object list and develop logistics plan	Mileage for transport, number of loads, carbon emissions (recorded on spreadsheet for Julie's Bicycle CCT calculation)	Wessex Museums
Reputation/Quality			
160k (c. 25-40k per museum/WMT) reach on social media platforms with exhibition related content	Reach measured on all exhibition related posts	Reach on social media platforms	Wessex Museums/ Partner Museums
80k (c. 15-20k per museum/WMT) website visits to exhibition pages during exhibition run	Website page visits measured for each exhibition run in each venue. Wessex Museums to measure website page visits for whole exhibition run	Website page visits	Wessex Museums/ Partner Museums

20k (c. 4-5k per museum/WMT) views across all video content platforms (YouTube and social media)	Views of video content to be measured for all exhibition related content on YouTube and social media platforms	Views	Wessex Museums/ Partner Museums
5-10% increase in social media follower growth across all social media channels during the exhibition period at each venue	Measure change in Instagram followers during exhibition run	Social media followers	Wessex Museums/ Partner Museums
Digital legacy of exhibition created	Create a digital 'exhibition' as a legacy of the project on the Wessex Museums website	Digital legacy exists on Wessex Museums website	Wessex Museums
Exhibition visitors' response to IIT above 70	IIT survey to be run in each venue during the exhibition run	IIT report	Partner Museums
Self / peer IIT response to IIT above 80	IIT survey to be run in each venue during the exhibition run	IIT report	Partner Museums
Social/Audience			
40k visitors to the exhibition across 4 venues	Each partner to provide visitor numbers at the end of the exhibition run	Visitor numbers at each venue	Partner Museums
Delivery of an exhibition and linked events programme that will engage local people, tourists, young families, folk interest groups and diverse community groups	Each partner to capture audience demographic data through IIT and complete a table recording programme activities, nos. attending, and demographic data if captured	IIT report; tables completed by partner museums	Partner Museums
5 x folk storytelling sessions delivered across 5 venues, as foundation of a public programme for the exhibition	Each partner to complete a table recording programme activities, nos. attending, and demographic data if captured	Tables completed by partner museums	Partner Museums
5x objects accessioned into the collections through contemporary collecting as a result of the exhibition project, community activities and events	Each partner to specify number of objects collected through contemporary collecting	Objects accessioned into each museum collection through contemporary collecting	Partner Museums
5 x community co-created 'new folk' commissions with underserved	Each partner to provide narrative about community co-creation work,	Narrative evaluation (case study) from partner, photographs from co-creation	Partner Museums

audiences and potentially accessioned into the collections	audiences they work with and why they are underserved, and confirm that objects have been accessioned	sessions, feedback from underserved audiences involved in the project museums (<i>Evaluation for Impact framework</i>)	
40 community participants engaged in co-production (8 per museum)	Museums to provide numbers of participants in co-production projects	Participant numbers provided by partner museums (<i>Evaluation for Impact framework</i>)	Partner Museums
5x underserved / diverse perspectives are captured through the film	Work with Create Studios to define films to be captured with emphasis on diverse perspectives. Evaluate content	Wessex Museums to evaluate film content post production	Wessex Museums
100% positive feedback from participants about their involvement in co-creation for the exhibition	Community Curators to use Evaluation for Impact framework to collect participant feedback	Participant feedback to be provided by the partner museums (<i>Evaluation for Impact framework</i>)	Partner Museums
Information available is collated into a cohesive narrative to tell the story of folk in the region	Curatorial contract issued	Touring exhibition created	Wessex Museums / MoBF
We will challenge the preconceptions of folk, as well as those about our local communities themselves, by platforming folk heritage that has adapted and been readapted to respond to contemporary communities and issues in our area	IIT survey to be run in each venue during the exhibition run to see if preconceptions of folk have been challenged and that the exhibition responds to contemporary issues	IIT survey report	Wessex Museums / MoBF
Collaboration			
Joint marketing strategy created and implemented for the exhibition	Marketing & Digital lead to develop marketing strategy with Marketing WG	Marketing strategy implemented	CB/Marketing WG
Joint merchandise strategy created and implemented for the exhibition	Merchandise group established by MAS to develop merchandise strategy	Merchandise strategy implemented	Hannah Thielen / Merchandise Group
Exhibition curated and designed for all 4 venues	Curatorial / design contracts issued to include 4x venues	Exhibition designs and photographs for 4x venues	Wessex Museums / MoBF
Objects from partner museums conserved for the exhibition	Conservation requirements identified in final object list. Conservation budget	Objects conserved based on identified needs (object list)	Wessex Museums

Staff report increased confidence engaging underserved audiences in co-creation	Staff involved in co-creation projects include response to this in evaluation report (see above)	Evaluation report / case study for community co-creation projects (<i>Evaluation for Impact framework</i>)	Partner Museums
Digital student placement recruited to develop digital legacy	Application for student placement from York University completed end September for placement Feb-May 2024	Student placement secured. Student working on brief for digital legacy	Wessex Museums
5x volunteers support community engagement activity across the partnership (30 hours)	Museums employ volunteer support as required for community engagement sessions	Volunteer hours recorded by museums	Partner Museums
5 x volunteers support collections research and documentation for the exhibition (50 hours)	Museums employ volunteer support as required for collections research/documentation	Volunteer hours recorded by museums	Partner Museums
15 x exhibition volunteers to steward the exhibition, speak with visitors and administer IIT surveys (2000 hours)	Museums record volunteer stewarding hours. Museums to train volunteers to administer IIT survey during exhibition	Volunteer hours recorded by museums	Partner Museums
The expert curator will share their folk expertise with museum staff and volunteers through collection research and exhibition development	Capture feedback on the process of developing the exhibition from museum staff and volunteers	Qualitative feedback provided by museums	Partner Museums