

National Museums Liverpool  
Strategic Plan  
2016-2019

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## 1. Foreword

2. The primary audiences for this Plan are National Museums Liverpool (NML) staff and Trustees, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCR), and NML's many partners and supporters, regional, national and international.
3. This three year Plan, while it contains much uncertainty, nonetheless outlines NML's priorities for the period, and how we expect our activities to meet our strategic objectives.
4. After a decade of continuous growth in visitor numbers, the year 2012 was our busiest ever, with more than 3.4 million visits. As a result of a subsequent reduction in levels of activity, during 2013 visits declined, and numbered 2.7m. Visitor numbers stabilised in 2014/15, and despite further cutbacks in our activities after the loss of more than 130 posts, numbers were maintained in 2015/16, and we remain among the national museums with the lowest grant-in-aid spend per visitor.
5. A period of national austerity has now lasted for several years, and is proving extremely challenging for NML, given our role as a national museum service based in a Northern regional city. Cuts in our DCMS grant-in-aid since 2010/11 have amounted to a reduction of c.25% in real terms. We currently have a four-year funding settlement from DCMS, which provides us with 'flat cash' at today's levels.
6. While NML is taking action to increase funding from multiple sources, this will never replace the funding cuts of the past five years. This pattern of funding has therefore resulted in major changes to the way we work, but we are proud of the social and economic impacts we have been able to deliver, alongside our international work.
7. Notwithstanding the loss of posts, we have striven to improve aspects of our work that underpin our massive (five fold, 2001-12) audience growth. In this we have had great support from NML staff, who have proved over the past few years that they can respond to new challenges and demanding targets, while maintaining the highest professional standards. We would also like to acknowledge the huge contribution our volunteers make to ensuring that NML provides a great service to our public.
8. To maintain progress we remain committed to finding new ways to deliver a sustainable service, including formally engaging with the Liverpool City Region to align NML with the city region's overall strategic plan for culture through the proposed Local Cultural Partnership.
9. NML's Trustees and Executive Team are determined to maintain the best service possible. We will strive to generate income from all sources, and we are prioritising income generation in all suitable areas of activity.
10. NML remains a global inspiration, a world model of best practice, providing an energetic, high performance, inclusive national museum service.

**Prof Phil Redmond CBE**  
Chairman

**Dr David Fleming OBE**  
Director



## 2. Who we are and what we do

1. National Museums Liverpool (NML) is one of the world's great museum services, probably the greatest in any non-capital city in the world. We hold in trust globally important museum collections, which are universal in range.
2. Because of our national importance, we are core-funded by central Government, and we are governed by Trustees who are appointed by Government.
3. We are the only national museum organisation in England based wholly outside London, and we have a unique, fourfold role: we are the core museum service for Liverpool and Merseyside; we are the North West's largest cultural organisation; we operate at national and international levels.
4. Having played a pivotal role in the cultural, educational and economic life of Liverpool and the North West for more than 160 years, our success can be measured in terms of how well we combine our local and regional role with our national and international responsibilities.
5. NML comprises eight museums: International Slavery Museum (ISM), Lady Lever Art Gallery (LLAG), Merseyside Maritime Museum (MMM), Museum of Liverpool (MoL), Sudley House (SH), Border Force National Museum (funded by the Home Office), Walker Art Gallery (WAG), and World Museum (WM).

## 3. Our Mission:

***To be the world's leading example of an inclusive museum service***

("inclusive" means available to all, regardless of age, ability, background or other factor or characteristic which might limit a person's access to what we do)

## 4. Our Values:

1. ***We are an inclusive and democratic museum service; we aim to maximise social impact and educational benefit for all – museums change lives.***
2. ***Museums are fundamentally educational in purpose.***
3. ***Museums are places for ideas and dialogue, that use collections to inspire people; we do not avoid contemporary issues or controversy.***
4. ***Museums help promote good citizenship, and act as agents of social change: NML believes in the concept of, and campaigns for, social justice.***
5. ***We believe in sustainable development and we have a role to play in the conservation and protection of the built and natural environment.***
6. ***We believe in innovation so as to keep our public offer fresh and challenging, while behaving ethically, and working with partners who support our values.***

## 5. Strategy Statement

Liverpool's cultural offer, including its museums, is without parallel in any UK regional city. That cultural offer has been placed at the heart of a new Devolution model for the city region. As NML, its collections, venues and staff form the biggest cultural asset within the city region, it will become formally engaged with the city region in helping form and being part of an overall cultural strategy that aims to develop a 30-year plan to help combat a host of social and economic problems.

NML has always worked in this challenging environment, and we carry a very great responsibility in terms of delivering first class museums that, as part of a wider pattern of cultural and educational provision, can enhance wellbeing, confidence and social connectedness. In a period of public spending reductions this responsibility grows even greater; NML can help mitigate the social consequences of adverse economic conditions by fully engaging with the proposed Local Cultural Partnership (LCP) on the delivery of a cultural strategy for the city region.

We are committed to facing up to this social responsibility, and our determination to provide free access to our museums (in line with Government policy), to programme our museums so that the content represents a diverse audience, allied with the highest quality standards and enormous variety, is at the core of this commitment.

The Brexit outcome in the EU Referendum may impact on NML in a number of ways – in the prices we have to pay if the exchange rate deteriorates; in the value of our investments; in our ability to join with European colleagues in EU-funded projects; in our ability to recruit and retain staff from EU nations; in our ability to raise capital sums or research funding from EU sources. There may be impact on the movement of collections and artists.

We will over the next few years aim to:

- 1. Engage with the LCP to help develop and then deliver a 30-year plan for culture.**
- 2. Widen participation in our activities, thereby fulfilling our social objectives, especially by attracting diverse audiences.**
- 3. Offer educational opportunities to people of all ages and backgrounds.**
- 4. Achieve economic benefits through developing cultural tourism, and by helping build a strong image for LCR.**
- 5. Pursue research programmes that lead to greater knowledge about our collections; develop our collections to make them more representative of society as a whole, and promote the exceptional quality of our collections.**



- 6. Improve our visitors' experience by upgrading our buildings, displays and facilities, offering quality and variety.**
- 7. Create a culture that motivates our team, enabling us to work effectively - only through the commitment of staff do we achieve success.**
- 8. Increase the diversity of our workforce.**
- 9. Be alert to political, economic, social, and technological change to ensure we remain focused, fast-moving and relevant.**
- 10. Work increasingly in collaboration with other agencies – education, arts, business, public bodies, Non-Governmental Organisations.**
- 11. Behave in an ethical manner at all times, promoting sustainable practices.**
- 12. Manage risk in a positive and effective manner.**
- 13. Use our resources wisely, providing real value for money.**
- 14. Augment our resources wherever we are able.**

In pursuing a strategy of combining significant audience growth and diversity with the highest levels of professionalism, and commercialising our activities wherever we can, we acknowledge that we have created a complex and challenging working environment.

This environment is characterised by regular review of the way we do things, by the pursuit of new ideas and methods, and by the constant re-examination of traditional museum practices.

Our success in terms of massive audience growth, combined with rising standards of collections care, demonstrate the validity of this approach, and our advice is sought globally on how to manage a modern, relevant and impactful museum service.

The next few years will be characterised by more change to how we do things, and to the service we provide to the public, as we continue to adjust to the diminution of the resources available to us.

It is our capacity to manage ourselves imaginatively, while continuing to align ourselves to our Values, wherein lies our future success.

A list of our key achievements for 2015/16 can be found in Appendix 1.



## 6. Strategic Objectives for 2016/17

With reference to our Strategy Statement at the beginning of this Strategic Plan, our major priorities over the next year are:

- 1. Engage with the LCP to develop a 30-year plan for culture, including defining a new role for NML within the Devolution agreement between central government and LCR.**
- 2. To deliver an excellent, socially inclusive, diverse, motivational, entrepreneurial and sustainable museum service.**
- 3. To manage the reduction in scale of NML, while striving to maximise our public impact.**
- 4. To develop new sources of income and increase philanthropic support.**
- 5. To develop appropriate partnerships which offer strategic development opportunities, regionally, nationally and internationally.**
- 6. Ensure NML is a place where people want to come to work.**

The key drivers in our achieving these objectives are the need to provide a basic level of *care to our collections*, and the need to ensure that the public has *access to these collections*. While during the course of the year we will see further change to what we do and how we do it, these drivers will remain at the core of our efforts.

We need to refocus efforts onto augmenting our income and pursuing productive partnerships; at the same time as doing all we can to maintain morale among our staff and volunteers.

### Context

NML is reshaping and reorganising our service, ensuring we are healthy and fit for the future. All the following objectives will be pursued in light of this.

Staff numbers have been reduced over the past five years by an estimated 25%, or 1 in 4 staff, and managing the impact of this reduction will sit at the centre of our continued efforts during 2016/17.

Our Strategic Objectives have been expanded to offer greater detail below. The sections are organised alphabetically and have an equal priority throughout NML.



## 1. Advocacy

We will:

1. Work with supporters, including Trustees, Foundation Trust members, Patrons, donors, and LCR, to advocate NML.
2. Raise our education and community health profile so as to better engage across the whole of government, beyond DCMS.
3. Raise the profile and scale of our exhibition programmes to ensure they are attractive to funders and partners and contribute to wider regional priorities
4. Maintain a national and international leadership role, through appropriate representation, media activity, print, social networks etc.
5. Widely publicise and build upon *House of Memories* to ensure that we maintain its high profile with the public, carers, stakeholders and funders.
6. Report on NML's social and economic impact.

## 2. Audiences

We will:

1. Strive to reach our target of 2.641m visits, with an emphasis on hard-to-reach audiences. We have targets for all our museums which make up this total.
2. Develop commercial trading activity to increase earned income, visitor satisfaction and dwell time.
3. Deliver a programme of engaging exhibitions to attract local, national and international audiences, developing the potential for increasing income through touring NML-generated exhibitions, and partnerships.
4. Build engagement with the health and social care sectors, beyond the *House of Memories* training experience.
5. Develop audiences via digital platforms and social media.
6. Develop our marketing strategy so as to cope with new pressures and expectations.
7. Pursue NML's Equality Objectives as defined by our Diversity Working Group.

## 3. Buildings and Museums

We will:

1. Implement Year Two of the *2015-20 Capital Strategy*. We will minimise running costs and capital repairs liabilities, and continue to develop our trading potential and visitor offer:
  - *Capital repairs* - we will undertake the infrastructure improvements and repairs works to maintain the steady state; ensure statutory compliance, and maintain the normal operation of our buildings so as to ensure the safety of staff and visitors, and care of collections.
  - *Rationalisation* - we will continue to rationalise accommodation, condensing staff accommodation and operational functions. We will undertake a comprehensive needs assessment of office and workshop accommodation, recognising the reduction in our staff numbers, and an appraisal of options for future location of



staff and functions and development of the estate. We will investigate the potential to dispose of ancillary buildings.

- *Development* - at the MoL we will complete remedial works to the external steps and terraces, and to ceilings. At WM we will complete the redevelopment and expansion of the Ancient Egypt galleries, and improvements to the ground floor shop and café to increase income. At MMM we will commence a renewed programme of modernisation. At the Walker we will refurbish the vacant Picton Stack to accommodate the Art Galleries staff and collections from the County Sessions House and North Street.
2. Initiate development plans for the next phase of the International Slavery Museum, one of the world's leading human rights museums with a view to making a Phase 1 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in summer 2017 (the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year).
  3. Review operations at MoL, so as to ensure its full potential as the world's leading city history museum, and ensure that it fulfils its role as the core museum and community heritage hub for LCR.
  4. Explore with the LCR partnership opportunities to make NML venues available, alongside opportunities to share other cultural venues, within the LCP overall cultural strategy.

#### 4. Collections

We will:

1. Ensure our collections are stored safely and securely, improving the management of our storage facilities and undertaking basic care. A major focus in year will be on the archive collections, currently housed in the North Street Warehouse, which will be transferred to secure and accessible storage off site. The planning will begin for the decant of decorative arts and other collections material held at North Street.
2. Continue to develop, research and interpret our collections, and undertake fieldwork, to maintain our professional and academic eminence and to make our collections ever more representative of society; develop slavery-related collections; seek grants, private and commercial funding and donations to acquire collections; undertake consultancy work on an earned income basis.
3. Expand the loan of collections nationally and internationally, with cost recovery and commercial charging, to enable us to conserve and promote them.
4. Develop a more comprehensive programme of exhibitions at all venues from NML's own collections and design a commercial model and test the market for touring them internationally, e.g. costume, Victorian Art, music.
5. Expand international relationships and support Government diplomacy agendas and the GREAT campaign through loans, exhibitions, consultancy and participation in international collaborations and research; seek funding from international partners, British Council and other organisations.
6. Plan for an exhibition of NML's Roman collections to be held in Mexico in 2017 and explore the possibility of touring in the Americas.
7. Negotiate a high-profile international loan to be shown in Liverpool
8. Continue to digitise collection databases and images to enable greater access to NML's collections online and generate earned income through increased image

sales and print on demand technology.

9. Explore with the LCR partnership opportunities to make NML collections available, alongside opportunities to share other collections or cultural assets, within the LCP overall cultural strategy.

## **5. Education**

We will:

1. Aim for 164k schoolchildren to participate in our formal education programmes.
2. Implement an education income generation strategy.
3. Implement a marketing plan for schools.
4. Ensure that our most 'hard-to-reach' visitors are represented within our education and community developments.
5. Work in partnership with the regional networks of schools, colleges and voluntary sector education providers, endeavouring to maintain young people's participation with our informal education and community outreach programme.
6. Develop a health and wellbeing strategy and programme for young people, adults and older people, across NML.
7. Explore with the LCR partnership opportunities to make NML venues, collections and staff expertise available, alongside opportunities to share expertise and assets from other cultural venues, within the LCP overall cultural strategy.

## **6. Efficiencies and effectiveness**

We will:

1. Continue energy-saving and sustainable initiatives, and continue to reduce our carbon footprint.
2. Use IT to deliver organisational objectives and cost savings, and implement IT enhancements to drive reductions in support costs.
3. Continue to review long term loans, and assess their status with a view to renegotiating retention by NML, or returning them to lenders.
4. Consolidate business and project archives and transfer material to accessible deep storage and, in so doing, improve retrieval processes and release space within our city centre buildings either for development, or disposal and to reduce running costs.
5. Investigate co-location of staff and departments to increase effectiveness and improve communications.
6. Ensure that NML and NMLT work more collaboratively.
7. Simplify policies, processes and procedures while maintaining adequate controls in order to reduce bureaucracy.
8. Explore with the LCR partnership opportunities within the LCP overall cultural strategy.
9. Produce a statement of NML's approach to ethical best practice.

## 7. Income and Fundraising

We will:

1. Deliver NML Trading Ltd profit of £324k and strategic developments, in line with business plan projections.
2. Continue to develop the Income Generation Group to improve existing revenues and realise new ones, to generate an additional £168k income.
3. Work more closely with external parties, such as LCR and other cultural organisations within the City Region, to increase NML's earned income.
4. Implement a grants and donations fundraising strategy, aligned closely to the capital programme, *House of Memories*, exhibitions programme and other strategic priorities.
5. Identify opportunities to increase philanthropic support for NML through digital giving and the development of long term relationships with potential donors and benefactors in the UK and internationally, in line with the DCMS Ten Point Plan for Philanthropy.
6. Increase cash donations from visitors through our donation boxes and through trialling new approaches.
7. Explore the potential for levying admission charges to exhibitions.
8. Increase our Membership scheme.
9. Deliver profit targets through projects such as touring exhibitions and commercial loans of objects, using our digital assets and collections, selling images for reproduction, selling management skills, research, and fees and charges; and through implementing business models for Education income generation and building upon the *House of Memories* project to progress it with an increasingly commercial focus.
10. Explore with the LCR fundraising opportunities within the LCP overall cultural strategy.

## 8. Partnerships

We will:

1. In the light of the regional Devolution Deal, to ensure that NML's strategic efforts and those of LCR are closely aligned especially with the development of the Northern Powerhouse, and the creation of a City Region Mayoralty and Local Culture Partnership.
2. Network locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
3. Develop NML's formal strategic partnerships to enhance our reputation and impacts, and to stretch our resources further, and maximise opportunities for selling skills and generating other income opportunities.
4. Support the UK Museums Association in its efforts to represent and advocate museums across all four home nations.
5. Continue our successful *House of Memories* partnerships in four regions across England.
6. Continue our successful international partnerships with the Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM), the Social Justice Alliance of Museums (SJAM), the Museum of International Democracy in Argentina, the Taiwan National University of the Arts, the Minnesota National Historical

- Society, and ICOM and INTERCOM; and develop others where possible.
7. Continue to develop our relationships with University of Leicester, School of Museums Studies and with local universities e.g. Liverpool Hope University.
  8. Work with partners to support destination marketing, secure funding, improve infrastructure and increase footfall on Liverpool's waterfront, at William Brown Street and in Wirral, via the Liverpool Waterfront Business Partnership, St George's Quarter and Wirral Business Network.
  9. Maintain strong relationships with disadvantaged community networks that experience social injustice (lack of opportunity, education, means, access, skills development and employment).

## 9. Team

We will:

1. Engage, motivate and reward our staff in a fair and affordable way.
2. Shape NML to meet our current and future strategic aims, within our available resources.
3. Develop our staff in order for them to be able to adapt to and meet our changing needs.
4. Provide and embed a transparent framework for managing and directing staff performance.
6. In collaboration with our trade unions, explore how best to develop increased volunteer opportunities.
7. Look at the social consequences and impacts of volunteering, especially on lonely, isolated and vulnerable people, as part of our strategy for social inclusion and changing lives.
8. Pursue NML's Equality Objectives as defined by our Diversity Working Group, as they relate to our staff.

## 7. Strategic Objectives for 2017/18 and beyond

Our priorities are to:

1. **Ensure that we are central to the creation of strategies for our city and region, developing a strong relationship with the Local Culture Partnership and the City Region Mayor's office. NML is about the people of LCR and the North West of England, as well as being a multidisciplinary museum service that reflects world cultures and issues.**
2. **Maximise our value to the public through maximising the number of visitors.**
3. **Stabilise NML at a new level of funding, while endeavouring to have as great a social and economic impact as possible. This means continuing to look at all methods of reducing costs.**
4. **Explore all opportunities to enhance our earned income and donations to NML.**
5. **Participate fully in the development of the Northern Powerhouse and other issues arising out of the devolution of political powers from Westminster.**
6. **Place NML at the centre of the 2018 Tenth Anniversary of *Liverpool - European Capital of Culture* celebrations.**

This Plan is subject to in-year review when Objectives for the year and beyond will be reassessed, based on further intelligence on Government funding and other emerging policies.

### Key Achievements 2015/16

During 2015/16 NML extended our reach with local, national, and international, audiences, through a busy programme within our museums, and through our growing networks.

#### Mayas Exhibition

We were delighted to host *Mayas: revelation of an endless time* at World Museum, which was the visual arts highlight of the Mexico-UK year of cultural cooperation 2015. This prestigious exhibition, funded by the Mexican Government, and curated in collaboration with the Mexican Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) in Mexico City, contributed to an 18% annual growth in visitor numbers at the Museum.

The exhibition showcased 385 extraordinary national treasures from the ancient Maya civilization, including sculptures, funerary masks, sacred objects, and gold and jade jewellery. With a supporting programme for schools, and a wide range of workshops and performances for adult and family groups, the exhibition attracted more than 260,000 visitors during the five-month run. We were honored to receive visits by TRHs the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, and their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Honduras and El Salvador; co-hosted with the Ambassador of Mexico, Diego Gomez Pickering.

#### Pre- Raphaelites Charging Exhibition

At the Walker Art Gallery in February we launched the successful *Pre-Raphaelites: Beauty and Rebellion* exhibition, which highlighted Liverpool's significant role in the Pre-Raphaelite artistic movement, and reinforced the city's position as the Victorian art capital of the north. The exhibition included works by Pre-Raphaelite masters Rossetti, Madox Brown, Holman Hunt, and Millais, many of which were drawn from private collections and rarely shown in public, together with masterpieces from our own, and other public collections.

This, NML's first charging art gallery exhibition for 15 years, attracted widespread media attention, and significantly raised the profile of the Walker. Visitor numbers, ticket sales, and retail and catering sales exceeded expectations, and the exhibition has provided a sound basis for developing the charging model to support financial sustainability going forward.

#### Lady Lever Art Gallery Refurbishment

The stunning new Lady Lever Art Gallery South End galleries opened to the public on 25 March 2016. This project was funded mainly by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and involved the research and redisplay of Lord Leverhulme's outstanding collections of 18th century English furniture, and portraiture, Chinese ceramics, Napoleon collections, Victorian and early 20th century sculpture, and the world's best collection of Wedgwood jasperware.

The project brought the building back to its former glory, while at the same time



ensuring that it meets modern sustainability and security standards. We sourced high quality traditional craft skills locally for the production of mouldings, replication brass fittings, and locks, and were also able to reuse and refurbish original materials such as the oak block flooring, and light fittings, which had been stored since the last refurbishment of the galleries in the 1960s.

Despite partial closure of the Gallery to enable the refurbishment, we were delighted to be able to grow visitor numbers, and engage new audiences, throughout the year.

### **Arts Council England Partnership and Grant**

A substantial partnership with Arts Council England (ACE) was established in January when it was announced that the Walker Art Gallery will join the Arts Council Collection National Partners Fund in a three year project, largely funded by ACE, to showcase the Collection, in partnership with ACE, Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne, Birmingham Museums Trust, and Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

### **House of Memories**

Our *House of Memories* dementia programme expanded during the year to meet unprecedented demand, with new initiatives being developed with regional and national partners. The programme has also developed an international dimension, with work undertaken with partners in Japan and the US, in 2015/16.

Ed Vaizey, as Minister of State for Digital and Culture (2014 – 2016), referred to *House of Memories* in a Radio 4 interview, as being a “good example of how you can put culture and heritage at the heart of what you do.”

Nationally-focused activity in 2015/16 has included delivery of the Department of Health-funded *My House of Memories* digital dementia training, with South East partners, including Bexley Heritage Trust, Brighton Royal Pavilion and Museum, the British Museum and the Cinema Museum.

Funded by Health Education North West, NML piloted a *House of Memories* Train the Trainer programme for the region, in partnership with Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, The Christie NHS Foundation Trust, and PSS Community Health.

Liverpool City Council and Barnett Waddingham supported a *House of Memories* Family Carer Buddy programme for the Liverpool City Region. Further afield, the Minnesota Historical Society is currently funding the development and exploration of a US Model of *House of Memories*.

### **Other Achievements and Performance**

#### **Advocacy**

NML continued to contribute to various groups which support the development of the Liverpool City Region visitor economy. This included membership of the Liverpool Waterfront Business Partnership, and the St George’s Quarter group. NML is a founding and active member of both community interest companies, which complement the destination marketing activity of Marketing Liverpool.





NML is frequently approached internationally for its expertise in campaigning for social justice, building large and diverse audiences, change management, developing new museums, addressing global issues (such as the ageing population), and commercial thinking. The Director and senior staff have advised internationally in a number of countries during 2015/16 including Argentina, Australia, Austria, China, Finland, Georgia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, and Ukraine, increasingly under the auspices of the British Council.

We organised a series of events for stakeholders and partners, including seven private views. The latter have enabled us to extend NML's networks to further build our supporter base as we focus more strongly on raising income through philanthropy and corporate events.

The *My House of Memories* App won its second European award, the 'Excellent Smart Health Innovation Award 2015' at the ENGAGED and eUcare - Think Dementia Conference in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. *House of Memories* won the Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Award for 'Best Dementia Friendly Partnership Working'.

The Executive Director for Education & Visitors was invited by the Baring Foundation, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and British Council (Japan), to a week long study tour in Tokyo, with 12 fellow UK delegates. The connection was NML's pioneering work to enable creative experiences and opportunities for older people.

*House of Memories* has featured as part of the EU Manifesto for Arts and Older People.

The Museum of Liverpool education team organised a Human Rights Day celebration in partnership with Migrant Artists Mutual Aid choir, and delivered workshops in conjunction with City Hearts, an anti-trafficking organisation.

The Museum of Liverpool and the International Slavery Museum hosted study visits from delegations of museum professionals and cultural advisors from Sweden, Denmark, USA, Albania, China, Belgium and other UK cities, who regularly visit NML to learn about the work we do to inform their own cultural developments.

We continued to build a high profile for NML and its work, via the media. We generated more than 5,000 media mentions throughout the year, worth almost £8m in estimated advertising value, and with an estimated circulation of more than 400m. This compares with almost 2,000 media mentions in 2014/15.

In order to support and develop existing, and new, partnerships, we extended our corporate communications activity in 2015/16, via a new regular stakeholder e-newsletter, and a well-received annual review. A new Twitter platform aimed at this audience, and sharing information about NML-wide initiatives, engaged more than 2,000 followers in its first three months.





## **Audiences**

We attracted 2,847,986 visits to our museums and galleries (a 7% increase on 2014/15) and this contributed to a 13.8% increase in retail and catering transactions, compared with 2014/15.

370,000 children and young people took part in NML's education programme during the year (a 7% decrease on 2014/15). The planned decrease is due to the Education Team restructure, and training in February 2015 to strengthen the curriculum offer and management support. Education numbers have continued to rise from November 2016 onwards, and we forecast that there will be growth in 2016/17.

There were 2.1m visits to the website in 2015/16 compared with 2m last year (an increase of 8%). Our new online collections pages, which continue to grow in quality and number, were especially popular.

We continued to grow engagement online via social media, gaining 19k Twitter followers and 11k Facebook fans during the course of the year. We now have 78k Twitter followers, 51k Facebook fans and 2k Instagram followers on our relatively new Walker account. We also increased our database of subscribers for online information by 27% and introduced a new corporate communications strategy to keep stakeholders and partners up to date about NML-wide developments.

Visitor surveys from 2015/16 show that in addition to overall growth, we have maintained diversity in the audience for the museums and galleries. There has been an increase in the number of visitors with a disability and more visits from people aged over 75.

In 2015/16 there was a slight decrease in visits from people in Black, Asian or Minority Ethnicity (BAME) groups. While we have maintained the higher level of visits which began in 2013/14, we recognise we still have work to do to diversify the audience so that it reflects the ethnicity of the local population and wider visiting public.

We were disappointed to see that in 2015/16, the trend for reduced engagement from lower socio-economic groups has continued. In recent years, a reducing proportion of our visitor base has been drawn from lower socio-economic groups (National Socio-economic classification, groups 5-8), and is now at 21%.

NML's waterfront museums supported Liverpool's 'Three Queens' event, and six week 'One Magnificent City' festival, which celebrated 150 years of Cunard liners with a series of public events. We contributed to the city's cultural offer with events at the Museum of Liverpool and the Merseyside Maritime Museum, a display of Cunard-related collections, and Visitor Services support during the key event, which attracted more than 1 million visitors to the Liverpool waterfront.

We contributed to Liverpool's Light Night events in May 2015, with late night openings at the Walker Art Gallery and the Merseyside Maritime Museum providing access to new audiences after hours.

We opened 13 exhibitions across our venues during the year. In addition to the Maya



and Pre-Raphaelites exhibitions, particular highlights included:

*Broken Lives*, at the International Slavery Museum, (26 June 2015 to 11 December 2016). This powerful and moving exhibition drew attention to the world's biggest modern slavery issue: the exploitation of the Dalits in India. Produced in partnership with the Dalit Freedom Network UK, the exhibition illustrated the scope and scale of trafficking and slavery in India today, and met the core objectives of the International Slavery Museum in highlighting modern forms of slavery.

*L8 Unseen*, Museum of Liverpool (3 April to 6 September 2015). Telling the stories and experiences of people from the Liverpool 8 community, this exhibition uncovered the spirit and heritage of the local area, through filmed interviews, and striking large-scale images taken by renowned photographer Othello De'Souza-Hartley. The exhibition was organised in partnership with B3 Media, and was part-funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

*Picturing Venice*, Lady Lever Art Gallery (1 May to 27 September 2015). Drawn from NML's fine art collection, the exhibition explored the stylistic developments of European art between the mid 17th and the 20th centuries, through images of Venice, and included works by British artists such as JMW Turner, Walter Sickert, and Valerie Thornton.

*On the Waterfront*, Merseyside Maritime Museum, (25 November 2015 to 19 June 2016). Marking the 300th anniversary of Liverpool's Old Dock - the world's first commercial wet dock– this exhibition covers the exciting story of the city's waterfront from the 18th century up to the present day.

## **Buildings**

The busy programme of maintenance and development across the museums and galleries estate throughout the year included the following highlights, in addition to the Lady Lever Art Gallery refurbishment:

The expansion and redisplay of the Ancient Egypt Gallery at World Museum has provided the opportunity to undertake significant improvements to the infrastructure of this part of the building, and bring it up to modern standards. This includes installation of new HVAC systems, electrical infrastructure, security, and improved fire detection systems. Improvement and expansion of the ground floor café and shop also began, to improve facilities for visitors, and make the operation more profitable.

Work commenced in February 2016 on the Museum of Liverpool – Steps and Terraces Rectification Enabling Works package. The work consists of the removal of the existing pre-cast concrete stair, seat, and terrace units, together with the installation of a new waterproof membrane.

## **Collections**

As part of NML's restructure, the collections management, conservation, and curatorial divisions were integrated under the management of the venue directors who hold responsibility for the collections. This has enabled greater coherence of work programmes, and ensured that best use is made of available resources.



NML was again successful this year in obtaining significant external funding for collections-related research, development, and display, from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, DCMS Wolfson, Arts Council England, and other academic sources. Collections development funding will enable us to expand our collecting activity, acquisitions, and research, in slavery collections, and art, and it allows NML to maintain Independent Research Organisation status.

DCMS Wolfson awarded a grant to the World Museum Ancient Egypt Gallery, in February 2015, for research work into, and conservation of, our important holdings of ancient Egyptian artefacts. The project, which will involve an expansion and redisplay of the gallery, has proceeded well during the year, and we plan to open the new gallery to the public in early 2017.

The Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund awarded a grant to the International Slavery Museum's *Sankofa: Connections and Collections* project, in December 2015. This will enable us to research NML's collections and material held by partners in the city region community.

Charlotte Keenan, Curator of British Art, won an Art Fund New Collecting grant to support the acquisition of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans (LGBT) related works. The grant also funds mentoring and professional development.

Some 6,000 objects from across our collection areas were loaned to museums and galleries within the UK (150 venues), and internationally (34 venues). Of these, 2524 objects (to more than 50 venues) were loaned within Liverpool City Region, including supplying objects to four separate exhibitions at The Atkinson, Southport.

### **Efficiencies and effectiveness**

Over the last 12 months NML has continued to implement technology to simplify processes and reduce maintenance and management costs. These include an extension to the virtual desktop environment, and a continued reduction in desktop printing. As well as reducing costs, this has increased flexibility for staff.

NML has implemented an improvement to the HR/payroll roster system which automates the approval and reporting of overtime across all NML.

We purchased a new business intelligence IS system which enables NML to link important software – for example, those which relate to commercial income and visitor data – providing access to more effective reporting.

Following the first full year after the installation of the EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale) software the organisation is seeing many benefits – most notably through stock control efficiencies, and reduction in management time on report composition/writing. This has enabled greater growth and improvements in other areas of the commercial departments.

We have invested in a modular pop-up shop, through the Maya exhibition, which can be used across the venues to support temporary exhibitions. This investment and



method of working enables the organisation to deliver an enhanced visitor experience in an efficient and timely way.

During March 2016 we installed a new visitor counting solution, which includes flexible reporting, and biannual auditing, to ensure reliable and accurate visitor figures, replacing a system no longer fit for purpose.

The opportunity was taken during gallery improvement projects to reuse materials where possible, and incorporate improved and more sustainable heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, lighting, and finishes. For example, we were able to bring the Lady Lever Art Gallery up to modern energy efficient standards. The structures within World Museum's Egypt gallery are being 90% re-purposed from existing exhibition cases and structures. Cases from the former Egypt gallery have been refitted with energy efficient LED lighting to reduce energy consumption, as well as heat exposure, for the objects.

A modular system has been factored into exhibition design to facilitate commercial touring. This will support future income generation from touring exhibitions.

### **Education and Visitors**

The Visitor Services, Education, Retail, and Catering teams supported the museums and galleries in providing a first-class experience for visitors during 2015-16, resulting in highly favourable Trip Advisor reviews and ratings for all venues, and a Visit England Gold Accolade for World Museum. Visitor Services also led the 'Old Dock Tours', funded in partnership with Liverpool One. The number of visitors to the Old Dock increased throughout the year, and highlights included Heritage Open Days, and a tour for the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool.

Across the museums and galleries the Education team engaged with a wide range of audiences. At the International Slavery Museum, the team worked with local students to create their own modern Magna Carta using the medium of stained glass, with artist Nathalie Liege. This piece of work is now on show in the Dr Martin Luther King Jnr Building.

As part of a wider audience development project, the Lady Lever Art Gallery Education team worked with the Liverpool Chinese community to highlight the Chinese collections. More than 3,000 people attended Chinese New Year celebrations.

The Waterfront Education team has continued to host several large scale events in conjunction with Initial Teacher Training departments at Liverpool Hope University, Liverpool John Moores University, and Edge Hill University. More than 1,000 trainee teachers have taken part, finding out more about the collections and facilities available for students.

World Museum was one of 21 UK science centres and museums to take part in a major Destination Space programme which celebrated the European Space Agency's first British astronaut, Tim Peake. The programme is designed to inspire young people about science and space and by April 2016 had engaged more than 17,000 people. As



part of this, the Museum hosted the Times Educational Supplement's (TES) "Cosmic Classroom" event involving a video call to Tim Peake on the International Space Station. Almost half a million pupils across 58 countries linked live to the event, which was Tim's only video call to schoolchildren during his time in space. With 7m Tweets, the "cosmicclassroom" hashtag trended at number 1 for six hours in the UK on Twitter. TES commented that this was comparable only with One Direction releasing an album, or the Presidential race in the US.

The Museum of Liverpool Education team hosted the now annual Trans Day of Remembrance (22 November), and demonstrated our continuing partnership with LGBT groups in the city. LGBT programming is now an embedded element of NML's calendar of events.

### **Income and Fundraising**

During 2015/16, 31% of NML's income was self-generated, amounting to £9m (including Museum of Liverpool legal income, and donated items).

NML's Trading Company, NMLT, returned a net profit of £359k in 2015/16 (of which £358k was donated to NML), significantly surpassing profit targets for the year by 39.3%. The additional profit against target is derived from a growth in sales, and efficiencies in cost of sales and company costs.

In comparison with the previous year, turnover and gross profit have remained stable at £3.8m, and £2.6m, respectively. Despite this, net profit, before any gift aid to NML, decreased year-on-year by 14%, or £57.0k. The reduction in net profit can be attributed to three key areas:-

- Increased investment in staffing resources for the long term strategic expansion of the event division which will enable further growth in profit.
- Increased investment in the medium and long term strategic developments such as training, marketing and infrastructure.
- The Events division lost a key element of its portfolio due to the Mayas exhibition at World Museum. This space could not be sold for corporate hire for the majority of the financial year, resulting in a loss of sales of £305k, and approximately £116k profit.

The Income Generation Group (IGG,) set up at the end of 2014/15, has focused on projects which will generate additional income over the next five years. This has included developing feasibility studies for charged facilities, and has streamlined the process for prioritising projects with the strongest business case. Plans are now in place to generate additional income to NML through new models that have been developed over 2015/16, for example, sharing NML skills, charging for some educational visits, developing exhibitions with touring income potential, and charging for facilities such as World Museum's Planetarium.

The first IGG project, The *Pre-Raphaelites Beauty and Rebellion* exhibition delivered ticket sales and retail and catering income that exceeded expectations, and it has provided a sound basis for developing the charging model to support financial sustainability going forward.





In 2015/16 we laid the groundwork for a new strategy which will increase philanthropic support for NML. This involved research and analysis into opportunities, and consultation with senior managers across the organisation about possible approaches. The strategy will be completed and begin delivery in 2016/17.

A framework for NML's advisory services has been developed. As a first development, speaker and expert fees have been introduced more systematically to increase income for the Director's and senior staff time and expertise.

NML continued to raise significant funds from Trusts, Foundations, and individual donors. Total fundraising recognised in the financial statements in 2015/16 was £2.7m – this is included in the self generated income of £9m. Significant fundraising achievements included:

- Donation boxes raised £211,808, an increase of 9% compared with the same period 2014/15.
- The *Mayas: Revelation of an endless time* exhibition received grant funding from the Mexican government.
- The Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund awarded a grant towards the *Sankofa: Connections and Collections Project*.
- The Art Fund awarded four grants towards the purchase of a 17th Century oil sketch *Virgin and Child in Glory* by Murillo, the Atta Kwami *Prints in Counterpoint* series, the *Cockle Pickers' Tea Set* by Paul Scott, and the purchase of Rose Wylie's *PV Windows and Floorboards*.
- Arts Council England (ACE) awarded a grant as part of their Arts Council Collection National Partners Fund.
- Personal donations were received from Snr Guillermo Whpei towards future developments at the International Slavery Museum. Snr Whpei is founder of the Museum for International Democracy, and the Fundacion Para La Democrocia Internacional in Rosario, Argentina.
- NML received a grant from the Armed Forces Community Covenant to produce *Memories Lost*. This project focuses on capturing the memories and telling the stories of soldiers, their families, and the charities that support them, both now and in the past, while raising awareness, and increasing support for people who live with dementia.
- NML was awarded a grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund's Our Heritage programme to support the *Hoards of Cheshire project*. This project has enabled NML to acquire for the North West region two outstanding groups of Romano-British finds, the 'Knutsford Hoard', and the 'Malpas Hoard'.
- The Association for Science and Discovery Centres' National Astronaut Programme awarded a grant to World Museum for the programme celebrating Tim Peake's six month mission to the International Space Station.
- We received two legacies from private estates to the *House of Memories* project, and the Walker Art Gallery.
- The NML Foundation Trust has funded the development of a sustainable commercial strand of *House of Memories* including a licensed workforce programme, and dedicated website with e-learning information portal.

- Marks & Spencer Bootle Branch chose *House of Memories* as their Charity of the Year. The North West Housing Conference committee also voted *House of Memories* as the Charity of the Year for 2015.

## Partnerships

Through the *House of Memories* programme, National Museums Liverpool has become a founder member of the new National Alliance for Museums, Health & Wellbeing, supported by Arts Council England.

NML was the first museum service to sign up to the Autism Charter, part of an innovative project by the Autism Alliance and the Department of Health, to build autism-friendly communities.

The Merseyside Maritime Museum Education team has worked in partnership with The Together Trust, which supports long-term fostered children. This has involved working with young people to research the history of the organisation and its young people, with NML delivering sessions, and discussions, about emigration.

The World Museum Education team is delivering a new *Meet the Scientist* programme in which scientists from the University of Liverpool, and Liverpool John Moores University, share their latest research with visitors in an interactive, informal, and family-friendly way. By 1 April, more than 9,000 people had participated in the events.

The events division has been working closely with the ACC, a significant conference centre in Liverpool, to develop a commercial partnership to promote business tourism. Recently, they visited IMEX (the worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events), on behalf of UKTI GREAT campaign.

In partnership with the School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) *Behind the Scenes of the 21st Century Museum*, was successfully delivered for two runs between June 2015 and February 2016, signing up more than 17,000 learners worldwide. The course used case studies from NML to explore topics in current museum thinking.

As part of our ongoing relationship with Liverpool Hope University, the Director gave his inaugural lecture as Visiting Professor in Museum Studies on 9 March 2016, under the title of *Museums Change Lives*.

NML continues to provide expert advice to the Museum for International Democracy in Argentina on the development and project management of this new museum. The International Slavery Museum is also a partner in their national programme on contemporary slavery. The museum is due to open during 2016.

## Team

We continue to coach, train, and develop our teams to make the most of our resources, and to ensure we are able to maximise opportunities. Wherever possible we have sought to secure external funding to further support the development of our staff.



NML is committed to looking at ways to improve our approach to health, wellbeing, and engagement for staff. A first staff health and wellbeing survey has been undertaken this year and the results have led to the holding of a series of wellbeing events. Further events have been held, including NML's first Spring Into Summer staff event. In addition, NML's training programme has been further developed in order to respond to information provided by the survey.

Unlike many other national museums, our trading subsidiary, NMLT, delivers retail, catering, corporate hospitality and events, with an in-house team. This ensures that our visitor's experience a seamless journey from beginning to end, and that our merchandise, service and products can be interwoven in the story of the museum or art gallery. At NML we retain 100% of the profit derived from commercial operations, which makes us exceptionally efficient. There are also intangible benefits as colleagues work closer together to ensure cross-pollination of contacts, databases, and opportunities; this not only makes us efficient and delivers more revenue, but ensures the visitor's expectations are exceeded.

Our trading subsidiary launched an engagement strategy for all commercial operations staff, looking specifically at customer services, core values, and behaviour. Training was delivered to set new expectations for staff.

NML continued to restructure the organisation in line with reduced funding. In 2015/16 this resulted in the removal of eight posts. We continued a recruitment freeze and recruited internally for vacancies wherever possible.

A 1% pay increase was awarded to most staff, in line with the government's pay remit. Staff on the lowest pay band received a 3.74% pay increase.

### **Touring exhibitions**

*Pre-Raphaelite and Romantic Age Treasures* (July 2015 to May 2016). An exhibition of 66 outstanding Victorian paintings and watercolours from the art collection of NML, toured to four venues in Japan. Arranged in Japan by Seiichiro Nakagawa of Artis Inc, the tour included Niigata City Museum of Art, (18 July to 23 September 2015), Nagoya City Museum of Art, (3 October to 13 December 2015), Bunkamura Museum of Art, Tokyo (23 December 2015 to 6 March 2016), and Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art, (15 March to 31 May 2016).

Two family-friendly exhibitions developed by NML were well-attended on their UK tours: *Eye for Colour* (June to November 2015) is a popular interactive science exhibition, shown at Tullie House Museum, Carlisle; *Plantastic* (February to November 2015) is an interactive science exhibition about the world of plants, shown at the Horniman Museum, London.