

Major Partner Museum

Programme evaluation March 2015 to March 2018

Presentation of independent evaluation by Jenifer Macindoe, 2018



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

The Partnership

Delivered across 6 museums and galleries	March 2015 and March 2018.
Core belief	Resilient organisations are outward facing They have a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses
Network approach	Building on strengths and maximising collaborative working to boost smaller organisations
Designed to	Encourage team working Encourage collaborations across the wider cultural sector.
In order to	Have access to skills and resources to deliver excellence

Working together to deliver outputs across 15 workstreams

Falmouth Art Gallery (FAG)

National Maritime Museum Cornwall (NMMC)

Penlee House Gallery and Museum (PH)

Royal Cornwall Museum (RCM)

Telegraph Museum Porthcurno (TMP)

Wheal Martyn Museum (WM)

CMP support from ;

Project Manager

Community Engagement Officer

Collections Co-Ordinator

Digital Co-ordinator

Scope and ambition

- ✓ Delivered outcomes and impacts across multiple areas
- ✓ Involved a variety of staff within the partner museums.
- ✓ Engaged arts practitioners and community partners to broaden the reach of the project.
- ✓ The culture of sharing and learning within the partnership and wider sector maximised impact

Impacts : at a glance

MPM supported exhibitions	858,621 people experienced at one of the six partner museums
Delivery of lifelong learning sessions	33 sessions for older people
Connecting with heritage	1,673 children, young people and adults took part
Welcoming new audiences	4,611 people taking part
Working with artist practitioners	68 artists delivering activities
Bright Sparks project, supported by FEAST	Run by nine museums
Digitisation project	20 volunteers

Impacts : at a glance

Industrial Heritage, Visual Arts and Digitisation events	468 people attended
Training in collections management	179 museum staff & volunteers
Individual collections care support	10 organisations
Workforce development sessions	205 people attending sessions such as Makaton, funding and diversity
Training bursaries	24 accessed to update skills and knowledge
Arts Award	All partners' Learning Officers trained in Bronze, Silver and Gold
Digitisation project	9,830 images digitised Over 2,400 uploaded to Media Storehouse Images viewed at least 6,646 times

Impact on Museums

Visitor Figures	Continued to rise New audiences reached Increase in positive visitor feedback Experimenting with (particularly) digital marketing helped reach larger and new audiences
Digitisation Projects	Projects and training laid the groundwork for digitisation of collections Opened up access to previously unseen objects Opened up new volunteering opportunities Drive to raise the standards for collection care and management across the sector thanks to work at WM
Learning and Community Engagement	Museums have created good working partnerships Expertise in working with minority groups Evidence of participants continuing beyond projects
Deeper Engagement	Museums have been reconsidering interpretation strategies and programming as a result of working more closely with visitors

Impact on Participants

Knowledge and Understanding	Learning about the collections Understanding how museums and galleries operate.
Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity	Strong across all projects Particularly when participants given independence and autonomy
Skills	Personal, artistic and creative, academic and work-related.
Attitudes and Values	Participants' views of museums and heritage positively influenced as a result of their involvement. Participants' views of themselves - many reporting increases in self-confidence, enthusiasm and pride in their achievements.
Activity, behaviour and progression	Commitment to return to the venues amongst participants was consistently high following projects, particularly where engagement was sustained over time.

5 Recommendations

1	Be clear	About expectations, roles and responsibilities
2	Continue to develop	Networks and training where there is greatest need
3	External partners	Continue to develop work
4	Data and qualitative feedback	Find ways to make the data work Integrate robust qualitative evaluation into planning
5	Implement learning	Continue to create powerful participant experiences

Project Delivery

1. Satisfaction very high in the main
2. Well managed by CMP
3. Partners investing time demonstrates value
4. Successful partnership working

Key learning

1. The value of being in a partnership with other museums
2. The value of CMP in leading the project
3. How to work with external partners
4. What partner museums need, what the heritage sector in Cornwall needs
5. How to ensure collaboration is effective
6. The need for clear communication and agreement on responsibilities
7. Understanding who is who and bringing the right people together
8. How to achieve big things with limited capacity

Key learning

'I think it's a really positive way of working. If MPM / NPO wasn't there, we would all be working independently. It does take a lot of effort, but the benefit is worth it.'

Director, RCM

Summary of Achievements

The journey of each partner museum

Falmouth Art Gallery

'It gave us the opportunity to prove to ourselves that we could deliver very high-class exhibitions, that we could smarten the place up, that we could do some really good and meaningful community engagement.'

MPM has allowed the gallery to move away from delivering small, individually funded pieces of work towards more cohesive programming. Staff feel that this has been key to improving standards and meeting excellence.

Projects such as the FOMO artists fair and the Youth dance projects explored the possibilities of the building as a resource and brought in entirely different audiences and had positive impact on the perception of stakeholders.

- ✓ Requests for talks to community groups have risen dramatically
- ✓ capacity for delivering school workshops is reached
- ✓ Visitor numbers and shop income have increased
- ✓ New relationships with artists and learning providers

National Maritime Museum Cornwall

Staff at NMMC report that the experience of MPM fundamentally impacted on the way that they think about developing and delivering exhibitions.

Experiences gained from working with different communities through their inclusion and community arts projects have highlighted positive effects on participants and museum visitors.

Staff feel that there has been a significant shift in how exhibition planning is approached. Community Voices has become an embedded part of their exhibition strategy.

MPM investment has help realise the highly successful Vikings, Tattoo and Titanic exhibitions and there is an increase in confidence around working with artists.

Confidence in developing and delivering community engagement work has grown. Listening to the views of under-represented audiences through these projects has reinforced the commitment of the museum to engaging people in conversations about their ongoing development.

Wheal Martyn

'We've not looked at MPM as a project on the side, it's become how we work. It's given us real direction, linking in to ace goals. After three years, it feels engrained.'

Wheal Martyn has been boosted in virtually all aspects through the MPM project.

Much progress has been made in conserving, cataloguing and digitising collections and the development of the interpretation strategy and masterplan which has allowed the museum to successfully develop an application to HLF for a major capital project, recently started.

The Activity Plan has been written to dovetail with NPO delivery. Staff feel that this achievement has only been possible with the MPM investment, and has 'set the tone' for the future development and resilience of the museum.

There has been a 63% increase in children and young people visiting over the MPM period and figures for formal learners have almost doubled. The Cornwall Residents Pass has seen the number of return visits increase by 2 ½ times.

Inclusion and community engagement projects have brought in new audiences :
– SEN schools, home educators, young carers for example.

Telegraph Museum Porthcurno

At the start of MPM the collection was virtually inaccessible, housed in a series of uncatalogued boxes. Now, staff and visitors can make use of more than 6000 images which have been digitised and are poised to develop even greater commercial and engagement activities with this new resource.

Underground exhibition areas have been brought up to the same high standard as the rest of the museum displays, with MPM funding enabling the museum to attract additional funds from DCMS Wolfson and Pilgrim.

Successful engagements with participants through the older people's projects have inspired them to keep working with this audience.

Staffing churn and internal communication systems presented challenges to implementing MPM activity to its fullest in the early years. Diversifying the board of Trustees has been a priority during MPM, with the number of women trebled and better representation from local stakeholders and people with relevant talent and skills.

Royal Cornwall Museum

Royal Cornwall Museum's primary needs were to improve the visitor experience and find ways to engage with greater local audiences. MPM investment has enabled the team to transform spaces and develop new offers that have contributed greatly towards these aims. In Year 2, the team was able to secure additional HLF funding to deliver a major audience research and business planning project. New lighting has been installed throughout the galleries, helping with energy consumption and enhancing the visitor experience.

There is evidence of the positive impact that these changes are having on visitors, staff and volunteers alike. During the period Feb – April 2018, following the relaunch of the museum, visitor figures were up 40%. The introduction of two free family days this year saw visitors treble from comparable days in the previous year.

Visitors can now access images and exhibitions online, the museum is developing itself as a resource for groups with additional needs such as older people, migrant families and autistic visitors. As a result of the focus on understanding audiences, collecting and interrogating data to inform decision-making is becoming more commonplace.

Penlee House

Developing and enabling participation has been key at Penlee House Gallery and Museum. There are considerably more opportunities to engage with the museum now compared to the start of the project and the methods used to engage visitors, particularly children, have been developed and refined as expertise within the museum team has grown. There is evidence of this throughout the galleries – previously generic activities for children have been replaced by high-quality resources built around different learning styles and awareness of disabilities. The museum now offers sessions for babies, young mums and adults with limiting mental and physical illnesses.

Improving accessibility has been a goal and there has been investment in equipment, such as digital recorders, pen friends, and in high-quality training ensures that the museum is able to sustain and continue steps to become more accessible for visitors with visual and hearing impairments.

Matching capacity with ambition has been a challenge faced by this partner museum, although this has been tackled by building volunteer capacity. Staff report increased cohesion between departments as a result of the projects delivered. Partnership working has extended beyond the project, with increased involvement in local festivals and other heritage partners.

Cornwall Museums Partnership

MPM facilitated the formation of Cornwall Museums Partnership. As a result of this project, the organisation has grown considerably, now delivering a portfolio of projects within the heritage sector. Internal processes have kept up with the pace of development and the team reports feeling much more joined up in terms of communication.

CMP have developed a body of intelligence about the sector, its strengths and networks, how it is connected, locally and nationally. It is clear from partner museums that the organisation is valued as a source of help, support and advice. A potential challenge for the future may well be managing the expectations of museums against capacity of staff.

This positive reputation is also starting to filter out more widely, although staff feel there is still some way to go with smaller museums.

'We've learnt about making change happen and the strategies and approaches that really get a shift in practice and get initiatives to stick in an organisation.'

CEO, CMP

'We feel that our charity has been instrumental in helping those museums work collaboratively and in new ways, in a genuinely cooperative and collaborative way, which we feel is the most productive way to affecting that change in museums that we all want to see - being more open and connected to the audiences they serve.'

CEO, CMP

Impact: Museum Visitors

- ✓ At FAG, the number of positive visitor comments left increased by more than a third during the period of the Winifred Nicholson exhibition.
- ✓ 85% of visitors to Wheal Martyn's Passion for Porcelain exhibition rated their enjoyment either 4 or 5 out of 5.
- ✓ NMMC's Tattoo exhibition encouraged people to travel from further afield to the museum, with the average journey time increasing from 36 minutes to 46 minutes when Tattoo was the primary reason to visit.
- ✓ 61% of visitors to PH's Stanhope Forbes exhibition strongly agreed that their needs had been fully met and were happy with the way they could experience the galleries; 31% agreed with this statement.

Impact : Museum Visitors

'Absolutely super exhibition, beautifully curated, a magical experience.'

Visitor to FAG

Learning was also a demonstrable outcome from the exhibitions, with high quality interpretation being the major factor in this.

93% of visitors to PH's Stanhope Forbes exhibition felt they had learnt something new. Appreciation and understanding of the local area and its heritage were also high on the list of outcomes listed by visitors.

- ✓ 76% of visitors rated the Passion for Porcelain exhibition at WM a 4 or 5 out of 5 when asked if they had learnt anything from visiting it.

Impact : Museum Visitors

At NMMC, a focus group with young people revealed that whilst previously participants did not feel the museum was for them, after visiting the exhibition they were excited about the benefits of having the organisation on their doorstep.

'The Tattoo exhibition has created a buzz. It's quite a surprise – you tend to think of boats and sailing clobber not something that we can relate to.'

Young person talking about NMMC's Tattoo exhibition

Impact : Museum Visitors

FAG's Year 2 and 3 inclusion project, Shallal Sketchbooks;

- ✓ Toured 16 venues
- ✓ Reached an audience of over 15,000
- ✓ Often being displayed alongside workshops run by Shallal staff.

'What a joy to see the artist sketchbooks, made my day. I have looked through about 10 today but when I pop in next I will make time to look through them all. They are wonderful.'

Impact: Project Participants

Knowledge and understanding

Learning about the subject matter of the museums, as well as sometimes understanding how museums and galleries operate was a common outcome for the majority of the projects.

However, much more than the acquisition of knowledge was the intention to connect participants with heritage for purposes of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity.

Impact: Project Participants

Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity

Year 5 children who delivered guided tours at PH described 'going behind the scenes' as one of the best parts of their experience.

Pupils at NMMC said they preferred working on the Bligh project to a regular school trip.

'I think it was nice because we visited it, like, so many times that we kind of got used to it and we knew our way round and really enjoyed going there.'

Pupil, NMMC

Impact: Project Participants

Personal skills

The nature of participants working on the inclusion projects meant that many were dealing with issues of anxiety, lack of confidence or dealing with disability or trauma so developing personal skills and learning to manage feelings were visible outcomes throughout these programmes.

'This project has given me the opportunity to do things and to meet people that I just wouldn't have been possible in normal school. I am now able to work better in a team and am more resilient.'

Participant, Sea and Me project, NMMC

Impact: Project Participants

Artistic and creative skills

Participants said they valued learning new creative skills from professionals e.g. filming and editing skills from Dogbite Studios at NMMC, choreography and performance skills from Shallal dance group at WM, artistic techniques from professional artists at RCM.

Impact: Project Participants

Academic and work-related skills

Evaluation of the creative writing project at WM found that pupils significantly increased skills in creative writing; singing; teamwork; self-confidence; knowledge of local history; and performance skills.

Many pupils working on the Bligh exhibition reported increases in grades 6 months after completing the project.

Young people at PH reported improving skills in budgeting, presentation to audiences, marketing and leadership as a result of the opportunity to run the Arts Café event.

'My writing became amazing'

Pupil at WM

Impact: Project Participants

Attitudes and Values

Participants' views of museums, galleries and heritage had been positively influenced by their involvement.

'I have never been to a gallery before and its way more exciting than I thought it would be – I have loved this project!' Youth Dance Member at FAG

The impact on participants' views of themselves was also evident, with many participants reporting increases in self-confidence, enthusiasm and pride in their achievements.

'My favourite part was when we did the tour. All of our hard work paid off!' Pupil, PH

Impact: Project Participants

Activity, behaviour and progression

Commitment to return to the venue was very high at the end of participants' involvement.

A third of participants on the Year 3 creative writing project re-visited Wheal Martyn without their school (i.e with family) during the 3 months of the project.

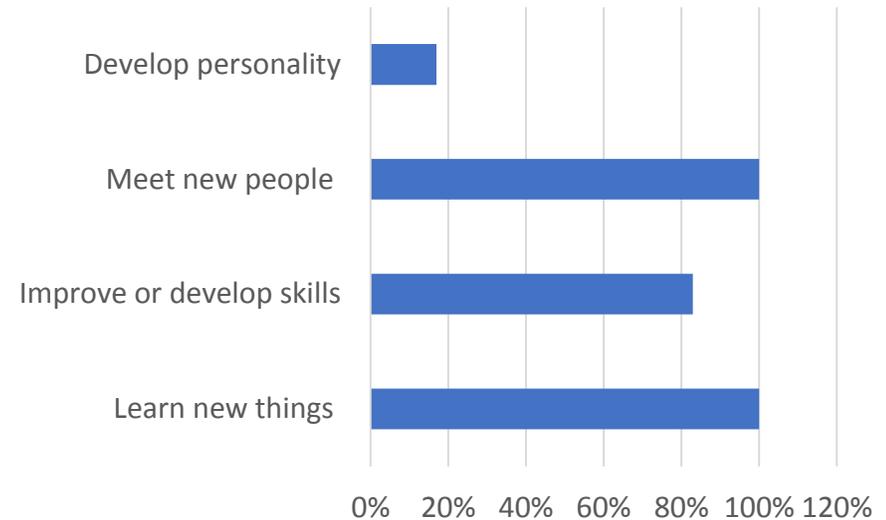
One participant in the older people's workshops at FAG had never been to the gallery before, despite living his whole life in Falmouth. Since taking part in the project he asked his carer to bring him back and now visits quite often to look at and talk about the paintings.

Volunteer Development

Existing volunteers have been given the opportunity to engage with new activities and technologies, and new volunteers have been attracted by the increased opportunities available.

10 volunteers recruited to work on RCM's digitisation project. Only one had been involved in a similar project.

A number of people have been persuaded to volunteer their support for the first time.



Training Delegates

The variety of subject areas, combined with good quality delivery of the CPD events delivered centrally by CMP, has meant that impacts on delegates are good, and in many cases, long-lasting.

At most events across the MPM period, 100% of all delegates said they understood the key issues of the subject covered.

Long Term Impact

- ✓ Helston Museum : set up an art store
- ✓ Wheal Martyn Museum : improved storage conditions for their paintings
- ✓ Fowey Museum : creating a more suitable storage solution
- ✓ Bodmin Town Museum : renovated a lock using techniques learnt at the workshop
- ✓ Perranzabuloe, Mevagissey and Bodmin Town Museums : successfully installed and upgraded Modes
- ✓ Cornwall Records Office : purchased the recommended resources for photographic conservation, changed their storage policies and have organised a further training
- ✓ Castle Heritage Centre : made improvements to the way new photographic donations are documented and cared for

Delivery Partners

All of the five partners involved in delivering the community arts engagement and inclusion projects agreed their projects had enabled them to ;

- deliver their organisation's desired outcomes
- explore new ways of working
- broaden their knowledge
- reach more people
- find new inspiration
- be innovative

All arts partners also agreed that the experience of working with the museum had helped them to:

- Improve their professional practice
- Learn new skills
- Engage with new audiences
- Secure new sources of funding
- Identify new opportunities

Delivery Partners

Arts partners commented on how the experience had opened their eyes to working with museums and galleries in the future.

- ✓ A new collaboration between KEAP, museums and the music hub is in early planning stages
- ✓ An inclusive dance festival is being planned at Wheal Martyn with Shallal dance group

Audience Development

Participatory projects – community arts engagement, inclusion and Arts for Health projects

- ✓ Numbers of visitors attending the venues exceeded expectations
- ✓ Audiences who may not have been interested or confident to access the museums are now doing so
- X Impact of work yet to be seen on Audience Finder dashboards which is a disappointment

Audience Development

Three of the museums introduced a locals' pass to lessen or remove barriers to attendance. Other MPM activities include:

- ✓ Opportunities to work on exhibition planning and conservation tasks - attracted more young people to volunteer at WM
- ✓ More women encouraged to volunteer through the Valley Inclusion project at TMP
- ✓ As part of the same project, junior members of the Science club have supported museum events by running demonstrations

Audience Finder

- X Challenges with using the software
- X Lack of confidence of volunteers to collect surveys digitally
- X Delayed reporting by Audience Agency
- X Difficulties of museums producing comparable data sets each year
- X Participant data not included
- X AF does not provide sufficient detail of flexibility to inform strategy

Digital Development

TMP, RCM and WM undertook digitisation of elements of their archives resulting in;

- ✓ Increased visitor access to collection
- ✓ Helping with capacity at museum
- ✓ Income generated slowly starting to build
- ✓ Recruitment and retention of digitisation volunteers

Collections Management

- ✓ Centred on making improvements to collection care at WM and using the museum as a teaching hospital.
- ✓ WM staff feel they have achieved what they wanted to in this area
- ✓ Work with Cornwall College students
- ✓ Upskilling the volunteer team
- ✓ Standards of collections management raised through this approach

"It was very helpful in seeing a clear way ahead" Perranzabuloe Museum

New special exhibitions and enhanced permanent displays

Improved visitor experience resulting in increases in visitor numbers.

Creating ambience -	painting gallery walls at FAG with a background colour to maximise visual impact of the artworks, angling lights in the WW2 exhibition at TMP to cast bomb-shaped shadows onto the walls
Bring in international loans	80% of the objects in NMMC's Titanic exhibition are from overseas collectors
Being innovative and risk-taking	NMMC open workshop within their gig project PH mounting an exhibition by an artist from a nearby town
interpretation and displays	Experimenting with commissioning artworks
Aligning activity programmes with current exhibition	engaging diverse practitioners with appropriate skills

Audience Intelligence & Marketing

- Partners were able to experiment with communications such as radio and billboards however measuring impact was difficult
- Investing in digital made evaluation of spend easier to manage
- All museums reported digital marketing helped them reach an increased number of people
 - ✓ WM redeveloped website – three times as many site visits
 - ✓ NMMC short films for Facebook increased traffic to website by 600%
 - ✓ NMMC's Instagram channel grew from 0 to 3000
 - ✓ Family fun day at WM promoted via Facebook had high attendance
 - ✓ TMP and PH invited to take over Visit Cornwall's Instagram
 - ✓ Both subsequently created own accounts
 - ✓ RCM Twitter & Facebook interactions have trebled

Learning and Community Engagement

Working in partnership with arts partners had a significant impact on delivering desired outcomes, exploring new ways of working and engaging with new audiences.

'The enormous increase in community engagement has resulted in an increase of cultural currency that my Falmouth Town Councillors can be proud of. This level of investment shows that as a body of Councillors they care about the more marginalised groups and are making decisions that have an impact and good outcomes.'

Director, FAG



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Learning and Community Engagement

'The one thing that really stands out for me is the fact that we have been able to engage with groups we probably wouldn't have done otherwise, particularly the migrant groups. In that way it's forced us into doing something that we knew needed to be done, it was just a question of finding the time and resources to do it.'

Learning Officer, RCM

Arts for Health

MPM allowed museums to develop this strand of work and make contact with care homes

Partners are keen to continue this work through NPO ;

FAG are continuing to run sessions in care homes

WM continue to run their memory café

Interpretation and Master-planning

- ✓ RCM and WM, have undertaken extensive audience research work in order to inform future strategies.
- ✓ RCM is clear about the longer-term investment needed to maximise enjoyment and learning and has a plan to pursue this.
- ✓ WM were successful in obtaining funding from HLF for their major capital project Clay Works.
- ✓ WM has been able to make some smaller improvements to the site including updating signage and experimenting with hosting curated exhibitions within the atrium.
- ✓ Funds have been awarded at PH to make an annexed learning space.
- ✓ PH and FAG need behind the scenes i.e. storage and learning space.

Green Audit

- ✓ Carried out by all partners
- ✓ Reduction of energy use (LED)
- ✓ Many reduced water consumption
- ✓ Increase in recycling
- ✓ 2 museums committed to reducing single use plastic in café and shop
- ✓ TMP and WM working on habitat management

- X In some cases the buildings are a barrier to making more progress

Workforce Development

- ✓ FAG attended Volunteer Makers - are now using the platform to manage their 86 cultural services volunteers
- ✓ Several museums said that the Philosophy for Children event had increased their professional skills and confidence
- ✓ RCM reports a more collaborative way of working between museum departments as a result of attending the agile training
- ✓ Training in audio description/guiding has resulted in four volunteers at PH who are now producing audio descriptions, boosting the capacity of the core team to deliver this work

Evaluation and Quality Assessment

- ✓ Sharing and learning has become commonplace
- ✓ Ensure a balance between sharing within Cornwall and learning from case studies from further afield
- ✓ Challenges in embedding evaluation are around value of evaluation
- ✓ Tendency to rely on subjective reflection rather than robust data
- ✓ Negative experience with Audience Finder has done little to boost data collection
- ✓ Difficulty in recruiting volunteers to carry out surveys
- ✓ Often feedback from participation events carried out by arts partner
- ✓ Much work to be done to offer Gold Arts Award