

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Art Galleries Committee – 15 February 2023

Subject: Manchester City Galleries’ report and revenue budget 2023/4

Report of: Head of Libraries, Galleries and Culture and City Treasurer

Summary

This report details Manchester City Galleries’ performance during 2022, outlines how we plan to deliver our vision in 2023/4 within the context of our strategic plan, and presents a draft revenue budget for 2023/4 for the approval of the Art Galleries Committee.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider and comment on the contents of the report and approve the draft gross budget for 2023/4 of £3.947m, with cash limit budget contribution from Manchester City Council of £2.43m. - See para 6.2 for details
2. Recommend the budget to Executive for approval as part of the Council’s 2023/24 budget setting process.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The capital programme and ‘Collections Rethink’ outlined in this report aims to reduce energy use (transport, utilities, M&E infrastructure) and, through the development of a public programme based around the City’s collection, we will reduce the carbon impact associated with traditional exhibitions (loan transport, tighter environmental requirements, build and materials).

Our commercial activity (business events, retail and café) will have environmental responsibility at its core. We will continue to encourage social responsibility through community and stakeholder involvement, supporting community climate champions, and providing public platform for climate activism as a respected and trusted educational organisation, promoting public dialogue and raising awareness.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The service is committed to equality of access and celebrating and promoting diversity. Our vision for 2023/4, based on our successes of previous years, is for the benefit of the widest possible audience, especially those least likely to engage with

culture. There remains a strong emphasis on widening participation and our anti-racism work, focussed on equality, diversity and inclusion; working with children, young people and older adults with a focus on residents of priority Manchester wards where engagement is currently lowest and where the potential of art and creativity to change lives could have the biggest impact.

Overall, the focus of our public programme, collection review and capital programme is to unlock the rich potential of the collection to foster belonging, togetherness and understanding. To unite cultures and communities through shared experience, common purpose, and mutual recognition. To create the conditions for new understandings, ideas and knowledge that will make a tangible difference to people's lives.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	We provide support for the creative economy through our public programme, training and development opportunities for young people, and contribute to economic growth and prosperity of Manchester by championing creativity, supporting creative industries, and through cultural tourism.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	We develop and nurture skills within our workforce and support the development of skills and creativity of Manchester residents through our programme of events, workshops, activities and exhibitions. With a large staff of skilled professionals, we work across the sector in mentoring, training and development programmes to strengthen the sector for the future.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The gallery aims to support individuals, families and communities achieve best outcomes through a programme that brings people together, encourages creative decision-making, and delivers public projects that generate social capital.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Manchester Art Gallery has signed up with Culture Declares to declare a Climate Emergency and commit to radical action in relation to its own carbon footprint, including making the physical gallery green (and developing our Jarman Garden) and working towards being carbon neutral.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	We deliver world-class exhibitions, education, arts and health, and community development through national and international partnerships.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue and capital

The proposals set out in this report form part of the draft budget submitted to the Executive and Council.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

None

1.0 Introduction

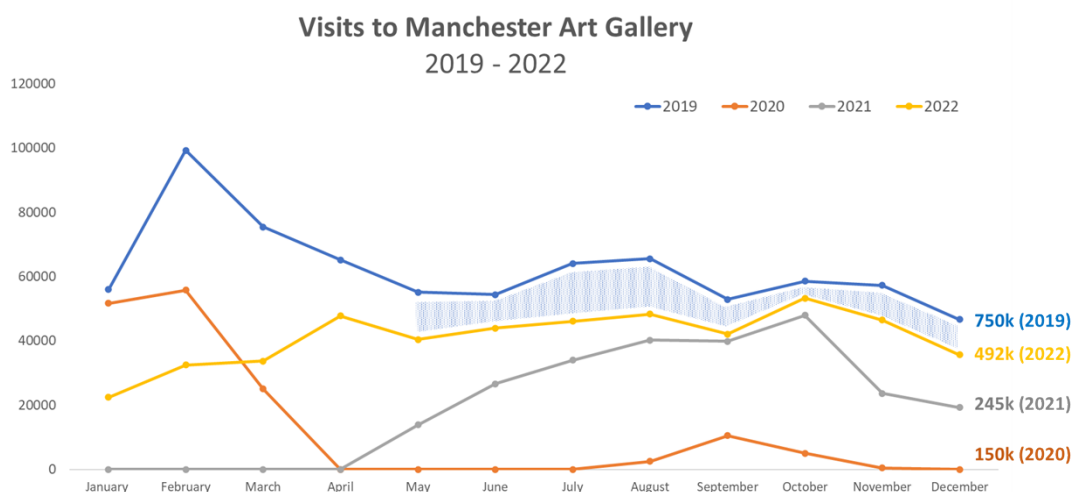
Manchester Art Gallery is free and open to all as a place of civic thinking and public imagination. It promotes art and creativity to achieve positive social change and has been at the centre of city life for 200 years, and proudly part of Manchester City Council since 1882. It has two public venues - Manchester Art Gallery (in the heart of the city centre) and Platt Hall (in Rusholme, under development with the local community). A third site - Queens Park Conservation Studios in Harpurhey - serves as the 'engine-room' of the gallery, providing essential collection housing and conservation studios.

The Gallery works in strategic partnership with the Whitworth Art Gallery and Manchester Museum as an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation to deliver the city's cultural objectives and promote Manchester as a centre of knowledge and creativity. Our 47,000-strong collection spans six centuries of art, craft and design, and fashion and dress, with a particularly rich, and much loved, collection of 19th-century art, including many Pre-Raphaelite paintings. The collection belongs to the people of Manchester, with the city council - under the terms of the Greater Manchester Act 1981 - as sole trustee. The gallery develops, conserves, display and interprets the city's collection and works collaboratively with communities across Manchester to rethink and use these collections to reflect wider histories and experiences - developing a long-term public programme that uses public space in diverse ways and brings people and collections together to share thinking, to inspire creativity, and to change lives.

This report outlines our achievements over the last 12 months and our budget outcomes and outlines our budget plan for next financial year.

2.0 Reach and Impact

Manchester Art Gallery received almost half a million (492,629) visits in 2022. This represents a 63% increase on 2021 visitation levels. The graph below places monthly visitor numbers in 2022 in the context of the last four years.

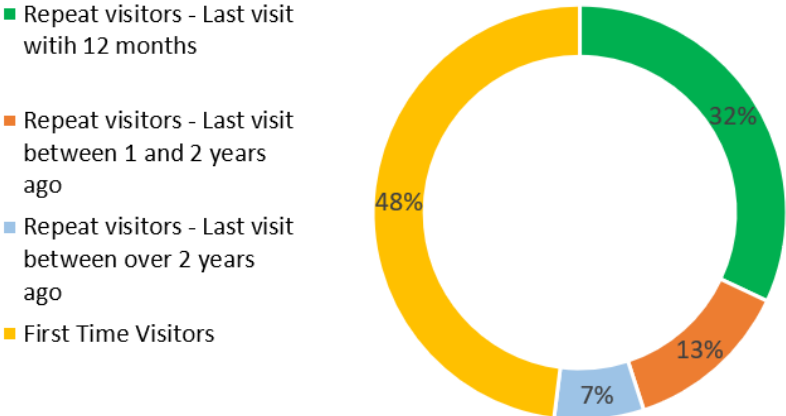


Visitor numbers at MAG in 2022 remained below pre-pandemic levels. However, it is notable that during the period between May and December 2022 visitor numbers averaged at just 21% below 2019 figures - mirroring the 20% drop-in opening hours compared to pre-pandemic (indicated in blue hatching on graph).

This is an encouraging result and a significant achievement, of which the gallery staff are extremely proud. This data provides clear evidence that MAG programmes and exhibitions remains as popular with the wider public as ever.

During 2022, MAG continued to engage with new audiences. Almost half (48%) of visitors in 2022 were engaging with MAG for the first time.

Repeat Visiting and New Audiences
Manchester Art Gallery 2022

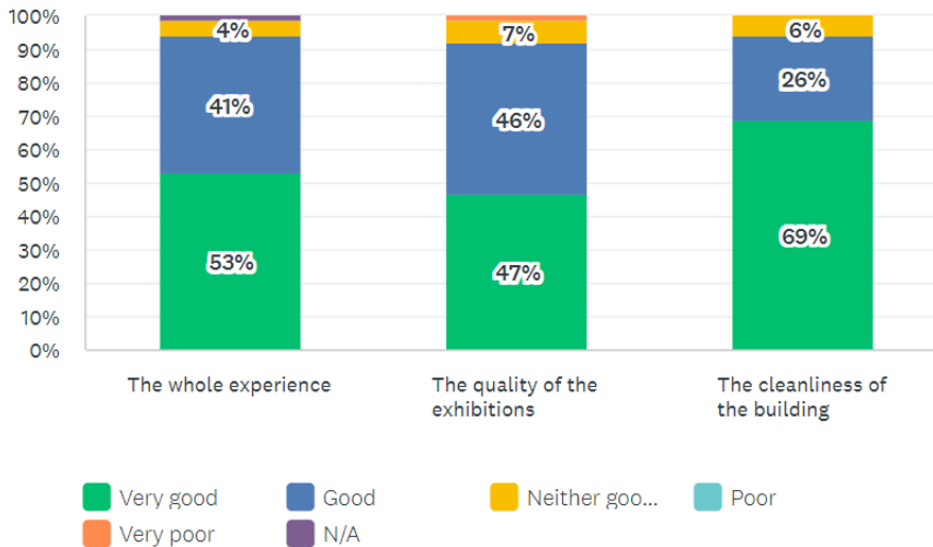


2.1 Quality of Experience

Audience research demonstrates that the gallery continued to deliver an excellent visitor experience in 2022. The graph below shows that:

- 94% of visitors rated their overall experience at Manchester Art Gallery as either very good or good.
- 93% of visitors rated the quality of the exhibitions as very good or good.
- 95% of visitors rated the cleanliness of the building as very good or good.

Ratings of Overall Quality of Experience 2022/23



Qualitative feedback from visitors also indicates that a high level of excellence was achieved this year across all aspects of the business from exhibition making, to the welcome, to the food in the café.

Loved it. You've shown with aplomb how British men's fashion over the last 250 years exerts a colourful, vibrant influence to the present time – on women's clothes as well as men's. Better than the V&A's exhibition too! (Visitor to Dandy Style, November 2022)

As always, the City Art Gallery makes me proud to be from this wonderful city! All the staff without exception are charming and helpful. I felt safe. I felt included!! I can't wait to meet up with friends to tell them how amazing it is. Thanks! (General visitor)

A delightful time visiting the gallery. The staff have all been so helpful and friendly which makes the experience even more enjoyable. The exhibition itself – fabulous! To see such a selection of men's fashions has been a real experience. Thank you. (General visitor).

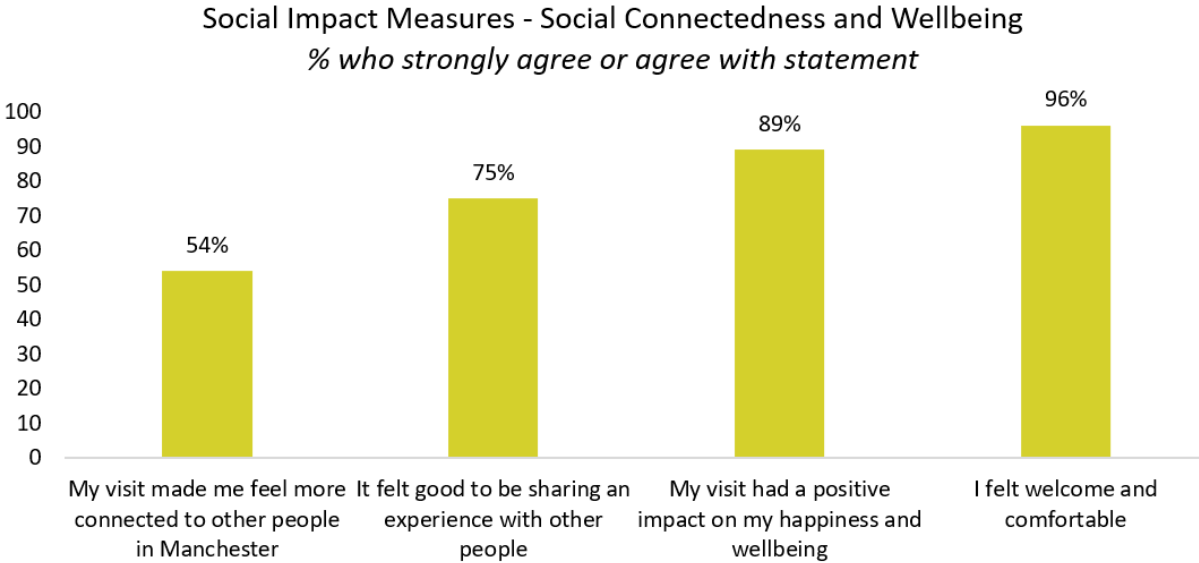
2.2 Social Impact

Over the last three years, arts engagement has played a pivotal role in supporting people's mental health and wellbeing¹. The 2021 State of the City Report identified low levels of social connectedness and digital access as leading to an increase in loneliness and social isolation amongst Manchester residents². Building on research first published in 2020, our latest data continues to show ways in which Manchester Art Gallery acts as a valuable civic resource for social connectedness and wellbeing.

¹ [The Role of the Arts during the COVID-19 Pandemic, August 2021. UCL](#) p5.

² State of the City Report, 2021. Manchester City Council. p15.

The graph below presents visitor ratings relating to social connectedness and subjective wellbeing



- 54% of visitors agreed that their visit to made them feel more connected to other people in Manchester, with 13% strongly agreeing with this statement.
- 75% of visitors told us that it felt good to be sharing an experience with other people, with 27% strongly agreeing with that statement.
- Almost 9 in 10 (89%) of visitors agreed that their visit to Manchester Art Gallery had a positive impact on their happiness and wellbeing, with 41% strongly agreeing with this statement.
- Almost all visitors (96%) felt welcome and comfortable during their time at Manchester Art Gallery.
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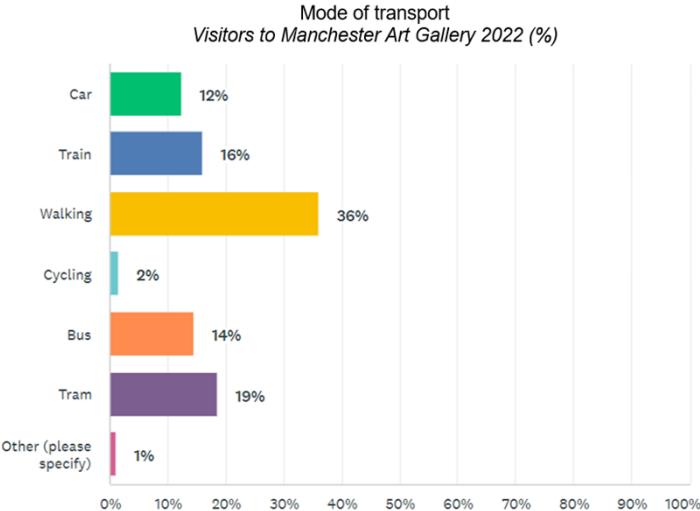
Towards further developing our (and the sector’s) understanding of the role galleries play in community wellbeing, MAG are collaborating with academics at Goldsmiths University of London on a major, new research study on visitor wellbeing and social connectedness. Centred on exhibition Room to Breathe, this study draws on survey feedback and physical data gathered via wristband sensors worn by visitors. The results demonstrate that Room to Breathe has a positive effect on visitors’ mood and encourages them to consider art galleries as places for them to use to look after their mental health.

2.3 Environmental Impact of our visitors

In 2022 we began collecting data on the mode of transport used by visitors to reach the gallery.

This data is important in enabling us to better understand the environmental impact of emissions generated by visitor travel.

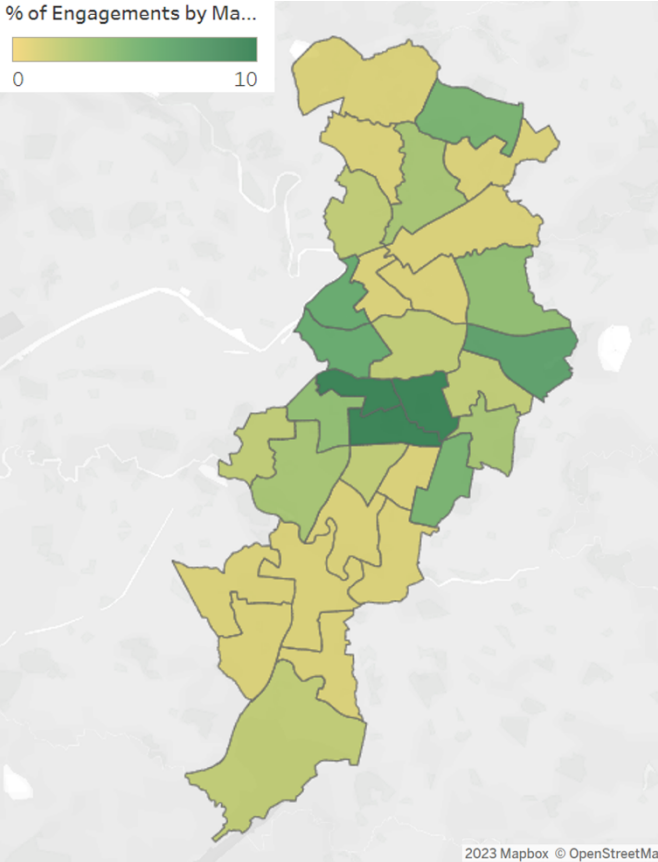
Reflecting higher levels of engagement with visitors who are resident in the city centre, the largest category of mode of transport is walking (36%), with 38%, or 185,000 journeys, made to the gallery through active travel. Almost 50% of visitors reach the gallery via public transport, with the most popular option being the tram (95,000 journeys). Just 12% use the car, however the 60,000 journeys this equates to, generated an estimated 175 tonnes of Co2 emissions³.



2.4 Engagement in Manchester Wards

The map below shows the distribution of data on participation in programmes at MAG made by Manchester residents during 2022. Data is shown at ward level with green shades showing wards with higher levels of visiting and yellow shades indicating wards with lower relative levels of engagement. The map is based on participation data from across schools and public programming.

The map shows a hot spot in engagement in three wards of **Fallowfield, Moss Side** and **Rusholme** which collectively account for almost a third (30%) of engagements in the city in 2022. The map makes visible the growing engagement activities taking place at Platt Hall which serve communities in these three wards through a diverse programme including social prescription delivered in partnership with Robert Darbshire GP practice. This data also reflects engagements with schools and colleges in these communities including Manchester Academy, Heald Place Primary and Education First Manchester.



Relative cold spots in terms of participation in 2022 continue to reflect those wards identified as less engaged with funded culture by the Manchester’s Cultural Impact Survey. Specifically:

³ Calculation based on duration of average UK car journey of 14 km and Co2 conversion make using EcoTree Carbon Calculator

- Brooklands, 1% of engagements (Pioneer High School and partnership with Thrive Manchester)
- Higher Blackley, 1% of engagements (Bowker Vale Primary)
- Northenden, 0.3% of engagements (Partnership with Thrive Manchester)
- Baguley, 0.3% of engagements (Partnership with Thrive Manchester)

2.5 Equality and Diversity

<u>Equality and Diversity KPIs</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>	<i>Census 2021 (GM pop.)</i>
Adult visitors aged 50+	33%	39%	32%	32%	32%	31%	35%
Adult visitors from ethnic minority backgrounds	20%	19%	25%	10%	19%	20%	24%
Disabled adult visitors and those with a long-term health condition	11%	11%	11%	10%	13%	10%	27%

3 The Public Programme

3.1 Learning and engagement

3.1.1 Early Years and Families

Our Family learning programme provides activity for the city's youngest residents and their families, and their post pandemic needs. We ramped this up during year to connect to and enhance Manchester's Our Year and the overall drive to make Manchester a child friendly city. The gallery's contribution focused on supporting early year's development, child and parent mental health and forming partnerships with other key health, wellbeing and educational providers. With this in mind, the gallery's programme includes provision for families with autistic children, early years and baby health sessions, and hyper local initiatives in the neighbourhoods around Platt Fields. Working with families and early years relies on trusted partnerships, in particular with the city's Sure Start hubs, Children's Services, the Population Health Unit, and the Children and Childhood Research Unit at Manchester Metropolitan University. As a result of the success of these partnerships, the gallery was asked by MCC's Children Services to shape and host the launch of the city's Start Well week, an initiative reflecting the pooling of the city's resources to launch Our Year and develop Manchester's status as a UNICEF child friendly city. The launch day was more successful than expected - 1,600 babies, toddlers, and their parents (nearly every child in the city born during the pandemic) came to the gallery to receive welcome packs and take part in baby yoga, nutrition, relaxation, and sessions with BBC's Tiny Happy People. Keynote addresses were given by Cllr. Garry Bridges, the Executive Member responsible for Children and Young People and the Director of Children's Services.

A central part of our programme this year has been the Families Seeking Sanctuary (now called Families of the World) project, funded by the Oglesby Charitable Trust,

supporting families who are refugees or seeking asylum in Manchester. The gallery provides a safe place where people can be welcomed and can connect with other organisations and services across the city in a relaxed and creative environment. The project has highlighted the failure of the asylum system in the UK and aims to improve the level of support available for families who are seeking safety. Partners include Manchester Sure Start, Rainbow Haven, Manchester City of Sanctuary, the National Literacy Trust, MCC's Population Health Team, and City in the Community. So far, the sessions have involved families from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Eretria, and Pakistan.

*I don't have family in Manchester, so these friends are my family here.
My girl is just bored and angry at home, but here she is so happy
We are waiting all week to come [to the gallery]. He is really excited to come"*

In August, we supported MCR Active's Holiday Activity Fund Programme to help tackle food poverty during holiday periods for Manchester children on free school meals. We delivered creative sessions at Platt Hall and Manchester Art Gallery. Most of the children had never been to the gallery before, and none of the local partners had previously engaged with our learning programme. Groups included the Sudanese Summer School (Burnage, Ladybarn), Rainbow Surprise (Crumpsall), Better We (Longsight), Clubhouse (Didsbury/Chorlton), Trinity House (Rusholme/Fallowfield), and Brighter Futures (Wythenshawe).

The sessions went really well. I think we still had really nice groups and the activities fit perfectly for them so thanks again. The children loved talking about the building [Platt Hall] and also loved the pieces of art they come away with. Platt Hall is super close for us. It's actually perfect for Trinity House!
Jamie (Youth worker, Trinity House)
When can I go back? I've met an artist and now I'm an artist too. Young participant

3.1.2 Schools, Colleges and Young People

This year, we have invested resources into developing paid opportunities within the schools and colleges programmes for early career global majority artists. We recruited 2 drama practitioners for our popular *Ancient Greeks* workshops and provided training to help them discover and develop their teaching styles. Both are now leading workshops for classes of KS2 Manchester pupils. We have also created assistants' roles within our *Art of Resilience* programme, with young artists supporting some of Manchester's most vulnerable children while learning from established artists and developing their confidence and skills.

Art of Resilience is one of the gallery's targeted programmes; focusing on school children who have endured adverse childhood experiences, in partnership with the Council's Population Health Unit and supported by Greater Manchester Police's Violence Reduction Unit. These sessions were fully booked with small groups of pupils from thirteen local schools. These sessions will continue into the new financial and academic years.

We worked in partnership with Centrepoin, the young person's homelessness charity, to use our collection displays, building and creative professionals to inspire

and support 8 young people to create a mural for a public space in the newly refurbished Centrepoint building on Oldham Street. The young people took part in 6 creative workshops led by an artist, gallery staff and youth worker with the emphasis on health and wellbeing, confidence building and visual and verbal communication skills.

The gallery worked with the TransVegas team to shape a creative response to the themes of the Dandy Style exhibition through a transgender lens to celebrate and amplify the voices of transgender people living in the city and cultivate new ideas. It celebrated Manchester as a culturally rich, outward looking, and welcoming city and has increased our understanding of transgender issues and how our collection can be used to explore transgender issues. We are now looking at how we include transgender perspectives within displays, programming, and collection management and development – in line with a broader effort to include many more perspectives and outlooks in the gallery's work.

3.1.3 Health and Well Being

We ran weekly sessions over a 2-month period - *Understanding Your Trauma and Building Resilience* - in partnership with Thrive Manchester based in Wythenshawe. This course worked with adults who have experienced trauma and supported them to learn skills and techniques to support their mental health.

I've learnt so much about how what happened to me might be affecting how I am today, especially as a parent. I feel like I'm able to be more kind to myself and accept myself for who I am, and I think this will make me a better parent.
(Course participant).

The gallery played a significant role in the Silver Linings project, in partnership with GMMHS NHS, North Manchester General Hospital and Lucienta Design. This focused on working with service users and artists to create and develop an artwork for the new £150 million mental health hospital opening in 2024. This aims to ensure that the hospital environment is a supportive space for recovery for some of our city's most vulnerable residents.

Set up in partnership with Start Manchester, the gallery also ran an 8-week course - *Creative Wording* - with additional support from Recovery Pathways and GMMHS NHS. It focused on working with NHS service users using creative writing activities inspired by art to boost wellbeing.

3.1.4 Adult learning and Volunteering

Our focus this year was to build back the volunteer teams in various roles across the gallery. Many volunteers have now returned post-Covid, and have spent time getting used to being back in the building and enjoying being connected again with visitors. Several volunteers have experienced poor mental health and loss through the pandemic, so it was important to provide support and create a positive team environment with events and training. In the summer, we recruited new volunteers to support the *Creative Families* programme, and these volunteers are now settled into the gallery. We are now exclusively using the MCRVIP system to manage volunteer

data and to log hours. This has successfully been used to recruit the new family volunteers and, most recently, new volunteers to support the work in the Manchester Together Archive. Volunteers have been very involved in the anti-racism work across the gallery facilitating conversations and embedding their learning in their roles. With a quarter of the financial year left to go, nearly 90 active volunteers have contributed 3,000 volunteer hours.

Attendance has been consistently good at regular weekly events including *Stories we Share*, *Art Bites*, *Philosophy Café*, *Making Conversations* and tours live at the gallery. Facilitators of these sessions (mainly volunteers) have found that people wanted to share their experiences of the last 2 years and valued the connection with others in the gallery. The *Stories we Share* drawing sessions have been welcomed by adults wanting to share a creative moment with others. Online programming is continuing in the Friends programme and once a month with *Philosophy Cafe* through zoom. *Art Bites* online is now run independently of Manchester Art Gallery with a network of people who continue to meet on Zoom from around the world.

Attendance at the monthly tours of the gallery in British Sign Language has been at its highest level ever. Deaf people have sought out these opportunities to connect and communicate direct in BSL. The tours always involve a social element afterwards in the cafe and the promotion through Eventbrite has promoted the gallery to new Deaf Audiences. This year has also seen a partnership restart across cultural organisations and a desire to work together to recruit new Deaf BSL freelancers for the future. Quarterly Audio Description tours have restarted in partnership with Henshaws Society for the Blind and Partially Sighted.

I enjoy the art gallery tours direct in BSL as this provides interaction with the tour leader and visitors who also communicate in BSL, and being able to follow what everyone is saying. The gallery tours are interesting and educational and the social chat in the café afterwards is beneficial for the Deaf community in providing an opportunity to meet and discuss in BSL.
Attendee BSL tours

3.2 Exhibitions and displays

3.2.1 Uncertain Futures

This collaborative exhibition was instigated and created by the artist, Suzanne Lacy alongside the curatorial and engagement teams at the gallery, and a group of local women over the age of 50. It explored issues of low pay/pension, poverty and other societal issues facing that group. The Uncertain Futures Advisory Group, which drove the participatory exhibition, were delighted to win the award for Promotion of Equality and Social Justice at the 2022 Culture Awards, reinforcing the impact the work is having across the city and beyond. The Uncertain Futures Advisory Group continues to meet monthly to drive the work and ensure it impacts the city. Groups regularly visit the exhibition and we have run a series of conversation workshops.

A further iteration of this work opened in September 22 which revealed the initial research findings. A website (<https://uncertainfuturesproject.co.uk>) has been created to merge the lived work experiences of women over 50 in Manchester with legal and

social policymaking and age discrimination case law. *Uncertain Futures* continues to combine art, research and activism and aims to create social change and affect social policy. In addition, we partnered with MCC Age Friendly to perform 4 monologues of *Uncertain Futures* interviews to visitors on the International Day of Older People in October.

The photo of all 100 women was empowering, it showed their strength, spontaneous, vibrant, warm, smiling eyes. Each woman is a role model, they are inspiring and never gave up, they have faced a range of issues of single mums, being carers, divorce, disabilities, family issues, employment issues, menopause and general challenges of being a woman. Many are similar to my own of migration and learning to stand on my own two feet. Quote from Women's Voices (Longsight) member

3.2.2 Room to Breathe

We have created a new dedicated space to connect with art mindfully. Focusing on just two artworks from the collection, visitors are invited to slow down, connect, and nurture their mental and emotional wellbeing. The artworks change every 6 months, and the themes are chosen by visitors. We are partnering with Goldsmiths, University of London and their Psychology of Arts, Neuroaesthetics and Creativity department, to gather data to prove the positive benefits to experiencing visual art on mental and physical wellbeing. Initial results show that the experience had a positive effect on people's mood, that it encouraged them to explore other ways in life to be mindful, and that they would now consider art galleries as places for them to look after their mental health.

We are also working with the homelessness charity the Booth Centre and artists' collective Limina, as well as sharing research with Van Gogh Museum & Museum of the Mind, Haarlem, Holland. Art and mindfulness sessions were also delivered with Back on Track, The Anthony Seddon Trust and the Manchester Rape Crisis Centre.

I think Room to Breathe is such an important place to recover after the past two years and life in general. I felt really strongly that stopping with just 2 artworks really helped me recover from so many things. Feedback from a participant

3.2.3 British Art Show 9

British Art Show 9 (BAS9), the biggest touring exhibition of contemporary art in the UK, was presented across HOME, Manchester Art Gallery, Castlefield Gallery and The Whitworth from May to September. The exhibition was developed at a precarious moment where politics, narratives of identity, and questions of agency were brought to the centre of public consciousness. The featured artists responded in critical ways to this context, imagining more hopeful futures and exploring new modes of resistance.

Alongside this, a group of local creative people created projects to make change in their city. The Art Agents worked with BAS9's art, people, spaces, and resources to explore tactics for care and togetherness. The programme provided paid

employment, including skills development for the Art Agents, who delivered a project that they proposed and developed. Rocha Dawkins and Cadija Cande created a film, with support from Papa Nii Akushey Quaye. They interviewed nine emerging black artists in Manchester to explore community and the importance it has in developing a creative career.

For this film we really wanted to create conversation. Specifically, around the black creative community and the spaces we recognised around Manchester that we occupied... I love how the message of the film highlights growing from connection, I definitely feel like I've grown since starting this process.” Rocha Dawkins, Art Agent.

In addition, students from Manchester Metropolitan University's Unit X delivered three days of creative public adult workshops connecting to BAS9 which attracted 150 participants. The aim of the project was to develop the talent and skills of these second-year art and design students and to give them a voice to shape the gallery and the city. The students identified what was important to them post-pandemic and they achieved their ambition of delivering workshops 'to create a joyful, caring, community led project space that encompasses our group's themes and opens conversations on love outside of romance'. The success of this project is summed up in one feedback card which read:

A gentle and beautiful exhibition celebrating all forms of love. The artists were welcoming and created a space of openness and vulnerability, deep rooted celebration and sometimes the weighty pain of love. The exhibition is wholly human and reminds us we are all connected by harmony and discord in delicate balance. I have no doubt the artists will go on to produce and cultivate successful and poignant exhibitions in the future.

3.2.4 Art Assembly Saturday

Art Assembly Manchester was a free one-day festival on 18 June. We worked with other visual arts centres and nine Manchester educational settings to create a vibrant, thought-provoking event. With the theme of 'City as Art School', and the gallery acting as the hub of activity, we championed culture, art and creativity to show how everywhere has the potential to become a place of creative learning. *Art Assembly* presented newly co-commissioned and co-created artworks and installations across the city, from established arts venues, busy squares and streets to billboards, pavements and more. The culmination of *Art Assembly* can be summarised as: 1 festival, 7.5 hours duration, 19 Locations, 11 artists, 9 learning groups, 11,100 learning engagements, 6 Partners, 148 learners, and 8 new art commissions.

3.2.5 Derek Jarman Pocket Park

This new green space for the city was created by Pride in Ageing volunteers from LGBT Foundation and opened on 22 June. The project delivered health and wellbeing benefits for the group and addressed the gallery's Climate Justice agenda through the development of sustainability solutions, including water saving elements and planting to encourage biodiversity. The volunteers went on to win Volunteers of

the Year at LGBT Foundation awards and were shortlisted for the Manchester Culture Awards.

3.2.6 April Lin 林森

Manchester Art Gallery was one of 30 galleries to take part in a nationwide festival of interventions by d/Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent artists on 2 July. Titled *We are Invisible We are Visible (WAIWAV)*, 31 artists staged interventions and performances on the same day. In Manchester April Lin 林森 (b. 1996, Stockholm – they/them) premiered a new performance *In Embrace of Fakeness* in the Pre-Raphaelite gallery, challenging the idea of value and originality in art.

3.2.7 Dandy Style: 250 years of British Men's Fashion (from 8 October)

Dandy Style focuses on men's fashion and image over the last 250 years. It features selections from the Gallery's outstanding menswear and portraiture collections and explored concepts such as elegance, uniformity, and spectacle from the 18th century to the present day. Drawing contrasts and comparisons between fashion, art, and photography - and melding the historic with the contemporary - the exhibition considers key themes in the development of male style, image and identity.

An accompanying engagement project Project Youth explores personal and collective identities of diverse groups of young Mancunians and is on public display in the exhibition. Working in partnership with Manchester Fashion Institute, and with funding from The Art Society, the display is the result of creative 'wear your identity' workshops. The youth groups taking part in the project (The Proud Trust, Levenshulme Youth Project, and Centrepint) valued the opportunity for their young people to be featured in the city's civic art spaces and to work with creative professionals (including the project photographer, academics and gallery staff) in a space that values young people as experts and creatives in their own right.

3.2.8 New Fashion Gallery

Dandy Style was the inaugural exhibition of the new Fashion Gallery, a dedicated space in the heart of the gallery to display the collection currently stored at Platt Hall. The space allows for flexible and innovative displays and was funded by the Clothworkers Foundation. The programme of annual exhibitions will increase access to the collection and reflect the collection's breadth.

3.2.9 Rethinking the Grand Tour

Four contemporary artists with lived experience of displacement have co-curated a display rethinking the period when aristocratic men travelled to Greece and Italy for their education. The artists have selected works from the collection which focus on empire and colonisation, trade, and freedom of movement. This is part of a wider project *Displacement Aesthetics* initiated by the University of Manchester and the University of Melbourne, with Manchester Art Gallery, The Whitworth Art Gallery, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

3.2.10 What's New? Collecting for Manchester

This new display, opening on 7 February, reveals the diverse ways artworks enter the gallery's collection and showcases new contemporary and historic works which haven't yet been on show. In our 200th anniversary year, we are reflecting on how the collection has been formed, how we can best use it and how it might grow in the future. The display explores how the gallery works with patrons, collectors, artists, and their estates and funding bodies, to build the city's collection of art. We outline current collecting priorities for works which relate to Manchester or the existing collection, as well as focusing on artists under-represented in the collection including women, LGBTQIA+ and ethnically diverse artists.

3.3 Web and digital

The gallery launched a newly redesigned website in July 2022. It has been designed as a platform that enables staff to update and publish content independently and improve the discoverability of the programme. We have now moved towards a digital gallery map (screens and QR code) and interactive signage across the gallery to reduce paper consumption and waste.

We changed and implemented how we manage internal communication with the use of a digital communication platform that will help gallery teams to adapt and make the most of the new hybrid digital working model so that we can become more inclusive and resilient.

The design of the new collection search platform is progressing across the NPO partnership (Manchester Art Gallery, Whitworth Gallery, Manchester Museum) to create a CIIM solution which accesses metadata and media from the EMu collections management systems, used by all three venues, to create an effective search facility for the collections. This improvement will help to make the collections, knowledge, and resources as accessible and useful as possible, and broaden the digital access to the collection and transform the gallery's website into a research and educational resource.

In October we partnered with Bloomberg and launched the Bloomberg Connects app, a new digital guide featuring temporary exhibitions, permanent displays, programme resources and commercial and donation tools, to enrich both onsite and offsite visits. The free arts and cultural app created by Bloomberg Philanthropies see us joins more than 150 cultural institutions around the globe and makes it easy to widen our audience outreach. It also provides a range of built-in features including video, audio, multilingual resources, and way-finding maps that strengthen and widen our accessibility offer.

3.4 Platt Hall

The past year has seen Platt Hall consolidate its place as an active participant in the communities of Rusholme, Moss Side, Fallowfield and Longsight. We now have a dedicated user base, actively engaged with the Hall through partnership programmes, volunteering, advisory groups, creative workshops, open days and collections exploration. Our programme supports identified local need, while also

testing new models of practice that push the development of the Hall forward. We are extending our reach across the mixed local demographic through strategic partnership with neighbourhood services such as Robert Darbishire GP Practice, Surestart, Trinity House and Heald Place Primary School, and learning all the time about the needs of different communities as a result. The collections and their unique capacity to facilitate community belonging have been central to all of this.

This year has seen 1,975 physical engagements with the Hall and 862 volunteer hours given, in a building that is not open to the general visitor. A major funding application to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation is underway which, if successful, will enable us to build on the success to date, address key challenges around diversity in staffing, and expand our co-production model to enable the next stage of the Hall's development.

Our programme this year has addressed three key areas:

3.4.1 Sense of Place

We continue to test ways of using the building and developing our presence and profile in the wider community.

Now in its second year, the Garden Project connects residents with changing activity at the Hall. This year saw the transformation of the Coronation Fountain flowerbed (in partnership with Parks Grounds Maintenance), a new Patchwork Garden area and raised bed at the front of the Hall. It has brought people together from a range of backgrounds to plant, dig and chat. The garden, created and maintained by volunteers, has been used by many people – visitors, Sure Start Stay and Play, schools, and ESOL groups as a safe haven to rest and connect with others. Into autumn and winter, the volunteer group have moved indoors and are now beginning to work with the staff team to improve aspects of the public rooms in the building.

The Platt Hall Garden Project has helped me a lot. Since covid I have spent 99% of my time alone in my home. It was the best day ever when I found the project. Garden Volunteer 2022

The garden provides serenity and an island of peace in a noisy urban area; The joy of seeing nature grow from seed to harvest is very fulfilling. It feels as if one is making a contribution in different ways which helps with connecting to place and local community. Garden Volunteer 2022

We have continued our partnership with Better Health Manchester: Robert Darbishire GP Practice, to deliver a weight management course led by health practitioners and Platt Hall staff using the building and collections as a stimulus for discussion. Evaluation suggests that the welcoming non-clinical atmosphere, coupled with the creative programme, has a direct benefit in promoting take-up of healthcare locally. We have continued our monthly Collection Chat with residents referred from various progression routes. Each month we look at two items from the collection as a spark for curiosity and conversation. We have also piloted a series of socially prescribed Walk-and-Talk events from the Hall around the park. Collection items were used to theme the walks and provide 'pause' conversation moments.

I learn about the hall in my previous session that were recommended by my GP. I feel that the hall is a good, safe place for the community and the way it's helping people of all walks of life is amazing. I'm so happy to be able to come to the hall. Also, the hall being in the park is a bonus. Weight Management and Walk-and-Talk participant, 2022

Weekly Stay and Play sessions in partnership with Surestart continue to attract an average of 18 families each week. The programme, developed to address the impact of Covid on families with young children, offers a high-quality learning environment both within the Hall and in the garden and surrounding park, that supports children's personal, social and emotional development, and their communication, language, literacy and physical development. The sessions also enable peer network development, the early identification of other support needs and referral to other agencies eg. parenting courses, food banks, and language screening. Responding to the specific local issue of low immunisation take up, this year we also trialled the provision of an immunisation clinic on site during the sessions. This piece of work will continue to develop, narrowing the gap of local health inequalities across the demographic diversity of the community.

This group has been amazing! It's just so good and I honestly don't know what I would have done without being able to come here every Monday. I feel so sorry for people who can't access this kind of thing near them. Stay and Play parent participant, 2022

This year we have begun to re-connect with local schools after the challenges of the pandemic. Exploratory visits by St James' Primary and Heald Place Primary have led to a growing partnership with Heald Place, supporting local children to develop pride in their neighbourhood through the heritage on its doorstep. In May, Year 5 children visited the Hall to investigate its history and architecture, creating artwork for display at Central Library as part of Historic England's Every Picture Tells a Story project. Since then, we have explored a range of ideas together, beginning with enquiry-based visits from Years 2 and 4, exploring the different spaces of the building and developing confidence in investigative questioning.

Over the summer, we also partnered with local playscheme provider Trinity House and artist duo Interference Art as part of MCRAActive's Holiday Activity Fund to provide creative holiday activities inspired by the Hall and collections for school-age children, from kite-making to shadow puppets. We hope to continue this work, inviting the children to act as tour guides for the Hall at upcoming Open Days.

We hosted two Open House days at the Hall on 2 April and 19 October, open to all local residents. Activities delivered in partnership with the Friends of Platt Fields and local artists and makers included henna design, clothing recycling, bulb planting and wellbeing walks, as well as tours of the building and a 'lucky dip' exploration of the collections. In July we took the Platt Hall cargo bike and Museum on My Street collection to the Manchester Mela in Platt Fields Park, supported by volunteers from the local South Asian community to share stories and experiences inspired by objects ordinary and extraordinary.

3.4.2 Everyday creativity

This year we have developed a new strand of programming, celebrating creative practice as an integral part of everyday life.

Through open call across Fallowfield, Moss Side, Rusholme and Longsight, we programmed a series of resident-led making workshops, some by professional artists, others whose creative practice is their hobby. Our aim is to celebrate the range of talents and skills held within the neighbourhood, build confidence, and provide a regular mindful creative space for adults. A small advisory panel made up of staff and residents developed and selected the programme together and it is now managed on our behalf by a member of the panel. The programme has created work opportunities for residents and valuable network links for makers in the area. Participants have enjoyed a time of making and they have been particularly well attended by people who are carers.

It was definitely a nice boost of creativity because I was in a little bit of a creative slump at the time, plus it made me want to go out and find more opportunities for myself too. Make Space participant

During the pandemic we used the windows to brighten people's lives, share messages of good cheer, and updates on the Hall. This has now become a commissioned programme of exhibitions, developed and selected by a panel of residents and staff that focuses on local creative practitioners. Four exhibitions have been programmed this year and next. The first of these, Healing Mandalas by artist Nadia Sultana, was launched at our October Open Day with a drop-in workshop making mandala patterns from found objects in the park. We're now working with a group of South Asian women from local welfare charity Women's Voices to develop the next exhibition, celebrating local embroidery skills and taking inspiration from the global textile collection in the Hall.

It's very important for people not to lose who they are and where they come from. The things I have learnt and the things I have made are part of my identity and I want to share this with the local community. Creativity and sharing of ideas and skills can improve our health and wellbeing. Making or creating something can make us happy and improve our confidence and when we are appreciated it gives us a lot of joy. Women's Voices member, Longsight

3.4.3 Collections at Platt Hall

This year has seen significant development towards a new identity for the Platt Hall Collection post-Gallery of Costume, that works with the history and changing identity of the building, supports the Hall's programme, and best meets the needs and interests of local communities.

Over the past year, more than 4,000 objects from the gallery's Mary Greg Collection have been audited, re-located from Queens Park Conservation Studios and re-housed in accessible storage at Platt Hall. Comprising a huge array of everyday domestic, homemade and handmade objects from the past, the emotional resonance and storytelling potential of this little-known collection became apparent during the

pandemic, through our online collections chat programme. Subsequently the physical collection has been returned to active use after decades in storage and now forms the basis of in-person collections chats. Collections management data has been strengthened, new museum-standard cabinets commissioned and a dedicated space for group object handling developed in the Hall.

The *Opening the Box* project works with partners and residents to build investment and understanding of the collection as a community resource. Workshops at Queens Park and Platt Hall enabled the sharing of traditionally 'back-of-house' collections care, facilitated hands-on exploration of a wide range of objects, identified what resonates with people locally, and considered what stories are missing and why. Funding from the Granada Foundation enabled us to appoint artist Abi Lake to capture the conversation, and match funding from the University of Manchester brought research partners Belle Vue Productions. A final sharing event brought together wider MAG staff, partners and residents to consider questions around the potential use and value of the city's collections.

This project is part of the wider organisational shift of rethinking the collections and their value. It demonstrated their extraordinary potential to elicit unexpected ideas and build new relationships when brought together with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. And it highlighted collection areas and topics of relevance that will form the basis of more focused follow-on projects over the next three years.

There's value in seeing what people back in history, who were in a privileged position, found interesting and took from your country that's now displayed in museums. It can potentially make those communities feel part of what's going on now - the ability to say, yes, I'm connected with here. Look what was taken and brought here as being interesting. We've contributed to what's here. And so you must acknowledge that we've got a stake here. Opening the Box participant, 2022

4 Developing our Assets

4.1 Collections Development

Our collections development work continues to focus on the review of our existing collections to improve our understanding of them and explore how they can best be used with and for the benefit of Manchester residents and communities. In addition to our ongoing review of the furniture collection, over the past year we have begun work on reviews in a range of collection areas including the local history, Rutherston loan scheme and global textiles. We are also reviewing unaccessioned material and assessing objects which are in poor condition.

In line with our collecting priorities outlined in our Collection Development Policy, a key focus of our collecting activity is to acquire works by ethnically diverse artists. With the support of the Contemporary Art Society, we have acquired 2 works by Hetain Patel, *To Dance Like Your Dad*, 2009 and *Baa's House*, 2015. We have also acquired two paintings by Nahem Shoa which were kindly gifted by the artist and we are in the final stages of acquiring of a painting by Somaya Critchlow, again offered as a gift. The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund patrons continued to offer their

generous support for acquisitions and at this year's art fair we selected four works for the collection: *Sea Fruit* by Jamie Holman, *Jar (Dandelions, after DH Lawrence)* by Simon Bayliss, *Cabbage* by Charlotte Dawson and *Bread and Water 2* by Mary Griffiths. Other recent acquisitions include two 1960s jackets which are currently on display in the Dandy Style exhibition, eight artworks from contributors to the Grayson's Art Club exhibition and a selection of works originally acquired for the South Asian Design exhibition in 2017 and Nordic Design in 2018.

Focus within our collection review work to date has been on research and assessment, so there are no disposals to report for this period. As part of our furniture review, we have returned 28 items to Wythenshawe Hall. These items were either a gift from RHG Tatton to the Parks and Cemeteries department in 1926 or previously found in situ at the Hall and then in the care of galleries.

As part of our collection review work and to support and prepare for the programme of collections moves and storage improvements the Collections Management and Curatorial teams have been auditing collections in store and working to improve collection information held on our collections management database. Focus this year has been on the Mary Greg collection to support the move to Platt Hall, the furniture collection as part of the furniture review, and an audit of the craft and design collections stored at Queens Park and Manchester Art Gallery to prepare for future moves. From January 2022 to January 2023, we have audited and/or moved 10,875 objects (23% of the collection) and we have improved collection information on 21,649 object records (32% of the collection). We've also uploaded 635 new or improved high resolution images or video on to our collections management database, helping to make the collection more accessible online.

We are continuing to develop different approaches to decolonising our collection. This includes working with diverse groups and communities to select works from the collection, decentering whiteness and Western perspectives so the displays are more representative of the people of Manchester - see *Rethinking the Grand Tour* (section 3.2.9) - and reviewing our approach to cataloguing to address problematic terminology and include different voices and perspectives. The two projects with the Decolonising Arts Institute at University of the Arts, London are progressing. Firstly, we are one year into a three-year national project (Transforming Collections: Reimagining Art, Nation, and Heritage) to dissolve barriers between collections by addressing digital search and research capability ie. decolonising algorithms. The aim is for audiences to be able to explore collections holistically, using machine learning and citizen-led archiving. Secondly our 20/20 commissioning project has just begun - we are one of 20 galleries nationwide who will commission a work by an ethnically diverse artist which will then enter the collection. We are currently at the selection process for the artist and once selected, will work with them over the next 15 months to develop the new work which will respond to our collections.

Although we currently have a loans moratorium in place to enable staff to focus on delivering the capital programme, we are continuing to honour loans agreed before the moratorium was implemented. Over the course of 2022/2023 we have lent a total of 58 artworks to 13 venues in the UK and 9 international venues in France, Germany, Poland Japan and Ireland. This includes the loan of our two views of the Fortress of Königstein by Bellotto to Staatliche Kunstsammlungen in Dresden and

The Royal Castle in Warsaw and 16 items from the craft and design collection to Manchester Museum for their new Chinese Culture displays opening in February 2023.

4.2 Collection Care

Our conservation team have been working to consolidate and improve storage areas and improve collection housing ahead of the large-scale collections moves. 175 textiles have been rolled, 180 pieces have been frozen, and 67 boxes of garments fully audited. 59 items of male dress were mounted and prepared for the Dandy Style exhibition. We also continue to carry out a rolling programme of unframing and rehousing the works on paper collections and have improved the paper collection at Platt Hall – buying a designated drawer system for fashion plates and other ephemera.

72 Paintings have been assessed for rehousing, prepared for loan or fully treated and 60 pieces of furniture have been fully condition checked as part of our work to better understand the collection.

We have carefully packed and moved the entire Mary Greg collection and rehoused at Platt Hall to allow start the process of clearing the first floor at Queens Park. The sculpture store has also been decanted to MAG and offsite storage to prepare for building works to commence.

Our temporary store at Lowry Mill has had ongoing roof leaks and we have had to carefully move a fifth of our furniture collection to a lower floor in the building to ensure safe care of the collection.

4.3 Capital Development

Capital funding was approved in August for a series of works at both Queens Park and Manchester Art Gallery; £3.48m for Queens Park and £4.84m for a first phase of works at the gallery. A further estimated sum of £4.5m for external stonework and elevational repairs has been put on hold pending detailed survey and measurement during the first phase of works.

The funding secured is intended to allow consolidation of collection storage across the gallery's estate, facilitate the move out of Lowry Mill in 2024, and enable the community-led development of Platt Hall to progress to the next phase.

Works at Queens Park include the creation of a new Fashion and dress collection store on the 1st floor, a furniture store on the ground floor, and publicly accessible collections spaces in the basement (the only part of the building that has level access from the park). The works at Manchester Art Gallery will create additional storage in the lower ground floor of the Athenaeum building for the craft and design collection, allow full use of the art store for the paintings collection (housing many of the paintings currently at QP), and address longstanding damp problems in the basement archive and library areas.

The funding for MAG is also intended to cover significant back log maintenance items and fabric repairs, and to address water ingress, improvements to environmental performance, increased operational storage capacity and enhance visitor facilities. The latter includes addressing longstanding issues with the lifts, and the refurbishment of the public toilets (including provision for ungendered changing place WCs).

Detailed design and pre-construction planning activities are in flow for both Queens Park and Manchester Art Gallery, with contractors expected to commence works in April / May 2023. Work on both sites will occur in a phased fashion to limit impact on day-to-day activities and visitors, and to enable the safe movement and temporary storage of collections.

4.4 Manchester Together Archive

We have been able to appoint a new part-time MTA Archivist thanks to a grant from the National Archives. She started in August 2022 on an 18 month contract and is focussing on completing the cataloguing of 10,000 items in the MTA to form a digital archive that can be accessed by the public. Funding for digitisation and creation of this platform will be sought next year.

Dr Kostas Arvanitis, Senior Lecturer in Museology, University of Manchester was seconded to the gallery from October 2022 to June 2023 (funded by the Advanced Humanities Research Council, Medical Research Council, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, and the Manchester Art Gallery Trust) to co-develop sustainable, and empathetic cultural policy and practice in three areas of work related to the MTA. These are:

- Exhibiting and digitising spontaneous memorials that consider the sensitivities and needs of different stakeholders (including families of the bereaved, survivors, and the wider public);
- Understanding and embedding a possible therapeutic impact of these physical and digital collections in museum policy and practice.
- Supporting and safeguarding cultural professionals that deal with such traumatic collections against the risk of secondary trauma.

The outputs of this work will include an MTA Collection and Development Policy, MTA Digitisation Guide, Ethical Practice Guidelines on how to address the risk of secondary/vicarious trauma of cultural professionals and how to engage audiences with physical and digital collections of trauma.

Six volunteers were recruited in January 2023 to assist with the cataloguing and repackaging of the material, alongside student volunteers. A Research Volunteer is conducting research on the Trees of Hope notes (from the 1st anniversary), under the supervision of Dr Kostas Arvanitis.

Dr Arvanitis has been undertaking consultation with MAG staff, university researchers and other stakeholders towards a longer-term access and engagement strategy for the MTA. This has also included workshops on how to digitise the MTA and the 3D scanning of the MTA space. This work will lead to the development of

relevant policies and practices on how the MTA is accessed physically and digitally in the future.

Although the archive is not open to the broader public, the team have hosted research and professionals' visits to the MTA. This has included University undergraduate, MA and PhD students on study trips from the UK and abroad (e.g. University of Manchester, MMU, University of Pennsylvania, USA, and Purdue University, USA) and a group of 20 National Lottery Heritage Fund professionals from across the UK.

We also hosted the Grenfell Memorial Commission, who visited the MTA to seek guidance on the development of their own spontaneous memorial archive.

4.5 Our Town Hall

In January 2022, Mather & Co were appointed as designers for the Manchester Town Hall Story exhibition which will be launched when the building reopens. Mather & Co have worked with the Visitor Experience Steering Group to create a strong vision for the new offer. After a period of validation to review the RIBA Stage 1 briefing documents produced in advance of their appointment, Mather quickly moved onto RIBA Stage 2, concept design. The Stage 2 report was approved by the OTH Strategic Board in June 2022. Since June, the Visitor Experience team has been working on RIBA Stage 3, scheme design. The Stage 3 report is due to go through the OTH governance cycle in early 2023.

The Manchester Town Hall Story is being designed to provide a family-friendly offer that will appeal to a wide cross-section of Manchester residents. It is guided by the following principles:

Manchester Town Hall Story is...

- A memorable experience with personality
- Something that is unashamedly Manchester
- A destination people want to flock to
- A relevant offer that connects with everyone
- An unexpected story of the Town Hall
- An interactive and immersive experience

The exhibition will blend classic interpretation techniques, including graphics and display cases, with experiential and immersive displays, including AV, tactile exhibits and interactives.

A programme of public engagement and consultation sessions is running in parallel to the design development. Up to Stage 3, the feedback from these sessions has been informing design and access decisions. As the team embarks on RIBA Stage 4, detailed design, the engagement activity will shift to focus on collecting community contributions to be used as part of the exhibition content.

Over the last 12 months, the OTH heritage team has worked with colleagues in Procurement to develop a Furniture Conservation Framework. The framework was

finalised in August 2022 and includes 12 expert conservation and restoration partners. It will allow the OTH team to assign contracts to partners who have already been quality-assessed and ensure that there is capacity to undertake conservation work on over 500 items of furniture in the Town Hall collection. The furniture has been divided into 26 batches and these will be released in stages until the end of the project.

In 2021/22, four batches of the Town Hall's paintings collection were put out for external conservation. The first two batches, including 11 paintings, were completed in May 2022. Conservation of the second two batches is currently underway.

As building work on the Town Hall progresses, partners in the construction team continue to make discoveries about the building and its fixtures and fittings. Items that have any architectural or social history significance are assessed and samples are being added to a Building Record Collection. In future this collection will provide evidence of the adaptations and use of the building over the years and could be made available for research. Decisions about the retention of items for the BRC are being made in collaboration with the architect and the Local Planning Authority.

5. Earned and raised income

The last year has been a difficult period for cultural fundraising and commercial income in the cultural sector. However, aligning gallery projects with council priorities – in particular, children and young people and community cohesion - and promoting the gallery as a key civic asset has offered opportunities to secure charitable grants and individual giving to support our work. This civic and charitable message extends to our promotion of the gallery as an event venue for corporate hire, weddings etc. and to customers in our shop and café and to customers.

5.1 Fundraising

The absence of a Development Manager for a significant part of this year was felt acutely, and it took longer than anticipated to recruit and appoint a replacement. As a result, we have focused on applications to public bodies and trusts and foundations for larger grants. This has resulted in some success in securing capital and revenue grants including £150,000 from the DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund to install new collection storage in the lower ground floor of the gallery, £61,265 from the Oglesby Charitable Trust for work with refugee families, and £20,000 from the Zochonis Charitable Trust to support learning work with children and young people.

Arts Council England have confirmed ongoing funding for the gallery as part of their 2023-26 National Portfolio programme. Manchester Museum Partnership (the gallery – as lead partners – with Manchester Museum and the Whitworth) have secured standstill annual funding of £1.620k, of which £520k is allocated to Manchester Art Gallery.

Major applications have been submitted and are awaiting decisions from funders including Arts Council England MEND (£673,826) for improvements to the building

fabric at Queen's Park, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (£377,566) for community programming at Platt Hall.

The decision to focus on grant income from charitable trusts for priority projects, and to work at increasing unrestricted funding through Friends and Patron memberships and on-site/online giving have proved to be the correct course of action. While we are keen to build relationships with businesses in the city, corporate membership and sponsorship are both difficult to secure in the current financial climate and high maintenance to service and maintain. This is not to say that we will not work to secure corporate funding when and where it is appropriate in the future.

A Friends and Patrons membership campaign has been successful in its early stages but analysis of this is being used to inform a further campaign in 2023/24 which will focus on the Gallery's 200th anniversary. Four new Patrons have been secured and all existing Patrons and Business Partners have been retained.

On-site cash and contactless donations have been consistently high since re-opening after pandemic closure, perhaps driven by a new appreciation that residents have for our free and open-to-all offer. We have increased the visibility of donation points and have changed messaging in our on-site and digital communications and expect the total takings at the end of the financial year will be around £51,000 (30% contactless, 70% cash).

5.2 Retail

After a record-breaking year in 2021/22 due to the popularity of Grayson's Art Club, performance for this year is on target, with turnover from April to December at £353,926. (£301,511 net). Online sales have reduced as a percentage of overall turnover to just under 5%, down from 25% in the same period last year. Again, this can be attributed to Grayson's Art Club and the fact that many of last year's sales were from non-visitors.

Gallery 2 was used in 2022/23 as an experimental retail space, with three pop-ups programmed. Projects included 20/22: Contemporary craft by local makers whose work retails for £22 or under, and Christmas Made Local – a showcase of the best festive gifts all made within 17 miles of the gallery. This space generated gross income in 2022 of just under £40,000.

Partnerships with the Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair (GNCCF) and Manchester Jewellers Network continued into 2022/23. From September 22 work from a handpicked selection of exhibitors at GNCCF was sold through the gallery shop. Manchester Jewellers Network continues to produce two exclusive ranges per year for sale through the gallery shop and most recently delivered a Dandy Style-inspired range to coincide with the launch of the exhibition in October 2022.

5.3 Venue hire

2022/23 is on track to be the most successful year for Venue Hire since the Trading Company was set up, with confirmed hire fees of over £270k and associated spend on Food & Beverage at over £250k. The income breakdown is in 4 areas - Weddings

(24% of sales), Evening Events (44% of sales), Daytime Events (24% of sales) and additional extras (8% of sales).

2022 also saw the return of ticketed commercial events, including several delivered in partnership with Stitched-up, a Manchester-based CIC whose aim is to reduce consumption of fast-fashion. The programme of events was devised to link with the Dandy Style exhibition and to date have all been profitable.

5.4 Cafe and catering

Café sales YTD are at just over £250k, which is around 3% higher than this time last year. Events catering has also been very successful this year, due to the very high volume of events. Numerous staff changes in the team have made it difficult to ensure complete consistency, however this should become more stable with the recent appointment of a new catering supervisor and several new members of the front of house team.

6 Budget overview

6.1 2022/23

The service is projecting a balanced outturn

6.2. 2023/24

We ask that committee approve a provisional cash limit budget of £2.43m for 2023/4 subject to approval by Executive in February 2023.

Expenditure	Proposed revenue budget 2023/24 £000's
Staffing	2,986
Premises	98
Transport	60
Supplies and Services	780
Internal charges	23
Total Gross Budget	3,947
Income	
MCC cash limit	2,430
ACE National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)	520
Art Galleries Trust (fundraising)	362
Earned income	530
Internal recharge (OTH Project)	105
Total Net Budget	3,947

Expenditure is based on notional estimates and the distribution between staffing and revenue will be confirmed once next year's business plan is finalised at the end of March 2023.

7. Our priorities for 2023/24

The focus of our work next year - coinciding with the bicentenary of the origins of the gallery in the Royal Manchester Institution, and 200 years of civic collecting – reflects the comprehensive programme of refurbishment and collection housing improvements across all 3 gallery sites. This will be delivered alongside an ambitious programme of collection review, research and recontextualization – the ‘collection rethink’ which will transform our public programme, putting the city’s collection and Manchester people at the heart of everything we do. This work will be the foundation for future public programming that uses our collections and gallery spaces in a dynamic way, bringing together people, objects, and art to address contemporary issues and concerns, that respond to the city’s needs and deliver social impact.

7.1. Public Programming

Following the departure of the Joint Director, MCC and the University of Manchester a full-time Senior Creative Lead role has been approved and is currently being recruited. They will co-lead the Gallery to deliver the gallery’s vision alongside the Senior Operational Lead. Both roles will report to the Head of Libraries, Galleries and Culture. The Creative Lead will have specific and personal responsibility for the development and delivery of the public programme across all gallery sites, and the development and use of the city’s world-class art collection for the benefit of the people of Manchester. Recruitment has commenced, with interviews planned for 21 March.

7.1.1 Exhibitions and displays

To support the capital works and Collection Rethink, our large exhibition galleries (G17 and G18) will be transformed into a ‘treasure house’ of previously unseen collections from Queens Park Conservation Studios (QP), Platt Hall and Lowry Mill. 100s of paintings will line the walls from floor to ceiling, with cabinets full of works on paper and craft and design, and a myriad of curious objects collected over the last 200 years. As well as providing a practical solution for secure storage during the capital works at QP, this new gallery space gives us an unprecedented opportunity to connect people and collections, bring traditionally ‘back of house’ practices to the fore, and explore models of collections engagement beyond the conventional modes of display and exhibition.

After Dandy Style closes in May 2023, we will be unveiling *Unpicking Couture* in our Fashion and Dress Gallery. This year long exhibition premieres spectacular couture which has recently entered the collection, bought with a NLHF Collecting Cultures grant. The clothes, created by influential designers and fashion houses, represent seminal moments in fashion and include work by Christian Dior, Elsa Schiaparelli, Cristobal Balenciaga, Paco Rabanne, Vivienne Westwood, Yohji Yamamoto and Alexander McQueen. Working with London College of Fashion, we will employ different modes of presentation and include multiple voices to engage a wide range of visitors. We will explore ideas around sustainability, creativity and expression of self and identity.

We will continue with *Room to Breathe*, the dedicated space for visitors to experience art in a more mindful way. Escaping from the noise and overstimulation of the

modern world, visitors can engage deeply with just one or two artworks. These artworks will change twice a year.

Jade Montserrat's *Future Collect* project, which commissioned the artist to make new work for the collection, will continue in a new iteration. Along with 12 watercolours, she created a performance called *Rehearsal Methods: Audition Pieces for Solo and Collective*, which will be performed in Manchester city centre this spring. Working with Short Supply, an artist-led organisation providing opportunities for early-career artists, and locally based performers, poets and spoken-word artists, the performance will be restaged in public settings in the city.

There will be a programme of performances and events by the artists involved in *Rethinking the Grand Tour* to activate the display. We will refresh aspects of *Out of the Crate*, including working with a school on a visual literacy project and new objects selected for 'live' Cold Case displays in which we ask the public to help research two sculptures. We are continuing to update The People's Choices display in *Trading Station* and will be displaying new items from June 2023.

7.1.2 Learning and engagement

a) Early Years and Families

We will continue to develop the Families Seeking Sanctuary project in partnership with other cultural venues, developing a web app to support newly arrived families to navigate the city's offer for under 5's, and working with our café team to provide culturally appropriate food for families seeking sanctuary in Manchester

In the Lion's Den we will be using the newly displayed collection works to develop our early years offer for nursery groups linking to the gallery's capital programme and Collection Rethink, and we will continue to highlight and celebrate children and family's creativity and make our partnership work more visible.

We will continue to work with Manchester Metropolitan University (children and childhood group) to understand how the gallery's collection can be used to support child development

b) Schools and Colleges

Building on previous learning and relationships we will be using the gallery's capital programme to explore the Rutherston collection. Working with two secondary schools (who borrowed from this collection in the 1930's) we will continue to use art to help young people develop their visual literacy.

We will extend our Future Creatives programme to include previous students; supporting alumni by developing a network that helps build skills, knowledge and understanding both within the group and with professionals working in Manchester's creative industries. It will also help us understand the impact of the programme on young people, how to improve the programme, and will provide paid work opportunities for alumni.

Using the knowledge and expertise developed through Art of Resilience we are now beginning to support schools and cultural organisations across Manchester develop

their knowledge and work to support good mental health. As co-chair of MADE's Health and Wellbeing group we have recently secured funding to create four pilot programmes between secondary schools and arts providers in the city and will now lead the group in developing new models of practice. As a trained trainer for MCC's Arts and Trauma we are sharing knowledge and supporting the city's ambition to become trauma informed.

c) Health and Well Being

We will build on the successful relationship with Start and Thrive Manchester to become a trauma informed gallery, linking to the Manchester Together Archive, Families Seeking Sanctuary and Art of Resilience. This will provide us with a better understanding of trauma, understanding of what we can do as a cultural organisation can do to aid recovery pathways, and raise the profile of Manchester as a trauma-informed city.

We will be partnering with Manchester Mind, focusing on North Manchester, to deliver a weekly Mums Matter training course over 8 weeks in Autumn to combat post-natal depression. This will be supported by a creche at the gallery
We will continue to build on the success of the Silver Linings project towards creating a new mental health hospital facility in North Manchester

d) Communities

The focus of our community-based work is outlined in section 7.1.4 (Platt Hall)
As part of *Uncertain Futures*, we will continue to work closely with academics from MMU and UoM and, with the Advisory Group, produce a policy report and key recommendations from the data from the 100 interviews. We will create a final film documenting the whole *Uncertain Futures* project with Soup Collective to be shown a long side the recommendations in a final iteration in the gallery space.

In partnership with Manchester Cares, we will bring together younger and older people to combat loneliness and isolation via their social clubs, crossover with the age friendly collective, and through tours delivered by volunteer guides

e) Volunteering

Connecting with the gallery's capital programme and Collection Rethink, we aim to increase the volunteer teams further to support this work and to continue to diversify the roles and voices within the volunteer team at the gallery. We will review our volunteer policy and practice to ensure that volunteers continue to be well supported and we will strive to ensure there are positive routes to volunteering from partnership work with local charities and organisations. Alongside this we will be continuing to embed anti racism work and diversify the teams where new opportunities emerge.

7.1.3 Web and digital

We will be focusing on creating a digital production roadmap, which will record all digital activities in progress and allow us to communicate the status of digital production projects in real-time. This will feed into our new Digital Plan and Strategy,

and create opportunities for innovation in artistic and cultural practice - both online and offline.

We will develop Platt Hall's digital presence and output to support its identity and growth. This will include the redesign of its website to share the evolution of the Platt Hall: in Between project and support future programming. Platt Hall will also have a presence on the Bloomberg Connect app to open the work to a global audience and amplify the stories.

We are exploring improvements to our digital offer via 3D user-led virtual tours of our exhibitions and galleries. This project, led by the Museum Studies Department at the University of Manchester, will use the scanning software Matterport and will improve our archive, legacy, access and accessibility and marketing. To enhance the visibility of the Collection rethink, there will be a livestreaming output from Gallery 17 to Gallery 3. This will provide constant virtual access to our spaces and offer an insight into the work we are doing over the next three years.

7.1.4 Platt Hall

Over the next year, we will continue to work towards the relocation of the dress collection (and its eventual new home at Queens Park), and to be ready with a plan for Platt's full redevelopment at that point as a centre for collections, communities and creativity. We have applied for Paul Hamlyn Foundation funding and, if successful, will put in place an expanded staffing structure and programme model. In the meantime, we will continue to build on the existing programme, looking to strengthen existing partnerships through smaller scale joint funding opportunities, staying flexible and responding to changing need. We will also build advocacy for the Hall through wider dissemination for the project, both internally within MAG and MCC and across the sector nationally.

Three themes will provide the overarching steer for our work:

a) Inhabiting the Hall

We will continue to develop the public rooms inside the Hall as beautiful, comfortable and welcoming spaces that draw on the visual culture of the neighbourhood and our collections, in sympathy with the historic aesthetic of the building. This year we will develop the West Pavilion link room that houses the Mary Greg Collection as a warm and inviting collections space, drawing on the creative work of the Opening the Box and Collections Chats programmes. We will roll out aspects of Platt's new visual identity with interior signage and brand colours throughout the ground floor and garden and focus on making the entrance hall a warmer and more inviting space for newcomers to the building.

We will also turn our attention to the longer-term use of other spaces in the building. We will consider the topic of food as a source of community belonging, in readiness for eventual development of a kitchen/café at Platt Hall. An affordable café in Platt Fields Park has consistently been the number one response to consultation about local need. This year we will test ways of bringing people together through food, in the process developing priorities for a future kitchen/café.

Building on the success of the resident-led Garden Project and Make Space programme, we will work with our volunteers and workshop leaders, alongside local makers and organisations such as Platt Fields Market Garden and Moss Side's Boilerhouse, to furnish and equip the Hall through community making programmes that build skills, confidence and ownership. The Garden Project will also continue to grow – a partnership funding application with the Friends of Platt Fields and Platt Fields Market Garden is underway that will create a volunteering programme across the park, further unite the Hall with other park stakeholders, and focus on developing the Rose Garden area at the front of the building.

A major funding application has been submitted to AHRC in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University and Surestart, for a three-year research project that will focus on the spatial, material, and embodied knowledges of early years children. If successful, *Things of the least: lively exhibition making through the material encounters of under-3s* will bring together Surestart families with the Mary Greg Collection, and the spaces of the Hall with local homes and community space, to co-produce an experimental 'exhibition' that will deepen understanding of how family cultures, histories and experiences contribute to placemaking, and how very young children respond to the sensory, spatial and material stimuli of spaces and objects.

b) Presence in the neighbourhood

The current cost-of-living crisis is causing severe hardship within our neighbourhood. Over the next year, we will develop our programme beyond the walls of the Hall to support people in the community. We will develop resources and activities with existing partners that take place in essential public spaces, such as schools, GP practice waiting rooms, the park, and other open spaces across the neighbourhood.

We will continue to develop our growing relationship with Heald Place Primary School, with regular 'explore the Hall' sessions, and a more tailored project to develop the Museum on my Street collection-on-a-bike for use around the neighbourhood and in school. Following the success of the HAF summer holiday programme, we will roll out a further programme this year that also develops and strengthens our relationship with community centre Trinity House. We will also extend key networks locally, making connections with The Place (Fallowfield Library) on Platt Lane, and taking every opportunity to participate in wider neighbourhood and park events.

In the Windows will continue to brighten the landscape for passers-by to the Hall, celebrating local projects and cultures through a process of open call and selection by residents and staff. This year's programme includes a celebration of embroidery by the local Women's Voices sewing group, followed by an anti-litter exhibition developed by Moss Side 'Feel the Rhythm' Pocket Park, and a music project centred around recently launched global majority music magazine SEEN. A range of creative events will be programmed alongside each display.

c) Dynamic Collections

We will continue to explore ways of opening up traditionally 'back of house' collections care processes, to build investment in the collections as a community resource, and to explore how care of objects can intersect with care of people. We will look for opportunities to extend the scope of volunteering into collections-based work, supporting the audit and rehousing of collections as part of the wider Collections Rethink.

Building on the findings of the Opening the Box programme, we will focus on understanding and exploring global textiles in the Platt Hall Collection. Textiles are central to the city's history and to the history of the Hall as a textile merchant's house and have been a constant source of connection through the Platt project. But the collection itself – which includes several thousand items predominantly from the European, African and Asian continents - remains under-researched, poorly documented and insufficiently understood.

7.2 Developing Our Assets

7.2.1 Collection Development

Alongside the broader Collection Rethink and review of the global textiles collections, we are submitting an application to NLHF Dynamic Collections to support public engagement in the Rutherston loan scheme collection and local history collection. The review of the furniture collection also continues and over the next year we hope to explore how items in the collection which were acquired for or have an association with Heaton and Wythenshawe Hall might have a potential future use at these sites.

Audit work continues across all sites to support the collections moves and collection review work. We are also participating in a research project led jointly by the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures (SISJAC) and the Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University (ARC) to construct a portal site for an online open access database that will widen access to and improve our knowledge and understanding of our Japanese collections.

We are working on 2 funding applications for future acquisitions. An application to the Art Fund is in progress to acquire 12 works on paper and a performance work by Jade Monserrat, and we are applying to the Rick Mather and David Scrase Foundation to support the acquisition of a work by Derek Jarman.

The loans moratorium remains in place due to the capital programmes work. However, over the course of the next year we are lending works to exhibitions at The Whitworth and National Museums Scotland, and we are working with the Our Town Hall project team on potential loans to the new visitor centre.

7.2.2. Capital development

The phasing of works, programme and decant strategy for art works is currently being agreed to permit a meaningful start in the first quarter of the year. Work is

underway to relocate art works from Queens Park to G17 at Manchester Art Gallery, and this work will continue well into next year.

Due to the significant heritage importance of the Gallery all works will require Planning Consent, and some considerable effort will go in during the early part of the year to demonstrate that the purpose of the works is to enhance public accessibility and to preserve, rather than damage, the building. Once all relevant permissions are secured works will commence on items on the critical path. This will prioritise highest risk elements (e.g., the lantern light over the Mosley St entrance) and those items (e.g., refurbishment of the lower ground floor) that are interdependent with the programme of works at QP.

7.2.3 Manchester Together Archive (MTA)

In 2023-24 we will continue to work with our University of Manchester partners and colleagues at Archives + to progress our work in advance of an application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Priorities include:

- Completing the cataloguing of the material
- Re-engaging with members of the bereaved families and other stakeholders as part of the consultation about the MTA's longer-term access and use
- Relocating the MTA to its new temporary space on the 2nd floor of MAG as part of the capital programme works.
- Developing and implementing an MTA Collection and Development Policy
- Develop an MTA Digitisation Guide and use it to prepare a brief to a digital developer and inform relevant NLHF and AHRC funding applications
- Develop Ethical Practice Guidelines on how to address the risk of secondary/vicarious trauma of cultural professionals and how to engage audiences with physical and digital collections of trauma.

7.2.4 Our Town Hall

February 2023 sees the start of the RIBA Stage 4 design of the Manchester Town Hall Story exhibition. Mather & Co, working in close collaboration with the OTH Design and Construction teams, will complete the detailed design of the exhibition and building interpretation scheme. On completion of the Stage 4 design, the OTH's management contractor LendLease will start the procurement process for a suitable fit-out contractor.

Throughout 2023, the OTH heritage team will focus on research and the development of content for the interpretation scheme. This will include a programme of engagement and co-development to ensure that diverse community voices will be heard in the telling of the Manchester Town Hall Story.

From February to May 2023, the OTH team will work with specialist consultants to devise an Audience Development Plan and prepare an application to the NLHF. Work on the Audience Development Plan will involve consultation with Manchester residents and will identify key target audiences for the Visitor Experience. The plan will help to inform the new NLHF application giving it a clear focus on community needs and benefits. The target date for submission of the NLHF application is May 2023. If successful, we will develop and pilot a new public programme which will

include formal and informal learning sessions, public tours and a volunteering and work experience offer.

We will embark on a full programme of furniture conservation using the newly established furniture conservation framework. The aim is to restore as much of the collection as possible and put it back into use to complement the architectural scheme, as intended in the original Waterhouse design. This investment will help to enhance the commercial appeal of events spaces and meeting rooms, as well as allowing the public to enjoy the collection in its original context.

2023/24 will be an important period for planning the eventual reoccupation of the Town Hall. The OTH heritage team will start the process of identifying and procuring the services of a suitable art transport provider to return the collection from offsite storage. The team will also continue the work of rationalising the existing collection, documenting new additions to the Building Record Collection and planning the storage areas in the Town Hall. This work will ensure that any collection that is not in use or on display can be stored in an accessible, secure, and protected environment.

OTH and Manchester Art Gallery teams are working together to identify material from the gallery collection that could be displayed in the Town Hall. This work will result in an internal loan so that items from the gallery collection can enhance the stories being told in the Manchester Town Hall Story. The team also hope to curate a selection of paintings from the MAG collection for display in significant Town Hall meeting rooms.

7.3 Earned and raised income

2023/24 will be a challenging period for income generation but we are relatively positive about the opportunities to generate increased income to retain the current level of programming. We are currently working on visitor / client communications that will make it more explicit that the commercial profit (shop, café, events) directly supports the work of the gallery – from exhibitions to the activities we run for the city’s most vulnerable residents. We are also working to improve environmental sustainability across the business and will use this as a selling point, particularly with companies booking events who are looking to improve their ESG (Environmental Social Governance) scores.

7.3.1 Fundraising

We will continue to focus revenue fundraising activity on securing grants from public funders and trusts and foundations, primarily to support our learning and engagement programme. Capital fundraising will focus on the planned improvements to Queen’s Park and Manchester Art Gallery, delivering buildings that are fit for purpose and enhance public comfort and collection security.

We will continue to promote individual giving, from large gifts to onsite (cash and contactless) and online giving. We will change messaging in 2023/24 to focus on the gallery’s collection and how people can help support its future, using the gallery’s capital programme and Collection Rethink as a driver. Membership campaigns to increase the number of Friends and Patrons are ongoing and are being supported by the adoption of a new CRM which helps identify trends and gaps in the schemes.

We will launch a new legacy campaign, in the first instance aimed at our existing supporters, and will reinstate will-writing days which were paused due to the pandemic. As ever, we will maintain relationships with our existing funders and donors through good ongoing communication and timely reporting.

7.3.2 Retail

The online shop will be redesigned to increase sales – with the aim to increase online turnover from 5% to 10% of sales. This work is being carried out in-house, thanks to the use of the Cultural Recovery Fund support for staff training.

Print-on-demand services through Art UK will be overhauled so we hope to see increased income via this channel. In addition, we will integrate this marketplace with the MAG online shop from the autumn, which will open new audiences for prints just in time for Christmas sales.

Partnerships with Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair and the Manchester Jewellers Network continue. We are also working on developing more in-house ranges that feature works from the collection, although these products have a much lower margin than off-the-shelf products.

7.3.3 Venue hire

As at January 2023, there are confirmed venue hire bookings for 2023/24 to the value of c £65k. We also have five ticketed events planned so far, with more to be developed over the coming months.

7.4.4 Cafe and catering

The appointment of a new General Manager for the café is our main priority for the new financial year, when the incumbent manager leaves in March. A new pricing matrix for both events and catering will be in place from 1st April and is averaging around an 11% increase across the board, in line with inflation.

8 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

The service is committed to equality of access and celebrating and promoting diversity. Our vision for 2023/4, based on our successes of previous years, is for the benefit of the widest possible audience, especially those least likely to engage with culture.

There is a strong emphasis on widening participation in 2023 and we will focus on equality, diversity and inclusion; working with children, young people and older adults with a focus on residents of priority Manchester wards where engagement is currently lowest and where the potential of art and creativity to change lives could have the biggest impact.

(b) Risk Management

The service takes an extremely robust approach to risk management and is fully committed to MCC's Risk Management Compliance Framework in all aspects of its operation, as well as keeping a risk log to manage other risks that may affect service delivery, reputation, and future funding.

(c) Legal Considerations

None identified.