

## SCRUTINY BULLETIN

9 JANUARY 2023

The papers attached are primarily for Councillors' information but will be made publicly available on the internet, with the exception of Part 2 items. They may relate to work in progress or updates on reports which have already been considered by the Scrutiny Committees.

The provision of this information does not override the authority of the Standing Orders as set out in the Council's Constitution. For example, Councillors remain entitled to ask for a specific item to be placed on a Scrutiny agenda, request a call-in or to ask questions of a Portfolio Holder.

If require further information please contact Jo Quinnell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer on 01392 265197 or alternatively email [committee.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@exeter.gov.uk)

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Scrutiny Bulletin: 9 January 2023

Title of Update: Council Housing Retrofit Programme

Relevant Officers: Bindu Arjoon – Deputy Chief Executive

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Completed retrofit properties in Burnthouse Lane (below left) and Russet Avenue (below right)



## 1. What is the update about?

In 2020, the Housing Service developed an approach to meet the city council's corporate objective to achieve net zero by 2030. The Service's strategy was to develop and deliver a retrofit programme of energy efficiency work to the existing housing stock. This focus was to alleviate fuel costs for those residents who lived in our stock with the worse energy performance.

The Council secured £1.6m of Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery funding from Government to help deliver this improvement and 420 properties have been refurbished to the standards reported below.

This update provides the outcomes from the recent delivery programme, including tenant involvement, the energy improvements and the carbon reductions achieved for the properties.

## 2. Background

The initial project overarching aims were to;

- Engage our tenants in work to reduce their carbon footprint
- Reduce fuel use and therefore, costs, for our tenants
- Reduce carbon impact
- Improve our Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) to at least a Band C rating where practicable
- Prioritise our least efficient fuel-use stock (EPC Bands D-G)
- Secure external funding

Following a series of initial workshops across the service and with our contractors, the following delivery objectives were agreed:

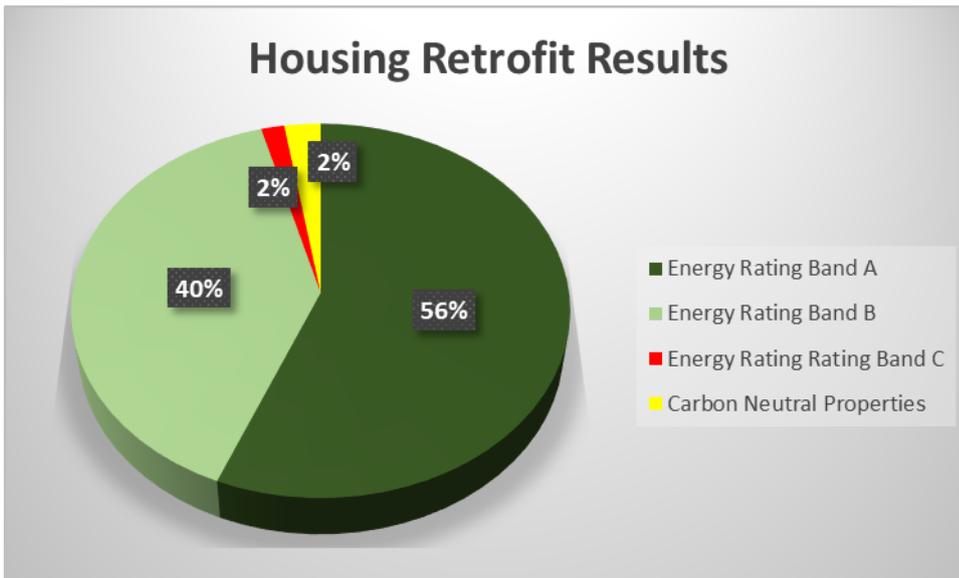
- Engage tenants to promote an understanding of carbon impact
- Support the city's wider carbon net zero vision
- Contribute to our future asset investment strategy
- Test a representative sample of the stock demographic (circa.10%)
- Incorporate retrofit works as a business as usual activity
- Develop our retrofit specification and ER's
- Integrate low carbon & renewable technologies where practicable
- Reduce fuel use for our tenants
- Mitigate the impact of fuel costs
- Protect our assets
- Monitor and measure outcomes

## 3. Current position

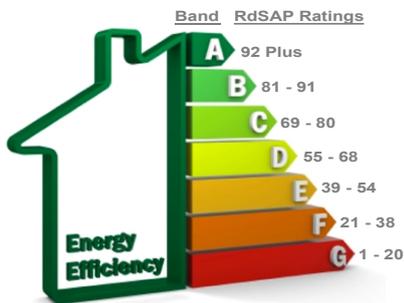
The following energy efficiency measures were introduced:

- Removal of failed cavity wall insulation
- Removal of historic debris and rubble left behind when previous insulation was installed
- Roofs and roofline repairs and renewals
- Installation of new thermally-efficient & low-carbon cavity wall insulation
- New loft insulation
- New renewable Solar PV systems
- New highly-efficient replacement heating systems where required
- Smart heating controls fitted
- Windows and Doors replacements
- Smart meters installed
- Monitoring and management support for tenants
- New tenant energy efficiency booklets published and distributed

Results achieved to date:



- 240 (56%) properties achieved the highest rating (Band A)
- 11 of the above properties achieved a rating of net-zero carbon
- 169 (40%) properties achieved the 2nd highest rating (Band B)
- 7 properties failed to meet target, 4 due to inadequate heating systems & 3 refusal to access properties to complete works



Average energy rating of properties before retrofit - 55 (Low Band D)

Average energy rating of properties after retrofit - 90 (Very High Band B)



Average CO2 emissions for regulated energy Pre Works 4.01 Tonnes

**Average CO2 Emissions Post Works 0.52 Tonnes**

## Tenant Feedback

Tenants are at the heart of this work. A group of Energy Champions has been formed and provide feedback on completed retrofit works. This helps us to gauge the success of the installations and provide energy data to enable the Council to track savings achieved/cost increases mitigated.

Energy Champions are contacted once a quarter and asked to provide meter readings (gas and electric) and to provide feedback on how the properties are performing. They have also been requested to, where possible, provide historic energy consumption information so that their usage can be compared to previous years, prior to the energy improvement works being completed. The tenants are encouraged to act as champions in their neighbourhood and community, and participate in promotional work. One Energy Champion has been interviewed by BBC's Spotlight to highlight the positive benefits of the project.

Some of the feedback from the initial survey has confirmed the following;

- All tenants understood why the works had been carried
- All tenants perceived that they were warmer in their homes and were saving money
- Two of the Group stated that pre-works information and communication could have been more detailed by the Contractor – procedures have been amended accordingly
- All tenants stated that the Contractors were polite and courteous
- One tenant fed back that work was not completed to his satisfaction – this related to more measures being requested which are currently not part of the installation package

## 4. Future position

The Housing Service is continuing the retrofit programme across the remainder of our stock, financed through the Housing Revenue Account. This will reduce the number of properties completed each year due to budget limitations - a delivery timescale is currently being developed. However, Government grant is currently available via the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and a bid is being prepared for submission.

The performance results from the 420 completed properties continue to be analysed to ensure that we develop the optimum retrofit model and accurate specification for future work. There is clearly a balance to be struck between maximising the energy performance of properties and the associated SAP rating with the affordability of the works programme for all Council properties in the shortest timescale possible. The revised Housing Asset Management Plan due to be published early 2023 will set the future delivery strategy, including programme timescales and any associated off-setting requirements.

## 5. Conclusion

It is now evident that the immediate impact of the retrofit installations is more likely to result in mitigating recent exceptional energy cost increases for tenants rather than delivering significant reductions in spend on utility bills. This is, however, a positive outcome during a volatile period of energy cost inflation.

Employment and training opportunities will be incorporated into the retrofit activity, particularly in relation to the creation of Apprenticeship opportunities in procured Contracts.

Every effort will be made to maximise the benefits resulting from retrofit programme of investment within the local economy.

Scrutiny Bulletin: 9 January 2023

Title of Update: Kickstart Scheme Review

Relevant Officers: Rosie Bates - Skills & City Inclusivity Manager

Victoria Hatfield - Service Lead – Net Zero & Business

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## 1. What is the update about?

This update is about the review of Exeter City Council's role as a gateway organisation for the Kickstart Scheme, including the performance of the scheme.

## 2. Background

In August 2020, Government announced the introduction of a new scheme, the Kickstart scheme, to support young people (aged 16-24) back in to employment.

The basis of the scheme was that this age group has been badly affected by the pandemic, with their prospects limited and in a number of cases their confidence significantly reduced. The scheme would be operated by the Department for Work and Pensions, and provide a wage subsidy to businesses employing an eligible young person, alongside an additional payment to support costs associated with employment – such as equipment, IT kit, clothing, and also personal and professional development for the young person to ensure they would have the best possible opportunity to transition in to sustainable employment at the end of their 6 month placement.

Young people needed to be aged 16-24 and claiming Universal Credit to be eligible for the scheme.

Businesses needed to complete an application process to demonstrate their commitment to supporting the young person and to demonstrate that they met key criteria – such as age of trading and financial stability.

When first announced, the Department for Work and Pensions would only accept direct applications from businesses able to offer at least 30 placements, meaning that the majority of small businesses would not be able to apply direct. To enable them to access the scheme they needed to apply through a 'Gateway' organisation. This organisation needed to be approved by

DWP, and was to be responsible for checking the business and placements were eligible and suitable for the scheme. There was a payment of £300 per filled placement for Gateway organisations to support the administration of the scheme.

On reviewing the scheme, and considering the profile of businesses within the city, Exeter City Council made the decision to become a Gateway organisation in order to support businesses to access the scheme, and for our young people to benefit from the opportunities to be made available. Government subsequently changed its position on this in January 2021, enabling any size business to apply directly to the scheme.

### 3. Current position

The Kickstart scheme came to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 when all placements were completed, the last ones having started no later than 31st March 2022.

Exeter City Council have since been gathering feedback and data to be able to review the scheme. A short report is now available.

The DWP have been conducting a national evaluation which will be available in early 2023.

The following table highlights some of the key statistics in relation to Exeter City Council's role as a Gateway organisation.

Number of businesses engaged	53
Number of businesses that recruited a young person	33
Total number of placements created (and approved by DWP)	187
Number of placements filled	105 (56.16%)
Number of placements finished early (variety of reasons)	29 (27.62%)
Number of Young People in employment – December 2022 (note: this may not be the same employment as their placement)*	72 (68%)
Different sectors of business that were engaged (see table below)	14

The feedback from businesses and young people has on the whole been positive. A number of businesses expressed frustration with the administrative elements of the scheme, and the timescales involved in the different stages. This was especially true for those that were involved at the outset of the scheme when a lot of the processes were constantly evolving.

The review report also includes feedback from DWP and the internal teams that were involved.

The most encouraging outcome from the scheme is that 68% of the young people who undertook a placement are now in sustained employment.

### 4. Future position

There is no further activity to undertake in relation to the role as a Gateway organisation as all activities in the scheme have come to an end.

The review report contains recommendations for the council to consider should a role such as this be required in the future.

## 5. Are there any other options?

The options are contained within the report.

## 6. Conclusion

There have been a number of positive outcomes for the young people and businesses engaged in the scheme. On the whole it was an administratively heavy scheme to deliver, and whilst there was funding for Gateway organisations, any future role such as this should be carefully considered.

A copy of the full review report can be obtained by emailing [rosie.bates@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:rosie.bates@exeter.gov.uk)

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Scrutiny Bulletin: 9 January 2023

Title of Update: Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery Annual Review  
2021-22

Relevant Officers: Camilla Hampshire - Museum Manager

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## 1. What is the update about?

The attached annual review celebrates the work of the museum during the period April 2021 to March 2022. It covers all aspects of the work of the museum: exhibitions, events, collections, contemporary art, community engagement, conservation, digital, skills development, commercial activities and visitor services.

## 2. Background

The museum produces an annual review every year. The previous annual review covered the period 2020-21

## 3. Current position

The review summarises an active and busy first post pandemic year – a year in which RAMM was the focus for many people venturing out from their homes to be in shared spaces, connecting with others and through our collections and exhibitions re-discovering a broader world. For those people who had felt isolated or struggled with their mental health, RAMM was a source of comfort and calm in what could seem an overwhelming return to our previous lives.

For RAMM too, 2021-22 was a year of recovery and rebuilding following the enormous challenges of the pandemic. When the museum reopened its doors on 18 May 2021, having only been able to open for 31 days in the previous year, we were met by a wave of good will and positivity from our visitors and partners. It was a powerful reminder of the important role the museum plays in the cultural life of the city and clearly demonstrated how much RAMM is valued by the people of Exeter.

The 2021 summer family activities in the Garden were particularly joyous, as was the first live Lates event in November 2021. The year culminated in the opening of In Plain Sight: Transatlantic Slavery and Devon in 2022, an important exhibition long in the making due to delays caused by the pandemic.

Partnership working is key to the museum's success, and across the year we worked with a wide range of groups and organisations that link the museum to the community we serve. 2021-22 saw the museum growing and building its partnership with the University of Exeter through the Creative Arc programme, and forging links with Wellbeing Exeter.

#### 4. Future position

N/a

#### 5. Are there any other options?

N/a

#### 6. Conclusion

This review celebrates the work of the museum and contains a thank you to all the museum's funders and partners who make this work possible.

**ANNUAL  
REVIEW**

**2012**

**mamm**



2021 was a year of recovery and rebuilding following the enormous challenges of the pandemic. The museum's focus on environmental themes in the spring enabled us all to reflect on growth and rebirth and what is important to society at large.

The exhibitions *Seedscares: Future-Proofing Nature* and *A Language of Seeds* highlighted the beauty of the natural world whilst reminding us how threats such as climate change and pollution are having a cataclysmic effect on biodiversity. The *Growing Together* community engagement project showed how healing it can be to have our hands in the soil and watch things grow.

Amy Shelton's work *Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium*, containing pressed plant and wildflower specimens from people's daily lockdown walks, movingly documented the unprecedented time when many people looked to nature and green space for wellbeing and respite.

Towards the end of the year, the exceptional images in the *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* exhibition demonstrated the fragility of nature, and highlighted how society must act in unison to protect our planet.

Taking its inspiration from our collections, Museum at Large used culture and creativity to help Exeter and its communities recover from the impact of the pandemic. From ornate headdresses celebrating Roman women parading through the streets to floating cuneiform cylinders at the Quay, a stunning installation featuring skylark calls in Rougemont Gardens and museum objects projected onto St Catherine's Almshouses, this vibrant public art project surprised and delighted many of us on a dark Halloween weekend.

None of this could happen without the dedication of RAMM's team, its wonderful volunteers, partners, supporters and friends, all of whom I would like to acknowledge and thank.

Of course, we are still facing the impacts of the Covid pandemic, coupled with new challenges of rising costs of living, set against the backdrop of climate change. In these testing times, museums, especially RAMM, can be a source of comfort, calm and connection to everyone in a sometimes troubling and unstable world.

**Cllr. Laura Wright**

Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture and Corporate Services



The last year has demonstrated to me how much RAMM is valued by the people of Exeter. When the museum reopened its doors on 18 May 2021, having only been able to open for 31 days in the previous year, we were met by a wave of good will and positivity from our visitors and partners. It reminded me of the important role the museum plays in the cultural life of the city.

The museum team continued to cope admirably with the myriad of challenges that the pandemic threw our way – from rescheduling exhibitions and operating with one-way routes, to finding new ways of running engagement projects – staff and volunteers showed remarkable resilience and good humour throughout.

As the year progressed, we were able to gradually reintroduce more of the elements that make RAMM special and visitors were delighted to see the return of live events in the museum. Even with the continuing operational challenges, RAMM delivered a fun and engaging programme. The summer family activities in the Garden were particularly joyous, as was the first live Lates event in November.

An injection of funds from the Culture Recovery Fund helped ensure the summer was a success. It also enabled us to produce a series of films highlighting the treasures in the museum and providing a glimpse behind the scenes. RAMM, like many other cultural organisations, is facing a very tough economic climate, post pandemic. Our visitor numbers are gradually increasing, in line with similar museums, but income generation has been badly hit and we are increasingly dependent on fundraising. We are immensely grateful to all our supporters and grant giving bodies, but also for the donations made by individuals visiting the museum. All contributions, large and small, help support RAMM's work.

The year culminated in the opening of *In Plain Sight: Transatlantic Slavery and Devon*, an important exhibition long in the making due to delays caused by the pandemic. We are indebted to the contribution of our advisory panel, collaborators from Devon Development Education and a number of artists and poets who helped us tell this important story. An educational resource based on the exhibition is in development and will ensure the exhibition's legacy.

Partnership working is key to the museum's success, and across the year we worked with a wide range of groups and organisations that link us to the community we serve. 2021-22 saw the museum growing and building its partnership with the University of Exeter through the Creative Arc programme. There are a number of exciting projects in development, as we explore how the museum and its collections can help shape a better Exeter.

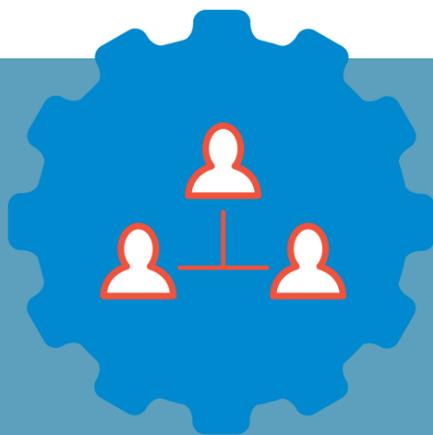
**Camilla Hampshire**

Museum Manager



## People

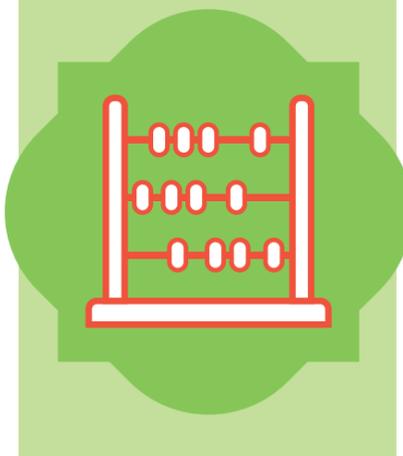
**56** members of staff  
**40** interns and work placements  
**232** volunteers contributing 7,615 hours  
**11.6%** of volunteers have declared a disability  
**10.1%** of volunteers identify as Black, Asian or ethnic minority



**16.7%** of volunteers identify as LGBTQ+  
**590** Friends members  
**24** Patrons

## Visitors

**122,522** museum visits



## Events

**24** exhibitions and displays  
**66** physical events  
**32** online events  
**1** festival  
**1,963** tickets for events issued  
**3,770** tickets for exhibitions issued  
**689** tickets for online events issued  
**11** exhibitions delayed



## Ratings and awards

Rated **4.5/5** and **#1** of 93 things to do in Exeter on TripAdvisor  
**Visit Devon Tourism Awards 2021:** Gold in Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism

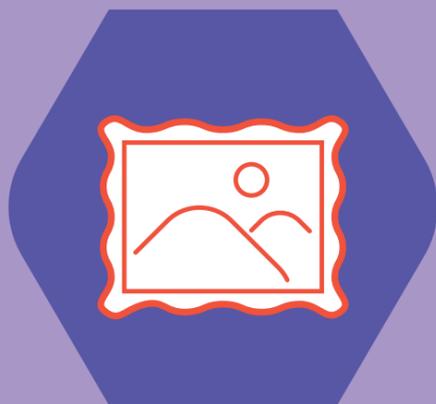
**South West Tourism Awards 2021:** Silver in Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism



# Statistics

## Objects

**43** acquisitions  
**299** incoming object loans  
**11** outgoing object loans  
**7** artist commissions



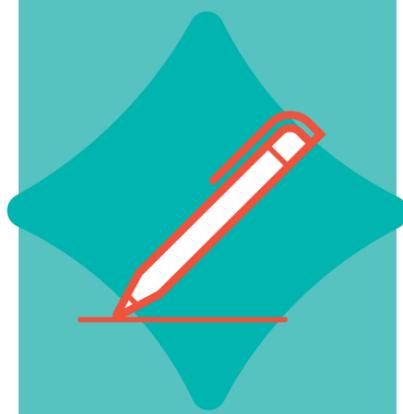
## Support



**15** grants awarded from trusts and foundations  
**£19,824** in grants from the Friends of RAMM  
**5** Gifts in wills pledges received

## Learning

**38** museum-led school visits  
**56** engagement sessions/workshops  
**45** new digital learning products



## Online views



**Main Site:**  
**121,000** users  
**397,000** page views  
 Users view an average of **3.4** pages per session  
 Around **60%** of users access the website via mobile/tablets, 40% via desktops

**Collections Explorer:**  
**22,000** users  
**140,000** page views  
 Users visit an average of **5** pages per session  
**Showcase:**  
**4,174** page views  
**Online Learning:**  
**1,536** page views

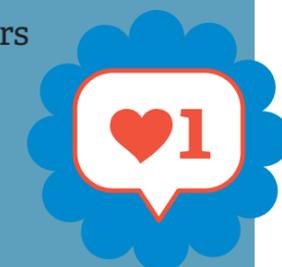
## Commercial

**£11.44** average spend per transaction in shop  
**£1.15** spend per visitor head  
**£19.33** average spend per online transaction



## Socials

**7,139** Facebook followers  
**16,777** Twitter followers  
**6,190** Instagram followers  
**563** YouTube subscribers  
**112** new content uploads on YouTube  
**10,662** new content views on YouTube



# Exhibitions



This page:  
Side view, large hollow blue and white porcelain garden seat, Jingdezhen, 1573–1620  
© The Trustees of the British Museum lent by kind permission of the Trustees of the Sir Percival David Foundation

## The British Museum Spotlight Loan: A Ming Emperor's Seat

A Ming Emperor's seat is a beautiful glazed blue and white garden seat dating from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). The seat was made for the court of the Wanli Emperor, one of the longest reigning of all the Ming dynasty emperors. Supported by the Sir Percival David Foundation, the loan celebrated the tenth anniversary of the arrival of the Sir Percival David Collection at the British Museum. It is considered to

be one of the finest collections of Chinese ceramics in the world. RAMM was delighted to display the seat as part of the British Museum's National Programme, marking the first time that the seat had been loaned to other museums in the UK.

This exhibition was made possible as a result of the Government Indemnity Scheme. RAMM would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.



## Seedscares: Future-Proofing Nature

In a world shaped by Covid-19, it seemed more important than ever to consider nature, biodiversity, and the environment. *Seedscares* brought together five contemporary artists who are exploring global efforts to safeguard vital plant species from extinction. Plant diversity is rapidly declining, and faces threats from global warming, pollution and war. Yet without seeds and their potential for food and medicine, we cannot sustain ourselves. Featuring photography, moving image and sculpture, *Seedscares* revealed how international artists, biologists and ecologists are responding to these challenges.

*Seedscares: Future-Proofing Nature* was curated by Liz Wells with creative producer Pippa Oldfield. An Impressions Gallery Touring Exhibition presented in association with touring partners The Dick Institute and Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery.

Top:  
Amy Shelton, *Biophilia: the Exeter Florilegium*  
Above left:  
*Seedscares: Future-Proofing Nature*

## Léonie Hampton: A Language of Seeds

Commissioned to complement the touring exhibition *Seedscares: Future Proofing Nature*, Devon-based artist Léonie Hampton's work engaged directly with the ecological emergency through a series of photographs that celebrate her vegetable garden, her family and friends, and the seeds in the collections at RAMM. Her lens captured both the beauty of the natural world and drew visitors' attention to the urgent climate crisis through images of the relationship between the human hand, body and mouth and the food she grows.

## Amy Shelton: Biophilia

Amy Shelton's *Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium* was RAMM's Covid-19 commission. Building on her environmental practice, Shelton's artwork included a herbarium of pressed plant specimens compiled on her daily lockdown walks in Exeter during spring and summer 2020. It also included flower contributions from staff and patients from the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS hospital, and specimens from the gardens of people self-isolating. A moving snapshot of personal experiences of the first lockdown in Exeter, Shelton's commission documented an unprecedented time when many people looked to nature and green spaces for wellbeing and reflection.

Above right:  
Seeds from RAMM's collection in Léonie Hampton, *A Language of Seeds*



**Michelle Sank: Breathe**

Created by internationally acclaimed photographer Michelle Sank, *Breathe* is an exhibition of work that documented the first Covid-19 lockdown in the Wonford area of Exeter. This series is a poignant visual record of individual and shared experiences of social isolation under lockdown. It explored how people negotiated their own predicaments, their relationships to each other, as well as their interaction with private and nearby public spaces.

**Wildlife Photographer of the Year**

This world-renowned exhibition, on loan from the Natural History Museum in London, was highlighted in the channel 5 documentary series *World of Wonder* in early 2021. It featured exceptional images capturing fascinating animal behaviour, spectacular species and the breath-taking diversity and fragility of the natural world. Using photography's unique emotive power to engage and inspire audiences, the images shone a light on stories and species from around the world to encourage a future of advocating for the planet.



Opposite page, top left:  
Arshdeep Singh, *Treetop Douc*.  
*Wildlife Photographer of the Year*,  
2020

Opposite page, bottom left:  
Michelle Sank, *Lacey and family*,  
*Burnthouse Lane, Exeter*. *Breathe*,  
2020

Opposite page, bottom middle:  
Rebecca MacPherson, *Fern Fossil*  
1, Monoprint. Local Art Show, 2020

Opposite page, bottom right:  
Sarah Furby, *Mummy board*,  
reduction linocut. Local Art Show,  
2020

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*Portrait of an African*, Attributed to  
Allan Ramsay (1713-1784)

**Local Art Show 2021**

The Local Art Show gave art groups and societies from Exeter and the surrounding area the chance to display members' work. The theme for 2020 was 'RAMM and its collections' and the shortlisted entrants were Double Elephant Print Workshop, Topsham Art Group and Magic Carpet. The public vote was hosted by Exeter Living, and Double Elephant Print Workshop were announced as the winners. Closure of the museum due to Covid-19 meant that the show was displayed briefly in December 2020 and was shown again in November 2021 to January 2022.

**In Plain Sight: Transatlantic slavery and Devon**

*In Plain Sight: Transatlantic slavery and Devon* was a major exhibition exploring the museum and Devon's links with centuries of trading enslaved African people across the Atlantic. The exhibition investigated aspects of the Transatlantic Slave Trade that are all around us, but for some remain 'hidden in plain sight'. Since 2018, RAMM has worked with a network of researchers and experts to shed light on this hidden history. Using the museum's collections and contemporary sources, *In Plain Sight* traced the local industries that relied on the trade and the lives of the people who benefitted from its profits. It also featured a newly commissioned film which reflects on RAMM's iconic painting *Portrait of an African* and a new commission by the acclaimed artist Joy Gregory – *The Sweetest Thing* was acquired by RAMM with support from the Contemporary Arts Society and Friends of RAMM.



# Events

The year began with the majority of our events still running online. As it progressed, we were delighted to be able to re-introduce live events back to the museum. Even with the continued challenges of the pandemic, we were able to deliver a varied and engaging programme of events for visitors to enjoy in 2021.

**'A chameleon climbed on my head and I honestly think my life peaked there'**

—Lates guest



**'Loved the Romans event, my little one liked being able to have a picture taken with a Roman soldier and loved seeing them march up and down Queen Street.'**

April, May and June continued to focus on an online offering for our audiences. Talks and workshops included looking at the outfits of actor Vivien Leigh, Victorian bathing suits and the story of the re-introduction of the Eurasian Beaver to Devon, which was to accompany a new acquisition for the collection.

We held another RAMM Lates online, celebrating the natural beauty and wonder in the everyday. We hosted an evening of storytelling, illustration, games, discussion, artist talks and photography for people to enjoy, all from the comfort of home.

One of the most successful online events in 2021 was a unique and engaging project with local storyteller David Heathfield and other international storytellers from around the world. 'Around the World in 88 Tales' allowed us to reach an international audience and encourage them to explore our collection, as well as delivering content for existing audiences to engage with RAMM remotely. The fascinating storytellers provided a new and engaging interpretation of objects from RAMM's collections, from obscure arrows and cowbells to the famous Puzzle

**'We'd like to say thank you for hosting Sunshine Follies in August. Our grandchild was absolutely spellbound for several hours and we adults enjoyed it too. We do hope you have the opportunity to host them again next year. Thank you for a wonderful day's entertainment.'**



Jug and beloved elephant. Some of the storytellers from Argentina and Japan took the project even further and encouraged their students to engage with the museum from afar and create work inspired by it.

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In July live events were re-introduced, funded by the Culture Recovery Fund, kicking off with a Roman extravaganza attracting over 600 people. Taking place beside Exeter's Roman wall, a cohort from Legio Secunda Augusta, one of Europe's pre-eminent Roman re-enactment groups, talked to visitors about life in the army. They demonstrated tactics that made them such a formidable fighting force and offered visitors the chance to interact with the soldiers, as well as marching up one of the main streets in Exeter. This event was a wonderful spectacle and a fantastic way to welcome people back to RAMM.

The summer saw craft activities for families inspired by RAMM's collections, roaming historical characters in the museum featuring Victorians, Romans and British army veterans, as well as world music performances. We held regular spectacular 'Sunshine Follies' events with storytellers, circus performers, a flea circus, music and puppetry, as well as seaside games taking place each week in the RAMM Garden. These events were incredibly popular, drawing a large audience and receiving rave reviews from those who attended.

The museum collection continued to be celebrated in the autumn with craft activities focused on ancient jewellery and exploration, a Beaver-themed storytelling and information day for children and the re-introduction of our incredibly popular museum at night for families



to explore in the dark. Night of Light and Sound focused on holidays that celebrate light, such as Diwali, Hanukkah and Vesak.

November witnessed the first live RAMM Lates since Covid began. The evening consisted of musical performances, flamenco dancing, the chance to meet live reptiles and insects, talks by an ethical taxidermist and RAMM's natural sciences curator, an artist talk with internationally acclaimed photographer Michelle Sank, plus much more.

Moving into early 2022 a programme of events around the *In Plain Sight* exhibition was developed. This included an evening with geneticist, writer and broadcaster Dr Adam Rutherford at which he discussed the subjects covered in his book *How to Argue with a Racist: History, Science, Race and Reality*. Alongside this headline speaker event we held talks with various academics on the themes featured in the exhibition. The family event programme focused on celebrating African culture and included African drumming, Myth, Magic and Music: Tales from Africa and making your own Adrinka cloth. Our RAMM Lates in March followed the same theme and included music and performance, artist talks, Capoeira demonstrations and exhibition tours.

Sadly, some events were cancelled later in the year due to the effects of the pandemic and this affected ticket sales. However, the events we held brought life and vibrancy back into the museum and it was wonderful to see the smiling faces and enjoyment of the visitors.

**'Entertainment for the adults and the kids – very funny. I am fairly grumpy and this made even me laugh!'**

—Sunshine Follies attendee

**"It was a fantastic evening to be a part of, one of my all-time favourite venues so far!"**

—Karina Gracia, Flamenco Dancer



# Collections

This year saw RAMM acquire objects across its subject areas. We began by collecting a selection of objects relating to the Covid-19 pandemic including lateral flow tests, masks, hand sanitiser made by local company Exeter Gin and a rainbow NHS pin badge given to a nurse by a grateful patient. Collecting objects relating to Covid-19 will continue throughout 2022 and beyond, some of which will feature in the exhibition *A Picture of Health: Exeter's Medical History* opening in October 2022.

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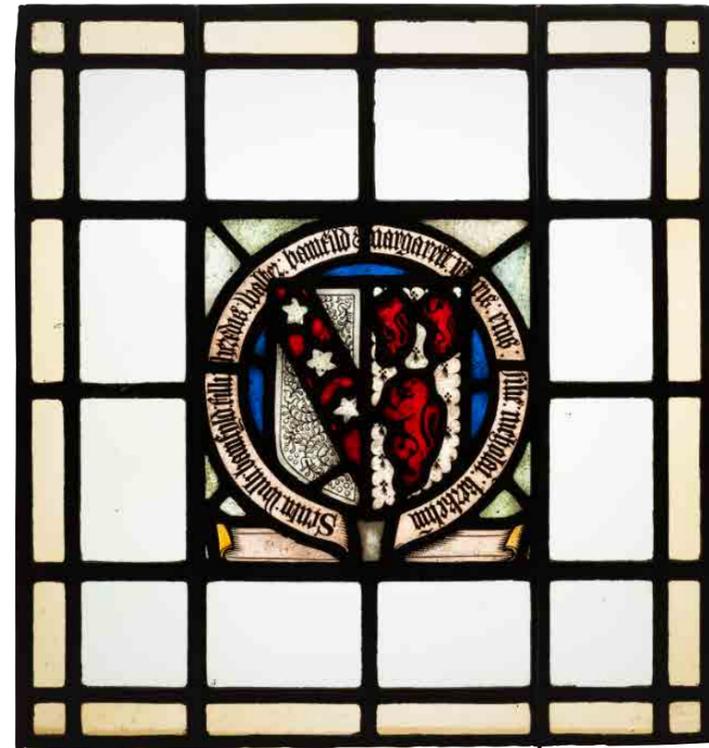


Treasures of the museum gave curators the opportunity to further research these wonderful objects, finding new stories and connections to the world. In doing so RAMM was able to acquire a press photograph of a young boy feeding Joey the crane at Kew Gardens in 1933.

Despite Covid restrictions, two items returned 'home' to Exeter from overseas. One, from France, is a multi-aperture frame containing miniature paintings of the Stone family. John Stone was a Victorian silversmith and RAMM's collections include a number of items made at his premises in Exeter. The other is a late medieval stained glass window inset, kindly donated by an art dealer in Pittsburgh, USA. It once formed part of a window at Bampfylde House in Exeter and the escutcheon is that of the Bampfylde family. We are grateful to the Friends of RAMM for their support in bringing this exceptionally fragile object across the Atlantic safely.

Additional grants allowed RAMM to secure several objects for the collections (discussed in detail in other sections of this review) including *Wing*, and two related drawings, by Peter Randall-Page, *The Sweetest Thing* by Joy Gregory, *The Exeter Florilegium* by Amy Shelton and a beaver from the river Otter.

Further acquisitions include eight archaeological archives from Exeter and the surrounding areas, two items of treasure (a dress hook and a thimble), a Deller's Café teapot, the oil painting *King and Queen* by Brian Rice, a print titled *Anyone may come and go* by Preston Street Union, baby clothes made from parachute nylon and negligée once worn by the actor Vivien Leigh.



Opposite page, left:  
Limoge enamel crucifixion figurine,  
12-13th Century  
Opposite page, right:  
Stone family miniatures, 19th  
Century  
This page top:  
Stained and leaded glass window  
inset with late Medieval escutcheon  
of Bampfylde family

This page, above left:  
Exeter Gin hand sanitiser, 2020  
This page, above right:  
Peter Randall-Page, *Wing*, 2020  
This page, below:  
European beaver taxidermy mount,  
2021



## Treasures of the Museum



The museum team began the year by considering some of RAMM's most special objects - making a shortlist of just 16 from over 1 million items was a quite challenge! To welcome back visitors after pandemic closures we launched a Treasures of the Museum trail around the galleries and invited our physical and virtual visitors to vote for their favourite. The trail highlights RAMM's rich and distinctive collections, connecting local people to their shared history. Our much-loved mascot Gerald the giraffe stole first place with over a quarter of the votes. The Samurai armour and the meteorite ranked second and third. It's not too late to choose your favourite. RAMM staff and volunteers created a video about each one for our YouTube channel - search 'RAMM Treasures of the Museum' on YouTube to discover the shortlist.

# Contemporary Art

Artists from across the region and the UK have brought RAMM's collections and stories to life. Since reopening in May 2021, the local has shone in exhibitions which focused on the ecological crisis. Exciting new artwork in media ranging from pressed flowers and textile to photography and video has shed new light on hidden parts of the collections. RAMM has supported and enabled artists in Exeter, Devon and London to create and show art this year. Their inspiration and interest has enabled curators and conservators to find out more and conserve objects previously in store.

Our funders and supporters have enabled us to acquire many of these new commissions for the collection, including Amy Shelton's *Exeter Florilegium* and Joy Gregory's *The Sweetest Thing*.

'A lot of people were communicating with me about the artwork in a way that I've never really had before... I had nurses and other people from the hospital actually putting notes through my door. And sometimes I took people to the exhibition, which I've never really done before, but it felt very important. This included some of my elderly neighbours, who I didn't know that well before and I was able to talk to them about the work and although they were not previously interested in contemporary art, our connection as a neighbour made it possible. I probably took about 15 people or met them there separately.'

Amy Shelton – an artist commissioned in 2020 – talking about the impact of her work *The Exeter Florilegium*, which was shown in RAMM's exhibition *Biophilia*. This work has subsequently been acquired by the museum.

'It was a complete privilege working with everyone at RAMM and contributing to such a landmark exhibition. I hope we have a chance to work together again in the future. Thank you all so much.'

Joy Gregory was commissioned to produce work shown in RAMM's exhibition *In Plain Sight*. This work, *The Sweetest Thing* has also been recently acquired by the museum.



Opposite page:  
Joy Gregory, *The Sweetest Thing*, 2022 (detail)

Above:  
Artist Joy Gregory at the launch of the *In Plain Sight* exhibition at RAMM.



**“... chatting to people there, I met a couple from Cumbria who had decided to holiday in Devon, had come across RAMM and based their break around the event.”**

—Thomas Cadbury, Assistant Curator at RAMM

Our major new acquisition *Wing* by Peter Randall-Page was finally installed in the courtyard in autumn 2021 after being delayed by the pandemic. RAMM celebrated with an artist talk later on, allowing people to see the sculpture installed alongside the artist's preparatory prints and drawings which are also now held in the RAMM collection.

Artists and artworks have intervened across the museum among its permanent displays, encouraging visitors to take another look at some well-known and much-loved objects. Naomi Frears' *In Other Words* video work was a humorous nod to being installed in the museum's core wall, while John Walter's *SOUTHCOTTIAN* video game was inspired by Joanna Southcott and objects displayed in museum cases. Both artists also had solo exhibitions at Exeter Phoenix's Gallery, strengthening the partnership between the contemporary art programmes across the neighbouring buildings.

Simon Pope's display celebrates wassailing and cider-making, bringing together a range of drinking vessels from the collections and a newly created film of the January 2022 Wassail. This major partnership with Arts & Culture at the University of Exeter has brought together a

team of creative practitioners and academics to explore the ecology and human cultures of cider-making, resulting in a number of public events across Devon and Cornwall.

RAMM's café screen also featured engaging video works by a number of contemporary artists including Laura Hopes, Trish Morrissey and Kay Walsh.

Many of the artists that RAMM has recently supported, nurtured, commissioned and acquired are continuing to share their RAMM-inspired work beyond the museum. Léonie Hampton has a solo show in Italy at the moment which includes the RAMM-commissioned series as well as other work. Heinrich and Palmer's *Aerial* (commissioned for *Birds without Borders* exhibition) has been selected by the Coro in Ulverston for their summer display and Bryony Gillard continues to use RAMM's seaweed collections in her research and practice, including in a new podcast:

Opposite page top:  
Simon Pope, *The Halstow Wassail*, 2022. Photo by Robert Darch

Opposite page bottom:  
RAMM's Contemporary Art Curator Lara Goodband in conversation with Peter Randall-Page, 2022

This page:  
Amy Shelton, *Biophilia: the Exeter Florilegium*, 2020



**“I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed your conversation with Peter last night. I think you put him at his ease which gave him space to express his thoughts at his own pace. The time flew, it was great, thanks.”**

—Ruth, Stone Lane Gardens





# Community Engagement

## Youth wellbeing - Frame of Mind

RAMM responded to research into spiralling mental health needs of children and young people during the pandemic, by devising the Frame of Mind project alongside art therapist partners Youth Arts & Health Trust and Joe Blatherwick Photography. Using mindful photography techniques pioneered by Somerset-based Look Again!, the project developed workshops interweaving live online sessions with face-to-face museum visits. The detail in museum objects inspired slow looking at the world outdoors.

Five small, relaxed groups of 12-19 year olds accessed the workshops, including young people with challenges such as autism, caring responsibilities, depression, dyslexia, selective mutism and social anxiety. They were referred through parents, home education groups, online promotion and networking with local mental health and youth support organisations. The methodology proved adaptable throughout Covid-19 lockdowns and social distancing, with young people logging in from campsites during school holidays. The project hosted an Instagram platform - @rammframeofmind - to share photography and mindfulness tips and ideas. Participants also co-created an online exhibition. Exeter College staff validated the young people's contributions and encouraged further steps in pursuing their creative interests.

The online exhibition was extended with additional content until summer 2022. After Covid-19 delays, the project partners later adapted the programme to reach additional groups of marginalised homeless young people. Alongside vital support from Arts Council England and Exeter City Council, the project expanded thanks to supplementary funding from The Northbrook Community Trust, The Norman Family Charitable Trust and The Arts Society Exeter.

## Wellbeing vouchers

RAMM has a track record over several years of taking part in conversations with local social prescribing networks. As a result of Covid-19 lockdowns and social distancing, the museum expanded its offer of museum café vouchers to community builders and connectors. The idea was to offer a safe, neutral, central destination for a meaningful day out, particularly suitable for people who don't like groups.

The simple offer proved adaptable at an unpredictable time when visits were often postponed and re-arranged at short notice. It enabled RAMM to welcome groups such as wellbeing photography walks for adults and groups of young people and families from lower income neighbourhoods, including many in receipt of free school meals. It proved popular with other creative and support groups working with young people, who found the museum an inspiring and safe space.

After consulting with the community builders and connectors, RAMM will be extending this programme through 2023 as well as responding to overtures from a new student-led social prescribing directory.

## Talking about race and equality

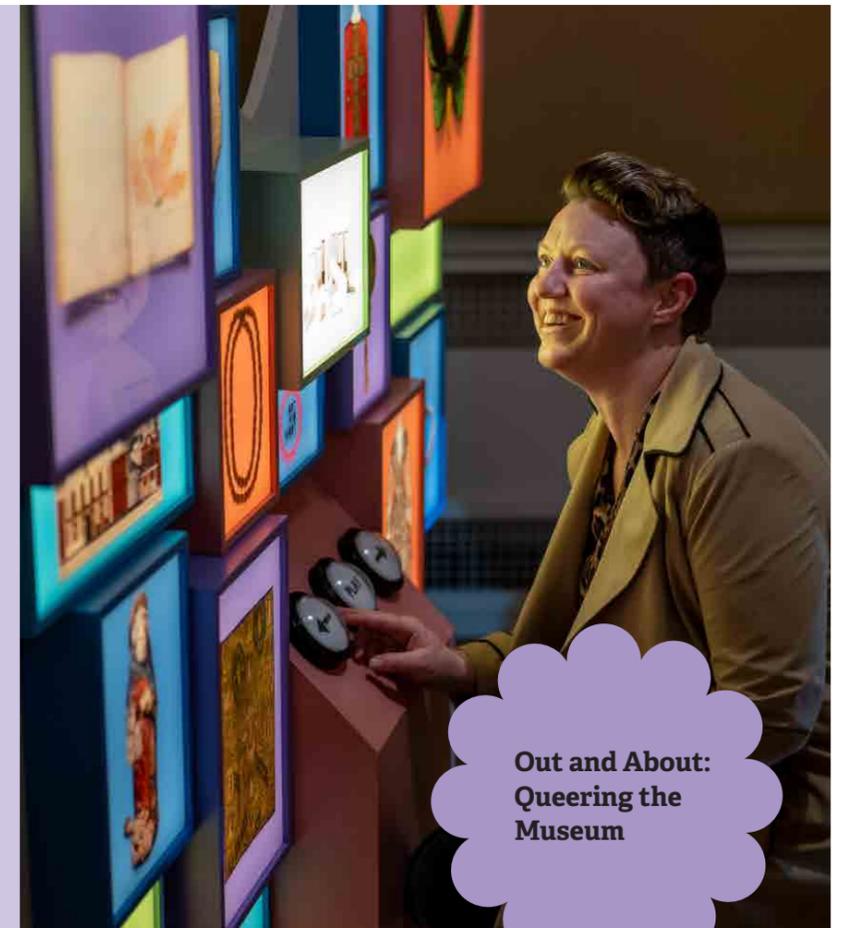
Covid-19 lockdowns enforced dormant periods in community outreach, but RAMM worked to keep up communications with an advisory panel working on the *In Plain Sight* exhibition about Devon's connections with the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In the run-up to its opening in February 2022, RAMM conducted staff training around race as well as sexuality and terminology around LGBTQ+ issues. RAMM consulted a conflict resolution specialist and colleagues in Bristol museums to devise bespoke, mandatory training for all RAMM staff and volunteers.

Out and About: Queering the Museum was a multi-faceted project, in partnership with the University of Exeter, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which explored how to empower lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) communities to uncover and create existing and new LGBTQ+ heritage at RAMM.

This project expanded RAMM's engagement with LGBTQ+ communities, co-creating alternative interpretations of the collections and identifying stories from people who are underrepresented as a result of intolerance and prejudice.

Curators and engagement specialists at RAMM worked with Dr Jana Funke (University of Exeter) and socially engaged artist and writer Natalie McGrath to invite LGBTQ+ people to interpret the collections and reveal previously obscured aspects of LGBTQ+ heritage.

This was achieved through a wide-ranging series of events; an online trail and website; six new artist commissions; a new piece of creative heritage writing; a series of blog pieces from the project's research volunteers; a digital Queer Collectors Case; staff and volunteer training; and a new permanent interactive which can be found at RAMM, by Stand + Stare, to house oral histories. A project booklet and film document this project, which reached its conclusion in March 2022.



Out and About: Queering the Museum

This responded to three questions: listening and empathy around difficult and controversial subject matters; current appropriate language around race and Transatlantic Slave Trade, and why language matters; and why colonial history – especially the Transatlantic Slave Trade – is both intensely personal and has ongoing present-day relevance. This training was transformational for staff and boosted confidence in dealing with the public.

RAMM continues discussions with partners at Devon Development Education, looking to ensure online access to the exhibition and collaboration on locally relevant educational resources.

### Dementia-friendly programme

RAMM's internationally renowned dementia-friendly programme, Living Each Season – inspired a decade ago by the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York – is all about sparking conversations in the moment and widening horizons for people with shrinking social worlds. A multi-sensory experience focusing on a variety of objects from across the collections reinforces both connection and a sense of identity for people with dementia and carers.

RAMM served as regional steering member of the Culture Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA) in 2021, with online discussions about current conditions for arts and museums programmes. We surveyed previous and new contacts to gauge interest and needs resulting from Covid-19 and lockdown lulls, and started refreshing the object-handling collection and methodology. The programme relaunched as an outreach offer in spring 2022, and RAMM hopes to devise a sustainable, low-cost model moving forwards. RAMM continues to mentor peers around the country on request.

### Ways of Seeing

RAMM worked with mindfulness teacher Dr Jo Gosling on a pilot project which guided visitors through looking at an object or series of objects from RAMM's collections from a mindful perspective. During this series of free sessions, participants were given the opportunity to slow down, focus, pose questions and explore ideas whilst being guided by Dr Gosling. Participants shared discoveries relating to self-understanding, connection to 'inner life', connection to one another and to all of humanity and art.

In order to reach a wider audience we have also recorded shortened versions of each session, which are available to access on RAMM's YouTube channel. Due to their popularity, we also plan to continue with another programme of live sessions in 2023.

### RAMMbingo

Following a delay due to Covid-19, we finally launched a set of RAMMbingo cards. These cards can be used by carers and personal assistants when supporting people with disabilities who are visiting the museum. Additionally, they are suitable for any visitors who would like an extra activity to enhance their visit and stimulate discussion. The content for these cards was co-created with disability partners Magic Carpet, Pelican Project, CEDA and Ellen Tinkham College over the past few years, working with freelance facilitator Stuart Crewes. Time was taken to ensure the final design was approved by our disability partners and was both accessible and fun for RAMM audiences.



### Pre-school project – Pancakes and Pierogi

We worked with freelance facilitator Sophie Yarde-Buller to devise a storytelling tour inspired by objects from RAMM's collections for pre-schools and nurseries. The tour focuses on the similarities between foods and dishes around the world and incorporates stories, activities, Makaton signing and puppetry as the children make their journey around RAMM. The sessions are aimed at introducing children to the museum who have not visited before. Families are also encouraged to come for a return trip through a pack, which includes follow up activities, information about family friendly museum events and a voucher for a free drink and snack in the museum café. We have delivered the tour to two groups so far and will deliver further sessions in autumn 2023.

### Co-creation projects in development

2021-22 saw RAMM's engagement team embark on two exciting projects which will be launched in 2023.

#### RAMM Sounds

RAMM is working with disabled sound artist Gemma Nash, freelance facilitator Stuart Crewes and individuals supported by partner organisations Magic Carpet, Pelican Project, CEDA and Learn to Live: 19-25 to co-create a new audio resource for RAMM that will enable people to access the museum spaces in a new and playful way. This year, we have held a series of immersive online workshop sessions to create content for the audio guide. This project is funded by The Clare Milne Trust, the Elmgrant Trust and private donors.

#### Mindful Museum audio guide

Working with Devon Recovery Learning Community to produce a mindful audio guide. Three tutors (experts in mindfulness practice) have been working with students experiencing mental health challenges to gather and trial ideas and approaches for the guide. It will act as a toolkit for mindfulness practice, introducing ways of looking at RAMM's objects and spaces that the listener can apply to their visit or use in their everyday lives. This project was made possible with Art Fund support and with a grant from the RAMM Development Trust.

### Growing Together

After a long winter in lockdown, we produced six 'Growing Together' seed activities to take part in, from April – June 2021. Inspired by the museum's seed exhibitions for summer 2021, *Seedscape: Future-Proofing Nature* and *Léonie Hampton: A Language of Seeds*, the packs encouraged participants to plant one species a week, and learn a few fun facts along the way.

The project aimed to inspire local communities across Exeter and the wider Devon community to come together and re-ignite their love of nature. At the peak of the pandemic, over half (53.1%) of British people reported that it had affected their wellbeing. The project helped to empower people to feel less isolated, bring happiness and relief into their lives and learn a few skills along the way after a difficult period of lockdown.



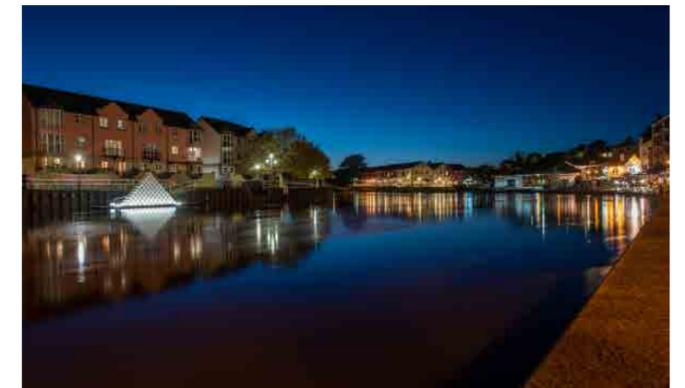
Left above:  
Pre-school visitors  
enjoy the museum in a  
personalised storytelling  
tour

Left:  
RAMM Sounds  
participants recording  
their sounds during a  
workshop session.

Between April and October 2021, RAMM delivered an ambitious programme of creative activity, culminating in a weekend of public art in the city. The aim was to help our city and communities recover from the impact of Covid-19, using culture and creativity to provide a memorable, shared moment in the year, as well as helping to drive footfall and economic growth for Exeter city centre.

# Museum at Large

“We came to see this because it is so brilliant to have something that you would only expect to see in London here in Exeter.”



Main image: Caro Williams, Lark Song, 2021  
 Above top: Gayle Chong Kwan, Ovation, 2021  
 Above middle: Jon Street, Timeline, 2021  
 Above: Walid Siti, Textscape, 2021

During the weekend of 29-31 Oct, Museum objects spilled out of the museum walls and into the city streets and public spaces of Exeter. From ornate head-dresses celebrating Roman women, paraded through the streets, to floating coneiform cylinders on the Quay, a stunning installation featuring skylark calls in Rougemont Gardens and museum objects projected onto St Catherine's Almshouses, Museum at Large saw artists, creative collaborators and museum professionals creating a vibrant programme of artistic activity in the city.

Guided by Creative Producer Rob Bowman, the project provided nine freelance opportunities to artists and creative professionals, offering employment and support during challenging times for the profession.

Four exceptional artists developed and produced spectacular public artworks that were inspired by and celebrated the RAMM collection. The artists created four very different outdoor artworks.

Gayle Chong Kwan began by asking locals “what objects do you value?” From this she developed *Ovation*, a multi-layered work connecting RAMM's Roman collection to ideas of value and worth,

and commenting on the little-known lives of women in Roman society. Gayle's photographic sculptural headdresses were brought to life through film, procession across the city and static 3D display.

Jon Street explored stories associated with RAMM's collection of treasures to create an interactive video installation, a ‘time machine’ that was projected around the walls of St Katherine's Almshouses. It had a game-like element that enabled visitors to manually control the images. Jon also worked with Exeter College students to create a series of stills and animations that were projected onto a building in Princesshay.

Caro Williams work celebrated the wonder and joy of birdsong. *Lark Song*, a tree installation in a city centre park, combined light, sound and sculptural materials to stunning effect. The work was inspired by RAMM's bird collection which includes species whose song we no longer hear, alongside those in danger of being lost. Once frequently heard, the skylark is now on the conservation red list.

In *Textscape 2021*, Walid Siti took RAMM's collection of ancient coneiform tablets as inspiration for a pyramid of stacked columns which floated on the River Exe and were floodlit from dusk. These objects resonated with Walid's own Kurdish-Iraqi heritage, exploring a human need to communicate and share knowledge, while the installation's proximity to the Quay and River Exe brought out Exeter's own relationships to the historic movement of people and things.

As well as the major artworks, in various locations around the Guildhall Shopping Centre and Princesshay, RAMM displayed work by people who had joined in fun and engaging creative activities, inspired by the museum's collections. Working with artists Felicity Shillingford and James Hedge, during September and October, we held 21 creative workshops, engaging 442 participants from local schools, Exeter College students, refugee groups, disability-focused groups, home education and learning groups.

The museum's Night of Light family event was another highlight of the weekend. One young boy, when viewing Caro William's piece with his lantern, exclaimed: “This is the best thing I have ever seen”.

Based on footfall data gathered, along with RAMM's own data collection, an estimated 63,000 people viewed the artworks over the weekend and 115,000 online. Through Museum at Large, RAMM was able to celebrate its rich collection and reconnect communities to their museum, providing a memorable, shared moment, something uplifting and hopeful at the end of what had been a difficult year.

This project was made possible thanks to public funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England and supported by the Friends of RAMM, the RAMM Development Trust, The Guildhall Shopping Centre, Princesshay Exeter, InExeter and Liveable Exeter.

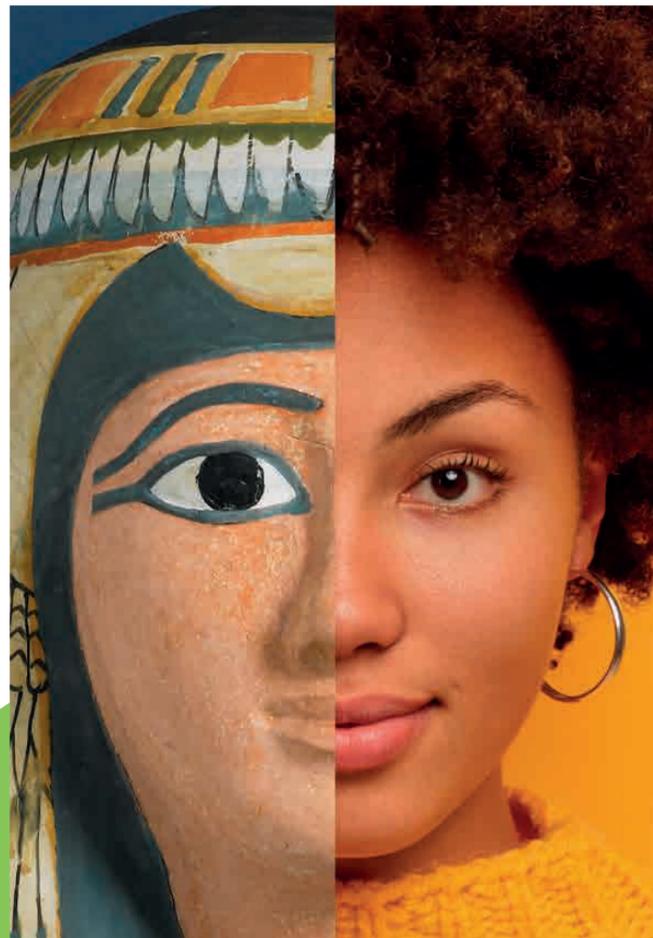
“It's the most excitement we've had in a long time.”

2021-2022 saw RAMM's digital programme gradually change, as the museum reopened and in-person events were reintroduced. During the period there was a shift in our digital content, as we reincorporated content around things to do in the museum, trying to drive visitors through the doors, as well as continuing our online engagement for those visitors not yet ready to return in-person.

Working with an external agency, we created a summer campaign (pictured right) to encourage visitors back, which ran from 2 July to 29 August 2021. In terms of digital content the campaign comprised of organic and paid social media, digital programmatic adverts, web news stories and social media/web promotion from Radio Exe, as part of a wider radio campaign.

Social media reached 238,081 people during this period, while programmatic advertising achieved a total of 1,901,254 impressions.

On YouTube, the *Inside the Museum* video series has been viewed 2,048 times, and the *Treasures of the Museum* video series has been viewed 3,134 times. On Instagram Reels the Treasures of the Museum series has 1,192 views. These video series were made with production company Preston Street Films, in order to raise awareness about RAMM and its work. The films have also provided content for the new website.



# Digital

## The museum on social media

Overall social media reach or impressions for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022:	<b>Twitter</b> 1,632,400 impressions (down 12.87% from previous period)
<b>Facebook</b> 265,528 people (up 129.9% from previous period) (119,008 of this was paid reach)	<b>YouTube</b> 10,527 views on YouTube videos uploaded from 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 (62% above the annual target)
<b>Instagram</b> 65,910 people (up 203.8% from previous period)	

# Conservation

Over the past year the conservation and technical team returned to business as usual. We supported a busy schedule of temporary exhibitions and updates to our permanent displays, while also keeping up with collections care tasks.



## Exhibitions

Catching up with all the delays caused by the pandemic, we were able to conserve and display the Dawlish Hoard, treat objects for and install the exhibition *In Plain Sight* and change over our Fine Art hang. We also installed four contemporary art exhibitions and displays, including Simon Pope's delayed *Here's to Thee*. And last but not least, we could finally show off some of our remarkable, new acquisitions. Amongst them was *Wing* by Peter Randall-Page which was meticulously installed by our and the artist's technical teams in RAMM's Courtyard, and a taxidermy of a beaver from the river Otter.

## Behind the Scenes

We were successful in securing grants from The Pilgrim Trust, The Aurelius Charitable Trust, The Finnis Scott Foundation, RAMM Development Trust, The Leche Trust and The Friends of RAMM to help conserve five portraits and their frames donated by the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust in 2019. These 18th century portraits depict some of Exeter's health pioneers and inspired our upcoming exhibition *A Picture of Health* which opens on Saturday 1 October 2022.

While our main work focused on objects for upcoming exhibitions, we were also able to make objects from the stored collections more accessible. Two crumpled pieces of barkcloth from the World Cultures collection were painstakingly unravelled to reveal beautiful three-metre long sheets that can now be studied for the first time in decades.

We dipped our toes into the world of the big screen, contributing to short 'Behind the Scenes' videos about conservation and mount making. Additionally, we took part in videos about the treasures of RAMM and a film documenting the work that went into the exhibition *In Plain Sight* and continued to spread the word about conservation by taking part in #AskAConservatorDay for the second year running.

We also helped train the next generation of conservators by hosting four student placements and were able to offer one student the transition into professional work life with a short paid contract.

Above left: Senior Conservator Sarah Klopff working on the European beaver taxidermy mount  
Above right: Close up of William Gandy's Portrait of John Patch Senior, about 1725, during conservation

Below: Conservators with curator Tony Eccles rolling out and examining 19th Century Hawaiian barkcloth in RAMM's Courtyard.



# Skills Development

## Youth Panel

In November 2021, RAMM welcomed its second cohort of youth panel members. The Youth Panel, generously funded by the Art Fund, aims to give young people a voice and offers them the chance to take an active role in shaping what happens at RAMM. A primary aim of the youth panel is to allow them to get involved in planning and implementing an exciting programme of events, exhibitions and activities specifically designed to appeal to 18-25 year olds.

With the reduction of restrictions, the new cohort have been busy getting hands-on with a range of activities this year; from networking with museum professionals, receiving professional training on how to film for social media, leading on their own digital campaign and getting hands-on experience on how to handle objects from RAMM's conservation team.

The Youth Panel have also successfully curated an exhibition called *The Youth Panel Collection* displayed in More in Store. The Youth Panel Collection focused on the theme of the environment and gave them the flexibility to select a variety of objects, from the contents of a late Anglo-Saxon rubbish pit to a Moa bird egg shell.

## Placements

RAMM has continued to support learning and development in people of all ages and works with a number of partners to provide placements.

### Graduate Business Partnership Internships

In order to support recent graduates with relevant and meaningful skills development, RAMM works closely with the University of Exeter to provide paid skills development internships. As part of the Graduate Business Partnership scheme, RAMM has offered three paid (12 month fixed term) internships to graduates this year. The internships offer recent graduates a fantastic opportunity to gain skills in the cultural sector and RAMM also benefits considerably from the new skills, ideas and enthusiasm that these early career graduates bring to our organisation.

Right:  
Niamh Canning, Former Marketing Intern. After her internship, Niamh moved on to work for the National Trust at Hanbury Hall

Further right:  
A-level and GCSE students from Exeter and the surrounding area on work experience.



## Kickstart Scheme

RAMM took part in the government's Kickstart Scheme which aims to give 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit the opportunity to gain invaluable skills in the workplace on a paid 6 months placement. RAMM was able to offer two placements working with our Visitor Services Team and another placement working within our Admin Team.

## Supported Internships

RAMM has continued to offer supported internships for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to allow them the opportunity to explore meaningful work experience in the cultural sector. This year, RAMM has worked with a student from Exeter College and provided him a long-term placement to develop his skills and confidence working within the tourist industry.

## Student Placements

RAMM has hosted numerous students work placements this year, including University of Exeter students working on our Creative Arc High Street Project 'RAMM About Town', creating a prehistory and contemporary art education pack and working on a green initiative for the museum. Another highlight, was a University of Plymouth, Masters Game Design student who has been working on creating a digital game for the museum (funded by imayflower). These placements not only give the students invaluable experiences for their own career development, but allow the museum to explore new ideas and tap into different skill-sets and subject expertise.



# Commercial



Page 28

## Shop

It was lovely to have nearly a full year's trading this year despite post-lockdown limitations. The Shop enjoyed sourcing stock to reflect and enhance RAMM's wide-ranging exhibitions. Highlights included seed and plant-related gifts and prints for *Seeds*, catalogues and toys for *Wildlife Photographer of the Year*, and thought-provoking books for *In Plain Sight*.

Customers responded positively to the opportunity to buy something different. We finished the year with 75% of pre-Covid sales from just over 50% of visitor numbers.

The Shop has continued to employ its policy of sustainable and ethical retail alongside a commitment that a minimum of 30% of our stock has a local connection. We are proud to work with a range of artists and authors from Exeter and the South West. This year that included Emma West Ceramics, Wild Hive paper flowers, artist Ray Balkwill, Exeter Ramblers, Claire Gent jewellery and Isla Middleton prints, amongst many others.

## Venue Hire

Venue hire bookings over this year have been slow to return due to a number of factors including corporate & private clients' reluctance to book functions and ECC's cautious approach to opening up our offer post-pandemic. This has impacted heavily on catering which is a key part of any venue hire event.

Enquiries and bookings have now virtually returned to pre-pandemic levels which is very good news indeed.



### Top sellers by quantity:

- Mayan beaded bracelets
- Face coverings
- Roman gladiator figurines

### Top sellers by income:

- *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* Highlights catalogue
- Ray Balkwill prints
- Dartmoor Tors Compendium

**“I have just visited the shop – It is wonderful, the effort put into the displays is impressive. The price range of tastefully chosen objects is amazing.”**

—Visitor

The visitor service team have been working hard getting the museum back up to speed after being closed for much of last year. As we reopened with certain restrictions in place we were able to and welcome RAMM's great variety of visitors, from local regular faces to holidaying international visitors from around the world. Slowly our Covid restrictions were phased out, removing the one way system and re-installing out tactile interactives. Over this time of change the team were on hand to reassure and inform our visitors.

As local school groups were welcomed back into the museum after a hiatus, a great deal of effort was put into getting the spaces they require ready. These visits have been an exciting reintroduction for the team as the school groups bring with them a wonderful energy and lots of interesting questions. We often see those children returning with their families, filled with excitement to show them around.

In addition to school groups coming back into the building we have been excited to open the doors in the evenings for talks and events. Many of RAMM's spaces have been used for this including the unique courtyard, the formal setting of Gallery 20 and our fresh outdoor space in the garden. One particularly lovely event we welcomed visitors to, was an evening of storytelling next to the Roman wall in the garden.

The visitor services team has been taking opportunities to work in other areas of the museum, giving team members the chance to gain new skills and also share their own expertise and knowledge. Some have been working with the collections team assist with cataloguing and organising the collection. Another has taken on the responsibility of working with the museum's disability awareness group. We have members of the team who are taking part in the planning of upcoming exhibitions and a keen member of the team is spending some time with the museum's technical team to assist with exhibition change overs. The team are well placed to help and respond where we can with an awareness of our individual passions and goals to take up exciting opportunities in other areas of the organisation.

One of the team's main duties is to be available to all visitors during the day. This includes invigilation of exhibitions. One major exhibition that we have been invigilating this year was *In Plain Sight: Transatlantic slavery and Devon*. Our presence in the space was one of information and also as a point of contact for any visitor who needed to talk about the content of the show. For this we had several training sessions about the objects and information in the gallery, plus the context in which it sits in the museum environment and more widely in society. As well as offering us a wealth of information and further suggestions for our visitors it was a chance to understand the museum as a whole which has fed into our everyday interactions regarding RAMM and its collections.

# Visitor Services



“I’ve included a gift in my will to support RAMM because I want to make sure this incredible asset is there for many more generations to explore and enjoy.”

— Sharon, Ivybridge

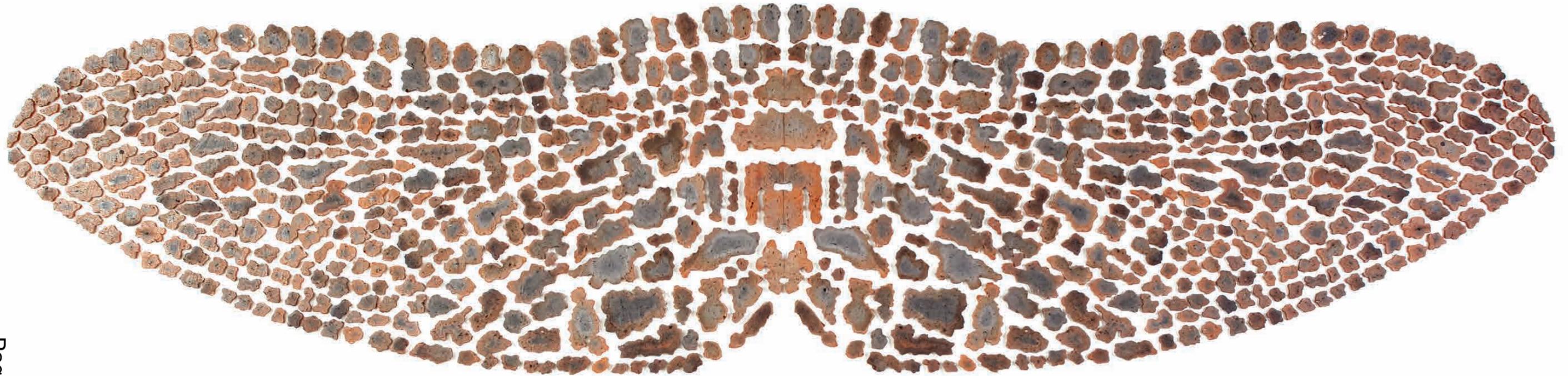


Image:  
Peter Randall-Page, *Wing*, 2020

# Funding

December 2021 marked ten years since RAMM reopened its doors to the public after a major four-year redevelopment project. Funded by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, Exeter City Council and many other sources, this project earned RAMM the coveted Art Fund’s Museum of the Year award. Then as now, we are incredibly grateful to all our supporters past and present whose generosity and enthusiasm help to make RAMM such a special and well-loved place.

Due to the pandemic, we saw 48 days of closure between April 2021 and March 2022. Thanks to RAMM’s supporters, we have begun to make steps towards recovery during this post-Covid period.

However, there is still a long way to go and the ripple effect of the pandemic will continue to impact on RAMM for some time yet.

Alongside vital funding from Exeter City Council and Arts Council England, RAMM received much-needed support from the second round of the Government’s Culture Recovery Fund. This helped us to deliver a number of projects, such as the *Inside the Museum* short film series and the *Treasures of the Museum* trail, which were aimed at reconnecting with the communities that RAMM serves and bringing them back to the museum after lockdown.

One of the year’s highlights was *Museum at Large*, an ambitious public art project culminating in a weekend of temporary outdoor art installations in Exeter city centre and the quay. This innovative project was made possible thanks to an Arts Council National Lottery Project Grant, alongside support from, the RAMM Development Trust, the Friends of RAMM and many local partners.

We were delighted to acquire two thought-provoking contemporary artworks for the collection. Amy Shelton’s *The Exeter Florilegium* was purchased with support from the Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Friends of RAMM and the Kent Kingdon Bequest Trust. *The Sweetest Thing* by internationally acclaimed photographer and artist Joy Gregory was presented to RAMM by the Contemporary Art Society with support from the Friends of RAMM. Having a permanent home in RAMM’s collection means that future generations can experience and reflect on these important artworks for many years to come.

Another highlight of the year was permanently installing *Wing* by critically acclaimed Devon-based artist Peter Randall-Page in the internal Courtyard, complementing the Devon sandstone of the café wall which denotes where the original building stopped in the 1860s. Inspired by the intricate patterns of an insect’s wing and consisting of 662 ceramic tiles, the impressive ceramic sculpture is evocative of RAMM’s insect specimens as well as the archaeological collection. The acquisition of *Wing* was generously funded by the Art Fund, the Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the RAMM Development Trust and the Friends of RAMM.

Thanks to grants from the Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA) and Friends of RAMM, we were able to commission two beaver specimens for the permanent collection. With the support of Devon Wildlife Trust, a female beaver specimen from the river Otter was preserved as a taxidermy mount by ethical taxidermist and natural history restorer Jazmine Miles-Long. Osteological preparator Jon Nott prepared and mounted the beaver’s skeleton in a pose that mirrors the taxidermy. Both specimens are currently on display in

RAMM’s Courtyard Wall and will be brought out for activities and events to share the story of the first ever reintroduction of an extinct native mammal to England.

We were pleased to secure funding from Viridor Credits Environmental Company for the first phase of moving to energy efficient lighting. This will involve replacing the lighting systems with energy saving LED bulbs and their compatible fittings in the permanent galleries. These improvements are essential as the halogen lights and fittings that we have in place are being phased out in the UK. They also offer significant benefits to RAMM including cost and energy savings, which will help reduce our environmental impact and build a more sustainable future. We continue to seek funding for the next phase of updating the lights in the temporary galleries and linking spaces.

None of RAMM’s achievements in the past year would have been possible without the continued support and generosity of funders, from grant givers to individual donors. We would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who have supported RAMM and made a vital contribution – you have made incredible things happen despite continued unprecedented challenges. From caring for the world-class collections held in trust for the public to bringing communities together, your support makes all the difference as we continue to rebuild and recover from the impact of the pandemic.

To find out more about all the different ways you can support RAMM - from signing up to Connect which is quick, free and easy, to leaving the most personal of support with a gift in your will. There is a range of support you can offer. Which will you choose this year? [bit.ly/SupportRAMM](https://bit.ly/SupportRAMM)

# Thank you for making incredible things happen

## Donors

Thank you to everyone who donated this year, from those who dropped a few coins into a donation box, to our major donors who had a big impact on RAMM's work. You all helped make incredible things happen.

To find out more about making a donation, please visit: [bit.ly/RAMMDonate](http://bit.ly/RAMMDonate)

## Gifts in wills

Thank you to those who left gifts in their wills and those who have pledged to do so in the future. We are always so touched when people choose to support RAMM's work in this way.

A gift to the future can have a real lasting legacy, to find out more please visit: [bit.ly/RAMMGiftsInWills](http://bit.ly/RAMMGiftsInWills)

## Grant givers

- Art Fund
- Arts Council England
- Aurelius Charitable Trust
- Bruce Wake Charitable Trust
- Contemporary Art Society
- Devon Wildlife Trust
- Elmgrant Trust
- Exe Decorative and Fine Art Society
- Exeter City Council
- InExeter
- Kent Kingdon Bequest
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA)
- The Arts Society Exeter
- The Clare Milne Trust
- The Finnis Scott Foundation
- Friends of RAMM
- The Leche Trust
- The Norman Family Charitable Trust
- The Northbrook Community Trust
- The Pilgrim Trust
- RAMM Development Trust
- Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund
- Viridor Credits Environmental Company

## Patrons

- Adrian Sassoon
- Andrew Gould
- Chris & Jenny Rolfe
- David Fursdon HM's Lord Lieutenant of Devon (Hon.)

- Edmund Burke
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- Nick Baker (Hon.)
- Sir Alan Budd (Hon.)
- Steve Knightley (Hon.)
- Thank you to all our Patrons who wish to remain anonymous.

## Sponsors

- Bonhams
- Drive Creative Studio
- Liveable Exeter
- Princesshay

## Partners

RAMM and its parent body, Exeter City Council, would like to thank all of the museum's partners. They enable the public collection of over one million objects, to be used in innovative and creative ways with the communities we serve. RAMM would like to give special thanks to the University of Exeter and Arts Council England, for the ongoing supportive partnerships we hold with them.

Special thanks also to all of RAMM's loyal Friends and volunteers, including the trustees who run the museum's supporting charities, the RAMM Development Trust, the Friends of RAMM and the Kent Kingdon Bequest.

- 8th Sense Media
- Age UK
- Amber Foundation
- Art Work Exeter
- Bookbag bookshop, Exeter
- Bristol Museums
- The British Museum
- Canada Council of the Arts
- CEDA

- Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery, University College London
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Culture Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA)
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- The Devon and Exeter Institution
- Devon Carers
- Devon Development Education
- Devon Recovery Learning Community
- Diversity Trust

- Double Elephant Print Workshop
- Ellen Tinkham College
- Exeter City of Literature
- Exeter College
- Exeter Community Trust
- Exeter Culture
- Exeter Live Better
- Exeter Living
- Exeter Phoenix
- Exeter Pride
- Exeter Seed Bank
- Franklyn NHS Hospital
- Gaia Rosenberg Colorni
- Gray's Devon Cider
- Guildhall Shopping Centre
- HM Government
- Honeyscribe
- Impressions Gallery, Bradford
- Intercom Trust
- Joe Blatherwick Photography
- Jurassic Coast Trust
- Kaleider
- Learn to Live: 19-25
- Legacies of Devon Slave-ownership Group
- Magic Carpet
- Maldon Care Home
- Mary Schwarz
- Meridian Raw
- The Natural History Museum
- Northcott Theatre
- One Voice Media
- Participate Arts
- Pelican Project
- Pete's Dragons
- Preston Street Films
- Quirk Theatre
- Rob Bowman
- Royal Devon & Exeter NHS hospital staff wellbeing team
- Sir Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art
- Space youth services
- Stand + Stare
- TRAYE
- University of Plymouth
- WayMakers
- Wellbeing Exeter
- The Westcountry Study Centre
- Windrush in Devon Group
- X-Plore Youth
- YAY! Cornwall
- Youth Arts & Health Trust

## Artists:

- Charice Bhardwaj
- Joe Blatherwick
- Gayle Chong Kwan
- Naomi Frears
- Natasha Freedman
- Joy Gregory
- Léonie Hampton
- Robin Harford
- Laura Hopes
- Sachal Khan
- Jazmine Miles-Long
- Rushaa Louise Hamid
- Natalie McGrath
- Carina Miles

- Trish Morrissey
- Gemma Nash
- Caleb Parkin
- Simon Pope
- Peter Randall-Page
- Michelle Sank
- Shiri Shah
- Amy Shelton
- Felicity Shillingford
- Nahem Shoa
- Oren Shoesmith
- Walid Siti
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- Michelle Williams Gamaker
- Anthony Wilson

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- Malcolm Richards
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- Laura Sandy
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- Samenua Seshar
- Nahem Shoa
- Jake Subryan Richards
- Joseph Sweetman
- Nicola Thomas
- Joanna Traynor
- Peter Wingfield-Digby





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