

EXECUTIVE

Date: Tuesday 16 December 2025

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Mark Devin, Democratic Services Officer - democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

Membership -

Councillors Bialyk (Chair), Wright (Deputy Chair), Asvachin, Foale, Patrick, Vizard, Williams, R and Wood

Agenda

Part I: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public present

1 **Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence from Committee members.

2 **Minutes**

To approve and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 4 November 2025 and the special meeting held on 26 November 2025.

(Pages 5 -
20)

3 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item.

Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

4 **Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

It is considered that the Committee would be unlikely to exclude the press and public during consideration of any of the items on the agenda, but if it should wish to do so, the following resolution should be passed:

RECOMMENDED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the particular item(s) on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure

of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

5 Questions from the Public Under Standing order No. 19

To receive questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and responses thereto.

Details of questions should be notified to the Democratic Services Manager by 10.00am at least three working days prior to the meeting. Further information about speaking at a committee can be found here: [Speaking at a Committee](#)

6 Matters referred by Scrutiny Committees

To consider recommendations made to the Executive from Scrutiny Committees.

7 2026/27 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan

To consider the report of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources. (Pages 21 - 46)

8 Council Taxbase and NNDR 1 2026/27

To consider the report of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources. (Pages 47 - 54)

9 Housing Rents and Service Charges 2026-27

To consider the report of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources. (Pages 55 - 68)

10 RAMM Collections Development Policy (2026-30)

To consider the report of the Strategic Director for Place. (Pages 69 - 146)

11 RAMM Forward Plan (2026-29)

To consider the report of the Strategic Director for Place. (Pages 147 - 270)

12 Exeter City Council Housing Services Hate Crime Policy

To consider the report of the Strategic Director for People and Communities. (Pages 271 - 286)

Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive will be held on **Tuesday 3 February 2026** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

A statement of the executive decisions taken at this meeting will be produced and published on the Council website as soon as reasonably practicable.

Find out more about Exeter City Council services by looking at our web site <http://www.exeter.gov.uk>. This will give you the dates of all future Committee meetings and tell you how you can ask a question at a Scrutiny Committee meeting. Alternatively, contact Democratic Services at democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

Individual reports on this agenda can be produced in large print on request to Democratic Services democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 4 November 2025

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)

Councillors Wright, Asvachin, Foale, Vizard, Williams, R and Wood

Apologies:

Councillor Patrick

Also present:

Chief Executive, Strategic Director for Corporate Resources, Strategic Director of Operations, Head of Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer, Head of Service - Environment and Waste and Democratic Services Officer

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MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2025, were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

81

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 19

A member of the public, Mr Frankum, submitted the following question, related to Minute No. 84:

- “NO² reductions in our City is largely a welcome success story this will be further improved with the addition soon, of Electric Buses, would council consider moving monitoring from a consistently low recorded area to Bovemoors Lane which monitoring has shown to suffer increased traffic, congestion & idling and is a concern to the local community”.

The Portfolio Holder for City Management responded that there had never been any diffusion tubes located in Bovemoors Lane as the location of the diffusion tube network sought to concentrate upon areas where there were higher volumes of car movements and therefore likely to be an issue with exceedance in nitrogen dioxide.

The nearest monitoring points were in Heavitree and Barrack Roads and as these locations had no exceedances this indicated that exceedance in Bovemoors Lane was unlikely as vehicle movement was lower and properties were set back from the road.

Mr Frankum in asking a supplementary question, stated that the Council's records showed that over the last three years, Carter's Court on Sidwell Street, recorded just 15.7, 15.9, and 16.1 NO² which were among the lowest in the city. Bovemoors Lane, however, had recorded 34 in a single day.

Devon County Council's own count confirmed an increase in traffic on this busy lane and the hospital's Chief Executive had said congestion there now delayed ambulances, particularly during peak times. He was surprised the council would

dismiss these local concerns and asked if Bovemoors Lane could be reconsidered as a monitoring site.

The Portfolio Holder for City Management in responding thanked Mr Frankum for the detail provided and advised that the consideration of an additional diffusion tube could be included as part of the ongoing air quality management review and that his comments would be taken into consideration.

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MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no matters referred from the Scrutiny Committees for this meeting.

83

REQUEST FOR A VARIATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

The Executive received the report which sought authority to undertake a further consultation period to satisfy the legal duties set out in Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Members were reminded that a request had previously been received from the Chair of Exeter St Davids Hackney Carriage Association, for an increase to the Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff and the Executive meeting on 20 May 2025, had agreed to a six-week consultation between 27th May and 8th July 2025.

The six-week period did not allow for completion within the statutory two-month timescale required under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and it was proposed that a new two-week consultation be undertaken between 6 and 20 November 2025 to comply with legislative requirements and would incorporate the feedback already received.

Particular reference was made to the 74 responses received during the six-week consultation period, of which, 69 had been in support of the fare changes. Delegated authority was also being sought to enable the Strategic Director of Operations and Portfolio Holder for City Management to consider any representations made and whether to introduce the proposed changes, with or without modifications, following the consultation period.

During the discussion, Executive Members raised the following points and questions:-

- the inclusion of data to meet statutory and charter obligations was supported and the additional two weeks was endorsed;
- the environmental benefits outlined in section 9 of the report with regards to Exeter's taxi fleet being among the greenest was welcomed;
- fare increases would also support further environmental ambitions;
- clarification was sought on the addition of two weeks in relation to the previous consultation;
- taxi drivers had not received a rise for a number of years and the provisions for a resolution before Christmas were welcomed.

In response to questions and points raised by Members, the Portfolio Holder for City Management and the Strategic Director for Operations advised that:-

- taxi drivers provided an essential service and a swift progression for fare increases through delegated powers was welcomed;

- the initial plan was for four weeks but had been extended to six weeks to align with the Council's Consultation Charter, and caused a timing issue with the statutory period;
- a review of the Consultation Charter would be undertaken to ensure it incorporated regulatory/statutory periods of consultation; and
- it was anticipated that new feedback in the consultation would mirror prior responses received.

Opposition group leaders raised the following points and questions:

- the fares had been reported at a recent Taxi Forum meeting and had been supported;
- there were 94 Hackney Carriage drivers in the city, who were considered as ambassadors of the city, and the increase was deserved;
- praise was given to the Chairs of the two taxi associations and support was given for the delegation to the Portfolio Holder and Strategic Director to implement the changes before Christmas;
- an enquiry was made on the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and assurances were sought on the powers of delegation, and whether the matter should be referred to the next Executive meeting; and
- support was given to expediate the fare increases having heard the desire from Hackney drivers about the need for an increase.

The Leader highlighted the honesty and integrity of local drivers following a recent experience. He also advised that he supported the two-week consultation and that the Council was being fully compliant.

The Leader moved the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Wright, voted upon, and CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED that the Executive approves:

- (1) for the fare increase proposals (in Appendix C of the report) to be put out to public consultation in accordance with the statutory requirements to run from 6 November 2025 until 20 November 2025;
- (2) that the comments received during the earlier consultation, would be carried forward into the new consultation for consideration alongside any other responses received up to and including 20th November 2025; and
- (3) the Strategic Director of Operations, be granted delegated authority in agreement with the Portfolio Holder for City Management, to consider representations and determine whether to set a date for the revised table of fares to come into effect with, or without modifications.

84

AIR QUALITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT AND REVISION OF THE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA (AQMA)

The Executive received the report statutory Annual Status report that had been submitted to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and contained the monitoring data from 2024, in-year summary of the actions taken to improve local air quality and future plans.

The Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded an amendment to the report recommendations to read as follows:-

Two original recommendations remain unchanged as follows:

- that Executive notes the statutory annual status report;
- that Council notes the statutory annual status report;

To delete recommendations 2.2 and 2.4; and replace with:

- that Executive does not amend the current Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and instead asks that the Head of Service scopes out a programme to include the physical and financial resource to revise and consult upon the Air Quality Action Plan for the current Air Quality Management Area as well as an Air Quality Strategy for the city; and
- that scrutiny on 20 November 2025 is asked to formulate ideas that they would like to be considered as part of the scoping programme, so that these can be factored into the future report when the physical and financial resource is being looked at.

The Portfolio Holder for City Management in speaking to the reason for the amendments made the following points:

- no area in Exeter currently exceeded the 40 micrograms per metre cube NO² exceedance which demonstrated that the Council was on course for improved air quality across the city;
- although one area in East Wonford Hill, previously exceeded 40 micrograms, it was now below that value, however, having an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) on a short stretch of road did not seem beneficial; and
- there needed to be a focus on continuing to improve air quality across the whole city with a focus on developing a five-year air quality strategy.

In speaking to the amendment, the Portfolio Holder for City Management read some key points of information for Members to consider:

- Air quality within the city had improved significantly over the last decade and was welcomed.
- The monitoring data gathered from the diffusion tubes for NO², showed that no sites measured an exceedance of the annual average objective in 2024 for NO² and that exceedance was 40 micrograms per metre cubed. This was the first year when all measurements had been below the objective for NO² and marked a significant milestone in the continued improvement of the city's air quality.
- There had been no exceedances from the previous year to create an unexpected dilemma for decision makers. For a number of years now, DEFRA's annual appraisal had stated that when a number of locations had more than three consecutive years without exceedance, the authority, in light of the Act and statutory guidance, needed to review the air quality management area with a view to covering the remaining areas that contained exceedances.
- This report had correctly fulfilled that role by asking for a revision to be considered.
- There was a likelihood that one remaining location could still legally require an AQMA for three years without exceedance by the end of 2026 and the Executive were being asked to consider whether it was worth investing resources into revising the AQMA now, when there was the probability that the new order would be short-lived.
- It was important to note that there was an imperative area of concern for East Wonford Hill which still needed to be the centre of the revision and consultation of the AQMA, which the Council was still required by law to revise and consult on.

- There was, however, an opportunity to remain compliant with the legal requirements but to go further by encompassing a wider strategy for the city as a whole. Whilst there was no legal requirement to devise a strategy, due to the AQMA, it would allow the Council to lead in developing a five-year strategy that would, as one of its primary objectives, lead to consideration of revoking the current AQMA after having three successive years below the UK objective of 40 micrograms per metre cube NO² exceedance.
- Instead of pursuing the report recommendations that had been correctly presented to Members, it was proposed that the Council continue with the current AQMA and do not consult upon its revision and ask the Head of Service to scope out a programme to revise the current air quality action plan, as well as an air quality strategy.
- It was important to note that such an undertaking would have to be scoped in detail as the service responsible did not have either the staffing resources or budget to undertake this work or bring in specialist resources to conduct this work. This would allow the Head of Service the time to properly scope this work so the Council could then consider the financial requirements and implications.
- There was also a role for Strategic Scrutiny Committee, which on its meeting on the 20 November 2025, the Portfolio Holder for City Management could hear ideas on the process could work.
- This would be an opportunity, to capture the methodology for capturing citywide input from Members from across the political spectrum, rather than getting into too much detail about the content of the action plan or the strategy, as that would be for a future process.

The Leader advised Members that the notice of motion, from the Council meeting on 14 October 2025, which was referred to Scrutiny would also be included for discussion at the Strategic Scrutiny Committee on 20 November, together with a copy of the Executive Minute for this item.

The Strategic Director for Operations advised that the report brought back the annual status update which met regulatory requirements and the amendments would allow the Council to go beyond minimum requirements.

During the discussion, Executive Members raised the following points and questions:-

- the worst areas of the city which no longer showing exceedances were welcomed;
- in supporting the current configuration, it demonstrated progress by the Council;
- despite heavy local traffic patterns in wards such as Pinhoe, there was improved air quality away from major roads;
- the amended recommendations were welcomed and demonstrated how the Council was going beyond compliance and the importance of an air quality strategy;
- there were limitations on transport/highways powers limitations without unitary status and the Councils unitary bid could enable better transport/highways powers to reduce emissions;
- the progress made on Air Quality was commended and more regular updates from the Portfolio Holder would be welcomed; and
- would there be improved collaboration with Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC).

The Leader advised that the Managing Director of Stagecoach had stated that Exeter bus fleet would become fully electric, but how far that range would extend was to be determined.

In response to questions and points raised by Executive Members, the Portfolio Holder for City Management advised:

- there would be more regular updates provided and likely two presentations made to Strategic Scrutiny Committee, with the first being in June 2026; and
- she was working closely with Devon County Council and over air quality action plan and was consulting with partners, such as the Director for Public Health, relevant neighbouring authorities and Highways.

Opposition group leaders raised the following points and questions:

- supported was given for the amendment and the new direction proposed;
- a concern was raised on the legality of wording implying Executive instruction to Scrutiny;
- a number of previously submitted questions had not been responded to;
- the previous report had been deferred to update the AQMA, but there appeared to be no changes other than to adoption of time scales;
- interim actions were sought until the new strategy was adopted, notably SMART actions and resources;
- enquired if the appraisal report would be signed off by Director of Public Health;
- clarity was sought on strategy framing for targets as required the Environment Act 2021 particulate matter targets; and
- long-term impacts from medium NO² exposure needed to be addressed as part of the work, including mapping of air quality against Indices of Multiple Deprivation such as in St. David's Ward.

In response to questions and points raised by Members, the Leader, Head of Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer, the Head of Service - Environment and Waste and Portfolio Holder for City Management advised that:

- there were no legal issues and Scrutiny was not being directed and could reject Executive proposals;
- the Strategic Director would respond to the submitted questions, but detailed points and questions should be directed to Strategic Scrutiny Committee which would provide cross-party input for a future report back to Executive;
- there were no exceedances last year and a commitment had been made to provide regular updates and closer working with Devon County Council and specified partners; and
- the Director of Public Health's team were fully cited on the ASR and there was currently no requirement for a physical signature this year but would be a requirement for future years.

The Leader moved the amended recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Wright, voted upon, and CARRIED unanimously.

RECOMMENDED that Council note the statutory annual status report.

RESOLVED that Executive:

- (1) note the statutory annual status report;

- (2) does not amend the current Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and agrees that the Head of Service scope out a programme to include the physical and financial resources to revise and consult upon the Air Quality Action Plan for the current Air Quality Management Area as well as an Air Quality Strategy for the city; and
- (3) ask that the Scrutiny Committee on 20 November 2025 formulate ideas that they would like to be considered as part of the scoping programme, so that these can be factored into the future report when the physical and financial resource is being looked at.

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PROPOSED POLICY OF THE COUNCIL FOR AN INDEMNITY TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Executive received the report which outlined the indemnity policy to be granted to Members and Officers, including former Members and Officers. The report also explained the Council's power to grant an indemnity, its benefits and the proposed terms of the indemnity policy were outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, which would provide clarification to the position and terms of the indemnity for Members and Officers.

Particular reference was made to:-

- as a matter of law, officers and members were generally not personally liable for a local authority's actions;
- statutory immunity applied when duties were exercised in good faith and without negligence;
- under the Local Government Act 2000 and the 2004 Order, local authorities may grant indemnities when exercising functions as a Director of a company or as member of an outside body; and
- the proposed policy provided indemnity subject to a number of exemptions, and it was common practice for a local authority to have an indemnity policy.

During the discussion, Executive Members raised the following points and questions:-

- the report was welcomed and having clarity was important for officers and members to operate effectively for the council's benefit;
- making the policy physical and more accessible in a more digital era was welcomed; and
- indemnity was valuable for those on sit on outside bodies where external indemnities may vary.

An opposition group leader sought clarification on the clause permitting the council to require security from an individual where it was reasonably anticipated that they would repay amounts paid by the council and what were the implications for councillors.

In response to questions and points raised by Members, the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer advised that the clause was discretionary and could apply where a criminal offence was suspected and the authority might reclaim costs. It was not a blanket provision and would be considered at the time of any application.

The Leader moved the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Wright, voted upon, and CARRIED unanimously.

RECOMMENDED that Council grant:

(1) the indemnity for Officers and Members and adopts the policy for inclusion in Part IV (Codes and Protocols) of the Council's constitution;

(2) a standing delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the s151 Officer and the Leader of the Council to:

- a) determine whether to meet the cost of any officer or Member liability or loss from the Council's own resources, where the Council's own insurance policy does not cover such a liability or loss; and
- b) agree and implement any necessary amendments to the indemnity policy where such amendments are required to reflect changes in legislation, insurance arrangements or best practice, provided that any substantive policy changes are reported back to Council for approval.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.25 pm)

Chair

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately. Decisions regarding the policy framework or corporate objectives or otherwise outside the remit of the Executive will be considered by Council on 9 December 2025.

EXECUTIVE

Wednesday 26 November 2025

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)

Councillors Wright, Asvachin, Foale, Patrick, Vizard, Williams, R and Wood

Also present:

Councillor Haigh (as an opposition group Leader);

Councillor Holland (as an opposition group Leader);

Councillor M. Mitchell (as an opposition group Leader); and

Councillor Moore (as an opposition group Leader).

Also present:

Chief Executive, Strategic Director for Place, Strategic Director for Corporate Resources, Strategic Director of Operations, Strategic Director for People and Communities, Head of Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Officer

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: DRAFT SUBMISSION-PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST IN EXETER AND DEVON

The Executive received the report which set out Exeter City Council's draft final submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Devon and responded to the Government's invitation for submissions and demonstrated compliance with Government's criteria.

The report outlined resource implications, legal requirements, proposed geography, stakeholder engagement, and a timetable for implementation, with new Councils expected to be legally constituted on 1 April 2028.

The draft final submission was considered by a special meeting of the full Council on 25th November 2025 and received almost unanimous support.

The Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded two amendments to the recommendations to:

- 1) amend recommendation 2.2 to change all instances of the word '**adjacent**' to "**surrounding.**" and
- 2) add an additional recommendation, as follows:
 - 2.3 That Executive agrees to a Joint Submission with Plymouth City Council to be presented as a shared Executive Summary with the two individual proposals as appendices. Members are asked to note that Plymouth City Council supported this approach and its Cabinet agreed a similar recommendation at their meeting on 24 November 2025.

The Chief Executive spoke to the report and advised that:

- Members were familiar with the draft submission's content from the Council meeting on 25 November 2025, as well as through various briefings held over the past six weeks;
- the Council had developed a draft proposal that addressed the government's criteria, which adhered to the Exeter principles and was legally compliant; and
- that subject to the Executive's approval, a joint submission would be made with Plymouth City Council, featuring a joint executive summary with both Council's full proposals attached as appendices.

The Leader advised that the recommendations were seeking delegated authority to enable the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to make further minor amendments to the proposal before it was submitted on the 28 November 2025.

The Leader noted the comments made at Council on 25 November for official recording, which he advised had been responded to at that meeting:

- neighbourhood plans, including the current St. James plan, should be treated distinctly;
- the city's status as a City of Sanctuary must be maintained to ensure it remained a safe city for everyone;
- concerns were raised about the large size of the proposed coast and countryside areas;
- a request was made to engage communities on how they wished to work together;
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) needed to be central to the new authority, and not an afterthought;
- there was a hope for enhanced SEND services that would work with communities and the third sector, to approach it differently.

The Leader referred to the requests from Members raised at the full Council and responded as follows:

Request for a youth council to be created

- The request for a youth council to be created was noted and the ambition to strengthen the voice of young people in shaping services was shared. However, it would be for the future unitary authority to decide whether to establish a youth council or a similar structure as part of its wider democratic framework.
- A Devon County Council social media post indicated that a Youth Council had recently been established.

Purpose, role and budget of Neighbourhood Area Committees (NAC) must be clear and requested that some of the detail be included in the bid.

- The Council was waiting for further government guidance on this issue.
- The Council was recommending that the new unitary councils use their devolved powers under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to run Community Governance Reviews to establish local governance arrangements, which NACs could be included as part of that process.
- When co-designed and properly resourced, NACs would strengthen accountability, bringing decision-making closer to residents, and give the new authorities clearer, stronger community representation.

To consider a democratic deficit and relationship between NACs and Parish Councils

- In unparished areas like Exeter, Plymouth, and Torbay, Neighbourhood Area Committees (NAC) would provide a currently missing democratic link to address the deficit;
- In areas with existing town and parish councils, the committees would work alongside them as part of a coherent framework and would not be replacing or duplicating their work.
- There was no proposal to remove assets or powers from existing town and parish councils.
- Political discussions were ongoing regarding the creation of new parishes with devolved responsibilities, but it was not appropriate to address it in the submission. It would be raised as an important issue during any future governance review.

Community Governance Review to use 'should' rather than 'could'

- A minor change to the report from 'should' to 'could' would make little practical difference, given the decision to undertake a Community Governance Review would ultimately sit with the new unitary authority and Government.

To consider strategic housing as there is no mention on what would happen to Exeter's housing stock, which the Council should be proud of. To request a clear commitment to Exeter growing the number of council houses it had

- The issue of Exeter's Housing stock would be articulated in the Implementation Plans.
- Exeter's housing stock was a major strength and the submission reinforced the city's long-standing commitment to growing the number of council homes and expanding high-quality, affordable houses.
- A unitary authority for Exeter and its surrounding area would strengthen strategic housing delivery, particularly across the major growth areas to the east and southwest of the city.
- Bringing housing, planning, transport and infrastructure into one authority would remove the fragmentation that stalled the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan and ensure new communities had schools, health provision and transport in place from the outset.
- The new authority would also be better placed to respond to homelessness and rough sleeping through integrated services, stronger prevention work and clearer accountability.

Ambitions for SEND transitions should go beyond being safe and legal

- The phrase "safe and legal" was the term used in the government's invitation to highlight the need for these crucial services being safe and legal from day one of the new councils.
- Shadow councils will have plans to mitigate service delivery risks during the transition, particularly for vulnerable people.
- The new authority was expected to use the reorganisation as an opportunity to redesign service pathways, integrate services, and provide families with clearer, more responsive support.

Request to ask the government to fund transitions in order to be realistic about significant debt, which forecast savings can only come after redundancies whilst SEND and social care will remain high costs

- The government had stated that LGR transitions were expected to be funded by the local authorities involved.
- Financial modelling indicated that the transition could be fully funded with a payback within three years, projecting cumulative savings of approximately £500 million over ten years, even with high-cost pressures like SEND and social care.
- During the next stage of the work, officers will continue to work with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and ascertain where any funding or resources might be available.

Ask Executive to reflect on what community is

- The proposal was designed to strengthen community engagement and protect the distinct identities of both rural and urban areas.
- The model had been shaped with a clear focus on communities and place and aimed to create genuine opportunities for neighbourhood impact while recognising and protecting the strong sense of place and cohesion that exists across different areas.

That possibilities for transport be considered (Bus Service Act) including bus services and re-doubling railway lines to increase services and therefore remove congestion from the roads.

- Transport was a central component of the case for local government reorganisation.
- A single unitary authority could use powers from the Bus Services Act more effectively to plan bus, rail and road networks in a coordinated manner.
- Integrating transport with housing, planning, and infrastructure would create conditions for more reliable bus services, better connections, and integrated ticketing.
- This unified approach strengthened the strategic case for rail and freight investment, including increased capacity and service frequency on key lines, with the goal of reducing congestion and supporting sustainable travel.

The Leader referred to submitted request from Councillor Michael Mitchell and responded as follows:

- If Exeter become a unitary authority, it should have a seat on the Combined County Authority (CCA) to ensure transferred powers continued to benefit residents. The decision rested with the future unitary authority, but it was assumed that any new council, regardless of political party, would want to be a constituent member.
- The proposal did not include creating new parishes in unparished areas like Exeter, Torbay, and Plymouth, but instead proposed to use neighbourhood area committees in those locations to address the democratic deficit.
- Those committees would not replace or duplicate the work of existing town and parish councils and government lobbying would continue to review the issue of for currently unparished urban areas but was not required as part of the current submission.

- A core part of the proposal was to strengthen the democratic voice and Neighbourhood Area Committees were intended to give councillors more local influence over priorities, funding, and decision-making.
- The specific delegated powers for those committees would be a matter for the shadow authorities to determine.

Executive Members spoke to the report and points raised at Council and made the following points:

- a diagram on page 185 of the report appeared to show town and parish councils sitting hierarchically below neighbourhood area committees, and it was suggested that the diagram be changed to present the neighbourhood area committees and the town/parish councils within the same tier or colour band;
- a suggestion was made to include Exeter's successful cross-council environmental work in the submission, notably the South East Devon Habitat Mitigation Committee strategy, and referring to the successful work undertaken would strengthen the submission's section on environmental management;
- the submission already included provisions for neighbourhood plans and addressed the concerns about local planning input;
- the proposal would enable closer working between environmental health officers and communities, as well as with Trading Standards for joined-up enforcement;
- the appointment of a single Director of Public Health would be critical for developing strategies like a city-wide air quality strategy, which required coordination with highways and transport;
- reorganisation would resolve inefficiencies in waste collection, such as waste from Alphington being collected by Teignbridge instead of being processed at the nearby Exeter plant;
- gratitude was expressed for the extensive work undertaken on the proposal;
- the city's City of Sanctuary status should be formally acknowledged in the submission document to reflect this status;
- the point raised about engaging communities on how they wish to work together under the new structure was endorsed;
- there had been significant engagement with community groups, stakeholders, individuals, and businesses which would continue;
- establishing a Youth Council was important to address the needs of young people, but would be a matter for the new unitary council to determine;
- the LGR (Local Government Reorganisation) survey report, included a significant proportion of young people with 23% of those interviewed in targeted groups being in the 16-24 age bracket;
- it was acknowledged that there had been frustration that more feedback wasn't received from younger groups but the work and learning had been very beneficial;
- follow-up conversations had been held with the Head of Service to discuss moving forward with engagement for groups like care leavers and schools;
- there was importance in strengthening the "sense of place" across both rural and urban areas;
- the point raised at Council regarding transport possibilities was endorsed, and the city's railway stations represented a significant opportunity for growth in passenger numbers if managed correctly;
- the unitary proposal was a critical opportunity to advance climate goals and adopt a full approach to governance;
- the joint approach with Plymouth was important and would strengthen the proposal from Exeter;

- the Leaders address of all considerations from the Council meeting was commended;
- the report was highly comprehensive, and meant that some Members, found responses to questions upon further reading;
- it was highlighted that the primary focus must be on the government's criteria for the proposal;
- the purpose of this meeting was to approve the proposal and decisions about future operations of the unitary authority were not for the current council to make;
- since the new unitary would cover a larger area than just the City of Exeter, the matter relating to being a City of Sanctuary would be a consideration for future trustees of the mayoralty to ensure city-specific aspects continued;
- the reference to Torbay's Children's Services and Education was welcomed as a good example of improvements made since becoming a unitary authority;
- concerns raised about transitional costs and financing were covered in section 4.1 the report;
- the joint submission with Plymouth was a significant strength, which demonstrated regional agreement, which was something the government wanted;
- the proposal met the required criteria set out by Government;
- the proposal was not intended to contain all the processes and regulations of the new authority and that other government guidelines existed;
- the MHCLG had confirmed that the legal status of local plans would not be impacted by local government reorganisation and the Exeter Plan, (currently with the planning inspectorate) once adopted would remain in place until a new plan for the new authority was created;
- the adopted St. James plan would continue to be a significant factor in planning decisions for that area;
- any new local plan would likely have similar levels of engagement and consultation and also would consider existing plans;
- under the devolution criteria, unitary authorities would have greater resources and strategic coordination to protect local identities;
- the creation of a unitary authority would have a long-term positive effect on preventing homelessness by joining up with SEND services;
- a unitary authority would provide a more integrated approach to housing to facilitate the growth of the housing stock;
- it was hoped that community would be a focal point of future discussions;
- the comprehensive report provided a high-quality analysis evidencing how the proposal could work well to deliver essential services;
- the proposal in comparison to other proposals was of a much higher standard and demonstrated a change meaningful was possible for such a massive impact on individuals' lives and future generations;
- residents both in Exeter and surrounding communities as far as Exmouth had been engaged and saw the advantages of the plan;
- there was a current dissatisfaction with Devon County Council from significant residents, notably with a perceived lack of accountability and transparency; and
- bringing together local plans under one authority would create cohesiveness and strategic control, building on the well-researched community plans that already exist.

Executive Members commended the report and expressed support for the submission.

The Leader responded to some of the points raised as follows:

- he acknowledged a Councillor's passion and detailed questions about their portfolio, but advised that many of these questions pertain to the operational delivery of a future unitary authority;
- he clarified that the current focus was on the submission to government, rather than on the day-to-day operational details of running the new authority;
- operational matters, such as the appointment of a Director of Public Health, would be addressed by the new authority once it was formed;
- the Executive had thoroughly considered the issues raised; and
- he acknowledged the importance of the City of Sanctuary status, especially at the current time and would look to ensure that it would be incorporated into the submission document.

The Leader thanked the Executive Members for their contributions during the debate and their reflections on how the proposal affected their respective portfolios.

The Leader invited leaders of the opposition groups to speak, focussing on providing any new information or suggestions to the recommendations, rather than repeating points from the Council meeting.

Opposition group leaders raised the following points and questions:

- concerns were raised about local democracy not being adequately addressed in the proposal and if contributions from the Council discussions were not incorporated into the proposal, the time and energy spent would have been wasted;
- the issues relating to the river Exe, were not sufficiently acknowledged as an important issue, which was considered a severe oversight as the proposal would inform the new authority's work plan;
- there was a need for an early community governance review, and delaying it until after the new authority was established could mean it would get lost;
- there was a perceived inconsistency in the proposal, which mentioned charter trustees and neighbourhood committees running alongside each other, whilst stating a community governance review for the current city of Exeter would be delayed;
- the point about strengthening local, frontline democracy through town councils was crucial for a larger unitary authority with fewer principal councillors, but it felt as though this concern was not being heard;
- a joint proposal with Plymouth was commended and would add strength to the submission to Westminster;
- having attended multiple briefings, it was considered that officers and Members had crafted a very robust and realistic proposal for Devon;
- it was surprising and disappointing that other Devon Council Leaders had disregarded Exeter's bid, given other proposals were overly elaborate; and
- a Greater Exeter Unitary Authority would provide solutions to national challenges and supported the adoption of the proposals.

The Leader in responding to the points raised from opposition group leaders advised:

- thanked the group leader for his supportive comments and endorsement from another political group;
- he acknowledged the opposition group leaders disappointment, but advised that the desired details could not be provided currently and Council was following a set process; and

- if his political group continued to have a lead role in the new unitary authority, they would be committed to working with neighbourhood councils, towns, and parishes.

The Leader in concluding the debate thanked all Members for their contributions and the cross-party support for the principle of a unitary authority based around Exeter and its communities. He also expressed his gratitude to the officers for their hard work in bringing the proposal forward.

The Leader moved the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Wright, voted upon, and CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED that Executive:

- (1) agrees the Draft Final Proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Devon;
- (2) support the creation of four proposed new unitary councils (the geographic details of which were outlined in the report) as follows:
 - a Unitary council for Exeter and surrounding parishes;
 - a Unitary council for Plymouth and surrounding parishes;
 - a Unitary council for Torbay and surrounding parishes; and
 - a Unitary council for the Devon Coast and Countryside.
- (3) agree to a Joint Submission with Plymouth City Council to present a shared Executive Summary with the two individual proposals as appendices. Members noted that Plymouth City Council supported this approach and their Cabinet agreed a similar recommendation at their meeting on 24 November 2025.
- (4) grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make any further minor amendments to the LGR proposal prior to its submission to Government by 28 November 2025.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.33 pm)

Chair

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately.

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 16 December 2025

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 13 January 2026

Report of: Strategic Director for Corporate Resources

Title: 2026/27 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 To provide a strategic overview of the budgetary position for the 2026/27 financial year and beyond including an indication of the likely level of available resources and the known demand for resources and the proposals to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 It is recommended that the contents of the report are noted and that the proposals to establish a balanced revenue budget and capital programme are approved

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget and Council Tax prior to the start of the financial year.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources:

4.1 The Council has a medium-term financial plan that contains proposals to ensure it can set a balanced budget next year. In line with the planned use of reserves, proposals for reductions / additional income total £1.616 million to balance the budget.

4.2 Across the remaining two years of the medium-term financial plan (2027/28 – 2028/29), further proposals for reductions / additional income have been identified totalling £0.465 million.

4.3 Unlike recent years, we are in a position to put forward a balanced budget for next year without having to identify further budget reductions / additional income. This is due to an expected increase in the grants we receive from central government for 2026/27 due to the new national Fair Funding Formula.

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5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There has been significant reform of Local Government finance delivered in time for the 2026-27 settlement. As widely expected, the business rates have been reset and therefore Exeter has lost all the Business Rates growth and pooling gains that it currently receives. The system was meant to reset in 2018, so the Council has enjoyed seven years of growth funding that were not anticipated when the system was first implemented.

5.2 Alongside this, the Government have also introduced a new funding formula (FF 2.0) which determines how funding is allocated across Councils. Importantly for Exeter, this has introduced a Council Tax equalisation element to reflect the fact that some Councils are constrained in the amount of Council Tax they can collect. Although the settlement has not yet been announced, it looks like this element alone has added an additional £3m back to the funding received. This has therefore substantially reduced the level of reductions required over the next few years, although some reductions are still required.

5.3 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the assumptions used in setting the budget for next year and the medium-term financial plan.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 As part of the budget and the Council Tax setting process, the Council is required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to make various specific calculations and decisions:

- (a) it must calculate its budget requirement in accordance with Section 31A of the Act;
- (b) it must calculate the City Council element of the Council Tax - first for Band D and then for all bands - in accordance with Sections 31B and 34 to 36 of the Act;
- (c) it must set the overall Council Tax for each band in accordance with Section 30.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the section 151 officer to report on the adequacy of the Council's financial resource.

The Monitoring Officer's comments are intended to assist all members of the Council in consideration of the complex legal background to their budgetary and Council Tax decisions and to set out the legal factors which members of the City Council need to consider in reaching decisions on the budget and Council Tax.

In coming to a decision in relation to the revenue budget and the council tax, the City Council and Councillors have the following legal duties:

- a) To act in accordance with their statutory duties and responsibilities;
- b) To act reasonably; and
- c) To have careful regard to their fiduciary duty to its rate payers and Council taxpayers.

The City Council has a clear legal duty to set a balanced budget. A resolution not to set a Council tax would be unlawful so would a resolution to set a Council tax which deliberately did not balance the budget.

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When deciding, councillors are reminded of their obligation to act reasonably and in accordance with the principles set down in the Wednesbury case (*Associated Provincial Picture Houses Ltd v Wednesbury Corporation* [1948]). This means that councillors are required to consider and take into account all relevant considerations and ignore any irrelevant considerations. Put simply, it would be unlawful for the Council to come to a view which is unreasonable in the sense that it is so irrational that no reasonable authority could have reached it.

The meaning of fiduciary duty is more difficult to define but can be summarised as a duty to conduct administration in a business-like manner with reasonable care, skill and caution and with due regard to the council's rate payers. When discharging their fiduciary duty, councillors will need to consider the following:

- a) Prudent use of the council's resources, including the raising of income and the control of expenditure;
- b) Financial prudence both long and short term;
- c) Striking a fair balance between the interest of the council taxpayers on the one hand and the community interest and adequate and efficient services on the other hand; and
- d) Acting in good faith with a view to complying with statutory duties and exercising its statutory powers for the benefit of the community.

Restriction on voting

Members' attention is drawn to the provisions of S.106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 which applies to members where:

- a) they are present at a meeting of full Council, the Executive or Committee and at the time of the meeting an amount of Council tax has remained unpaid for at least 2 months and
- b) Any budget or Council tax calculation, recommendation, or decision which might affect the making of any such calculation, is the subject of consideration at the meeting.

In these circumstances, any such members shall at the meeting and as soon as practicable after its commencement disclose the fact that S.106 applies to them and shall not vote on any question concerning budget setting.

Failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence unless such member can prove that they did not know S.106 applied to them at the time of the meeting or that the matter in question was the subject of consideration at that meeting.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equality Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

An EQIA assessment has been undertaken for each of the 2026/27 budget proposals, as set out in Appendix 2. Three proposals were identified as requiring an EQIA, which accompany this report.

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

10. Report details:

10.1 Local Government Funding: Fair Funding Review 2.0

The Government has consulted on significant reforms to how funding from central government is allocated between English councils. From 2026-27, there will be a new system for allocating funding. The new funding distribution will be subject to transitional arrangements and introduced gradually over the period of the three-year settlement, from 2026/27 to 2028/29. Once finalised, this will be the first multi-year settlement in a decade.

The latest funding changes were announced on Thursday 20 November in a ministerial statement.

Officers have worked with external consultants to model the expected outcomes of the Fair Funding Review, which include the following:

- **Business Rates**

Re-set the Baseline Funding Level for retained business rates in full in 2026-27.

The Business Rates Retention System (BRRS) was introduced in 2023-14. Under the BRRS, each authority was assigned a Baseline Funding Level which determined how much of its relative funding need was to be met through retained business rates income. This was then compared to a measure of their individual ability to raise business rates. Where a local authority raised more in business rates than their assessed level of need – they were required to pay a tariff. Conversely, if an authority's business rates income was below their assessed level of need – they received a top-up.

The BRRS was designed to be periodically re-set, to ensure that the distribution of resource is realigned with need. It has been over a decade since the BRRS was introduced without a re-set. This has meant that many local authorities, including Exeter, have grown their business rates income in excess of their Business Rates Baseline and have benefited from retaining business rate growth. For Exeter, this equates to a loss of circa £4m.

- **Council Tax**

The new funding allocation system is expected to include an assessment of how much councils can raise via council tax, based on modelled revenues if their tax rates was equal to the average rate across all councils.

The review is intended to achieve 'full equalisation' of revenue-raising capacity, to ensure councils receive the same share of overall funding that they are assessed to need, if they

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were to set their council tax level to the national average. For Exeter, this equates to gain of circa £3m, due to its low council tax levels.

In terms of Council Tax increases, the Government will maintain core referendum principles as they were in 2025-26 over the multi-year Settlement, with a council tax referendum principle of up to 3% or £5 increase for District Councils. This is in line with the medium-term financial plan. As a result, Exeter's budget strategy for next year assumes that council tax will increase by 2.99%, which, along with the estimated surplus on the collection fund of £82,783 and increase in the taxbase will raise an extra £264,260.

The Government have also consulted on modernising and improving the administration of council tax, this includes proposals to spread council tax payments over 12 monthly instalments by default, rather than the current default 10 monthly instalments.

- **The end of the New Homes Bonus**

The funding currently allocated to the New Homes Bonus (circa £290 million in 2025-26 across the country) will be returned to the core funding settlement.

- **Grants simplification**

The Government have consulted on consolidating several smaller grants into the main funding formula, so that they form part of the multi-year settlement and into the non-ringfenced Revenue Support Grant, including Temporary accommodation funding, Biodiversity Net Gain Planning Requirement, Local Government Finance Data Review, among others.

Alongside this, the Government are setting up four consolidated grants, as part of the multi-year Settlement package, which will be ring-fenced. Details on their distribution and conditions will be announced as part of the provisional settlement;

- Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant
- Children, Families and Youth Grant
- Public Health Grant
- Crisis and Resilience Fund.

At the time of writing this report, the Government announced their intention to maintain the Recovery Grant allocations, at 2025-26 levels across the multi-year Settlement. The Recovery grant targeted funding towards areas with greater need and demand for services and equates to £271k p.a. for Exeter. The MTFP does not currently reflect this recent announcement.

- **Transitional Arrangements**

Transitional funding, including a minimum funding floor, to protect councils from the full impact of the funding changes. There will be a 3-year transition to new funding allocations.

8.2 Other Budgetary Assumptions

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

8.2.1 An overall allowance of £0.971m has been set aside for inflation. The inflationary increases allowed in the budget are:

Pay Award	2.5%
Pay – Increments	0.5%
Electricity	4.0%
Gas	0.0%
Water	3.50%
Insurance	5.0% - 18.0%
Rates	3.6%
Motor Fuel	0.0%
General Inflation	3.6%
Income (excluding Car Parks)	3.0%

8.2.2 A thorough review of all budgeted costs and income has been performed to help ensure adequate provision is made for inflation and where allowance has been made for a general inflationary increase, it has been provided for at 3.6% in-line with August 2025 CPI. Pay has been increased by 2.5% although there is a risk that this again may be lower than the actual amount agreed.

8.2.3 Interest is based on the existing loans that have been taken out and the amounts available for investment. Future borrowing requirements are based on rates of around 3.5% and the Council will seek to internally finance borrowing until rates stabilise from the present highs of around 5.8%.

8.3 Likely Revenue Resources 2026/27 to 2028/29

8.3.1 The main resources are set out below. As already highlighted, the Government is implementing significant reforms, under the Fair Funding Review, to how funding from central government is allocated between English councils. From 2026/27 there will be a new system for allocating funding between councils, which will take account of new official assessments of councils' spending needs and their relative abilities to raise revenues themselves via council tax. Every council's new funding allocation will be phased in over three years in equal steps.

The Council has worked with external consultants to forecast the outcomes of the Fair Funding Review and this is reflected in the forecast sources of funding below:

Source	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Revenue Support Grant	1,384	0	0	0
Business Rates Income	9,929	0	0	0
Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)	0	10,940	11,710	12,570
CIL income	798	793	793	793
New Homes Bonus	872	0	0	0
Extended Producer Responsibility Fund (EPR)	1,410	1,500	1,500	1,500
Council Tax	7,507	7,771	8,006	8,338
Resources	21,900	21,004	22,009	23,201
Increase/(decrease)		(896)	1,005	1,192
Annual % change		-(4.0%)	4.8%	5.4%

8.4 Additional Spending Pressures

8.4.1 Additional Spending Pressures over the period are set out in Appendix 1 and total:

	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Additional Pressures	910	1,162	85	85

8.5 Revenue Savings and Other Budgetary Reductions

8.5.1 The MTFP has a funding gap of £2.1 million (26/27 – 28/29) of which proposals of £2.1 million have been identified. The proposals identified for 2026-27 will ensure a balanced budget can be presented.

The reductions / additional income proposals identified are summarised below. Please refer to Appendix 2 for details of the 26/27 budget proposals.

	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Saving proposals identified - prior years	(2,400)	(590)	(400)	0
Saving proposals identified - 26/27 budget cycle	0	(1,026)	(65)	0
Further savings required	0	0	0	0
Total	(2,400)	(1,616)	(465)	0

8.5.2 The updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is set out in Appendix 3.

8.6 General Fund Capital Programme

8.6.1 At this stage there are no additional requests for Capital Expenditure. As Members are aware, the higher interest rates mean that any further borrowing would require additional reductions, which on top of those set out above, risks the Council having insufficient funds to run its Services.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

8.7 Risk Assessment

8.7.1 It has already been mentioned above in this report that our financial forecasts are based on a number of assumptions including the level of inflation, interest rates, income levels, support from the government and general prevailing economic conditions. The main risks to the Council's financial position are as follows:

- The outcome of the Fair Funding Review in relation to the funding from central government over the medium term;
- The Council is reliant on a strong economy for much of its funding. Car Park income and Commercial Property income provide support, not just for our discretionary services, but increasingly support our statutory services and corporate costs. Changes in work patterns are already impacting car park income and contributing to the financial challenges.

Although the Council faces risks from the assumptions and uncertainties outlined above these have been mitigated by the following:

- Adopting a prudent approach to financial forecasting which involves obtaining information from external professional sources;
- Continuous monitoring and review of the key factors together with regular reports to Members on any key issues;
- Regular budget monitoring meetings with budget managers to ensure that budget pressures are identified at the earliest opportunity;
- The adoption of robust financial management arrangements including option appraisal, risk assessment and financial monitoring; and
- Retaining a prudent level of reserves and balances.

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 This is the strategic overview of the financial position of the Council.

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12.1 The risks relate to failing to set a balanced Council budget and are mitigated by regular reporting to the Strategic Management Board and Members.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 Not applicable.

Strategic Director for Corporate Resources, Dave Hodgson

Author: Michelle White

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

None

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Budget Pressures
- Appendix 2 – Budget Proposals
- Appendix 3 – MTFP
- EQIA Home call Proposal
- EQIA RAMM Charging for Exhibitions Proposal

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Appendix 1

	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's
<u>Unavoidable or Already Committed from Previous Years</u>				
Fleet maintenance	95			
Living Wage	25	25	25	25
Housing Benefit Admin grant reduction	60	60	60	60
Pension Revaluation	36			
External valuations		(90)		
Business Rates revaluation	50	215		
Arena Reduction not achievable		300		
Homeless Prevention Grant		640		
	266	1,150	85	85
<u>New Revenue Bids - Recurring</u>				
PT Payroll Post	18			
Deletion of SCP 2		12		
Comms Post	58			
Communities posts - remove CIL funding	81			
PT Property Lawyer	38			
Insurance over inflation	70			
CCTV Maintenance	80			
Guildhall Surplus reduction (offset by earmarked reserve)	299			
	644	12	0	0
TOTAL	910	1,162	85	85

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Service	Proposal	2026/27 Revenue Estimate (income/cost reduction) (£)	2027/28 Revenue Estimate (income/cost reduction) (£)	EQIA Assessment	Description
Energy	Review of electricity & gas budgets	645,000	50,000	Financial review exercise and no impact on people	Budgets reduced to reflect Corporate Energy Manager projections in conjunction with review of spend patterns, schedules produced for breakdown by service cost centre
Various	Asset Maintenance Contracts Review of existing procurement arrangements across the various directorates in terms of asset maintenance contracts to provide BVM/Cost Savings i.e PPM, Auto doors, Asbestos etc		10,000	Change to a small number of contracts and unlikely to impact on people	Potential cost savings via consolidated contracts. Requires support from Procurement. Expected benefits from economies of scale
Parks & Green Spaces	Events	10,000		Financial review exercise and no impact on people	Increase budget income recognising annual over performance
Parks & Green Spaces	Rental Income	23,000		Financial review exercise and no impact on people	Increase budget income recognising annual budget over performance
Waste Operations	Recyclate income	100,000		Financial review exercise and no impact on people	Realign budget with historic sales
Fleet	Reduced fuel costs	30,000		Financial review exercise and no impact on people	Savings can be realised due to electric vehicles powered by solar farm
Fleet	Fleet hire costs	100,000		Contractual arrangment unlikely to have any impact on people	More vehicles migrated across to the fleet contract with SFS
Homecall	Homecall	5,000	5,000	EQIA completed in relation to the increase in customers to meet the target income increase, and associated comms campaign. A further EQIA will be developed later for the overall review of Homecall	Work with Devon LA's in colloborative working for ECC to run and manage their respective systems. Comms campaign to increase customer base across Exeter and the wider area. Review of Homecall with a report presented to SMB winter 2025.
Local Plans	Cut Local Plan Evidence Budget	33,000		Financial review exercise and no impact on people	In base budget but not required on a recurring basis
Culture	Cultural Redesign Phase 2	30,000		EQIA completed and appended to the report	This is in addition to the savings being made in 2025/6. Further details to be scoped.
Culture	RAMM Exhibition income	10,000		EQIA cimpleted and appended to the report	This is charging for exhibition space currently not charged for.
Sales and Marketing	Increased income	40,000		Income target will be raised through employment of extra post. There is no impact on the current team so an EQIA is not required	The figure listed for 26/27 is based on current establishment capacity.
		1,026,000	65,000		

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MEDIUM TERM REVENUE PLAN (2024/25 - 2028/29)

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Resources					
Revenue Support Grant	1,799	1,384	0	0	0
Business Rates Income	8,858	9,929	0	0	0
Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)	0	0	10,940	11,710	12,570
CIL income	774	798	793	793	793
New Homes Bonus	486	872	0	0	0
Extended Producer Responsibility Fund (EPR)	0	1,410	1,500	1,500	1,500
Council Tax	7,170	7,507	7,771	8,006	8,338
Likely resources	19,087	21,900	21,004	22,009	23,201
Expenditure					
Service expenditure					
Committee expenditure	18,059	23,350	17,993	17,144	17,466
Net Interest	1,277	1,475	1,400	1,430	1,530
Repayment of debt	1,805	2,502	2,603	2,634	2,462
RCCO	115	89	0	0	0
	21,256	27,416	21,996	21,208	21,458
Other funding					
Contribution to/ (from) earmarked reserves	(1,592)	(1,693)	(136)	765	765
Contribution to/ (from) balances - Other	(577)	(1,423)	760	501	978
	(2,169)	(3,116)	624	1,266	1,743
Further reductions required		0	0	0	0
Potential reductions identified		(2,400)	(1,616)	(465)	0
Total Net Budget	19,087	21,900	21,004	22,009	23,201

Opening General Fund Balance	5,882	5,305	3,882	4,642	5,143
Closing General Fund Balance	5,305	3,882	4,642	5,143	6,121
Balance as a percentage of budget	27.8%	17.7%	22.1%	23.4%	26.4%

Equality Impact Assessment: Homecall

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive 16 December 2025	Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan	Review of Homecall, to increase the customer base of the service across Exeter and the wider area	Race & Ethnicity Disability Age

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this

conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).	Negative	Low	Homecall is only available to purchase for those that have an address, mobile or landline, a modern 3-pin electricity plug socket, a nominated 'keyholder' or have a key safe which will impact on Gypsies and Travellers who do not have permanent addresses. However most Gypsies and Travellers who are travelling live in groups and are therefore unlikely to be alone and require this service.
Disability: as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	Positive	High	Homecall alarms are available to anyone who needs one, provided they have an address, mobile or landline, a modern 3-pin electricity plug socket, a nominated 'keyholder' or have a key safe. This includes the elderly, those with mobility or medical problems or those in sheltered housing. If the individual isn't able to purchase a key safe or have a nominated individual, they are unable to become a customer, as emergency services may need to access their property. There could be a scenario where an individual is unable to afford Homecall, the team guide the individual to grant funding opportunities within the City Council and from other sources.
Sex	N/A	N/A	
Gender reassignment	N/A	N/A	

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Religion and belief (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).	N/A	N/A	
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).	N/A	N/A	
Age (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Positive	High	<p>Homecall alarms are available to anyone who needs one, provided they have an address, mobile or landline, a modern 3-pin electricity plug socket, a nominated 'keyholder' or have a key safe. This includes the elderly, those with mobility or medical problems or those in sheltered housing. If the individual isn't able to purchase a key safe or have a nominated individual, they are unable to become a customer, as emergency services may need to access their property.</p> <p>There could be a scenario where an individual is unable to afford Homecall, the team guide the individual to grant funding opportunities within the City Council and from other sources.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity including new and breast feeding mothers	N/A	N/A	
Marriage and civil partnership status	N/A	N/A	

Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion

- Prepare a communications plan that is accessible for all identified protected characteristics within this EQIA

Officer: Head of Service City Centre & Net Zero

Date: 18 November 2025

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Equality Impact Assessment: RAMM charging for exhibitions

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive 16 December 2025	Charging for RAMM exhibitions	To introduce admission fees for all exhibitions at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM).	Age Disability Gender Reassignment Marriage and Civil Partnership Pregnancy and Maternity Race Religion or belief Sex Sexual orientation

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This is must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

- High impact** – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.
- Medium impact** –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence
- Low impact** – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Age	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 68.6% of people were aged between 16 and 64 years. 16.6% of the local population were aged 65 years and over and 14.8% were reported to under the age of 15 years.</p> <p>Data from RAMM Demographics 2024/25, report usage by age as follows; Age 19 – 8% - 15,520 people (based on 194K visitors) 20-29 – 17% - 34,980 people 30-39 – 10.5% - 20,370 people 40-49 – 13.3% - 25,802 people 50-59 – 13% - 25,220 people 60-69 – 20% - 38,800 people 70+ – 17% - 32,980</p> <p>The is no fee for exhibitions for those aged 18 or under, meaning there is no impact for this age group, RAMMs major funding currently requires this age group to have free entry, future plans longer term 2028 onwards could review this. For those aged 19 and over, there is no evidence available of specific impact on those of different ages and no targeted provision in relation to age.</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			Consequently, exhibition fees across the museum will equally impact all Exeter residents aged 19 years or older.
Disability	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 7.3% of the population identified as disabled under the Equality Act with day-to-day activities limited a lot. 11.6% of the population identified as disabled under the Equality Act with day-to-day activities limited a little. 81.4% of the local population identify as not disabled under the Equality Act.</p> <p>Data from RAMM demographics report 2024-25 that 9% of visitors identify as disabled – 17,460 visitors to the museum each year.</p> <p>There is no evidence available of specific impact in relation to disability. The Museum is fully accessible, and tickets to exhibitions are available both online and via the museum reception. There is no charge for an accompanying carer. Consequently, exhibition fees across the museum will equally impact all Exeter residents, regardless of disability. There is currently no discount for disabled visitors, certified carers are free.</p>
Gender reassignment	Neutral	Low	There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 35.7% of the local population aged 16 or over were married or in a registered civil partnership. 64.3% of people aged 16 or over held other marital or civil partnership status.</p> <p>RAMM does not collect data on pregnancy and maternity status.</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Low	RAMM does not collect data on pregnancy and maternity status. There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Race	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 4.9% of the local population identified as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, 0.9% identified as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African. 2.5% of the local population identified as mixed or multiple ethnic groups and 1.4 % identified as another ethnic group. 90.3% of the local population identified as White.</p> <p>Data from RAMM demographics report 2024-25 identifies that 8% of RAMM's visitors are from Global Majority communities.</p> <p>There is no evidence available of specific impact on those with different races or ethnicities and no targeted provision in relation to race or ethnicity. Consequently, exhibition fees across the museum will equally impact all Exeter residents, regardless of race or ethnicity.</p>
Religion or belief	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 48.5% of the local population were reported to have no religion or belief, followed by 40% who reported to be Christian. 4.2% of people identify as Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish or Sikh and 7.4% failed to answer.</p> <p>RAMM does not collect data on religion or belief.</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Sex	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 51.3% of the local population were female and 48.7% were reported to be male.</p> <p>Data from RAMM demographics report 2024-25 identifies that 44% of visitors are male (85,360 people), 56% of visitors are female (108,640 people). No visitors stated they were other/intersex in 2024-25.</p> <p>There is no targeted provision in relation to sex, and all exhibitions are equally accessible to males and females. Consequently, exhibition fees across the museum will equally impact all Exeter residents, regardless of sex.</p>
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Low	<p>Data from the 2021 Census Profile for the Exeter LAD report that 5.3% of the local population were reported to identify as either gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer or other sexual orientation. 86.2% of the local population identified as either straight or heterosexual. 8.5% failed to answer.</p> <p>13% of RAMM's visitors identify as LGBTQ+</p> <p>There is no evidence available of specific impact.</p>

Officer: Cath Hill
Date: 20.11.25

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REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 16 December 2025

Report of: Strategic Director Corporate Resources

Title: Council Taxbase and NNDR 1 2026/27

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

1.1 To set the 2026/27 Council Tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

1.2 To seek approval that the Council's estimate of Business Rate Income (NNDR1) for the next financial year is delegated to the Strategic Director Corporate Resources.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Exeter City Council as its tax base for the year 2026/27 shall be 40,186.

2.2 That the Collection Fund Surplus of £1,060,596 be approved.

2.3 That the section 151 Officer is delegated responsibility to approve the Council's NNDR1 return by 31 January 2026.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 To ensure that the Council meets its statutory deadline for notifying Precepting Authorities and the Government by 31 January 2026.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources:

4.1 Both the Council Taxbase and the NNDR1 provide key information used to calculate the overall resources available to the Council, Government and Preceptors in the following financial year.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 Approval of the report is a statutory requirement in respect of the Taxbase. There is an increase of 334 Band D equivalent properties compared to the 2025/26 Taxbase (increase of 0.83%).

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6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 When setting the council tax base and national non-domestic rates (NNDR) base, members must consider the council's financial requirements, including government grants, business rates, investments, fees, charges, and financial reserves. The council tax requirement is calculated based on the aggregate of estimated expenditure, contingencies, and reserves needed to meet future or past deficits.

In coming to decisions in relation to the revenue budget and the Council Tax the City Council and Councillors have the following legal duties, namely:-

- (a) The Council must act in accordance with its statutory duties and responsibilities.
- (b) The Council must act reasonably.
- (c) The Council must not act in breach of its fiduciary duty to its ratepayers and Council Tax payers.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 imposes restrictions on voting rights for members of local authorities present at a meeting of the Council, the Executive or a Committee where individual members have unpaid council tax debts that have been outstanding for at least two months. If such a member is present at a meeting where matters related to council tax are being considered, they are required to disclose as soon as practicable that section 106 applies to them and they are prohibited from voting on any question regarding those matters.

7.2 Failure to comply with these requirements constitutes a criminal offence, unless they can prove they were unaware that section 106 applied to them at the time of the meeting or that the matter in question was the subject matter of the meeting.

7.3 The Monitoring Officer's comments are intended to assist all members of the Council in consideration of the complex legal background to their budgetary and Council Tax decisions and to set out the legal factors which members of the City Council need to consider in reaching decisions on the budget and Council Tax.

In coming to a decision in relation to the revenue budget and the council tax, the City Council and Councillors have the following legal duties:

- a) To act in accordance with their statutory duties and responsibilities;
- b) To act reasonably; and
- c) To have careful regard to their fiduciary duty to its rate payers and Council taxpayers.

The City Council has a clear legal duty to set a balanced budget. A resolution not to set a Council tax would be unlawful so would a resolution to set a Council tax which deliberately did not balance the budget.

When deciding, councillors are reminded of their obligation to act reasonably and in accordance with the principles set down in the *Wednesbury case (Associated Provincial Picture Houses Ltd v Wednesbury Corporation [1948])*. This means that councillors are required to consider and take into account all relevant considerations and ignore any irrelevant considerations. Put simply, it would be unlawful for the Council to come to a

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view which is unreasonable in the sense that it is so irrational that no reasonable authority could have reached it.

The meaning of fiduciary duty can be summarised as a duty to act lawfully, prudently and in the public interest for the benefit of all residents and taxpayers in order to ensure that a lawful and balanced budget is set. When discharging their fiduciary duty, councillors will need to consider the following:

- a) Prudent use of the council's resources, including the raising of income and the control of expenditure;
- b) Financial prudence both long and short term;
- c) Striking a fair balance between the interest of the council taxpayers on the one hand and the community interest and adequate and efficient services on the other hand; and
- d) Acting in good faith with a view to complying with statutory duties and exercising its statutory powers for the benefit of the community.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report determines the taxbase for the whole City.

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

10. Report details:

10.1 BACKGROUND

10.1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, Exeter City Council as a billing authority will be issuing Council Tax bills to occupiers of property in March 2026, effective from 1 April.

10.1.2 As a first step to calculating the Council Tax itself, the City Council is required by legislation to determine a tax base by the 31 January for the following financial year.

10.1.3 Based on a valuation list received from the Valuation Officer, the calculation, in simple terms, involves three steps, namely:

- i. the determination of the number of chargeable dwellings;
- ii. an assessment of disregards, premiums and discounts, and
- iii. the equivalent number of band D properties and a collection rate.

10.1.4 The calculation of the Taxbase includes the impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme, which significantly reduces the Council's income from Council Tax.

10.2 COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2026/27

10.2.1 The Council Tax Base for Exeter is set out in table 8.1 and in Appendix A. It is estimated that the equivalent number of Band D properties (Gross taxbase) for 2026/27

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(including the reduction in dwellings owing to the Council Tax Support Scheme) will be 41,216 an increase of 342 over 2025/26.

10.2.2 This estimated collection rate of 97.5% for the year is applied to the Gross Taxbase, which results in a net Council Tax base of 40,186, an increase of 334 over the 2025/26 figure of 39,852.

Table 10.1 – Taxbase 2026/27

Taxbase	2026/27 Gross Taxbase	2026/27 Net Taxbase (97.5%)
Taxbase to be used in calculating the council tax for 2026/27	41,216	40,186

10.2.3 The Collection Fund Surplus to be declared is £1,060,596 and will be split as follows:

	2025-26 TAX	2026-27 SHARE
EXETER CITY COUNCIL	£185.76	£82,783.42
DEVON FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE	£104.68	£46,650.35
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL	£1,801.26	£802,726.47
DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE	£288.20	£128,435.52
	£2,379.90	£1,060,595.76

10.3 BUSINESS RATES RETENTION

10.3.1 Under the Business Rates Retention funding, the Council has to provide MHCLG with an estimate of its Business Rate Income for the forthcoming year. However, due to the changes in the funding and the local/central share, MHCLG require the estimate (completed on a NNDR1 form) to be compiled and formally submitted by 31 January. The Council must also share this information with Devon County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service who are also affected.

10.3.2 MHCLG have stated that, in their view, the decision to approve the NNDR1 can be delegated to the section 151 Officer and this report seeks approval for such delegation as the figures have not yet been calculated (The Council requires an annual software update in order to calculate the NNDR1 form).

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 The approval of the Taxbase enables the Council to calculate the budget available for the following financial year.

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12.1 Not applicable.

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13. Are there any other options?

13.1 Not applicable.

Strategic Director for Corporate Resources, Dave Hodgson

Author: Michelle White

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A – Council Taxbase 2026-27

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL
2026/27 TAX BASE

	BAND	TOTAL	A relief	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
LINE 1	No. OF CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	53,893	20	9,757	14,578	13,436	8,720	4,222	2,139	988	33
LINE 2	No. OF DISCOUNTS	-9,661	-9	-3,482	-3,043	-1,823	-818	-288	-142	-53	-3
LINE 3	No OF ADDITIONS (TECHNICAL CHANGES)	593	0	197	124	118	78	33	23	17	3
LINE 4	WHOLE No. EQUIVALENT CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	44,825	11	6,472	11,659	11,731	7,980	3,967	2,020	951	34
LINE 5	FRACTION TO APPLY TO ARRIVE AT BAND D EQUIVALENTS		5/9 ths	6/9 ths	7/9 ths	8/9 ths	1	11/9 ths	13/9 ths	15/9 ths	18/9 ths
LINE 6	BAND D EQUIVALENTS (PER CTB1)	41,216	6	4,315	9,068	10,427	7,980	4,849	2,918	1,586	67
	TOTAL BAND D EQUIVALENTS	41,216									
LINE 7	COLLECTION RATE	97.50%									
LINE 8	EXETER CITY COUNCIL TAX BASE	40,186									

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REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 16 December 2025

Report of: Strategic Director – Corporate Resources & s151 Officer

Title: Housing Rents and Service Charges 2026-27

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report sets out the proposed changes to council dwelling rents, garage rents and service charges with effect from 1 April 2026.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Executive approves that:

- 1) Rents of Council dwellings are increased by 4.8% from 1 April 2026.
- 2) Garage rents are increased by 4.8% from 1 April 2026.
- 3) Service Charges are increased by 4.8% from 1 April 2026.
- 4) In principle an additional increase in rents in relation to non-convergent properties to bring them into line with convergent rents over a period of time. The precise increase in rents in addition to the above to be delegated to the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources and the Strategic Director for People and Communities in consultation with the Leader and relevant Portfolio Holder.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 The government announced in June 2025 that there will be a 10-year rent settlement for social housing from 1 April 2026 in which rents will be permitted to increase by Consumer Prices Index (CPI) + 1% per annum. The CPI figure for September 2025 was 3.8%, so under this policy the Council is permitted to apply a rent increase of 4.8% for 2026/27.

The government also confirmed at the spending review that it will implement a convergence mechanism as part of the new rent settlement. Convergence would allow rents for Social Rent properties that are currently below 'formula rent' to increase by an additional amount each year, over and above the CPI + 1% limit until they 'converge' with formula rent. Formula rent refers to the formula that is used to calculate the rent that may be charged for a given property when it is let to a new tenant. A convergence mechanism was originally introduced in 2002 but as scrapped in 2015.

The details of precisely how, and at what level, this mechanism will be implemented will be confirmed at the Autumn Budget, taking account of the benefits to the supply and quality of social housing, the impact on rent payers and the impact on the government's

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fiscal rules. The consultation sought views on increases of either £1 or £2 per week in addition to the inflationary increase where actual social rents are below convergent rents. The consultation is also expected to consider when these increases can be implemented and over what period. ECC has a significant number of tenancies at non-convergent rents, and currently these can only be increased to formula rent on change of tenancy.

Rents of garages and service charges fall outside the scope of the Government's rent policy. Authorities are expected to set reasonable and transparent charges which reflect the service being provided to tenants.

There is an appreciation of the impact of rent increases on tenants of ECC. However, a lower than permitted increase would place financial constraints on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and result in a lower base-line position for future year rents, as well as a reduction in service delivery.

In 2023/24 the government capped rent increases at 7% where the actual CPI + 1% would have resulted in an increase of 11.1%. This resulted in a reduction in rental income of approximately £2.5m over 3 years whilst the costs of materials and labour continued to increase at inflationary levels.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources:

4.1 The proposed changes in housing rents, garage rents and service charges are reflected in the proposed 2026/27 estimates for the HRA.

The current rent policy is intended to apply for 10 years from 2026, in order to allow landlords to plan ahead. The medium-term financial plans for the Council's HRA therefore reflect assumptions for the annual uplift of property rents by CPI + 1%.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 The proposed increase is in line with Government policy and will support the significant repairs and maintenance and capital programmes that the HRA requires. If the Government decide to implement rent convergence, this will be considered via the delegated power, if approved, and reported to Members in the Budget papers to be considered in February 2026.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 The government has issued a policy statement on rents for social housing which was effective from 1 April 2020 and has since been updated. The policy requires the Regulator of Social Housing to have regard to the policy statement when setting its rent standard for registered providers of social housing. The term 'registered providers' includes both private registered providers of social housing (including housing associations) and local authorities. Subject a number of limited exemptions, the government policy applies to 'low-cost rental' accommodation. This is defined in section 69 Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

Accommodation is low-cost rental accommodation if:-

- (a) it is made available for rent;
- (b) the rent is below the market rate, and

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- (c) the accommodation is made available in accordance with rules designed to ensure that it is made available to people whose needs are not adequately served by the commercial housing market.

The policy sets a formula for the calculation of rents for properties let at a 'social rent' with the aim of ensuring that similar rents are charged for similar social rent properties. The policy also limits the maximum annual charges in social rent and affordable rent levels. From April 2016, the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 required social landlords to reduce their rents by 1% each year for four years (this was known as the 'social rent reduction')

The changes introduced by the policy from April 2020 onwards reflect the government's intention to set what it describes as a 'long term rent deal for both local authority landlords and housing associations'. The policy permits annual rent increases on both social rent and affordable rent properties as set out in this report.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Members will note the legal aspects set out in the legal aspects at paragraph 6 and the limitations imposed upon increases in rent as set out in this report below.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

10. Report details:

10.1 Rent Setting Background

The underlying rent for each council property is based upon a national rent formula.

The rent formula was established to ensure that social rents take account of:

- The condition and location of a property – reflected in its value.
- Local earning.
- Property size (specifically, the number of bedrooms in a property).

The rent formula for each council dwelling is set, based upon January 1999 levels, and uplifted for inflation each year.

On 11th June 2025 MHCLG announced that increases to social housing rents will be limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for a further 10 years from 2026.

10.2 Social Rent Increases for 2026/27

In accordance with the social rent policy which came into effect from 1 April 2020 and has been extended for a further 10 years from 2026, rents will be increased by CPI + 1% (CPI

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is the official method of calculating inflation in the UK). For 2026/27 this will result in an average increase of £4.58 per week, over 52 weeks, per property.

Rents are collected over 48 weeks, resulting in an average increase of £4.97 per collection week for 2026/27.

On a typical 2 bedroom flat the weekly rent for 2026/27 will be £100.08 (over 52 weeks). For comparative purposes, the average weekly rents for a 2 bedroom property in Exeter as at 31st March 2025 were:

- £109.98 per week with a housing association; and
- £260.31 per week rented in the private sector.

10.3 Rent arrears impact

From 1st April to 17th November 2025 the rent arrears have increased from 0.85% (£214,902) to 1.79% (£454,042). We should see an expected reduction in the overall arrears figure over the Christmas rent free period, and likewise at the end of the current financial year. We will work with tenants giving them the opportunity to ensure their rent accounts do not go into arrears by offering support and advice.

Factors that will have an impact on rent collection for next financial year are likely to include;

- Universal Credit (UC)

The migration of customers over to UC continues. Since April 2025 we have had a reduction in HB fortnightly payments by an estimated £60,000. Migrations means we cease to receive direct Housing Benefit payments. This does impact collection because, as we have previously mentioned, HB payments are a reliable source of income as they are always paid directly into the customer's rent account.

This is not the case with UC payments which are initially paid directly to the customer, who are expected to use the money to pay their rent. However, due to pressures on household incomes the rent element is not always used in this way.

It is possible under certain criteria to apply for direct payments from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). We are also able to apply for deductions from a person's UC to reduce their rent arrears. However, deductions are only agreed by the DWP if the amount of arrears exceeds 8 weeks, and there are no other deductions in place already.

It remains the case that the Housing Rent Team must work with its tenants to ensure they understand the importance of paying their rent. This kind of intervention is time consuming and very labour intensive.

- Cost of Living / Energy

The pressures on household budgets remain real for many of our tenants and such pressures inevitably lead to rent arrears building. Increases in energy prices is just one example of the financial squeeze our tenants face. The increase in energy prices has coincided with the loss of the winter fuel allowance and with winter now on us this will put strain on the ability of our elderly residents to pay.

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To reduce the potential impact of this change we have started an initiative to identify those pensioners who should be in receipt of Pension Credit and help them to claim. Pension Credit is a qualifying benefit for the winter fuel allowance so it is important we ensure those tenants who are eligible are in receipt. In addition to this, we are still working with tenants to see if we can support them with projects such as the retrofit programme which reduces energy bills.

New guidance was issued by DLUHC in November 2020 that set out arrangements for local authorities to apply to the Secretary of State for agreement to depart from the Government Rent Policy, if it would cause the authority 'unavoidable and serious financial difficulty'.

In considering whether the application of the Government Rent Policy would cause unavoidable and serious financial difficulty, the Secretary of State will expect to be provided with evidence that:

- the local authority's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is at risk of a deficit in either the current or subsequent financial year;
 - complying with the requirements set out in the Rent Standard would jeopardise the local authority's ability to meet legal requirements/ obligations, including ensuring the health and safety of its residents; and
 - all possible steps have been taken to avoid the need for an application to the Secretary of State, including reviewing services and commitments and taking action to minimise costs and curtailing non-essential commitments.
-
- Litigation & Court Proceedings for Rental Arrears

The Housing Rents Team out of necessity have, had to review and implement a revised process in response to recent changes in court litigation procedures and actions under the Legal Services Act and recent outcomes and guidance following a High Court Judgement in the case of Mazur.

The Legal Services Act 2007 establishes that the conduct of litigation is a reserved activity. The conduct of litigation can only be carried out by an authorised person, such as a solicitor. The conduct of litigation cannot be carried out by an unauthorised person. Council officers employed in recovering rent arrears in relation to the authority's housing stock are not authorised persons and therefore cannot conduct litigation. Unauthorised persons can only provide support to an authorised person. All litigation must be carried out by solicitors in the Legal Services team.

This has had a substantial impact in admin resources and time spent to redefining the process for court action in the case of Housing Rental Arrears and court action.

It is not considered that there are grounds to depart from the Government's Rent Policy.

10.4 Affordable Rents for Newly Built Council Housing

Affordable rent allows local authorities to set rents at levels that are typically higher than social rents, at up to 80% of local market rent inclusive of service charges. The intention behind this is to maximise returns and generate capacity for further investment in new

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affordable housing, allowing more people in housing need to have access to a good quality home at sub-market rent. Affordable rent is charged on new properties built to passivhaus standard, with the expectation that tenants would benefit from lower fuel bills.

For Exeter, this includes properties the Council has built at Knights Place, Rowan House, Silverberry Close, Barberry Close, Reed Walk and Chester Long Court, Anthony Road, Bovemoors and Thornpark Rise. Affordable rents may also be increased by 4.8% in line with social rent rises.

10.5 Garage Rent Increase

Rentals of non-dwellings, such as garages, are outside the scope of the Government's social rent policy. However annual increases to garage rents are generally kept in-line with rises in social rents.

Under self-financing local authorities are encouraged to review the rents of non-dwellings in order to ensure associated costs are fully recovered. Allowing for inflationary rises for employee costs and for general repair costs, a rise in line with rent charges is considered appropriate.

A 4.8% increase in garage rents and parking spaces is therefore proposed, in line with the permitted rises in social and affordable rents at CPI + 1%.

10.6 Service Charge Increase

These charges cover services and facilities provided by the authority to tenants which are not covered by their rent. Service charges reflect additional services which may not be provided to every tenant, or which may be connected with communal facilities. Different tenants receive different types of service reflecting their housing circumstances.

Service charges are limited to covering the cost of providing the services. Government guidelines advised that authorities should endeavour to keep increases in-line with rent changes, at CPI + 1%, to help keep charges affordable. Increases above this may be made on rare occasions when an authority has increases in costs outside its control, such as increases in fuel costs.

It is proposed that in general service charges are increased by 4.8%, in line with rent rises.

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 The Housing Revenue Account contributes to the key priorities of Homes and People, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2025-2028.

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12.1 The main risk to council dwelling rents relates to the cost of living crisis and its impact on tenants' ability to pay.

The level of rent arrears is kept under review by the Housing Rents Team and currently compares favourably with other social landlords.

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A provision has been made in 2025/26 for a similar arrears level to 2024/25. This assumes no recovery from current level of arrears during the next financial year.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 From 1 April 2026, social landlords may not increase rents by more than CPI + 1% in any year. This limit is a ceiling and landlords are able to apply a lower increase. However, any rent increases at less than 4.8% would have a significant impact on the HRA's financial position and resources available to invest in its stock.

Strategic Director Corporate Resources, Dave Hodgson

Author: Claire Hodgson

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

List of Appendices:

- EQIA Rents and Service Charges

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Equality Impact Assessment: Housing Rents and Service Charges 2025/26

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive Committee 16 th December 2025	Housing Rents and Service Charges 2026-2027	That Executive recommend that Council approves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rents of Council dwellings are increased by 4.8% from 1 April 2026 • Garage rents are increased by 	As the increase is applied universally and does not explicitly target any protected group, it could have an indirect adverse effect on individuals with lower incomes, some of whom may share protected characteristics.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
		4.8% from 1 April 2026 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Charges are increased by 4.8%, from 1 April 2026 	The mitigations for this are set out at the end of this table.

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).	Positive	Low	<p>On 11 June 2025 a letter was sent from the Housing Minister to registered providers of social housing regarding the results of the Spending Review 2025.</p> <p>This letter confirmed that the government will permit social housing rents to increase by CPI+1% each year from April 2026. In response to a consultation undertaken by government, the length of this settlement has increased from 5 years to 10 years, giving Registered Providers, lenders, and investors greater long-term certainty.</p> <p>The CPI figure for September 2025 was 3.8%, so under this policy the Council is permitted to apply a rent increase of 4.8% for 2025/26.</p> <p>In addition the government also announced a convergence mechanism that would allow rents on social rent properties that are currently 'below formula' (i.e. lower than the usual maximum that may be charged when a property is let to a new tenant) to increase by an additional amount, over and above the CPI+1% limit, up to formula level.</p> <p>A lower than permitted increase would place a financial constraint on the HRA and result in a lower base-line position for future year rents.</p> <p>For information last years' rent increase was 2.7%.</p>
Disability: as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.			See information provided above

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Sex			See information provided above
Gender reassignment			See information provided above
Religion and belief (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).			See information provided above
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).			See information provided above
Age (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).			See information provided above
Pregnancy and maternity including new and breast feeding mothers			See information provided above
Marriage and civil partnership status			See information provided above

Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion:

We have a number of support mechanisms to manage potential hardship, which could mitigate the adverse effects of this increase in rents. These include:

- There are 3722 households which are not in receipt of full or partial housing benefit, however these households may be in receipt of other tenancy related benefit such as Universal Credit as many have been 'migrated over', but as the Department for Work and Pensions holds this information, we are not able to say how many of the number above this incorporates. Please note that these figures are correct as at the time of writing, week 33 (17/11/2025) but the numbers are subject to change in the future as people become eligible/ineligible for HB or move to UC

- Financial inclusion support: We have teams who can signpost to organisations offering money advice, we are able to refer our tenants for support and provide assistance in maximising income through benefit claims
- Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs): we have funds available to support claimants who need help with housing costs
- Rent levels remain well below market rates in Exeter, ECC rents remain significantly below private market or 'affordable rent' levels as levied by housing associations
- Proactive arrears prevention: An in-house income collection team can take a supportive approach to preventing arrears
- We have identified 2,651 tenancies where the rents are less than formula rents (representing 56.3% of tenants), there are 1898 where there is no difference (40.4%) and 155 which are higher than formula rent (3.3%)
- For those tenants who might be affected by changes to their rent because of rent convergence, a report based on our data shows that where tenants are paying less than 'formula' rent, the average difference is only £1.94 a fortnight
- There are 244 tenants identified where the rent would be more than £5.00 per fortnight, but for the majority, the difference is less than £5.00 per fortnight.

Officer: Sarah Hemming
Date: 18.11.25

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REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 16 December 2025

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 13 January 2026

Report of: Strategic Director of Place

Title: RAMM Collections Development Policy (2026-30)

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report sets out the requirement to approve a new Collections Development Policy for the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery to cover the years 2026 to 2030. It is anticipated that the outcome of Local Government Reorganisation will require the CDP to be revised and approved by the appropriate governing body before its stated end date. Arts Council England have advised for the purpose of Accreditation, museums affected by LGR should make their submissions based on their current arrangements.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Executive recommends that Council approve the Royal Albert Memorial Museum Collections Development Policy 2026-30.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 A Collections Development Policy approved by a museum's governing body is a requirement of Museum Accreditation, which is the UK standard for museums and galleries. Only museums which hold Museum Accreditation may apply for major investment from Arts Council England and most other sector funding bodies.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

4.1 The purpose of a Collections Development Policy is to determine the nature, extent and sustainability of a museum's collecting. Museums are defined as organisations that collect, and collections are at the heart of RAMM's activities, yet all new acquisitions must be made with an awareness of the long-term resource implications involved in their conservation, display, storage and management. The policy articulates in what circumstances it is appropriate to make acquisitions and when it is appropriate to dispose or transfer accessioned objects to other institutions. RAMM does not have a fund for acquisitions and therefore all purchases are dependent on raising external funds.

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5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no additional financial implications contained in this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 National and international legislation regulate acquisitions and disposals made by museums in the United Kingdom including the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) 1973, Treasure Act 1996, Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, Human Tissue Act 2004 and the Ivory Act 2018. The purpose of the proposed policy is to ensure that Exeter City Council, through the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM), will not acquire, either directly or indirectly, any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, unless given to the museum by a relevant authority. The attached policy seeks to set out Exeter City Council's approach, via RAMM, to the acquisition and disposal of items in order to comply with national and international law.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Members will note the purpose of the proposed policy in order to ensure that Exeter City Council is legally compliant in the museum acquires and disposes of acquisition of items.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equality Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

8.2 By developing collections that relate to Exeter and its citizens the museum helps to promote community cohesion and establish a sense of local identity. The updated policy sets out priority areas for collecting to achieve this by redressing historic collecting biases and ensuring contemporary society is accurately reflected. Inclusive and relevant collections enable visitors, both physical and virtual, to better engage with RAMM and benefit from role the museum plays within the city.

8.3 RAMM's Collections Development Policy will affect people within the protected characteristics of disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, religion, sex and sexual orientation. It will do this by actively acquiring collections that better reflect the diversity of contemporary Exeter and historical objects that encourage discussion of groups within society that have previously been marginalised.

8.4 All potential new RAMM acquisitions are discussed at fortnightly Collections Team meetings to ensure any objects entering the collection meet the criteria set down in the Collections Development Policy. RAMM will record instances when potential acquisitions falling into the categories outlined in 8.3 are brought to the meeting and document the reasons when not agreeing to accept these objects for the collection.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 There are no direct carbon/environmental implications for the decision. However, RAMM is mindful that the long-term storage requirements associated with particular objects may have an impact on energy usage and this will be borne in mind when making decisions on new acquisitions.

10. Report details:

10.1 RAMM's collection numbers over a million individual objects from all over the globe, ranging from geological specimens millions of years' old to contemporary art. The collections have been built up since the 1860s and contain groups of outstanding historical and cultural importance.

10.2 The entire World Cultures collection received Designated status in 1998 in recognition of its international significance. Highlights include a Tahitian mourner's costume from the 1790s, artefacts from Captain Cook's second and third voyages and Richard Denett's objects acquired in the Congo region in the nineteenth century.

10.3 The Natural Science collections include George Montagu's molluscs which were Designated in 2020, as well as Percy Salden's echinoderms (starfish and related creatures), which is one of the best collections of its type in the UK, and over 12,000 birds including great rarities, such as moa, ivory-billed woodpecker and passenger pigeon.

10.4 The long history of archaeological investigation in Exeter means that RAMM holds a unique record of historic artefacts found in the city. This legacy is continually supplemented by new finds and acquisitions, such as an exceptionally rare silver penny of Alfred the Great minted in Exeter which entered the collection in 2025.

10.5 The Costume and Textiles collection consists of about 24,000 objects mostly with strong local connections which ensure it is rated as one of the top ten in Britain. The Treadwin and Bury Palliser lace collections are particularly significant and were among the first groups acquired by RAMM.

10.6 Highlights in the Fine Art collection include eighteenth-century watercolours by local artists Francis Towne and John White Abbott; the famous 'Portrait of a Man in a Red Suit'; Batoni's Grand Tour portrait of John Rolle Walter; twentieth century works associated with the Bloomsbury and Camden Town schools of art; and drawings and sculpture by Dame Barbara Hepworth.

10.7 The museum's holdings of Devon silver are of international importance, and along with ceramics, glass, clocks and watches make up a Decorative Art collection of more than 2,000 items.

10.8 Given the size of RAMM's collections it is only possible to display a small percentage at any one time. Changes are made to displays as resources allow and stored objects are regularly used in temporary exhibitions. An in-house database includes information on all collections and about 20,000 object records are accessible via RAMM's collection website (rammcollections.org.uk). Physical access to collections is by appointment and store tours are regularly carried out for small groups.

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10.9 The character and scope of a museum's collection is defined by its approach to acquisitions and the type and range of material it decides to collect, care for, and in certain limited circumstances, transfer or ethically dispose of. This is set out in a museum's Collections Development Policy (formerly known as an Acquisitions and Disposals Policy).

10.10 An approved Collections Development Policy is a requirement of Museum Accreditation, which is the UK standard for museums and galleries. Only museums which hold Museum Accreditation may apply for major investment from Arts Council England and other bodies.

10.11 An agreed policy allows RAMM to decline inappropriate gifts while focusing on making key acquisitions to improve the quality of collections and visitors' experience.

10.12 The policy includes general principles on strategic, ethical collecting and disposal, and subject statements for each of the collections: Antiquities (Archaeology), Contemporary Art, Costume and Textiles, Decorative Art, World Cultures (Ethnography), Fine Art, Natural Sciences, Numismatics (Coins), Photography and Social History.

10.13 In addition to the policy there are three appendices. Appendix A provides guidelines for the deposition of archaeological material from developer-funded excavations. Appendix B on dealing with human remains and C on dealing with requests for repatriation and restitution.

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 RAMM directly contributes to two intended outcomes of ECC's strategic priorities. Within Local Economy it is integral to 'A vibrant cultural and tourism offer' and in People it plays an important role in 'A safe and thriving city with great things to see and do'. RAMM's collections play a key role in the cultural life of Exeter, through displays and temporary exhibitions in the museum they attract visitors to the city centre. By developing collections that relate to Exeter and its citizens the museum helps to promote community cohesion and establish a sense of local identity.

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12.1 Without an approved Collections Development Policy, RAMM would not meet the UK standard for Accreditation which creates the risk of losing critical funding sources and causing reputational harm to the city. Approving the policy allows RAMM to proceed with the Accreditation submission.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 No. To achieve Museum Accreditation status museums must have a Collections Development Policy agreed by their governing body.

Strategic Director Place, Ian Collinson

Author: Julien Parsons

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

List of Appendices:

- RAMM Collections Development Policy 2026-30
- Appendix A RAMM Archaeological Archives Deposition 2026-30
- Appendix B RAMM Human Remains Policy 2026-30
- Appendix C RAMM Repatriation and Restitution of Objects and Human Remains 2026-30
- EQIA RAMM Collections Policy

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Collections Development Policy 2026-2030

Name of museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM)

Name of governing body: Exeter City Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 16 December 2025

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 2030.

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1 Relationship to other relevant policies and plans of the organisation:

1.1 The museum's statement of purpose is:

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM) is a service of Exeter City Council. It exists to enrich the lives of people living, working in and visiting Exeter by providing them with opportunities to be inspired, informed and entertained. The City's world-class collections are placed at the heart of everything the museum does. RAMM will acquire collections that document the natural and cultural history of Exeter set within its regional and national context as well as those that represent the City and region's connections across the world. The museum holds collections in trust for present and future generations, managing their care and security for the public benefit.

Its Manifesto states RAMM is:

Guardian of the past and collector of the future - Our world-class collections are at the heart of everything we do. We have been collecting since the 1860s – and will continue to do so – to record the natural and cultural history of Exeter, its region, and its place in the world. We collect specimens and artefacts in a thoughtful way, recognising our environmental and ethical responsibilities. We manage and care for collections for present and future generations.

1.2 RAMM's governing body, Exeter City Council (ECC) will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3 By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. ECC therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items from the museum's collection.

1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5 The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using Spectrum primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account

limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

- 1.6 The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.7 The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

2 History of the collections

2.1 Overview

RAMM owes the wealth of its extraordinary collections to its origins in the 1860s. Its predecessor, the Devon & Exeter Albert Memorial, was created through public subscription in the wake of Prince Albert's death. Civic leaders had been toying with the idea of a museum for several decades as there were important collections of artefacts and specimens in the city, such as those held by the Devon & Exeter Institution, gathered by people who had lived or worked abroad and retired to Devon.

These early donations helped to establish RAMM's collection priorities when it opened in 1868 around four subject areas: Antiquities (Archaeology and Local History), Art, Ethnography (World Cultures) and Natural History. In 1870 the Albert Memorial Museum, School of Art and Free Library was conveyed to the Corporation of Exeter in trust for the benefit of the City of Exeter under the Public Libraries Act, 1855. In the subsequent years collecting in the four core areas has been refined and formalised through a policy periodically ratified by elected members.

Between 2000 and 2013 RAMM undertook a major project to tackle a backlog in collections documentation followed by a root-and-branch review of its collections by assessing information on provenance, significance and usage. The award-winning review identified collections strengths and weaknesses and informed the themes and priorities for future research, collecting and rationalisation.

While the core themes established at RAMM's foundation remain the cornerstone of collecting, the museum's acquisition policies have evolved in the subsequent years.

3 An overview of current collections

3.1 Overview

RAMM houses a varied collection well in excess of a million items. The principal subject areas are classified under the headings of Antiquities, Costume and Textiles, Decorative Art, World Cultures, Fine Art, Natural Sciences and Social History.

Alongside (and sometimes within) the principal subject areas, RAMM's holdings also incorporate inter-disciplinary material, such as Numismatics, Contemporary Art and Photography.

3.2 Antiquities

Approximately 55,030 accession records refer to the archaeology of Devon and Exeter, Britain, Egypt, the Mediterranean and Western Asia as well as fragments from local buildings. Many of these records refer to group accessions (one accession number may cover a box of many pot sherds for example) so the actual number of objects within the Antiquities collection is significantly higher – estimated at 1,060,700 (May 2025).

RAMM's local archaeology and history collections represent the heritage of almost every community in Exeter, East Devon, Mid-Devon, Teignbridge and parts of the South Hams and Dartmoor. The collections cover most aspects of domestic, social, cultural, religious, economic and political life over the past 300,000 years.

For a small city, Exeter has been the subject of a huge amount of archaeological attention. The results of this work are deposited at RAMM. The archaeological holdings reflect the history of Exeter: from Roman military origins; a Roman civilian phase; post-Roman decline; Anglo-Saxon renewal; medieval growth; a Tudor and Stuart period of prosperity from trade and colonialism; to a less prominent but affluent Georgian and Victorian period.

Archaeological projects on the outskirts of Exeter have increased our knowledge of the prehistoric, Roman and medieval occupation of the area. For example, during the development of the Exeter Logistics Park, a 6000-year-old Neolithic grinding stone for making flour was uncovered, it is the largest and most complete example in the UK. Further afield, near Newton Abbot, the largest prehistoric pot to be found in Devon, a Middle Bronze Age (1600-1200 BCE) bucket urn, was discovered during excavations preceding a housing development.

The collection includes a large number of coins and coin hoards found by archaeologists and metal detectorists (e.g. the Roman hoard from Seaton Down). There are also 18th and early 19th century coin finds from Exeter, particularly those of W.T.P. Shortt and the Norton collection. These two are of particular note as they contain large numbers of eastern Mediterranean and Arabic coins which have long puzzled archaeologists. Coin finds from controlled excavations are of great importance in site dating and interpretation.

Historically, RAMM has collected archaeological material from the whole of Devon; however, since the 1990s, the museum has only collected archaeological archives from the local authority areas of Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, Teignbridge, plus the eastern half of Dartmoor and the South Hams (see Appendix A). RAMM levies a fee for the deposition of these archaeological archives which covers their long-term storage and curation. RAMM holds the archives of field records, site plans, photographs, etc., relating to pre-2014 archaeological sites from both Exeter and Devon. Now that most archaeological documentation is 'born digital', RAMM no longer collects this material, instead it is archived with specialised digital repositories such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

RAMM works actively with the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) and metal-detecting communities to encourage detectorists to record their finds. The Museum has acquired finds through the Treasure Act 1996 as well as non-treasure items directly from landowners and detectorists.

Additionally, the antiquities collection includes important architectural fragments from buildings in Exeter and around Devon dating from around AD 950 to 1800. The best examples have regional and national importance as a record of building styles and methods, many of which have been lost during recent development. As with the archaeology collections, they form an important element in establishing a sense of place. Of particular note is a nationally important collection of late medieval ecclesiastical woodwork fragments from churches of the Southwest collected by Exeter-based Harry Hems.

The archaeology of the Mediterranean region, Egypt and Western Asia is represented by collections in RAMM. The majority of the European, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Cypriot, Etruscan and Roman material was collected in the 19th and very early 20th centuries. The core of the collection is formed by the Cobham collection of Cypriot antiquities, the Corkill collection of Mesopotamian cylinder seals and the L.A.D. Montague collection. The latter is a good example of a 'gentleman's' antiquities collection, mostly purchased from dealers and including a Greek hoplite helmet said to be from the Battle of Marathon. Individual objects of interest include: the mummy of Shep en-Mut, a late 18th-dynasty stone sculpture head, possibly Tutankhamun or Horemheb, and examples of Coptic textiles. RAMM and its partners are actively researching this material to try to establish more precise identifications and provenances.

3.3 Contemporary Art

Contemporary art and craft in RAMM's collection have been acquired by purchase (with grant support) and donation in recent years and works are found across the collection areas. In 2015-20 sculpture was the particular focus with works by Polly Morgan, Peter Randall-Page, Michael Shaw and others entering the collection. 2020-2025 saw photography take priority (see 3.10). The World Cultures collection also includes artwork commissioned to celebrate the museum's international links, such as by Rosanna Raymond and Suzuki Mutsumi. Acquisitions have been made through the museum's membership of the Contemporary Art Society including Gillian Ayres, Céline Condorelli, Joy Gregory and Michelle Sank. Since 2018 the collection has focused on redressing the gender balance of artists in Fine Art (see 4.7) so artwork by women artists including Fern Leigh-Albert, Susan Derges and Amy Shelton have been acquired.

3.4 Costume and Textiles

RAMM's collections management database includes approximately 17,000 verified records relating to the costume and textiles collection. However, many of these refer to a group of items, so it is estimated that the actual number of objects in the collection is nearer 24,000.

The Costume and Textiles collection illustrates the types of clothes worn by local men, women and children from 1750 to the present day, with some much earlier examples of underwear, accessories and textiles. The collection is strongest in middle/upper class female

clothing but is better balanced for more recent periods, including every day and occupational clothes worn by people of all classes in Exeter.

The collection of lace, some 2,000 items including documentation and equipment, is particularly strong. It covers European and British laces (and allied techniques) from the 16th century to the present day. The Bury Palliser and Treadwin collections - both important 19th-century collections of English and continental lace samples - were among the first collections to be given to the museum in the 1860s. They are unique to RAMM. In recent years RAMM has acquired the collections of two modern Devon lace makers and teachers: Christine Hawken and Elsie Luxton MBE.

The strength of the Costume and Textiles collection is the quantity of material with strong local connections, whilst the quality and quantity of items ranks it among the top ten costume collections in Britain. Many objects have been published.

3.5 Decorative Art

The Decorative Art collection covers a broad field. It comprises approximately 500 items of silver, 1,300 ceramics and 400 glass objects, as well as smaller collections of civic regalia, furniture, horology, pewter and other metalwork.

RAMM's collection of Devon silver is of international importance and dates from the medieval period to the present day. Most was acquired in the post-war years through the Veitch bequest and through the Reynolds Chard bequest. The V&A Purchase Grant Fund in 1995 allowed the acquisition of the Corfield Spoon Collection. The museum also has some important early church silver on loan from churches within the diocese. The collections at the Guildhall are mostly of a later date and with Civic associations. The most recent acquisitions were two Elizabethan silver mounted tigerware jugs from Exeter, about 1580-90, purchased in 2012 through the Reynolds Chard bequest and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund and Art Fund.

The ceramics collection is made up of English and continental material from the 17th century to the present day. Some is of a high quality and the collections of harvest jugs is of national importance. There is also a strong collection of Martinware. Devon potteries such as Brannam's and Aller Vale are well represented, but there are some significant gaps in the studio ceramics collections. RAMM is addressing these and is actively collecting to bring the collection of local studio pottery up to

date. Recent acquisitions in 2024-25 include a jug and raku tea bowl by Jill Fanshawe Kato; and a jar and a dish by Doug Fitch and Hannah McAndrew. Bruce Chivers donated a raku ware vessel in 2017.

The museum has a large and representative collection of glass dating from the early 18th century, based on the Clarke bequest of 1928. There are several pieces of special note such as the Joanna Southcott beakers and Charles II flute glass.

RAMM's collection of horology embraces clocks, watches and clock and watch-making tools from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Most of the watch collection was bequeathed by C.R. Venn in 1928 and is one of the most important collections outside London, including several very rare time-pieces. Later acquisitions, including an 18th-century watch by Henry Gard of Exeter, acquired in 2011, have filled some of the gaps in RAMM's collection.

3.6 World Cultures

RAMM's World Cultures collection consists of some 11,000 items. In 1998 the collection gained Designated status. This is in recognition of its national and significance and international importance. The collection includes items from different parts of the world. It reflects acquisitions made during the time of British colonialism. This period dates from the late 18th century through to the early/mid-20th century.

The collection represents British interests in:

- ▶ Africa, (particularly Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and South Africa)
- ▶ the Americas (includes Arctic, Northwest Coast and Plains region of the USA, Mexico, Guatemala and the Amazon and Savannah regions of South America)
- ▶ Western Asia (notably Oman)
- ▶ Asia (such as China, India and Myanmar)
- ▶ Oceania (includes Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Australia, Aotearoa, and Tonga).

Local Exeter and Devon residents were responsible for acquiring these souvenirs. Sometimes they donated trophies of conflict, as they were witness to or participated in iconic historic events. The collection represents the significant connections made between local people and Indigenous communities.

After the museum opened in 1868, there were several significant donations:

- ▶ The Devon and Exeter Institution transferred items to RAMM. This included rare items from Tahiti collected by Francis Godolphin Bond in 1792.
- ▶ Reverend Henry Townsend was an Exeter-born missionary based in Nigeria. He set up a mission in the new Egba city of Abeokuta in 1846. He acquired prestigious items from people in positions of power.
- ▶ Henry Vaughan was an art collector. He donated items from Captain Cook's second and third voyages. These items came from the 1806 Leverian auction.
- ▶ Crew members from the HMS Discovery (1790-95) and HMS Blossom (1825-28) traded artefacts in the Arctic and Pacific regions.
- ▶ In 1865 botanist John Gould Veitch participated in a collecting voyage on the HMS Curaçoa. Artefacts from these voyages are found in collections at RAMM.
- ▶ F.W.L. Ross served on the HMS Tagus in 1813, built his own museum in Topsham. His naval contacts helped him establish an important collection of rare items.
- ▶ Richard Edward Dennett was a dealer in ivory and rubber in the Congo region. He acquired a collection of artefacts associated with the nganga priest class. He was likely a member of the Lemba trading guild.
- ▶ James Bandinel was the head of the anti-slave department at the Foreign Office (1824-49). His collection of artefacts came from naval ships which had seized slaving vessels.

Modern acquisitions enhance the historic collection. Artefacts have to match the quality and range of existing material. This includes expedition material from the Amazon and Cerrado regions of Brazil. Also, Chhau performance masks made in 1980s India.

Contemporary art has become an important part of the collection. In 2007, Polynesian artist Rosanna Raymond was commissioned to produce *Genealogy*. These barkcloth-covered jeans highlighted the significance of barkcloth to Pacific Island identities. Melinda Schwackhofer is an artist of Muscogee heritage. RAMM purchased her 2021 portrait *I am Mvskoke*. This now features in the Ancestral Voices gallery redisplay.

3.7 Fine Art

The collection includes material from the 16th century to the present. It comprises approximately 500 paintings, 3,600 drawings and watercolours, 3,600 prints and a small collection of sculpture.

The Fine Art collection is strong in 18th and 19th-century local artists - in particular Francis Towne, John White Abbott and John Gendall, representing Exeter and Devon topographical scenes. Since 2005, significant Devon artists of this period (pre-dating the 20th century), such as Francis Hayman, Benjamin Robert Haydon and Richard Cosway have been acquired via grant aid in order to extend and consolidate this already significant collection. These artists are either native to or have a tradition of working in Devon. Artists (of excellence and significance) beyond the above remit, including a John Opie portrait of Micaiah Towgood, have been acquired only via donation or bequest.

The representative collection of 20th-century paintings, prints and drawings has been developed, with the addition of works linking to artists already featured in the collections (e.g. Duncan Grant, Walter Sickert) and the groups and schools with which they were associated (e.g. Bloomsbury, Camden Town, Euston Road). More recent acquisitions include a David Bomberg landscape. Works by war artists have lately been consolidated by the acquisition of Leighton Hall Woollatt's Blitz scenes, among others.

The acquisition of local works, for example landscapes and portraits, can be of more importance for their topographical or historical significance than their artistic merit. RAMM has continued to acquire selected additions of work related to the region, such as Exeter and Devon landscapes; work with a connection to the region through ownership or provenance; and work by established professional artists born, trained or resident in the region, including artists-in-residence. Important recent acquisitions to this part of the collection include works by John White Abbot and Leighton Hall Woollatt.

Works in RAMM's sculpture collection range from the medieval period onwards. The acquisition of sculpture is limited by size, storage and conservation factors. However important 20th-century small-scale works include *Zennor* by Barbara Hepworth, *Carapace* by Michael Ayrton and *Triple Loop* by Bill Pye. In 2017 RAMM commissioned Danish glass artist Steffen Dam to create *Specimens from an Imaginary Voyage* specifically for the 'Sladen's Studies' gallery.

3.8 Natural Sciences

RAMM's Natural Sciences collections are wide in scope covering zoology, botany and geology. They contain British and foreign material of high quality and scientific importance. Approximately 121,000 accession records relate to Natural Sciences objects. Many of these records refer to group accessions (for example, one accession number may cover an entire cabinet of entomology specimens) so the actual number of objects within Natural Sciences is estimated in excess of 500,000.

The molluscs number approximately 70,000 individual specimens with good global and taxonomic coverage. In January 2020 George Montagu's collection of shells received Designated status from Arts Council England. It includes 120 lots with type status and attracts international research interest. It is the most intact and taxonomically important collection of British shells of the early 19th century to be found anywhere in the UK. Juliana Linter's collection of approximately 14,000 exotic land snail shells is also noteworthy for it includes many rare or extinct species as well as some type material.

Percy Sladen's echinoderm collection comprises several thousand microscope slides and fossils from the collection of William and Philip Carpenter and over 2,500 dry and wet-preserved echinoderms. Some of these echinoderms were collected on the expeditions of HMS Challenger (1872-76) and HMS Lightning (1868). This is one of the best echinoderm collections in the UK outside of national museums.

RAMM has excellent British and exotic butterfly collections numbering in the region of 120,000 specimens, many of which have been consolidated (organised taxonomically rather than by collector). RAMM also has comprehensive holdings of British beetles and spiders (the acquisition of Toddy Cooper's collection in 2023 filled many of the gaps in Dave Bolton's collection).

Birds are a particular area of strength within the vertebrate collection with more than 12,500 study skins, eggs, bones and mounts. The specimens are of native and exotic species with good global coverage and include those now extinct or exceedingly rare such as the kakapo, huia, moa, ivory-billed woodpecker and passenger pigeon. North American birds are particularly well represented. Some of RAMM's most iconic objects are mammals. Of the 1,400 mammal specimens around 60 were collected by big game hunter Charles Victor Alexander Peel including the giraffe as well as a polar bear and an African elephant. Reptiles, fish and amphibians are less well represented.

The botany collection is a good reflection of the activities of collectors from Victorian times up to the mid-20th century. Specimens from early collectors such as William D'Urban and William Hiern are particularly data-rich. Both collections include local and national material. Some of Hiern's specimens have been published in *Flora of Devon* (1939) by Keble Martin and Fraser. Also of note are approximately 2,000 seaweed specimens, many collected by female collectors including Amelia Griffiths, Mary Wyatt, Catherine Cutler, Fanny Hindon and Ellen Hutchins.

The geology collections are strong in specimens from Devon and the South West of England; together with intermittent worldwide coverage. The palaeontology collections are particularly extensive, with important material from the local Cretaceous, Pleistocene and Triassic systems including the holotype of *Fodonyx spenceri*.

3.9 Numismatics

The numismatics collection comprises coins, tokens, medals and bank notes issued in Devon. Archaeological coins and coin hoards are represented within the Antiquities collection (see 3.2). The most important elements are a very fine systematic collection of the silver pennies struck at Devon's four Saxon and Norman mints (Exeter, Barnstaple, Totnes and Lydford), which includes one of only three known Alfred the Great EXA pennies, acquired in 2025. The sequence of Exeter's Civil War coinage is also of great importance.

There are also good collections of Devon tradesmen's tokens of the 17th and 18th centuries, local medals, pub checks and badges, and a small collection of local banknotes. The museum also holds a representative selection of typical British coins of Saxon to modern date and a small collection of Classical coins.

3.10 Photography

An assessment of RAMM's photographic holdings was undertaken by a curatorial post from the V&A Museum's Photography Curators' Training programme, supported by Art Fund. It identified photographic material in all of RAMM's principal collection areas, as well as in the archive. It includes early daguerreotype and ambrotype material from the 1850s to present day prints. It is estimated that there are 600 photographic prints (including unique photographs, original and reproductive prints); 250 negatives and transparencies; 4,700 lantern slides; a small collection of

photographic albums and books containing photographs; and a collection related to photographic technology, including photographic equipment and raw materials.

The collection is strong in late 19th- and early 20th-century material by local, professional photographers with a particular focus on studio portraiture (cartes de visite, cabinet cards, loose and in photographic albums), such as by Owen Angel, James Frederick Long and Heath & Bradnee Ltd.

Highlights of the collection include:

- ▶ Four photographic portraits of the Royal family (reproductive prints) by Baron (Stirling Henry Nahum), Alice Hughes, and W. & D. Downey
- ▶ A tri-colour carbro print, *A Domestic Affair*, c. 1925, an outstanding example of early colour photography by Exeter-based photographer Frederick Gordon Tutton (1888-1930)
- ▶ Book with albumen prints of fungi (c. 1870s-80s), some hand-coloured, by early female photographer Miss M.M. Clarke
- ▶ Book *Hortus Veitchii*, 1906 with approx. 50 photogravure illustrations possibly by E.J. Wallis
- ▶ Group of 44 photographs of tree specimens collected by JR Jackson (including albumen prints by Samuel Bourne, Bourne & Shepherd, Charles Thomas Scowen, Nicholas & Curth and GR Lambert and Co.)
- ▶ A unique photographic album (platinum prints) of *Reminiscences of Mysore* by Barton & Son, Bangalore from c. 1906.
- ▶ Three crystoleum photographs by Exeter-based photographer Owen Angel, c. 1870s-80s
- ▶ Daguerreotype of an unknown girl by Charles Henry Williamson (1826 - 1874), c. mid-1850s
- ▶ Two boxes of microphotographs, some made by the pioneer of microphotography John Benjamin Dancer
- ▶ Photographs by Michelle Sank depicting the 2015 Rugby World Cup and subsequently COVID-19 pandemic purchased through the Contemporary Art Society's Rapid Response Fund.

Recent acquisitions focussed on Dartmoor, with works by Suan Derges, Garry Fabian Miller, Robert Darch, Fern Leigh Albert and Marie Yates entering the collection.

3.11 Social History

The Social history collection at RAMM is currently estimated at 9,955 records and 16,945 objects. Social history has recently been identified as a discrete group within RAMM's collections and we are currently assessing our holdings for significance.

These objects reflect the history of Exeter and its region from the 17th century onwards. They include artefacts relating to the city's institutions (the defences, religious institutions, the Guildhall, public health and the water supply for example), its foreign and regional trade (with highly important material from the operation of the custom port of Exeter), its industries, domestic life and topography (the last including a series of city models ranging in date from about 1820 to the 1970s). There has been little organised collecting in the past, and this is an area the museum is looking to develop in the future.

RAMM holds a small collection of musical instruments including important keyboard instruments as well as some woodwind and string instruments dating from the late 18th century. The 17th-century virginals by Charles Rewalyn of Exeter and the Italian harpsichord of 1782 are outstanding pieces.

The small collection of armour and swords is based on local 17th- and 18th-century material. A medium-sized collection of firearms has as its core the high quality products of the local firm of W.J. Harvey and other innovative 19th-century firearms collected by W.J. Harvey.

The small technology collection numbering some 296 objects was mainly collected between the 1970s and 1980s, with a few existing older acquisitions being included. A number of objects in this collection was identified as potential candidates for disposal following a rationalisation exercise.

RAMM has a significant collection of objects relating to fire insurance and firefighting, with some of the earliest examples dating from the 18th century. These objects include fire buckets, fire insurance marks, uniform and equipment, and a fire engine used by Exeter Cathedral.

4 Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Overview

RAMM's approach to collecting is shaped by its organisational purpose and values and responsibility to manage collections ethically, legally and effectively within the resources available and in line with the distinctive character of the museum, and always for the public benefit.

RAMM will collect in accordance with the following general principles:

- ▶ RAMM will collect strategically and ethically, to further our organisational purpose.
- ▶ Acquisitions will contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world.
RAMM is actively seeking to acquire material that reflects the diversity of contemporary Exeter and the surrounding area including, but not limited to, faith, race, gender, sexual orientation and disability.
- ▶ As part of the process of considering an item for the collection, we take into account the potential of the item to stimulate discussion and new perspectives and to help personalise the making of meaning.
- ▶ We take a focused, responsive approach to collecting, within the resources available to us.
- ▶ Whilst we emphasise the interconnectivity and diversity of our content, we do not aspire to build a comprehensive collection covering all areas of material culture.
- ▶ We balance further collecting with the imperative to better understand and make use of existing collections.
- ▶ In considering an item for our collection, we take into account the need for collections information, care and access.
- ▶ We seek to fill gaps in our collection only where this will strengthen existing collections themes, enrich visitor experience, or contribute to opportunities for discussion and debate.
- ▶ We will acquire an object only if it has clear potential for display, interpretation, research, learning, access or outreach.
- ▶ We will not acquire material whose care and conservation needs are out of proportion to its potential for display, interpretation, research, learning or outreach.
- ▶ The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations and work with them to ensure Devon's unique history is reflected in museum collections without significant duplications.

4.2 Antiquities

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established Antiquities collection areas as set out in 3.2. A particular focus for the next five years will be:

- ▶ Archaeological finds (whether they are found by professional bodies or members of the public) that significantly add to RAMM's collections or to the heritage of local communities.
- ▶ Archaeological archives from planning and development projects in line with the museum's Guidelines for the Deposition of Archaeological Archives. (Please see Appendix A for full details.) A priority will be to collect archives from the new communities that are being built in and around Exeter. Another focus will be on material that has potential to benefit from new analytical technologies investigating such subjects as DNA, stable isotopes and trace elements.
- ▶ Selected items of treasure (as defined in the 1996 Treasure Act). RAMM will follow the procedures as set out in the Treasure Act Code of Practice (see Treasure Act Code of Practice, paragraph 60). Coin hoards and hoards of Bronze Age metalwork are particularly strong sources of information and are a priority for collection.
- ▶ The Museum strongly discourages the removal of historic architectural fittings from their original buildings. However, in circumstances where such pieces will certainly be removed, or already have been removed, ecclesiastical or secular woodwork with Devon provenances will be acquired by purchase, gift or bequest, subject to their historic importance and with consultation with relevant local museums outside Exeter. Items relating to Harry Hems or Herbert Read and their workshops are of particular interest.

RAMM will not collect the following:

- ▶ British archaeological material from outside Devon.
- ▶ Digital documentation from archaeological projects or paperwork generated by such projects. Contracting units will be asked to deposit a digital archive with a suitable repository, such as the Archaeology Data Service.
- ▶ Examples of UK coinage or coinage from other countries (unless it is part of an archaeological find).
- ▶ Large architectural items owing to storage constraints. If the museum becomes aware of endangered architectural items, the Local Authority Archaeologist and Historic Environment Record will be contacted. Where practicable, attempts will be made to find alternative homes for significant items.

- ▶ Significant new collections of foreign archaeological material. New acquisitions, however, will be considered if artefacts are known to have come from the major donors of material already held in the collection e.g. Claude Delaval Cobham, Lt. Col. L.A.D. Montague, Dr. N.L. Corkill.

4.3 Contemporary Art

Since 2011 RAMM has developed a reputation for exhibiting and commissioning contemporary artists. Since 2018 this work has been guided by the role of Contemporary Art Curator and Programmer through a range of selection processes.

RAMM will acquire contemporary art. Collecting will be informed by RAMM's Manifesto, Business Plan and programming themes. Contemporary art acquisitions will contribute to exploring issues, events or people relevant to RAMM's wide-ranging collections. It will also be informed by Exeter's natural and cultural histories and its connections across the world. Contemporary art acquisitions may also explain historical museum processes and engage in dynamics of thinking between disciplines.

Funding will also inform the rationale for collecting contemporary art, as investment will be required for ambitious projects to be realised.

Methods for acquiring contemporary art may include:

- ▶ Purchase, bequest or donation (including donation in lieu of tax) in particular where it is linked to programmes and themes across RAMM
- ▶ Commissioning work for exhibition and public programmes
- ▶ Acts of repatriation
- ▶ National collecting or commissioning schemes such as through the membership scheme of the Contemporary Art Society
- ▶ In particular, RAMM needs to address the long-term storage of digital works already commissioned and to futureproof future programming and commissions for collecting. (see 4.11)

4.4 **Costume and Textiles**

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established Costume and Textiles collection areas as set out in 3.4. A particular focus for the next five years will be:

- ▶ Costume items with strong local provenance and which fill gaps in existing collection (Exeter and Devon); early Devon-made pieces; designers/makers with a local connection (all periods).
- ▶ RAMM seeks to build on existing collections of occupational and working-class dress particularly 18th and 19th century
- ▶ European lace items which fill gaps in existing collection: early pieces, particularly Devon-made; 16th- and 17th-century continental laces.

4.5 **Decorative Art**

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established Decorative Art collection areas as set out in 3.5. A particular focus for the next five years will be:

- ▶ To fill gaps in the studio ceramics collection, including both 20th-century and 21st-century pottery. A particular focus will be on Devon ceramicists and studio potters of national significance.
- ▶ Contemporary craft work that relates to RAMM's collections
- ▶ Silver with an Exeter or Devon association

4.6 **World Cultures**

New acquisitions should enhance collection strengths. Or they can fill existing gaps in the collection. Artefacts which reflect contemporary issues for collections-connected communities are also considered.

Suggestions for new acquisitions include:

- ▶ Historic photographic archive relating to the collection to aid interpretation.
Textiles from the African and American continents. Examples include Yoruba adire.
- ▶ Contemporary artwork.
- ▶ Traditional religious and high-status artefacts. Care must be taken to show provenance and means of acquisition by the donor. RAMM's care of such items must not cause offence to the originating peoples, and holders of specialist knowledge.

RAMM will not accept the following:

- ▶ Unmodified human remains
- ▶ Artefacts carved from ivory and rhinoceros horn post-1900
- ▶ Items acquired as a result of human conflict
- ▶ Sacred and high-status items as a result of historic colonial policy of assimilation

4.7 Fine Art

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established Fine Art collection areas as set out in 3.7. A particular focus for the next five years will be:

- ▶ Portrait miniatures by Devon artists. Four of the most important artists in the history of the portrait miniature were Devonian: Nicholas Hilliard, Richard Cosway, Richard Crosse and Ozias Humphry. Though their careers were based in the capital, each maintained strong connections to the South West and secured numerous commissions in the region. Works by Hilliard command prices far beyond the normal resources of the museum and special efforts would have to be made to acquire a work if the opportunity arose.
- ▶ Women artists. RAMM's collection, like many founded in the Victorian period, presents a traditional, patriarchal art historical view. While there are some notable Victorian women artists represented, the collection is heavily male-weighted. RAMM seeks to redress the balance by collecting works by female artists from all periods with strong links to the South West e.g. Exeter artist Ethel Larcombe (fl.1900-1920).
- ▶ Portraiture. The portrait collection is significant with examples from the 16th to the 20th century. The majority of these works depict white, wealthy and powerful sitters, that do not adequately reflect the diversity of historic or contemporary British society. There are no depictions of disability or portraiture that reflects the discourse of gender identity. Few works reflect Britain's racial and ethnic diversity or individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds. RAMM is actively seeking acquisitions to address this, with a focus on the diversity of Devon.

4.8 Natural Sciences

In addition to the considerations set out in 4.1 RAMM has the following standards and criteria for Natural Sciences collecting:

- ▶ Specimens should be well provenanced - known collector, collection location and date
- ▶ They should be locally relevant – this is considered in geographical terms – Devon, Exeter - or from a historical perspective (local collector, collector relevant to RAMM and its history, or local historical event).
- ▶ Foreign material will only be considered if of very good quality and if it complements RAMM's existing collections.
- ▶ Objects with a particular UK geographical association beyond Exeter but within Devon will only be acquired following consultation with relevant museums. Specimens should be identified to species level
- ▶ Herbarium specimens should be mounted where appropriate.
- ▶ Vertebrate specimens will be accepted if already prepared as mounts, skins, skeletons or preserved wet. Carcasses will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances
- ▶ Insects should be set and mounted or preserved in fluid. Papered, un-set or un-mounted specimens will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.
- ▶ Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established Natural Sciences collection areas as set out in 3.8.

A particular focus for the next five years will be to:

- ▶ Ensure both sexes of a species are represented where sexual dimorphism is present.
- ▶ Collect wild species new to Devon, including spreading UK natives and 'alien' introductions.
- ▶ Seek historic and modern specimens to provide voucher coverage (reference specimens) for Devon.
- ▶ Seek local examples of native and introduced reptile and amphibian species that occur in Devon to develop a reference collection of well-preserved specimens.
- ▶ Fill gaps in existing British mollusc collections with Devon specimens (where possible), as well as collecting examples of new species to the county.
- ▶ Fill any remaining gaps in the British spider, millipede, centipede and woodlouse collections ideally with specimens from Devon (list available on request).
- ▶ Collect palaeontological specimens from the World Heritage coast particularly Triassic reptiles from the Helsby Sandstone Formation (formerly known as Otter Sandstone) near Sidmouth and material from other Permian / Triassic sources in the South West.
- ▶ Collect Devon petrological and mineralogical material to fill existing gaps. Material related to industrial use is also sought.

4.9 Numismatics

Collecting will focus on items that were made in Devon or were issued in Devon. As the coin collection is already a very strong one, the focus will be on tokens, bank notes, badges and medals.

4.10 Photography

Selective acquisitions may be made according to the criteria of any of the principal collection areas. RAMM seeks to develop its photographic holdings by acquiring high-quality works by significant artists.

A particular focus for the next five years will be:

- ▶ Works by photographers who have made a significant contribution to the story of photography in the South West. Their work should provide insights into Exeter's and the region's culture and society and/or natural landscape.
- ▶ Photography made in and depicting the South West (specifically Dartmoor) produced during the late 20th and 21st centuries. The primacy of photography's documenting capacity in relation to landscape and the natural world will be of significance, but collecting will not be limited to traditional concepts of 'landscape photography'. Photographs on wider Dartmoor themes and topics related to culture and society of the area such as environment and nature, freedom and living with the land will be considered.
- ▶ Supporting young, local and emerging photographers through the acquisition of photobooks.
- ▶ Representing the diversity of contemporary Devon.

RAMM is not seeking to acquire the following material:

- ▶ Photographer's archives
- ▶ Topographical and documentary photographs of Exeter and Devon will be referred to Devon Heritage Services

4.11 Social History

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established Social History collection areas as set out in 3.8.

A particular focus for the next five years will be to:

- ▶ Acquire items with clear and unique connections to Exeter and Devon in terms of design, production or use by people living or working in Exeter, past or present.
- ▶ Collect social history items to enrich visitor experience (physical or virtual), introduce additional voices and stimulate discussion and new perspectives and to help personalise the making of meaning.
- ▶ Women's stories are underrepresented in the social history collection. RAMM will actively seek acquisitions that reflect the lives and experiences of women in Devon
- ▶ RAMM is not currently seeking to acquire oral history material, apart from in exceptional circumstances. On the occasion such material is acquired it will be with due regard to the codes of practice and ethical guidelines established by the Oral History Society and comparable professional bodies.

RAMM will not collect the following:

- ▶ Mass-produced items unless they strongly meet one or more criteria laid out in 5.1
- ▶ Large-scale industrial history items
- ▶ Due to restrictions of space and resources RAMM cannot undertake large-scale contemporary collecting. However, it will seek to make selective acquisitions that reflect contemporary Exeter life.

4.12 **Digital media**

RAMM is keenly aware of the growth in digital work in contemporary art and other creative areas. This includes artist commissions and exhibition content. Because the museum is not resourced for the long-term storage and preservation of born digital, or archived as digital, creations such works are not accessioned at present. Longer term we seek to find a means of accessioning, storing and preserving digital objects and are will explore partnerships that can deliver this aspiration.

5 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 Overview

The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

The following areas have been identified as priorities for rationalisation or disposal for the period 2025-2030 following further research and review.

5.2 Antiquities

- ▶ Recent Devon or Exeter archaeological archives with small collections of finds that form typical assemblages. These assemblages duplicate many others in RAMM and have little research value or community interest.
- ▶ Archaeological archives found on properties managed by heritage organisations, such as English Heritage, will be transferred to join existing collections with those organisations.
- ▶ Sampling/retention strategies will be applied to types of archaeological material where industry best practice has been built up. In several instances this best practice has been influenced by RAMM projects. Examples include archaeometallurgy, faunal remains, pottery building materials, and clay pipes.

5.3 Contemporary Art

None identified.

5.4 **Costume and Textiles**

- ▶ Duplicate examples of 20th-century gloves and stockings where condition or provenance is poor.
- ▶ Post-1970 periodicals in mass circulation that do not reflect the content of the collection.
- ▶ 20th-century hairdressing items and cosmetics.

5.5 **Decorative Art**

- ▶ Furniture (excluding pieces connected to Kent Kingdon)
- ▶ European ceramics that do not relate to key donors in the museum's history

5.6 **World Cultures**

- ▶ Souvenirs that contain little cultural value
- ▶ Various items from European countries that may sit better under other collections areas (e.g. Costume and Textiles) within RAMM or be a better fit with the collecting remits of other Accredited museums
- ▶ Duplicate historic items that might be best cared for in another museum collection or community of origin if wanted.
- ▶ Items (particularly weapons) that are in bad repair and are not good examples of their kind.
- ▶ Items which are identified as being sacred by source communities and those which were acquired unethically during the time of British colonialism. Such items will be considered for repatriation to support the needs of the originating community where a return offers significant healing and reconciliation. The significance of need is dealt with on a case-by-case basis in line with RAMM's repatriation process (see section 15 and Appendix C).

5.7 **Fine Art**

- ▶ Duplicate prints
- ▶ Documents better suited to a record office, such as South West Heritage Trust, or that are not locally relevant
- ▶ Publications which are available at other institutions and libraries

5.8 Natural Sciences

- ▶ Spirit collection - Poorly preserved material - often in phenoxytol which has been shown to be ineffective as a preservative – with negligible or insignificant provenance will be disposed of by destruction.
- ▶ Birds' eggs with poor data and little research potential.
- ▶ Recent, mass-produced publications

5.9 Photography

- ▶ Duplicate prints and copies
- ▶ Film negatives (hazardous materials) after digitisation
- ▶ Cameras, technical equipment and photographic raw material without direct relation to the collections and the museum's history or particular significance
- ▶ Material showing signs of extreme physical deterioration without any possibilities for restoration

5.10 Social History

- ▶ Firearms: mass-produced firearms not from Devon makers

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

Devon

- ▶ A la Ronde, Exmouth
- ▶ Allhallows Museum, Honiton
- ▶ Arlington Carriage Museum, Barnstaple
- ▶ Arlington Court, Barnstaple
- ▶ Ashburton Museum, Ashburton
- ▶ Axe Valley Heritage Museum, Seaton
- ▶ Axminster Museum, Axminster
- ▶ Branscombe Old Bakery, Seaton
- ▶ Braunton & District Museum, Braunton
- ▶ Brixham Heritage Museum, Brixham
- ▶ Buckfastleigh Museum and the Valient Soldier Heritage Project, Buckfastleigh,
- ▶ Buckland Abbey, Yelverton,
- ▶ Burton Art Gallery & Museum, Bideford
- ▶ Castle Drogo, Exeter
- ▶ Coldharbour Mill Working Wool Museum, Cullompton,
- ▶ Coleton Fishacre House & Garden, Dartmouth
- ▶ Combe Martin Museum, Combe Martin
- ▶ Cookworthy Museum of Rural Life, Kingsbridge
- ▶ Crediton Museum & Heritage Centre, Crediton
- ▶ Dartmoor Prison Museum, Princetown
- ▶ Dartmouth Museum, Dartmouth
- ▶ Dawlish Museum, Dawlish
- ▶ Devonshire Collection of Period Costume, Totnes
- ▶ Elizabethan House, Plymouth
- ▶ Exmouth Museum, Exmouth
- ▶ Fairlynch Arts Centre & Museum, Budleigh Salterton
- ▶ Finch Foundry, Okehampton
- ▶ Flete, Ivybridge
- ▶ Holsworthy Museum, Holsworthy
- ▶ Ilfracombe Museum, Ilfracombe
- ▶ Killerton House, Exeter

- ▶ Knightshayes Court, Tiverton,
- ▶ Lyn & Exmoor Museum, Lynton
- ▶ Markers Cottage, Exeter,
- ▶ Morwellham Quay Open Air Museum, Tavistock
- ▶ Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon, Barnstaple
- ▶ Museum of British Surfing, Braunton
- ▶ Museum of Dartmoor Life, Okehampton
- ▶ Newton Abbot Town & GWR Museum, Newton Abbot
- ▶ North Devon District Council Museum Service, Barnstaple
- ▶ North Devon Maritime Museum, Appledore
- ▶ Overbecks Museum, Salcombe
- ▶ Salcombe Maritime Museum, Salcombe
- ▶ Saltram House, Plymouth
- ▶ Sidmouth Museum, Sidmouth
- ▶ South Devon Railway Museum Trust, Buckfastleigh
- ▶ South Molton & District Museum, South Molton
- ▶ Tavistock Museum, Tavistock
- ▶ Teignmouth and Shaldon Museum & Historical Society, Teignmouth
- ▶ The Box, Plymouth
- ▶ Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Honiton
- ▶ Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life, Tiverton
- ▶ Topsham Museum, Exeter
- ▶ Torquay Museum, Torquay
- ▶ Torre Abbey (Torbay Council), Torquay
- ▶ Totnes Elizabethan House Museum, Totnes
- ▶ Totnes Fashion and Textile Museum, Totnes
- ▶ University of Exeter, Bill Douglas Centre, Exeter

Other counties

- ▶ Bristol Museums, Bristol
- ▶ Falmouth Art Gallery, Falmouth, Cornwall
- ▶ Lyme Regis Museum, Lyme Regis, Dorset
- ▶ Penlee House Gallery & Museum, Penzance, Cornwall
- ▶ Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro, Cornwall

7.3 Specific reference is made to the following records offices and archives:

- ▶ Beaford Arts, South Molton
- ▶ Cornwall Record Office
- ▶ Devon Heritage Services (South West Heritage Trust)
- ▶ The Box, Plymouth

8 Archival holdings

8.1 Overview

As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, it will be guided by the 'Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom' (third edition, 2002) and resources provided by the Archives & Records Association of the UK & Ireland.

Archival material offered to RAMM that does not relate to RAMM's collections will be referred to Devon Heritage Services or other relevant record office.

9 Acquisition

9.1 Overview

All new acquisitions (whether offered to the museum by external persons or bodies, or sought for purchase by the museum) will be considered by a team composed of museum staff. In the case of small acquisitions this will be made up of curators and conservators with the senior member of the Collections Team to make a final decision, if required. For large acquisitions and those that require significant finance the decision will be authorised by the museum's Management Team.

When a new acquisition is offered to the museum, staff must demonstrate that a proposed acquisition has significance and value to RAMM because it is consistent with the general principles above. Decisions to accept or decline are agreed through the monthly Collections Team meetings.

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

9.2 Ethical acquisition

The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been

legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from 1 November 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The museum will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

9.3 Unsolicited items

Items left at RAMM without prior consent of the collections team (and the completion of an entry form) may be disposed of. Items deemed to be held illegally or a health and safety hazard will be surrendered to the relevant authorities.

10 Human remains

10.1 RAMM will follow procedures in the *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums* issued by DCMS in 2005.

10.2 The museum does not knowingly hold human remains under 100 years old. We are actively reviewing and resolving instances where human remains are lacking documentation or are poorly provenanced.

10.3 If existing holdings are found to be younger than 100 years, or the museum seeks to acquire such material, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.

10.4 For more information see Appendix B: Human Remains Policy

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 The museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any biological or geological specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the

United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12 Archaeological material

- 12.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 12.2 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

13 Exceptions

- 13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:

- ▶ acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- ▶ acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases, the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

14 Spoliation

- 14.1 The museum will use the statement of principles *Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period*, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 15.1 The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums* issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 15.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums*.
- 15.3 For a detailed guide to RAMM's procedures regarding repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains please see Appendix C.

16 Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal. Disposal of accessioned objects will comply with the Museum Association's published guidance: *Off the Shelf: A Toolkit for Ethical Transfer, Reuse and Disposal*, 2023.
- 16.2 A representative of the governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort – destruction.

- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by a representative (relevant Portfolio Holder) of ECC only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.
- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone. ECC's Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture & Tourism has delegated decision-making power with regard to disposals. In the event that the Head of Service and Portfolio Holder have concerns about a proposal to dispose, the decision will be made by ECC Executive Committee.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8 If the material is not acquired by any museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's *Museums Journal* or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other museums and heritage organisations. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain such as educational settings, libraries, and community groups.

- 16.10 Any monies received by the museum from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England
- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with Spectrum procedure on deaccession and disposal.
- 16.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.
- 16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may sanction its destruction.
- 16.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police

certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVES DEPOSITION 2026-2030

Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery, Exeter

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM) is a service of Exeter City Council. It has a significant collection of archaeological finds and records (archaeological archives) built up since the 1970s through so-called ‘rescue archaeology’ and developer-funded archaeology. These archives represent a major part of our communal cultural heritage, and – for the periods of Exeter and Devon’s rich history for which there are no documents or many buildings surviving – is the only evidence for what happened in the past, for illustrating how people lived and died, and for how the urban and rural landscape have developed over the centuries. By its nature, archaeological material, and the knowledge it contains cannot be replaced.

This document sets out how RAMM will work with archaeological contractors and planning archaeologists to ensure that archaeology generated as part of the planning and development process is archived and preserved in a public repository.

The volume of archives from developer-funded archaeology means that RAMM has to be selective in what it takes as publicly accessible archaeological archives. It is not sustainable to take all finds from archaeological projects, many of which duplicate each other and RAMM’s extensive existing archaeological collection.

RAMM will only accept finds of an exceptional nature and ones that significantly add to our knowledge of a community’s heritage. The archive deposited with RAMM will have been subject to agreed sampling and disposal strategies which will have taken into account RAMM’s existing archaeology collection. There may be archaeological material that is not suitable for deposition with RAMM but may have long-term research interest to the wider archaeological community. RAMM will act as the consulting museum to work with archaeological contractors and planning archaeologists to find another repository for this archive.

The document element, whether ‘born-digital’ or retrospectively digitised, will be deposited with a trusted and respected digital repository, such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

RAMM will charge a box fee for items it accepts. (Price on application, see Appendix 4 for a selection of current box sizes and charges.) Deposition with other repositories, such as ADS, will be at the archaeology contractor’s expense.

RAMM reserves the right to refuse to accept archaeological material that does not meet the conditions outlined in this document. When RAMM receives archaeological material, it accepts responsibility for it in perpetuity. It accepts archaeological material on the basis of making it publicly accessible through exhibition, education and research.

2. MANDATORY CONDITIONS OF DEPOSITION

- 2.1 That the site lies within Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery's (RAMM) collecting boundaries (see Section 3 and Appendix 1).
- 2.2 That RAMM has been contacted prior to commencement of the archaeological project and it has been agreed that RAMM is to be the consulting museum.
- 2.3 That the archive is complete and fieldwork is not ongoing. Any sampling strategies need to have been carried out in consultation with RAMM prior to deposition.
- 2.4 That any reference numbers issued by RAMM prior to commencement of the excavation are referred to in HER records, OASIS records, site reports, publications and in documentary and digital archives as specified.
- 2.5 That the accession number/s issued by RAMM is used to number all items in the finds, documentary and digital archives as specified. Wherever possible this number is also referred to in HER records, OASIS records, site reports and publications
- 2.6 That if any items are accessioned by RAMM, signed title to them will have been obtained by the excavator and this is transferred to RAMM.
- 2.7 That a copyright licence has been assigned to RAMM.
- 2.8 That where human remains are included in the archive, there is an accompanying copy of the associated paperwork, required according to current law, from the documentary archive.
- 2.9 That any conservation work essential for the long-term preservation and intelligibility of finds within the archive has been completed by the excavator and is fully documented.
- 2.10 That the archive has been prepared to the standard specified in this document.
- 2.11 That the contractor has submitted a 'Statement of Potential' about the site archive. This only needs to be a brief synopsis or paragraph outlining the importance, or not, of the site and its finds. This will serve as a good starting point for use of the archive and will be included on a future museum web entry for the site. A digital image (of the site or a significant find) should also be submitted, again this will be used to illustrate the site on RAMM's website. The image should be a jpeg at 300dpi and 1000 pixels on the longest side.
- 2.12 That an Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) form has been completed for the site
- 2.13 That charges relating to the deposition of the archive have been paid.

3. RAMM'S COLLECTING BOUNDARIES

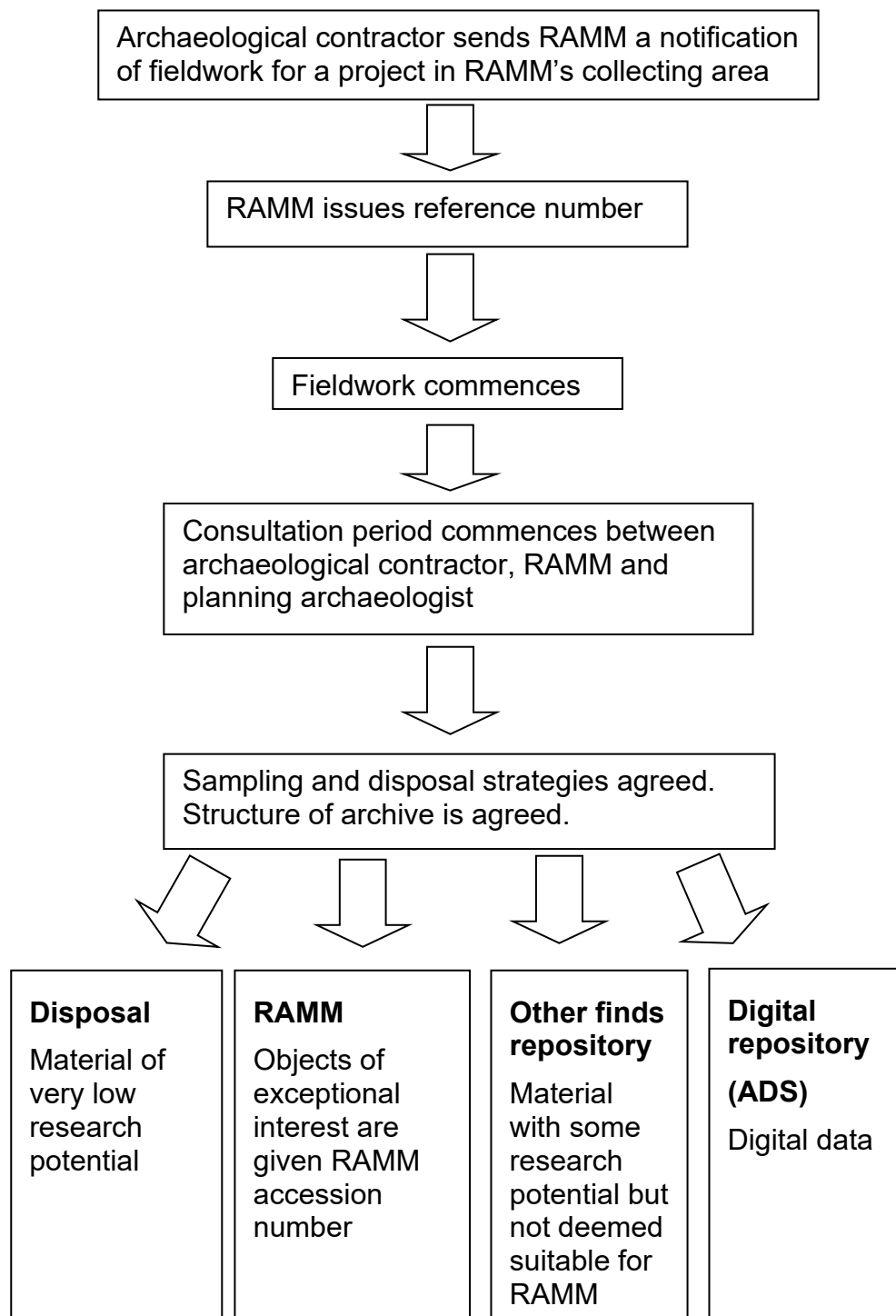
RAMM collects archaeological material from the following district council areas:

- Exeter
- East Devon
- Mid Devon
- Teignbridge
- South Hams (only the parishes of Staverton, Littlehempston, Dartington, Totnes, Berry Pomeroy, Marldon, Stoke Gabriel and Kingswear) and West Devon (only the parishes of Bondleigh, North Tawton, South Tawton, Spreyton, Drewsteignton, Throwleigh, Gidleigh and Chagford).

For a map showing the collecting boundary see Appendix 1. RAMM cooperates with Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery, Torquay Museum and Barnstaple & North Devon Museum to cover archaeological collecting across the county.

4. PROCESS CHART

This chart outlines the process for depositing archaeological archives with RAMM.



5. CONTACTING RAMM PRIOR TO FIELDWORK

As soon as the archaeological contractor has been commissioned to undertake an archaeological project within the RAMM collecting area they should complete a Notification of Fieldwork form (see Appendix 2) and email or send it to the address below. RAMM will agree, in principle, to be the consulting museum, providing the excavator fulfils the standard as set out in this document. At this point RAMM will issue a reference number which can be quoted in the WSI, correspondence with RAMM and quoted in data submitted to OASIS and ADS. This number is used to track archaeological activity and does not commit RAMM to accepting material from the site into its collection. It acts as the start of a period of consultation between the archaeological contractor, the planning archaeologist and RAMM.

RAMM will charge £40 to cover the administrative work involved in registering an archaeological project and issuing a reference number.

Contact details are:

Thomas Cadbury
Assistant Curator
Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art
Gallery
Queen Street
Exeter EX4 3RX

Telephone: 01392 265356
Email: thomas.cadbury@exeter.gov.uk

6. CONSULTATION PROCESS

During consultation, sampling and disposal strategies can be formulated, these will take account of the sizeable collection already held by RAMM. Finds to be accessioned by RAMM will be selected, and those that should be deposited elsewhere will be noted.

7. ALLOCATION OF RAMM ACCESSION NUMBER

Should the project find objects of an exceptional nature or of high significance to a community's heritage then RAMM may decide to acquire them for its collection. In this case RAMM will assign a unique accession number to the site. Items given accession numbers should also be quoted in data submitted to OASIS and ADS and in final published reports as an aid to researchers and museum staff.

Appendix 6 lays out how the accession number is used in relation to different classes of finds (sub-numbered by material, period etc).

Important

Where individual artefacts have been identified within specialist reports it is essential that they are individually identifiable within the archive. Similarly, where specialists have sorted artefacts into different types within a context, these groups should be bagged accordingly and labelled with their identification. This aids future research and use of the collections.

8. DIGITAL DATA

RAMM expects that the documentary element of an archive is deposited as digital data with a trusted and respected digital repository, such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

When depositing with ADS the standard method is with ADS Easy. Larger or more complex datasets can be deposited following consultation with ADS.

9. TRANSFERRING TITLE

Any parts of the archive being accessioned by RAMM should have signed title transferred to RAMM prior to deposition of the archive (see Appendix 3). The excavator is the signatory for the documentary archive and the freehold landowner is the signatory for the finds archive.

10. ASSIGNMENT OF COPYRIGHT

Copyright to the archive must be made available to RAMM via the Copyright Licence form for unrestricted internal use of the archive. (see Appendix 5).

11. ESSENTIAL CONSERVATION WORK

All essential conservation of archaeological objects must be completed prior to deposition. Where appropriate, conservation issues should be discussed with RAMM in advance of work being carried out. Full records of any conservation work and treatment carried out need to be included in the archive. All conservation work must be carried out by a professional conservator. If in doubt, contact the museum for advice.

12. STANDARDS FOR PRESENTATION OF ARCHIVES

Archives must be prepared to the required standard of RAMM. This is set out below.

12.1 FINDS ARCHIVES

12.1.1 Sampling and Disposal

Sampling is increasingly used to discard bulk material where it is thought to be surplus to future research needs. This should be discussed with the museum in advance of any sampling process being carried out. All sampling strategies need to be fully documented in the final archive. The existing holdings of RAMM's archaeology collection will be an important factor that informs the sampling and disposal strategy.

12.1.2 Bulk finds

12.1.2.1 Cleaning

All bulk finds must be cleaned. The only exceptions are where it is thought cleaning will destroy important evidence regarding the function of an object. Finds such as washed pottery and bone must be allowed to fully dry before being bagged up. If finds are packaged damp, mould growth will occur.

12.1.2.2 Marking

Where possible all bulk finds must be marked with the reference number or accession number followed by the context number in brackets (see 7 and appendix 6). On finds where the application of paraloid B72 diluted with acetone will not damage the object, a layer of paraloid should be applied and the number written onto the paraloid when it has dried. This should be done using a mapping pen and black 'Indian' ink. White ink should only be used on very dark finds as it gives a more untidy result and tends to be less permanent. 'Windsor & Newton' or equivalent quality inks must be used; that is water resistant drawing ink made from a lightfast pigment in a shellac solution (can be thinned with distilled water if required). A top coat of paraloid should be added to ensure the longevity of the number.

The writing should be small, neat and legible. Pottery sherds should be marked on the inside towards the middle. This is preferable in case the pot is ever reconstructed and the edges consequently obscured. It also means that the number is more likely to survive if the sherd is chipped or further sampled.

It is not possible to mark some bulk finds such as slag; samples; artefacts with very rough surfaces, or those which are very small.

For a full guide to marking see [Labelling and marking museum objects booklet - Collections Trust](#)

12.1.2.3 Bagging up

All bulk pottery, bone, slag and glass must be bagged up, according to material and context number, using at least 200-gauge self-seal polythene bags with three white write on panels. Bags should not mix materials or contexts. Bags should hold an appropriate amount of material for their size. Bags containing metal finds should be perforated to

prevent the build-up of harmful micro-environments. A quick method of doing this is to use a pricking wheel of the type available from needlework shops.

The listed contents should be clearly visible from the outside of the bag. Information should be written onto the bag using a permanent black marker pen.

12.1.2.4 Boxing up

Only boxes of the correct dimensions and acid-free properties should be used (see 13.2.1). Bagged up bulk finds should be placed in AAZ1046 sized low acid boxes or where there are a small number of finds AAZ1045 boxes. If the size of individual objects cannot be accommodated in these sizes of box, then box AAZ1047 can be used but this should be the exception. Occasionally, boxes might be needed to house finds which have larger dimensions (see 13.1).

Out of necessity, boxes of finds are often stored on high level shelves and, as such, become dangerous to lift if they are too bulky or heavy. Apart from small sites, where all the finds will fit into one box, materials should not be mixed. For such smaller sites, ideally boxes should be partitioned using acid-free boxboard. Boxes should not mix finds of significantly different robustness.

12.1.2.5 Labelling boxes

Boxes must be labelled using foil backed box labels. The labels should preferably be printed but, if handwritten, need to be legibly filled out using an archival permanent black marker pen. Labels must be stuck to the left side of both a short and long side of the box.

12.1.3 Small finds

12.1.3.1 Cleaning and conservation

All small finds must be cleaned and, where necessary, treated by a professional conservator to ensure their long-term preservation and intelligibility.

Ensure that X-radiography of all metal objects (iron and copper alloy) has been carried out. This provides information about the objects and their condition but also identifies anything bound up in the corrosion deposits.

12.1.3.2 Marking

Where possible, all small finds should be marked using their accession number (see section 12.1.2.2).

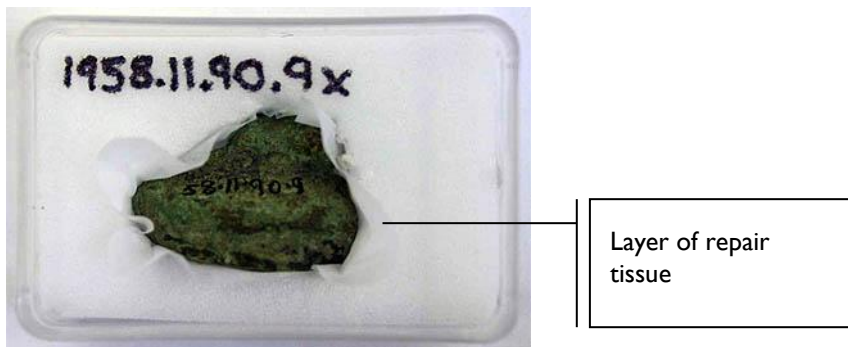
Objects should be marked discreetly but not obscurely. The marking should not detract from the potential display of the object.

12.1.3.3 Packaging (also fragile bulk finds)

In general, small finds need to be housed in more protective storage than bulk finds, as they are usually more delicate in nature.

Very robust small finds may be bagged in the same manner as bulk finds. Moderately robust small finds can be cushioned on a layer of polyethylene 'jiffy' foam in a polythene bag. They should not be wrapped but should be visible through the clear side of the bag.

Bags should be perforated. More delicate small finds should be housed in clear, non-hinged, polystyrene 'crystal' boxes in plastazote inserts. These should consist of a layer of plastazote, which fits into the bottom of the box, and a top layer, which has a cut-out in the shape of the object, into which the object is placed. Ideally, a layer of PEL wet strength repair tissue should be placed between the object and the cut-out to facilitate easy removal. The small find should be visible through the lid of the box. Where necessary plastazote 'braces' should be put over the object to prevent it moving and banging against the lid.



Packaged metal small finds and other small finds, which need to be kept in regulated micro-environments, should subsequently be packed with humidity absorbing crystals into a polythene box (see 13.2).

Silica gel stored with ferrous objects should be pre-conditioned at below 15% relative humidity. With non-ferrous metals the silica gel should be pre-conditioned to below 35% relative humidity.

Polythene small finds boxes must also have a humidity indicator strip placed inside. Please position this so that it is visible from the outside.

Larger metal or composite objects may need to be housed in their own stewart boxes. Again, these finds should be supported by plastazote, have a regulated micro-environment and a humidity indicator strip.

12.1.3.4 Boxing up

Packaged non-metal small finds should be boxed up in low acid boxes (G. Ryder code AAZ1045 or AAZ1046). Care must be taken to ensure that the objects do not crush each other and that there is minimal movement in the box. Acid free tissue paper and polyethylene 'jiffy' foam should be used as a buffer within the box or where possible, internal partitions created using acid-free boxboard.

Packaged metal objects should be boxed in polythene boxes. Again, acid-free paper or polyethylene 'jiffy' foam should be used as a buffer to ensure minimal movement within the box.

12.1.3.5 Labelling boxes

All small finds boxes must be labelled using foil backed box labels. Box labels should be stuck to the left side of a short and long side of the box. Crystal box labels should have a paper label cut to size and placed in the bottom of the box beneath the plastazote layer. The unique accession number should be written with a permanent marker pen onto the

plastazote beside the object, and also onto the lid of the box at the top right-hand corner and where possible should not obscure the view of the contents.



Where crystal boxes are too small to be labelled using a pre-printed label, they should be put inside a perforated labelled polythene bag with the find showing through the clear side of the bag.

12.1.4 Outsize objects

Some objects, whether bulk finds or small finds, are too large for standard packaging. Items such as large timbers or stone carvings may not require packaging for storage but may sit directly on a shelf. Other items may require bespoke packaging. All materials must be of a conservation standard. All items should have a tyvek label marked with the object number in permanent marker pen and be attached using soft unbleached cotton tape.

12.2 DOCUMENTARY ARCHIVES

Documentary archives should be presented as digital files to ADS.

13. MATERIALS AND SUPPLIERS

If an excavator already uses materials which they feel correspond to those listed and would like to use these instead, please get in touch to discuss this **before** going ahead and using alternatives to those items listed.

13.1 Low acid boxes

Used to store bulk finds and small finds where appropriate.

Suggested supplier: G. Ryder & Co. Ltd (codes quoted)

Alternative supplier: Rotadex

AAZ1045

Wire Stitched Boxes

Made from 1900 micron double Kraft lined board Low acid (pH 6.5-8)

With a 76mm depth lift off lid. Stitched with pure brass wire.

394 x 241 x 76 mm Internal dimensions

AAZ1046

Wire Stitched Boxes

Made from 1900 micron double Kraft lined board Low acid (pH 6.5-8)

With a 76mm depth lift off lid. Stitched with pure brass wire.

394 x 241 x 152 mm Internal dimensions

AAZ1047

Wire Stitched Boxes

Made from 1900 micron double Kraft lined board Low acid (pH 6.5-8)

With a 76mm depth lift off lid. Stitched with pure brass wire.

394 x 241 x 304 mm Internal dimensions

13.2 Polythene boxes

Used to store small finds.

Suggested product: Addis Houseware Ltd Clip & Close

These boxes have performed well in conservation tests for being suitable for long-term storage of sensitive finds. The boxes are available in a wide range of sizes and from many suppliers.

13.3 Foil backed box labels

Preservation Equipment Ltd	Supplier code	Dimensions in mm	Use to label
Single sheet	387-3025	280mm x 216mm	Documentary archive boxes
10 label sheet	387-5352	102mm x 51mm each label	Small finds boxes which are too small to accommodate the 6 label sheet size label
84 label sheet	387-2520	47mm x 11mm	Photographic wallets, slides

13.4 Table of Suppliers

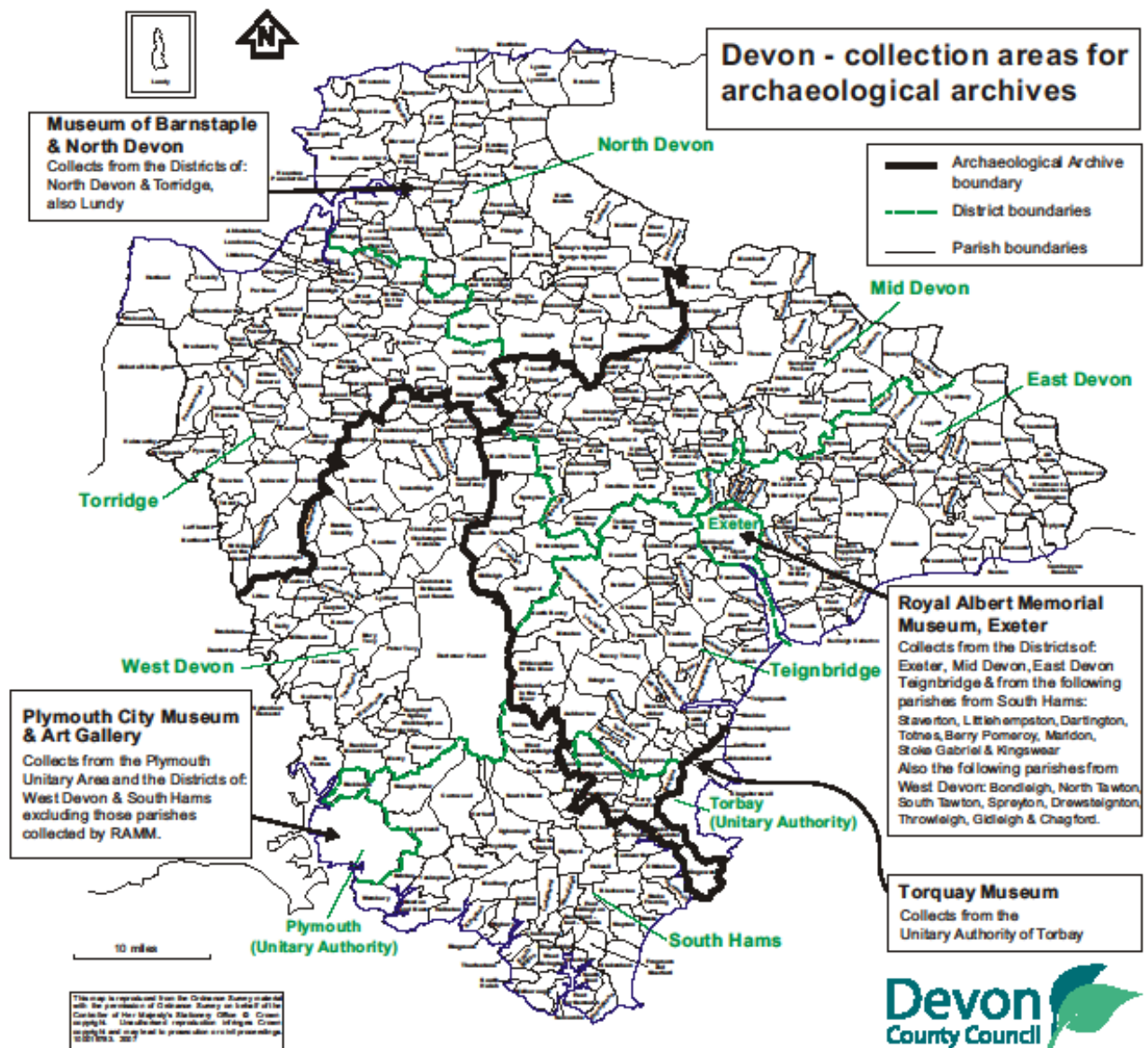
Name of supplier	Contact details	Supplies (and product codes)
Conservation Resources (U.K.) Ltd	Units 1,2 & 4 Pony Road, Horspath Industrial Estate, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2RD Tel: 01865 218277 Email: info@conservation-resources.co.uk Web: www.conservation-resources.co.uk	Flat document cases (15101), black polyester marker pens (PMP), 'pigma' archival pens, white marker pens (EF780), soft pencils (4HB), paraloid B72 (SY7 & SY7F), Perma-Saf™ photographic wallets & suspension rods (PSH-F)
G. Ryder & Co. Ltd	Denbigh Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK1 1DO Tel: 01908 375524 Email: sales@ryderbox.co.uk Web: www.ryderbox.co.uk	Wire stitched boxes (see section 13.10)
Polybags Ltd	Lyon Way, Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 0AQ Tel: 020 8575 8200 Email: sales@polybags.co.uk Web: www.polybags.co.uk	Polythene bags (self-seal gauge with three white write-on panels. Must be at least 200 gauge)
Polyformes Limited	Cherrycourt Way, Stanbridge, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU7 4UH Tel: 01525 852444 Email: info@polyformes.co.uk Web: www.polyformes.co.uk	Plastazote
Preservation Equipment Ltd	Vinces Road, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 2DG Tel: 01379 647400 Email: info@preservationequipment.com Web: www.preservationequipment.com	Art-sorb beads (857-0016) and sheets (857-1919 & 857-0016/20), humidity indicator strips (931-3100), manuscript folders (701-1915), plan boxes (see 9.2.1.2), plan hangers (502-6225), foil-backed labels (see 10.3) tyvek labels (613-7500), soft unbleached cotton tape (586-0016), box board (345-1620), kaiser-schreiber film marking pen (871-2040), PEL wet strength repair tissue (682-3614)
Rotadex	Rotadex Systems Limited, Systems House, Central Business Park, Mackadown Lane, Birmingham B33 0JL tel: 0121 783 7411, email: sales@rotadex.co.uk	Conservation and archival boxes

14. DOCUMENTS FOR REFERENCE

- Archaeology Data Service: [Archaeology Data Service](#)
- Boyle, Gail and Rawden, Anooshka. 2020. Standards and Guidance in the Care of Archaeological Collections. Society for Museum Archaeology and Arts Council England.
- Brown, Duncan H. 2011. 'Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation'. Institute of Field Archaeologists on behalf of the Archaeological Archives Forum.
- Brown, Adrian & Perrin, Kathy. January 2000. A Model for the Description of Archaeological Archives. English Heritage Centre for Archaeology.
- CiFA. 2014 'Standards and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives'
- CiFA. 2022 'Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives'. [Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives | ClfA](#)
- English Heritage. 1991. Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2). English Heritage.
- English Heritage. 2015, 'Guidelines on the X-radiography of archaeological metalwork'
- Fernie, Kate. 2017. 'Seeing the Light of Day: report and recommendations for museums'.
- SPECTRUM 5, the UK Documentation Standard for museums. 2022. The Collections Trust. [Introduction to Spectrum – Collections Trust](#)
- Tsang, Claire. 2024. The Collecting of Developer-Funded Archaeological Archives: 2024 Survey. Historic England
- Watkins-Kenny, Sarah. 2024. First Aid for Finds. Rescue/UKIC Archaeology Section. 4th Edition.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: DETAILS OF COLLECTING BOUNDARIES



Appendix 2: NOTIFICATION OF FIELDWORK FORM

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTRACTOR:

Commencement date:

Type of fieldwork: evaluation/watching brief/field walking/excavation

Name and address of landowner (or whoever is able to transfer title of objects to RAMM):

Site manager:

Site name:

Parish:

Site code:

Location, latitude and longitude:

Planning Authority:

Application/Permission/Consent number:

Quantity of material expected (boxes): <10 / <20 / <30 / <40 / <50 / >50

Conservation problems anticipated (e.g. waterlogged material, organics):

TO BE COMPLETED BY MUSEUM ON NOTIFICATION

Reference number:

Date issued:

TO BE COMPLETED BY MUSEUM AFTER CONSULTATION PROCESS

Accession number:

Date issued:

Appendix 3: TRANSFER OF TITLE FORM

This form should be printed and will be used in conjunction with RAMM's standard entry form. The entry form is a paper form that will be signed by owner of the objects or the depositing archaeological contractor at the time of deposition.

Museum accession number:

Site name and site code:

Name of Archaeological Contractor :

Name and address of owner:

Telephone Number:

I hereby confirm my donation of the archaeological discoveries (any objects, materials or remains of archaeological interest, other than those articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be Treasure) recovered from the site named as an absolute and perpetual gift. I wish all material to be unconditionally transferred to Exeter City Council the Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

Signed

Date

Print name

Data Protection

The Museum retains the names and addresses of persons donating, bequeathing, selling or loaning objects because this information forms part of the object's history. This information is for the Museum's records and is not made available to any other organisation.

Appendix 4 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION FORM (from April 2023)

Accession number:.....

Name of archaeological contractor:.....

Site name:.....

Site address:.....

Item to be deposited	Size in mm	Number of items	Deposited (internal use)	Charge per item (excl VAT @ 20%)	Total
Finds box AAZ1045	394 x 241 x 76			£82.00	
Finds box AAZ1046	394 x 241 x 152			£127.00	
Finds box AAZ1047	394 x 241 x 304			£175.00	
Small finds box	Various sizes			£82.00	
Outsize/other items (price on application)					

Total charge for deposition

Date of deposition

Signature of archaeological contractor

Signature of RAMM staff

Appendix 5: COPYRIGHT LICENCE FORM

Museum accession number:
Site name and site code:
Name of Archaeological Contractor :

Name and address of copyright holder:
Telephone Number:

The above hereby grants to Exeter City Council the Royal Albert Memorial Museum a perpetual royalty-free licence to:

1. reproduce all or part of the Archive for the purposes of research, study and conservation
2. display copies of all or part of the Archive in any medium
3. publish all or part of the Archive in any form or medium and in any publication
4. permit third parties to do any of the above.

I undertake and warrant that:

1. I represent the sole, unencumbered owner of the copyright in the Archive and are free to grant the licence set out above
2. no use by Exeter City Council the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in accordance with the above licence will infringe any rights of a third party
3. this licence is binding on the heirs, assigns and successors of the above organisation.

When all or any part of this Archive is used as part of this licence the following should be credited:

.....

.....

Signed -----Date -----

Print name -----

Data Protection

The Museum retains the names and addresses of persons donating, bequeathing, selling or loaning objects because this information forms part of the object's history. This information is for the Museum's records and is not made available to any other organisation.

Appendix 6: ACCESSION NUMBERS - SUB-NUMBERING SYSTEM

A flexible system: additional sub-numbers can be created according to the finds per site – periods, materials, typologies can be added as sub-number groups. Individual numbers can be allocated to individual objects.

.1	Paper archive		
		1.1	Primary archive paper records (context sheets etc)
		1.2	Photographic records
		1.3	Secondary archive paper records (post-excavation)
		1.4	Reports
		1.5	Digital records
.2	Lithics		
		2.1	Tools
		2.2	Debitage/waste
.3	Pottery		
		3.1	Prehistoric
		3.2	Roman
		3.3	Medieval
		3.4	Post-medieval
		3.5	Modern (post-1750)
.4	Clay pipe		
.5	Faunal bone		
		5.1	Prehistoric
		5.2	Roman
		5.3	Medieval
		5.4	Post-medieval
		5.5	Modern (post-1750)
		5.6	Unstratified

.6	Human remains		
.7	Glass		
		7.1	Prehistoric (Iron Age)
		7.2	Roman
		7.3	Medieval
		7.4	Post-medieval
		7.5	Modern (post-1750)
.8	Coins	8.1	Prehistoric
		8.2	Roman
		8.3	Medieval
		8.4	Post-medieval
		8.5	Modern (post-1750)
.9	Metals		
		9.1	Iron
		9.2	Copper alloy
		9.3	Lead
		9.4	Other
.10	Small finds [non-metal]		
		10.1	Worked bone
		10.2	Worked stone
		10.3	Leather
		10.4	Wood
		10.5	Other
.11	Building materials		
		11.1	Stone
		11.2	Ceramic tile
		11.3	Plaster and mortar
		11.4	Tesserae
		11.5	Brick

		11.6	Wood
		11.7	Daub/Fired clay
.12	Industrial material [slag, cauldron mould etc]		
.13	Ecofacts and environmental material		
		13.1	Environmental samples
		13.2	Environmental residues (charcoal, charred seeds etc)

■

Appendix B - Human Remains Policy 2026-30

1. Introduction

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM, ‘the museum’) acts within the legal framework of the Human Tissue Act 2004. The museum does not knowingly hold human remains under 100 years old and does not need licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004.

We are actively and ethically resolving any cases where human remains are poorly provenanced or lacking documentation that can prove they are more than 100 years old.

In our treatment and use of human remains we will be guided by:

- ▶ *Code of Ethics for Museums* (MA, 2008), plus any subsequent revisions
- ▶ *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums* (DCMS, June 2005)
- ▶ *Science and the Dead: a guideline for the destructive sampling of archaeological human remains for scientific analysis* (Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England, 2013)
- ▶ *Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England, second edition* (Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England, 2017)
- ▶ *Standards in Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (MGC, 1992)
- ▶ *The role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project* (Historic England 2018)
- ▶ *Statement on burial law and archaeology* (Ministry of Justice, April 2008)

2. Definition of human remains

We will use the definition of human remains as outlined in DCMS guidelines:

“...bodies, and parts of bodies, of once living people from the species *Homo sapiens*...This includes osteological material (whole or part skeletons, individual bones or fragments of bone or teeth), soft tissue including organs and skin, embryos and slide preparations of human tissue.”

We will extend the definition to include hair, nails and funerary ashes.

3. Inventory of holdings

We have identified human remains within the collecting areas of Antiquities, Costume and Textiles, Fine Art, Natural Sciences and World Cultures.

4. Acquisition

If human remains are discovered in local archaeological contexts RAMM may take this material into its care. The finds must be of exceptional importance or shed significant light on a community's heritage. RAMM will only acquire this material if there is an accompanying copy of the associated paperwork, required according to current UK law. Acquisition of human remains within other disciplines will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5. Use and storage of human remains

RAMM conveys intellectual access through display and interpretation. We will follow DCMS guidelines when considering acceptable and ethical use of human remains.

Human remains are appropriately cared for and discreetly kept in the museum store. Remains are stored separately from other materials and access to the material is restricted.

6. Research, access and information

RAMM provides information about the collections in line with its Access Statement (2025). Some holdings are included on RAMM's collections website rammcollections.org.uk. Information not published online is available on request, and in person visits to view the collections can also be arranged. Please email ramm.enquiries@exeter.gov.uk and you will be put in contact with the most appropriate member of staff.

RAMM will consider all requests for access to human remains by researchers and community groups at museum Collections Team meetings. We will also consider applications for sampling and analysis of human remains in order to answer research questions.

RAMM has worked with legitimate source community representatives and government officials to try to ascertain provenance for remains in the World Cultures collection. Good documentation has allowed RAMM to return remains to

Australia, New Zealand and Canada. A [list of human remains](#) in the World Culture collection, and those that have been returned, is available online.

7. Exhibition and display

Where human remains form part of an exhibition, we will display them in a culturally sensitive, appropriate and informative manner which will be accompanied by explanatory and contextual information.

8. Images

All images of human remains in the museum and on the museum's website will be in context with appropriate interpretation. Records on Collections Explorer where images include human remains will display a 'sensitive content' warning when returned in search results.

All requests for use of images or filming of human remains should be made to the responsible curator.

9. Deaccession, repatriation and reburial

The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, may take a decision to deaccession human remains. This may be to return them to a country or people of origin, transfer to another museum or arrange reburial.

Claims for repatriation and reburial will be considered on a case by case basis, within the museum's legal position and taking into account all ethical implications.

Requests for repatriation will be considered in line with Appendix C of RAMM's Collections Development Policy.

RAMM will follow guidelines issued by Historic England and the Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England when considering reburial.

Prior to making a formal request for deaccession, repatriation and reburial, RAMM encourages individuals, cultural groups, museums and government departments to enter informal conversations with the Collections Team. Please email ramm.enquiries@exeter.gov.uk.

Formal requests should be sent to:

Dr Julien Parsons
Collections & Content Manager
Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery
Queen Street
Exeter
EX4 3RX

julien.parsons@exeter.gov.uk

The contact information may be updated from time to time as appropriate.

RAMM will work with the claimant to clarify the nature and scope of the request and to gather as much information as possible relating to the claim. A full written report will be presented to Exeter City Council Executive Committee, advising Members of the factors involved in making a decision.

The final decision will be made by Exeter City Council as the governing body and minuted. Claimants will be given a full explanation of the decision and will be given time to respond.

Appendix C – repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains.

Guidelines on the procedure for dealing with repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains from the collection of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM), Exeter, December 2025.

Background

This document should be read in conjunction with RAMM's Collections Development Policy and its Appendix B: Human Remains Policy 2026-30.

RAMM's governing body is Exeter City Council (ECC). It will act on the advice of the museum's professional staff to make a decision to return human remains, objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. All legal and ethical implications and available guidance will be taken into account.

RAMM follows UK museum sector guidance on repatriation and human remains, namely:

- *Museums Association Code of Ethics, Additional Guidance* (2015): to 'Deal sensitively and promptly with requests for repatriation of items in the museum's collection, both within the UK and from abroad. Take into account: the law; current thinking on the subject; the interests of actual and cultural descendants; the strength of claimants' relationship to the items; their scientific, educational, cultural and historical importance; and the consequences of retention and repatriation for a range of stakeholders.'
- *Restitution and Repatriation: A Practical Guide for Museums in England* published by Arts Council England (September 2023)
- *Museum Accreditation Scheme Guidance* issued by Arts Council England (ACE, December 2024)
- Collections Trust template and checklist for recording and researching restitution and repatriation claims (2015)
- *Restitution and Repatriation: Guidelines for Good Practice* published by the Museums & Galleries Commission (2000)
- *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums* issued by DCMS (2005)

The process of repatriation requests at RAMM

1. Accessing information about the collections at RAMM

The collections at RAMM contain over one million items. Around 20,000 of these can be viewed online at rammcollections.org.uk.

Information not published online is available on request, in line with RAMM's Access Statement (2025). In person visits to view the collections can also be arranged.

Prior to making a formal request for repatriation, RAMM encourages individuals, cultural groups, museums and government departments to enter informal conversations with the Collections Team. Please email ramm.enquiries@exeter.gov.uk and you will be put in contact with the most appropriate member of staff.

2. Making a formal request

Individuals, cultural groups, museums (or similar organisations) and government departments wishing to make a request for repatriation of artefacts or human remains from RAMM's collection should make their request in writing to the Museum's Collections & Content Manager, or designated member of the museum's Management Team. The request must:

- clearly identify the artefacts they are requesting
- provide a background to their claim
- provide an assessment of the significance of the object(s) to their community
- describe the proposed future use of artefacts

3. RAMM's response to the request

In dealing with repatriation and restitution claims, RAMM is committed to:

- acting promptly
- treating requests with sensitivity and confidentiality
- recording and documenting any claims
- investigating any potential competing claims for the same material
- forming a recommendation by undertaking a multi-faceted review of factors, including, but not limited to, the scientific or cultural importance of the artefacts, the strength of claimants' relationship to items and the consequences of either retention or repatriation.

4. Making a decision

RAMM is a service of Exeter City Council (ECC, the governing body) and all decisions on repatriation of artefacts and human remains rest with them. A full report on requests for repatriation will be presented with an officers' recommendation at a meeting of the Executive Committee of ECC where councillors will make a decision.

Claimants will be notified of the outcome of the committee's decision on the next working day, UK time.

5. How long will this take?

The process of evidence gathering and report writing can take several months before presentation at committee. Claimants should expect complex cases to take on average one year to process.

A positive outcome from the Executive Committee will require further discussions with relevant museum staff on the logistics of transferring ownership. This may include securing the required export permits from the UK government and import permits for the receiving country.

6. Contact details

Formal requests for repatriation of artefacts and human remains from RAMM's collections should be sent to:

Dr Julien Parsons
Collections & Content Manager
Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery
Queen Street
Exeter
EX4 3RX

julien.parsons@exeter.gov.uk

The contact information may be updated from time to time as appropriate.

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Equality Impact Assessment: *RAMM Collections Development Policy 2026-30*

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive: 16 December 2025	Collections Development Policy RAMM (2026-30)	To approve Collections Development Policy RAMM (2026-30)	All characteristics with the exception of age.

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).	Positive		The updated policy states that RAMM is actively seeking to acquire material that reflects the diversity of contemporary Exeter including race. Exeter's racially and ethnically diverse community will be better represented in the collections.
Disability: as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	Positive		The policy states that RAMM actively seeks acquisitions to better represent people with disabilities (historic and contemporary).
Sex/Gender	Positive		In general, women's history is not currently as well represented in the collection as men's. New acquisitions will seek to redress the imbalance in gender diversity of artists and makers currently represented in the collection by actively seeking works by women artists. Acquisitions that reflect the lives and experiences of women in Devon are also a priority area for collecting within the social history collection.
Gender reassignment	Positive		The updated policy states that RAMM is actively seeking to acquire material that reflects the diversity of contemporary Exeter including gender. Objects associated with gender reassignment would fall within this.

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Religion and belief (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).	Positive		The policy states that RAMM is seeking new acquisitions to better reflect Exeter's multi-faith society.
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).	Positive		The updated policy states that RAMM is actively seeking to acquire material that reflects the diversity of contemporary Exeter including sexual orientation. The LGBTQ+ community will be better represented in the collection.
Age (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Neutral		No particular age groups are specified in the policy
Pregnancy and maternity including new and breast feeding mothers	Positive		While not specifically mentioned in the policy, it does state, 'Women's stories are underrepresented in the social history collection. RAMM will actively seek acquisitions that reflect the lives and experiences of women in Devon.' This broad remit includes pregnancy and maternity (the collection already has objects relating to maternity).
Marriage and civil partnership status	Positive		New acquisitions reflecting Exeter's multifaith society and diversity in sexual orientation are actively sought; both may include marriage and civil partnerships.

Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion

By developing collections that relate to Exeter and its citizens the museum helps to promote community cohesion and establish a sense of local identity. The updated policy sets out priority areas for collecting to achieve this by redressing historic collecting biases and ensuring contemporary society is accurately reflected. Inclusive and relevant collections enable visitors, both physical and virtual, to better engage with the collections at RAMM and benefit from role the museum plays within the city.

Officer: Julien Parsons
Date: 02/10/2025

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 16 December 2025

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 13 January 2026

Report of: Strategic Director of Place

Title: RAMM Forward Plan (2026-29)

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report sets out the requirement to approve a Forward Plan for the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM) to cover the years 2026 to 2029. It is anticipated that the outcome of Local Government Reorganisation will require the Forward Plan to be revised and approved by the appropriate governing body before its stated end date. Arts Council England have advised for the purpose of Accreditation, museums affected by LGR should make their submissions based on their current arrangements.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Executive recommend Council approval of the Forward Plan for the Royal Memorial Museum and Art Gallery for the period 2026 to 2029.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 A Forward Plan approved by the museum's governing body is a requirement of Museum Accreditation, which is the UK standard for museums and galleries. Only museums which hold Museum Accreditation may apply for major investment from Arts Council England and most other sector funding bodies.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

4.1 The Forward Plan outlines the key aims and actions of RAMM for the next three years which will determine the use of ECC resources, as well as funding received from Arts Council England and a variety of external funding bodies. In the light of an external review completed in October 2025, RAMM will be developing a five-year Strategic Roadmap that will outline increased opportunities for income generation and philanthropic giving to enable a reduction of ECC investment in the museum without diluting the quality of the museum's activities.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no additional financial implications contained in this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 Although there is no legal requirement for RAMM to put in place a forward plan, Members will note that a forward plan is required in order to maintain the Museum Accreditation Standard. Details on this requirement are set out in this report.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal, potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equality Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

8.2 The aims and actions outlined in RAMM's Forward Plan positively impact people within the protected characteristic groups of disability, gender reassignment, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation.

8.3 RAMM aims to be welcoming to everyone whatever their background. As an ACE National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), RAMM must demonstrate how it contributes to the Investment Principles set out in ACE's Let's Create Strategy 2020-30. At the heart of ACE's Inclusivity & Relevance Principle is a commitment to achieving greater fairness, access and opportunity across the cultural sector, ensuring that England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that ACE supports and in the culture they produce.

8.4 RAMM must demonstrate the Inclusivity & Relevance principle in the work it produces, both building a relationship with its communities, and demonstrating how its work is accessible and relevant to those communities. ACE requires NPOs, like RAMM, to agree targets for how their governance, leadership, employees, participants, audiences, and the work they make reflects the communities in which they work. These targets cover both protected characteristics and socio-economic background.

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 One of the five key aims of the Forward Plan is to improve the museum's environmental sustainability. This involves a carbon reduction plan with proposals to lower energy usage, for example in lighting and environmental control, more use of sustainable materials, for instance in temporary exhibitions, and benefitting from solar panel arrays on roofs at RAMM and the Ark.

9.2 One of RAMM's programming themes for the next three years is 'Raising awareness of environmental challenges' and, specifically, presenting content that addresses the challenge of climate change and habitat loss which impacts our planet and the natural world. The theme aligns with ECC's decarbonisation of the city and ACE's Environment Investment Principle.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

10. Report details:

10.1 The museum first opened to the public in 1868 as one element of the landmark Gothic Revival building on Queen Street. It was established as a memorial to the Prince Consort, Albert, who died in 1861, and encompassed not only a museum but a school of art, library and later a college which evolved into the University of Exeter. From 1899, the museum was granted authority to prefix its name with 'Royal'. The acronym RAMM has been in common usage for many decades.

10.2 Major investment in RAMM by ECC and National Lottery Heritage Fund enabled a substantial development project which created an off-site storage facility, additional temporary display spaces, new entrance, improved visitor orientation and refurbished permanent galleries which opened in December 2011. RAMM won the Art Fund prize for Museum of the Year in 2012 and has continued to receive accolades and awards for the quality of its visitor experience and programming ever since.

10.3 Since the pandemic, RAMM's annual visitor figures have reached about 200,000 and this has been calculated to contribute at least £6.8 million to the local economy. Visitors are attracted by the permanent displays as well as a dynamic public programme of temporary exhibitions – featuring RAMM's collection, touring exhibitions and loans, contemporary art and even some specially commissioned artworks – running alongside themed events, talks and workshops which cater for people of different ages and backgrounds. Upcoming exhibitions for 2026 include 'Grayson Perry: Aspects of Myself', 'Wow! Amazing Science in Children's Books' and 'Colour'.

10.4 RAMM's inclusive engagement work helps give people a sense of pride in their locality. Its learning programme introduces children to local and national history as well as to cultures that may be less familiar to them. Through a Youth Panel and Future Skills programme young people have the chance to actively engage with the museum and its staff and since 2023 RAMM's Community Panel has helped shape the museum's programming.

10.5 In order to plan effectively, the Museum Accreditation Standard expects museums to have a Forward Plan. This should include the fixed period that the plan covers; a statement of purpose; key aims and objectives; resources; agreed budgets for the current and subsequent year; and a review date. It states that the plan should be set within the local and national context.

10.6 RAMM's Forward Plan 2026-29 comprises an introduction; executive summary; historical and contextual information; vision and mission statements; alignment with ECC and ACE policies and strategies; five aims, each with key actions and people-focused outcomes; methods of monitoring; review date and appendices.

10.7 RAMM's five aims are:

1. We will deliver ambitious and enjoyable in person and digital experiences for our audiences
2. We will care for the museum's world class collection, and make it better known and better understood

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3. We will aim to foster a sense of civic pride, belonging and community cohesion
4. We will strive to ensure the museum is welcoming for everyone, whatever their background, and our audiences, staff and volunteers are representative and reflective of our local population.
5. We will adopt a strategic approach to improving the museum's financial and environmental sustainability

10.8 RAMM's Forward Plan 2026-29 will be reviewed in September 2028 or sooner if the stated assumptions change.

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 RAMM directly contributes to two intended outcomes of ECC's strategic priorities. Within Local Economy it is integral to 'A vibrant cultural and tourism offer' and in People it plays an important role in 'A safe and thriving city with great things to see and do'. RAMM plays a key role in the cultural life of Exeter, through displays and temporary exhibitions that attract visitors to the city centre. Its collections relate to Exeter and its citizens, and the museum's engagement work helps promote community cohesion and establish a sense of local identity.

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12. Without an approved Forward Plan, RAMM would not meet the UK standard for Accreditation which creates the risk of losing critical funding sources and causing reputational harm to the city. Approving the policy allows RAMM to proceed with the Accreditation submission.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 No. To achieve Museum Accreditation status museums must have a Forward Plan agreed by its governing body.

Strategic Director Place, Ian Collinson

Author: Helen Hartstein and Julien Parsons

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None.

List of Appendices:

- RAMM Forward Plan (2026-29);
- Appendices (Background analysis; Economic value report; Audience data; Current organisation chart; Risk register)

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RAMM Forward Plan 2026-29

Version: 1.0

Date: 27 November 2025

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Introduction

RAMM (Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery) is regarded as a cultural flagship for the city of Exeter. It is regularly cited as one of Britain's best regional museums with collections of regional, national and international importance, two of which are Designated. It is an Exeter City Council (ECC) service.

RAMM has been at the heart of the city and region's cultural life for over 150 years enriching people's lives, forging the bonds that create community and creating a sense of place through shared experience and understanding. The museum plays an important social and economic role in the city. It is both a vibrant public space that instils a sense of local identity and pride and drives footfall to the city centre promoting economic growth by encouraging people and businesses to come to Exeter.

This document sets out RAMM's Forward Plan for the period 2026-29. It has been written in an environment of significant uncertainty (see external analysis in Appendix 1) reflected in its two largest funders, ECC and Arts Council England (ACE). Local Government Reorganisation is underway and RAMM will soon become a service of a unitary authority and Baroness Hodge is carrying out an independent review of ACE, the results of which will be published in early 2026.

Several assumptions have been made in writing this plan:

- ▶ RAMM continues to be a council service
- ▶ RAMM continues to receive ACE National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding at a broadly similar level to its current allocation
- ▶ Staffing levels at the museum remain roughly the same. (A restructuring of the museum team is underway at the time of writing. This plan is based on the current structure.)

If these assumptions change significantly then the plan will need to be reformulated.

Following a recent review of the museum by an external consultant, it was agreed that a five-year strategic roadmap for the cultural services in Exeter will be developed to support the council's aim of reducing its investment in the museum. The development of the Strategic Roadmap is one of the actions set out under Aim 5 of this plan and will run in parallel with its delivery:

- ▶ **Three-year Forward Plan:** covers the museum's work with collections, programming and audiences and adopts people-based outcomes.
- ▶ **Five-year Strategic Roadmap:** focuses on how to reduce the museum's reliance on council funding. It will be completed by the end of 2025-26 and will

cover commercial and income-generating activity and consider the consolidated portfolio of cultural services including the Underground Passages, Custom House, Historic Guildhall and Corn Exchange.

Executive summary

This plan sets out RAMM's Forward Plan for 2026-29 and shows how the museum will achieve its vision to enhance people's quality of life through being a place of discovery which encourages everyone to be curious. It shows how it will use its local and global collections to connect people to the world and inspire them to shape a better future.

The plan has been written in an environment that is sometimes described as 'VUCA' (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous). This is particularly the case for RAMM's two largest funders, ECC and ACE. Local Government Reorganisation is underway and RAMM will become a service of a unitary authority, currently thought to be by 2028. Baroness Hodge is carrying out an independent review of ACE, the results of which will be published in early 2026.

RAMM's Forward Plan supports ECC's Corporate Plan in the following ways:

Local Economy: RAMM is a driver of the local economy, driving footfall to the city centre, creating a cultural environment which encourages tourists to visit and businesses and people to move to the area.

People: RAMM supports the health and wellbeing of residents through its community engagement projects, often focusing on under-served audiences. It works with community groups to promote inclusion and community cohesion. Through its vibrant public programme, it is contributing to a thriving city with great things to see and do for everyone.

Sustainable environment: RAMM's programme of exhibitions and events shine a light on the action that people can take to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. RAMM has a decarbonisation plan and an environmental forum for action team.

The aims of RAMM's Forward Plan 2026-29 are as follows:

1. We will deliver ambitious and enjoyable in person and digital experiences for our audiences

2. We will care for the museum's world class collection, and make it better known and better understood
3. We will aim to foster a sense of civic pride, belonging and community cohesion
4. We will strive to ensure the museum is welcoming for everyone, whatever their background, and our audiences, staff and volunteers are representative and reflective of our local population.
5. We will adopt a strategic approach to improving the museum's financial and environmental sustainability

Under each of these aims, this plan considers the background situation and the high-level actions for the next three years.

The plan sets out the budget for the 2025-26 and the indicative budget for 2026-27. It also shows the staff structure needed to deliver the plan and shows how the plan will be monitored.

Finally, this plan has been written with RAMM's existing staffing structure in place. The redesign of ECC's cultural services and consolidation of its other heritage and cultural assets under a centralised management structure will mean that there may be changes to the way RAMM operates in the future. The work on the 5-year Strategic Roadmap will consider the wider portfolio of consolidated cultural services and the Forward Plan will be updated to reflect this if necessary.

Background

About the museum

In 2024/25 RAMM attracted 213,900 visits, 6,990 attendees at events and 615,337 page views of its websites. Since 2024 there have been over 6 million views of its images on Wikimedia. The museum contributed £6.8 million to the local economy. It is managed as part of ECC's cultural services and since 2023 an Oversight Panel has taken responsibility for overseeing the museum's NPO programme. RAMM has two independent supporting charities, the RAMM Development Trust and the Friends of RAMM.

RAMM originates in a public campaign to create a memorial in Exeter to the Prince Consort, Albert, who died in 1861. Under the leadership of Sir Stafford Northcote, a campaign raised funds to build the Devon and Exeter Albert Memorial which opened in 1868 in a Neo-Gothic building on Queen Street. The Memorial included the museum, the Exeter School of Art, a library and later a college run by a board of trustees.

In 1870 the Albert Memorial Museum, School of Art and Free Library was conveyed to the Corporation of Exeter 'upon trust for the benefit of the City of Exeter under the Public Libraries Act, 1855'. This arrangement allowed the city to raise extra local taxation as a way of supporting the Albert Memorial. Under the city council from the 1870s, governance was through a Museum Sub-Committee reporting to a General Committee which was subsequently known as the Royal Albert Governors. This was discontinued in 1947 when governance was established through a Museum and Library Committee. The provision of Museums is Part III of the Exeter City Council Act 1987.

Over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries the original constituents of the Albert Memorial established themselves elsewhere in the city, such as Exeter Library, University of Exeter and Exeter School of Art, allowing the museum to fully occupy the Queen Street building which was greatly extended in the 1880s and 1890s. Following the opening of a new wing in 1899, the museum was granted the authority to add 'Royal' to its name. By the late 20th century, the complex phases of Victorian rebuilding were causing structural issues and the galleries and visitor facilities required refurbishment and refreshment. In the early 2000s, a project to redevelop the museum was initiated and following an investment of £24 million from ECC and the NLHF the new RAMM opened in 2011 after four years of closure. In 2012, it won the Art Fund prize for Museum of the Year.

Since re-opening after its major redevelopment, RAMM has regularly featured in polls of Britain's best regional museums. Since 2020 it has received numerous

awards and accolades including Gold in Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism at the Devon Tourism Awards (2021); Gold in Accessible and Inclusive Tourism at Devon Tourism Awards (2022); Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice (2023); Bronze in Large Visitor Attraction of the Year at Devon Tourism Awards (2023) and Shortlisted for Accessibility Award at Museums + Heritage Awards (2025). In May 2025 RAMM passed its Visit England visitor attraction Quality Rating assessment with a score of 87%.

Partnerships

Through its partnerships with educational institutions, such as the University of Exeter (UoE) and Exeter College, RAMM promotes skills development and is a catalyst for the local creative economy. In the last decade RAMM has developed a close working relationship with the university; however, its last Memoranda of Understanding was signed in 2019. Museum staff frequently collaborate with academics in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) and the Arts and Culture team, often partnering on Arts & Humanities Research Council-funded projects that result in public programmes such as exhibitions, events and artist commissions. These collaborations give RAMM greater audience depth and reach, and increased profile, and the university gains access to RAMM's audiences and visibility in the city centre, furthering its impact aims. Additionally, RAMM works with UoE to offer student work placements and internships which provide life-changing experiences for young people and additional human resource for RAMM.

RAMM has a network of city-based partners, for example through the Exeter Partnership, as part of its Connected Culture strand, Exeter Heritage Partnership in volunteering and Heritage Open Days. RAMM contributes to the Exeter City of Literature partnership and collaborates with the other NPOs in the city.

The museum offers community groups a safe space and is a trusted partner for wellbeing activities, for example working with Wellbeing Exeter and its associated partners, community connectors and builders; engaging older people through Age UK Exeter, Franklyn Hospital and care homes; supporting people's mental health together with Youth Arts for Health, Wellbeing Exeter and disabled people through disability charities CEDA, Pelican Project and others. It works with community groups such as Hikmat, Inclusive Exeter, Refugee Support Devon, the Beacon Centre, and Exeter Food Bank.

RAMM works with national museums such as the British Museum, the National Gallery and Tate, in both loans and audience development programmes. It is part of national networks such as the National Museum Directors Council, the English Civic Museums Network and the MAGNET exhibition touring group. It participates in national projects such as Towards a National Collection/N-RICH and Time Odyssey. RAMM also operates in an international context, regularly attracting

interns from overseas to its conservation studio, loaning works abroad and, through its university partnerships, collaborating on international heritage-based research projects, such as the recent GLAM-E Lab.

Environment and context

A summary of the PESTLE and SWOT analysis carried out can be found in Appendix 1.

Museum review

Exeter City Council has recently restructured to create a Directorate dedicated to 'Place.' RAMM is part of the Place Directorate as one element of a wider culture and leisure service which has been brought together for Exeter. ECC is currently developing and consulting on an updated Cultural Strategy.

It was within this context that in spring 2025, ECC commissioned a review of RAMM's operating model with a view to identify whether there are opportunities to transform the current funding, operating and management model to improve the museum's efficiency and financial sustainability and maximise income generation while balancing its socio-economic impact and encouraging engagement with RAMM's offer among Exeter's residents, especially in priority neighbourhoods.

This Delivery Model Assessment used an established process to: frame the challenge, define the different possible service delivery models (retain in-house as is; in-house plus; merge with other regional entity; move to trust; transfer to existing not-for-profit provider; cease and mothball and cease and dispose); establish the strategic and operational evaluation criteria (both financial and non-financial) and then evaluate the different delivery models against these criteria.

The outcome of the review was that retaining in-house with changes was the preferred option.

"The desire of the Council and other key stakeholders to ensure that RAMM continues to be a key attraction in the city and continues to play a pivotal role in wider cultural, economic, and strategic outcomes means that continuing to provide the offer in-house is still the preferred delivery option for the Council. However, the need to seek to reduce the reliance on Council funding into RAMM requires an approach that will focus on increasing alternative funding sources and in particular increasing the museums commercial acumen and income generating capabilities without diluting its reputation for cultural and heritage expertise."

The review made the following recommendations that will be developed into a 5-Year Strategic Plan (Roadmap) for the museum to help improve its financial resilience. This is included in aim 5 of this plan.

1. Investigate the financial benefits of establishing a trading company for the museum's income-generating activities, including the potential net benefit of accessing the Museums & Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief scheme (MGETR).
2. Ensure that any future capital investments include a clear plan and associated financial forecasts targeted at increasing income generation.
3. Create a consolidated portfolio across the wider cultural service, extending skills and capabilities to include other historic sites/offers in the city.
4. Create a 5-year business plan (Strategic Roadmap) to ensure the on-going operation of the museum/heritage portfolio is clearly understood; offers further resilience regardless of the outcomes of LGR; and sets out expected returns (financial, social, economic, educational, etc.)
5. Seek to re-negotiate the terms of engagement with key partners.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness and future relevance of RAMM's current co-leadership model and consider the re-establishment of a single leadership position for the museum with clear responsibilities and targets to balance museum and commercial activities to achieve the items listed above.

Vision

RAMM will enhance people's quality of life. RAMM is a place of discovery which encourages everyone to be curious. The museum uses its local and global collections to connect people to the world and inspires them to shape a better future.

Statement of purpose

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM) is a service of Exeter City Council. It exists to enrich the lives of people living, working in and visiting Exeter by providing them with opportunities to be inspired, informed and entertained. The City's world-class collections are placed at the heart of everything the museum does. RAMM will acquire collections that document the natural and cultural history of Exeter set within its regional and national context as well as those that represent the city and region's connections across the world. The museum holds collections in trust for present and future generations, managing their care and security for the public benefit.

RAMM's manifesto sets out how it will achieve its mission:

<https://rammuseum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/RAMM-Vision-and-Manifesto-for-website.pdf>

Values

- ▶ We are friendly and welcoming to everyone
- ▶ We are enthusiastic about our museum
- ▶ We are ambitious in our work
- ▶ We are responsive to new ideas and views
- ▶ We embrace our responsibilities to society and to the environment
- ▶ We work with our community to make a positive impact on people's lives

Brand

RAMM's current brand was established after its redevelopment in 2011 which revealed the Victorian building and juxtaposed it with high-quality contemporary design and re-presented the collections based on enchantment, visual stimulus

and personal discovery. With a range of spaces from theatrical to contemplative, RAMM's displays represent a 'curiosity-style' museum, which were characteristic of the early 21st century. The approach features object-rich displays, visually stunning arrays and large-scale cases. When in 2012 RAMM won the Art Fund 'Museum of the Year' award, the galleries were described as 'some of the most intelligently considered displays on view in any museum in the UK'.

RAMM's personality is eclectic, quirky, and playful; it brings a sense of gravitas but with an unexpected twist or a surprising detail. The museum's communications strive to be warm, conversational, accessible and thoughtful. The brand is expressed through RAMM's visual identity which was last refreshed in 2021/22. RAMM has an in-house designer who is responsible for exhibition design, signage in the museum, gallery interpretation and the design of printed and promotional materials.

Caring for collections with strong links to the British Empire, RAMM is often discussed in the context of decolonisation. The museum is progressive in terms of its ethical approach to collections and through ECC has been repatriating human remains and sacred artefacts since the 1990s, long before this was widespread. Since 2022 it was involved in high-profile repatriations of First Nations artefacts to Canada. It is likely that the politically charged issues of repatriation and restitution will remain of relevance over the next three years.

Alignment with corporate priorities and national strategies

Exeter City Council plans

Exeter City Council corporate plan

This plan supports the [Exeter City Council corporate plan 2025-28](#) in the following areas:

Local Economy: RAMM is a driver of the local economy, driving footfall to the city centre, creating a cultural environment which encourages businesses and people to move to the area. Alongside the Cathedral, RAMM is the city's main visitor attraction. It is a source of information for tourists wanting historical and contextual information on the city. RAMM's economic value work shows the museum contributes £6.8M to the local economy (See Appendix 2).

People: RAMM supports the health and wellbeing of local residents through its community engagement projects such as Museum Meet Up with Wellbeing Exeter, Dartmoor Frame of Mind with Youth Arts for Health and its dementia-friendly programme. It works with community groups to promote inclusion and community cohesion. It is focused on reaching under-served audiences through its outreach work and schools' programme. Through its exhibition and event programme, evening events such as Lates, and its schools' programme it is contributing to a thriving city with great things to see and do for everyone.

Sustainable environment: RAMM's programme of exhibitions and events shine a light on the action that people can take to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. RAMM has a decarbonisation plan and an environmental forum for action team.

City centre strategy

ECC is currently engaging with key stakeholders to develop a City Centre Strategy – vision and action plan. A draft strategy will be consulted on in February 2026 and adopted by the Council in the summer. One of the key 'pillars' of the emerging strategy is the "Destination Offer" - with the City Centre recognised nationally and globally as a place that successfully combines its natural, built environment and heritage assets with the international strengths of its key institutions, including RAMM.

Cultural strategy

ECC is leading the development of an ambitious place-based Culture Strategy for Exeter. The new Strategy will:

- ▶ establish a clear vision and mission that aligns with the needs of Exeter's residents and communities.
- ▶ reflect Exeter's current cultural, social and economic landscape, identifying existing cultural assets, community needs and opportunities for cultural development.
- ▶ reflect the importance of culture as a catalyst to connect communities to Exeter's unique natural environment, heritage, literacy and learning and ensure that cultural growth is at the heart of cultural placemaking in Exeter.

This work is in parallel with the City Centre Strategy, and running to the same timescale, Key stakeholders have been engaged, combined with Connected Culture strand of the Exeter Partnership. An online residents survey has also been undertaken, gathering information and points of view to understand Exeter and its culture. RAMM will be contributing to this strategy. A draft is expected to be completed and consulted on in February 2026.

This work aligns with Exeter's ambition to be recognised nationally and internationally as a 'City of Culture' as set in Exeter's 2040 Vision. ECC has agreed to submit an Expression of Interest to be UK City of Culture 2029. A successful bid will place culture at the centre of city development, raise ambition and can-do attitude across the city, repositioning the city and creating a new national and international outlook. It will enable cross-sectoral working / learning and engaging citizens in new and valuable ways.

Exeter Plan

The Exeter Plan will shape the future of Exeter for the next twenty years and will be the basis for how the city continues to evolve and meet the needs of the community. It will be the main planning policy document for Exeter, setting out where development should take place and providing the policies which will be used in making decisions on planning applications. History and heritage and culture and tourism are important themes in this plan.

Liveable Exeter

Liveable Exeter is the Council's bold initiative to regenerate large brownfield sites in the city, build at least 12,000 homes and create inclusive, healthy and sustainable new neighbourhoods. Culture is one of the key principles which underpins this programme, aiming to deliver a diverse and accessible cultural

offering connecting our world leading climate science, arts and literature, heritage, learning and innovation.

Local Government Reorganisation

In December 2024, the Government published the English Devolution White Paper: Power and Partnerships – Foundation for Growth. This set out a long-term plan for simpler council structures and the end of two-tier local government in areas like Devon.

In response to this, Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council have submitted a single, shared proposal to Government for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Devon. This proposal is ambitious and evidence-driven, shaped by extensive engagement with partners and communities across Devon. It is a plan for a simpler, stronger, and more coherent system of local government - one that works for cities, towns, coastal communities, and rural areas alike.

The proposed model creates four councils that reflect Devon's real-world geography - its travel patterns, labour markets, housing pressures, environmental context and community identity, including an Expanded Exeter Unitary Council.

A unitary council for Exeter and the surrounding area would be well placed to coordinate cultural investment and strengthen Exeter's role as a place where people come together to learn, celebrate, and express shared identity. Culture, sport, and placemaking will play a key role in supporting wellbeing, attracting talent, and sustaining a vibrant, inclusive area for future generations. Cultural and heritage services will be delivered in each area, with models adapted to the needs of urban and rural populations and making best use of available assets, like RAMM. Using established locality-based working that is rooted in communities and already part of the voluntary and community sector network, they will continue to grow community capacity and a sustainable cultural offer that is flexible, modern and relevant to the communities being served.

The new unitary councils will come into being on 1 April 2028 and it is fully expected that RAMM's Forward Plan 2026-29 will need to be adapted to take account of the evolving environment. In the meantime, RAMM's leadership team will continue horizon-scanning and preparing for LGR by continuing to be flexible and fleet of foot and building relationships with other cultural services in neighbouring authorities.

Let's Create

'Let's Create' is Arts Council England's Strategy 2020-2030. The intended outcomes of the strategy are:

- ▶ Creative People – Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life.
- ▶ Cultural Communities – Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture.
- ▶ A Creative and Cultural Country – England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international.

ACE's outcomes are to be achieved through four Investment Principles for cultural organisations:

- ▶ Ambition and Quality – they are committed to improving the quality of their work.
- ▶ Inclusivity and Relevance – England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals ACE supports and in the culture they produce.
- ▶ Dynamism – they are dynamic and able to respond to new challenges.
- ▶ Environmental Responsibility – they lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility.

Accreditation

The Museum Accreditation Scheme, run by ACE, is the UK industry standard for the governance and operation of museums and galleries. The scheme applies to museums of all sizes with organisations assessed according to size and type, with standards and commitments scaled accordingly. To achieve Accreditation, museums and galleries must meet minimum standards in:

- ▶ Organisational Health
- ▶ Managing Collections
- ▶ Users and their Experiences

Each area contains minimum requirements which organisations must meet on how they are run, how they manage collections and how they engage with users. The principles ensure an ethical framework to build public confidence in how museums manage collections in trust for society, and how they manage public resources.

While the scheme is voluntary, it is a mandatory condition for museums in receipt of grant aid from major funders that they are Accredited Museums. This is reflected in specific grant terms for ACE's NPOs, for example. Those in receipt of Museums Estate and Development (MEND) funding, such as ECC, must abide by an additional commitment for Accreditation for up to 15 years. Similar conditions apply with other national funders, such as National Lottery Heritage Fund, and all major funders have published a statement confirming that loss of Accreditation status through unethical disposal, or in the event of closure purely for financial

means, can result in the ejection from the Accreditation Scheme and result in clawback of any grants made on condition of that status being maintained.

RAMM's Aims 2026-29

1. We will deliver ambitious and enjoyable in person and digital experiences for our audiences
2. We will care for the museum's world class collection, and make it better known and better understood
3. We will aim to foster a sense of civic pride, belonging and community cohesion
4. We will strive to ensure the museum is welcoming for everyone, whatever their background, and our audiences, staff and volunteers are representative and reflective of our local population.
5. We will adopt a strategic approach to improving the museum's financial and environmental sustainability

Aim 1 – We will deliver ambitious and enjoyable in person and digital experiences for our audiences

Current situation

RAMM's collections are presented through a suite of permanent galleries. The displays were created in the redevelopment project (2011) and played a significant part in RAMM winning the Art Fund prize. RAMM's collections are also heavily featured in temporary displays and exhibitions which, alongside loans, commissioned artworks, touring exhibitions and an extensive schedule of related talks, workshops and events form an ambitious and diverse public programme. Highlights of recent in-house curated exhibitions include 'In Plain Sight: Transatlantic slavery and Devon' (2022); 'Gatekeepers to Heaven' (2023) including medieval manuscripts loaned from the Bodleian Library; and 'Dartmoor: A Radical Landscape' featuring new commissions and art created on Dartmoor since the 1960s.

RAMM has gained a reputation for the excellence of its visitor experience, with its cased displays punctuated by interactive experiences through object handling, opportunities for play and screen-based content. It has an active focus on accessibility, making the museum more welcoming for people who face barriers.

The museum collections are at the heart of RAMM's interpretation and are used to inspire learning, creativity, enjoyment and wellbeing through its public programme. The museum team develops and co-creates ambitious events and activities alongside people of all ages and backgrounds, inside the museum and around the city.

Since 2015, RAMM has developed an evolving set of themes to inform its extensive programme of exhibitions, events and contemporary art commissions. Themes have been developed in conjunction with staff, RAMM's community and youth panels and volunteers, and for the period 2026-29 will be as follows:

Highlighting untold stories

Stories that have been marginalised in the past. This encompasses the suppression of minority and disenfranchised voices in Britain and in cultures represented by RAMM's international collections and connections. Strategically, it

aligns with ECC's EDI initiatives and ACE's Inclusivity and Relevance Investment Principle.

Deepening a sense of belonging

The grounding of visitors within a geographical or cultural space. Most obviously, RAMM's place in Exeter, Devon and SW England, but extends to worldwide connections represented in RAMM's international collections. Aligns with 'sense of place' concept utilised by ECC and other local place-shapers.

Raising awareness of environmental challenges

Content that addresses the challenge of climate change and habitat loss which impacts our planet and the natural world. The theme aligns with ECC's decarbonisation of the city and ACE's Environment Investment Principle.

Enhancing wellbeing

Provide programming that stimulates visitor interaction, boosts wellbeing and helps relieve feelings of isolation and despair. The theme aligns with one of the central tenets of ACE's 'Let's Create' strategy which places creativity and engagement in creative activities as critical to a healthy society and ECC's corporate priority of People and their wellbeing.

RAMM has a rich formal and informal learning offer for children and young people. This includes a schools' programme offering museum-led and teacher-led visits and online resources; Time Odyssey, a national learning programme for 7- to 11-year-olds from schools with high pupil premium numbers and those in isolated rural areas; Youth Panel; Future Skills programme and work placements. A review of RAMM's learning offer is currently underway.

In 2024-25 across RAMM's websites there were almost 440,000 page views and 144,000 views of video content. RAMM's primary site (rammuseum.org.uk) saw an impressive engagement rate of over 70%. In 2025 RAMM launched a digital guide on Bloomberg Connects which offers additional content, improved accessibility and increased international reach.

Key actions for Aim 1

To achieve this aim, we will:

1. Ensure we have excellent and accessible museum galleries and websites that are well known by and well used by our audiences.
2. Build on our outstanding visitor engagement so everyone feels welcome at RAMM
3. Continue to deliver and evaluate a dynamic programme of temporary exhibitions, displays and contemporary art based on agreed programming themes
4. Further develop our inspiring, inclusive and enjoyable public programme of events
5. Implement the findings of our learning review to improve our formal and informal learning opportunities
6. Deliver the museum's NPO activity plan and Ambition & Quality plan.
7. Work with partners, collaborators and communities to ensure the programme is rich and relevant to our audiences
8. Take a data-driven approach to audience development

Outcomes of Aim 1

- ▶ Museum visitors will have memorable experiences
- ▶ There will be new things to see and do each time people visit
- ▶ Children and young people will be inspired by high quality learning experiences
- ▶ Tourists will be attracted to Exeter to visit RAMM
- ▶ People will feel entertained and have fun
- ▶ Visitors and participants will feel a sense of enjoyment, creativity and improved wellbeing
- ▶ People will feel that they have gained new insight and knowledge and that their curiosity has been sparked
- ▶ People will feel emotionally engaged by the content

Aim 2 – We will care for the museum’s world class collection, and make it better known and better understood

Current situation

RAMM’s reputation as one of England’s best regional museums rests on the breadth and quality of its collections. From its beginnings in the 1860s, the museum received internationally significant ethnographic artefacts and natural science specimens, as well as local antiquities and art. The character of these collections reflects the colonial, military and naval links of Devon and the South West in the Victorian period. RAMM cares for over a million individual objects classified within the categories of Antiquities (Archaeology), Contemporary Art, Costume and Textiles, Decorative Art, Ethnography (World Cultures), Fine Art, Natural Sciences, Numismatics and Photography. Since 1998 the entire World Cultures collection has been Designated due to its international importance and in 2020 part of the Natural Sciences collection was Designed: Montagu’s shells are considered some of the most significant of the 19th century. (More information on RAMM’s collection can be found in the Collections Development Policy 2026-30.)

Apart from the World Cultures collection and a selection of mixed collections configured to allow public access and engagement, the bulk of the museum’s collection is housed off site in rented accommodation and at a purpose-built, ECC-owned collections store known as The Ark, which was built in 2006-07, uses an innovative construction technique that provides maximum thermal mass through solid wall masonry and super insulation; it reduces the energy required to maintain the environmental conditions within the parameters set for collections storage. It provides about 1000 square metres of collections storage plus office space, freezer, quarantine room and rest room. The basis for all collections management tasks is a comprehensive FileMaker Pro database of about 250,000 records. About 20,000 object records are available online with about 1500 RAMM images on Wikimedia Commons.

Key Actions for Aim 2

To achieve this aim, we will:

1. Proactively maintain the museum's high standards of collections management and conservation
2. Follow an agreed policy that articulates what RAMM collects and cares for
3. Provide increased online access to the collection including associated content produced by our communities
4. Provide physical access to the collection facilitated by suitably qualified staff
5. Facilitate object loans to other organisations
6. Provide open access to collection images when possible
7. Strive to produce content that promotes an understanding of complexity and nuance, especially when addressing British and colonial history.

Outcomes of Aim 2

- ▶ Residents and donors trust RAMM to safeguard Exeter's collection
- ▶ The museum acquires objects that are important to the people of Exeter and Devon
- ▶ Beyond Exeter, people know about RAMM and its collection and have access to knowledge on it
- ▶ Local communities feel that their histories are represented in our collection
- ▶ Users build their knowledge of the collection which RAMM holds on their behalf
- ▶ People will feel they have gained new insight and that their curiosity has been sparked

Aim 3 – We will aim to foster a sense of civic pride, belonging and community cohesion

Current situation

The UK is currently facing increased social and political polarisation. Exeter and Devon, like many other parts of the country, have seen tensions over migration and identity surface in protests and counter protests.

We believe museums can play a role in helping to establish a shared concept of belonging. Pride in place is a core strength of social cohesion in Britain and RAMM is well-placed to respond to this challenge. [Recent research by More in Common for the National Trust](#) has identified that history and heritage are key sources of local pride for people across the political spectrum. Four in five Britons want to see local authorities support their local museums and they want these museums to celebrate their local history.

RAMM's 'Belonging' programming theme and its inclusive community engagement programmes give people a sense of pride in their local area. The museum is a space where people can connect with each other and their shared history, through topics with which we all identify (Home Sweet Home, Tastes Like Home/Food: Beyond the Plate). Its learning programme exposes children to other cultures and artistic practice in schools where teachers have expressed concern about the rise of racism and misogyny amongst pupils. In 2023 RAMM established a Community Panel to help shape its practice and it works with communities to make the museum a welcoming and accessible space for all.

Throughout the duration of this plan, RAMM will reach out to people who do not usually visit the museum. We will aim to be welcoming of everyone, providing ways for our audiences to share their comments and reflections. We will encourage new perspectives and stories by building links with our communities and encouraging respectful debate and thought-provoking discussions. We will try to talk to people in terms they understand, not in museum jargon.

Key Actions for Aim 3

To achieve this aim, we will:

1. Maintain and celebrate RAMM as Exeter's cultural flagship, a landmark building and service which attracts 200,000 visits each year
2. Connect people to Exeter and Devon's stories through collections, artists' commissions and exhibitions that are distinctive to Exeter and its surrounding area
3. Co-develop and deliver accessible and inclusive engagement, exhibition and learning programmes to reach priority neighbourhoods.
4. Provide fun, narrative-driven, hands-on experiences highlighting local history in the galleries.
5. Provide a space for ideas to be explored and discussed

Outcomes of Aim 3

- ▶ People feel more connected with their city and with each other
- ▶ People have a shared sense of pride in Exeter, its museum and the programmes it offers
- ▶ People feel a sense of belonging to their local area
- ▶ Users of the museum enjoy improved wellbeing
- ▶ People feel more resilient
- ▶ The business community understand how RAMM helps boost the local economy
- ▶ People can express themselves and feel listened to

Aim 4 – We will strive to ensure the museum is welcoming for everyone and our audiences, staff and volunteers are representative and reflective of our local population

Current situation

Since 2018, RAMM has adopted a data-driven approach to activity planning to ensure it understands its audiences and can make informed choices based on this intelligence. It has collected audience data using the Illuminate and independent surveys, the Culture Counts Impact & Insight Toolkit and data from event booking. This has given the organisation a strong sense of the demographics of its audiences and how they reflect the local population in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, disability (medical and social models) and socioeconomic status (see demographics report, Appendix 3). It also asks visitors if they have experienced any barriers to accessing the museum. This information is used to inform the museum's work to ensure that the programme is accessible and enjoyable for its varied audiences.

This data has identified that RAMM's audiences, staff and volunteers are broadly representative of the local population in terms of protected characteristics. In fact, it is over-representative in some areas (for example, 21% of RAMM's volunteers currently identify as LGBTQ+ and 30% have declared a disability). Amongst audiences, the percentage of people declaring a disability is slightly lower than the local population. There is a slight disparity in socio-economic status with people from lower socio-economic groups slightly under-represented in visitors and the workforce, although the profile of visitors when looking at household income, is broadly similar to the local population.

RAMM is attempting to diversify its workforce through its skills development programmes and inclusive hiring practices. Staff receive various forms of diversity training and RAMM works with its community and youth panels to ensure that local people of all ages have an opportunity to shape the museum's work.

Key Actions for Aim 4

To achieve this aim, we will:

1. Develop, implement and evaluate a plan to enable access for all and deliver the NPO Inclusivity & Relevance plan
2. Provide interesting and rewarding opportunities for volunteering
3. Evolve RAMM's skills development programme to encourage people from more diverse backgrounds to participate
4. Provide opportunities for people to influence and shape RAMM's work via the Community Panel and Youth Panel
5. Embed inclusive recruitment strategies
6. Ensure all our staff and volunteers have access to diversity training

Outcomes of Aim 4

- ▶ Local people feel more involved with RAMM
- ▶ RAMM benefits from the richness of experience of a diverse range of audiences, partners and staff
- ▶ People gain transferable skills which they can use in the wider world
- ▶ Volunteers and participants feel positive and connected and that their contribution is valued
- ▶ Local people can get closer to the museum
- ▶ Job applicants feel that RAMM is committed to removing barriers so that people from lots of different backgrounds can work at RAMM
- ▶ Staff feel empowered and supported

Aim 5 – We will adopt a strategic approach to improving the museum’s long-term financial and environmental sustainability

Current situation

Funding and income generation

The breakdown of RAMM’s sources of funding (using 2024-25 actual expenditure) is as follows:

Exeter City Council – 73%

Arts Council England – 15%

Other grants from trusts and foundations - 5%

Earned income through commercial activities - 7%

RAMM’s major funder is ECC; its investment in the museum in 2024-25 was £3,369,341 (£3,658,967 minus commercial income of £289,626).

Investment by ECC supports the fixed costs associated with occupying the historic, landmark Queen Street building (utilities, maintenance and operations) as well as foundational, operational and functional roles: security, visitor safety and services, building operations, collections care and stewardship, volunteer coordination, events and community engagement, shop, management and administration.

The museum has a long-standing relationship with ACE: the museum has been an NPO since 2018 and prior to that was a Major Partner Museum. Using ECC’s core funding as leverage, successive rounds of ACE investment (most recently 2023-27) have increased the value of local authority expenditure, built museum capacity and profile, and delivered innovation and creative programmes.

Investment provided to RAMM by ACE through its current NPO programme amounts to £618,363 per annum. Broadly, ACE investment has funded staff and resources to build capacity in RAMM to successfully deliver the outcomes of its activity plan, and developmental activities including marketing and fundraising. Performance is closely monitored against agreed targets on a quarterly basis.

In addition to the ACE NPO investment, RAMM regularly draws in external funding from charitable trusts and foundations. This is restricted funding, ring-fenced to

support acquisitions and projects that fall within the parameters of the funders' objectives. It is usual for these to exclude museum core costs. RAMM's two supporting charities, the RAMM Development Trust and the Friends of RAMM, enable RAMM to apply for external grants which a local authority would not be able to apply for and provide match funding for these grant applications. Donations to the museum are drawn down by the two supporting charities to enable this.

Recent grants awarded to RAMM include:

- ▶ MEND Museum Estate and Development Fund (ACE) - £498,000
- ▶ Dynamic Collections (National Lottery Heritage Fund) - £247,708
- ▶ Museum Meet Up (National Lottery Communities Fund) - £13,375
- ▶ Museum Renewal Fund (ACE) - £114,202

Through working with UoE and other higher education institutions, the museum accesses funding for joint projects that further academic research and deliver social impact, a prerequisite for HE funding. RAMM's recent GLAM E-Lab project is an example of this, with a research assistant being employed by ECC but funded via the project. RAMM also received funding from UoE in the early stages of Creative Arc to run a series of pilot projects, now completed.

Other income comes from RAMM's commercial activities: shop, café, venue hire, ticket sales for events, exhibitions, and school activities etc. The team is using funds from the recent Museum Renewal Fund to help improve these income-generating activities.

ECC, like most councils in the country, is experiencing financial pressures and is looking to reduce its investment in the museum. Since there is little discretionary budget (£187K p.a.), any reductions in core funding from ECC will need to be matched by income generation from other sources and a Strategic Roadmap for addressing this is in development.

Building and environmental sustainability

The museum's buildings are designed to provide safe, secure and controlled environments for nationally and internationally important collections and to accommodate the activities of staff, freelancers and volunteers delivering a wide-ranging programme to the public.

The RIBA award-winning, Grade II listed Queen Street building with its contemporary additions is a prominent heritage and architectural asset within the historic and cultural landscape of the city. As shown by the recently built 'UK first' Passivhaus leisure centre, St Sidwell's Point, ECC is ambitious in investing in important community assets within the city. The museum team works closely with

wider council service areas to contribute to placemaking and sustaining the important heritage aspects of the museum set within its wider environs.

RAMM represents a success story in consistent carbon reduction and ongoing developments towards long-term sustainability. This can be evidenced in the annual returns to 'Julie's Bicycle - Creative Climate Tools', a platform used by ACE to track and benchmark environmental impact and carbon emissions. Since 2012 (the first available year after RAMM's redevelopment) consistent annual reductions have equated to an annual total carbon footprint reduction of 52%. In energy consumption alone, usage was reduced by 59% or approximately 392 tonnes CO₂e per annum, a saving equivalent to the average energy consumption of 98 UK households per annum. Reducing the museum's dependence on fossil fuels and the high associated cost, is one of the keys to ensuring the continuity and sustainability of the museum.

Although successful in an applying for the government's public sector decarbonisation funding in 2023/24, unforeseen complexities meant ECC was required to return the funding. However, in response to this outcome, a heating and infrastructure decarbonisation survey was commissioned. This detailed report informs the future priorities and investment potential for RAMM.

In the past two years, the museum has sourced and invested substantial funds to replace historic roof structures at RAMM; the project included raising roofing levels to incorporate extensive insulation and to anchor new solar arrays to increase photovoltaic generation.

As important as our plans for built infrastructure and heat decarbonisation are, equal emphasis is placed on operational sustainability and investment into staff and public awareness of climate change. 60% of all museum staff are carbon literate trained. In 2024 RAMM launched its 'Environmental Forum for Action' bringing together key staff to support policy development, initiatives and projects helping further sustainability and awareness.

Key actions for Aim 5

To achieve this aim, we will:

1. Develop, implement and monitor a 5-year Strategic Roadmap for RAMM covering:
 - Fundraising
 - Amalgamation of Exeter's cultural services to achieve efficiencies
 - Commercial income generation strategies
 - Museums & Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR)
 - A plan for renewing and forging partnerships with key stakeholders
2. Invest in marketing and communications to attract visitors to the museum
3. Continue to develop, deliver and evaluate a carbon reduction plan for the museum, delivering the NPO Environmental Responsibility plan.
4. To work with colleagues at ECC to ensure RAMM and its satellite sites are maintained to a level that reflects a high-quality visitor experience and meets the security and conservation needs of the collection.

Outcomes of Aim 5

- ▶ People will feel attracted to come to the museum
- ▶ Future generations will have access to a world-class museum
- ▶ People will experience more ambitious projects made possible by new partnerships
- ▶ Donors understand that RAMM is a cause worthy of their support
- ▶ Staff understand the need to generate more income through fundraising and commercial activities and know how they can contribute
- ▶ People will feel reassured that the museum is playing its part in addressing the climate emergency

Activity plans and policies

For detailed activity plans which support this forward plan, see:

2025-26 NPO plan: Activity Plan and Investment Principles plan
2026-29 Audience Development Plan
Access Statement
2025-28 Access Plan
Collections Development Policy 2026-30
Collections Information and Access Policy
Documentation Procedural Manual
Collections Care and Conservation Policy and Plan
Emergency Plan

Finances

2025-26 budget summary:

Budget April 2025-March 2026	Total
INCOME	
Local Authority income	£ 2,785,740
Arts Council - NPO	£ 618,363
Direct activity income (Day Admissions)	£ 10,800
Heading only: OTHER EARNED INCOME	£ -
<i>Museum Shop Sales</i>	£ 279,930
<i>Rent Income</i>	£ 23,280
<i>Other Earned Income</i>	£ 52,770
<i>Solar Panel Electricity Income</i>	£ 7,010
TOTAL INCOME: £ 3,777,893	

EXPENDITURE	
<u>Staff Costs</u>	
National Insurance	£ 64,945
Pension	£ 97,634
Salaries	£ 534,909
Temp Staff	£ 20,100

Direct Activity Costs

Artistic and Cultural Spend	£	36,690
Programme Costs: Exhibitions	£	47,590
Programme Costs: Events	£	12,600
Programme Costs: Freelancers:	£	6,000
Ed & Out: Staffing Costs	£	261,530
Ed & Out: Volunteer/Student	£	4,300
Ed & Out: Other Education and Outreach Costs	£	21,900
Staffing: Other Direct Activity	£	979,782
Other Costs: Other Direct Activity	£	63,320

Overheads

Advertising & Promotion	£	24,000
Bank fees & charges	£	3,250
Consultant fees & subscriptions	£	10,010
Depreciation	£	535,390
Earned Income Costs	£	136,580
Insurance	£	109,910
Equipment purchase	£	9,030
Other costs (not elsewhere specified)	£	1,450
Other office expenses	£	19,640
Rates	£	63,610
Travel	£	12,870
Utilities	£	545,280

Other Overheads

<i>Access costs</i>	£	151,620
<i>Training</i>	£	3,953

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £ 3,777,893

Income against Expenditure: £ -

2026-27 budget summary

The 2026-27 budget has not been ratified by Council. However, based on our current assumptions, we believe that the budget for next year will remain roughly the same, with a 3% increase in staff costs. Utilities will be reduced to reflect more realistic energy prices (Electricity by 30% and Gas by 24%). All other budget lines are expected to remain the roughly the same (NPO activity budgets will be reduced to balance the increase in salaries).

Budget April 2026-March 2027**Total****INCOME**

Local Authority income	£	2,671,038
Arts Council - NPO	£	618,363
Direct activity income (Day Admissions)	£	10,800
Heading only: OTHER EARNED INCOME	£	-
<i>Museum Shop Sales</i>	£	279,930
<i>Rent Income</i>	£	-
<i>Other Earned Income</i>	£	99,280
<i>Solar Panel Electricity Income</i>	£	7,010

TOTAL INCOME: £ 3,686,421

EXPENDITURE**Staff Costs**

<i>National Insurance</i>	£	66,035
<i>Pension</i>	£	100,817
<i>Salaries</i>	£	546,434
<i>Temp Staff</i>	£	44,630

Direct Activity Costs

Artistic and Cultural Spend	£	37,208
Programme Costs: Exhibitions	£	46,780
Programme Costs: Events	£	10,899
Programme Costs: Freelancers:	£	5,190
<i>Ed & Out: Staffing Costs</i>	£	272,341
Ed & Out: Volunteer/Student	£	4,300
Ed & Out: Other Education and Outreach Costs	£	18,944
<i>Staffing: Other Direct Activity</i>	£	1,010,733
Other Costs: Other Direct Activity	£	58,595

Overheads

Advertising & Promotion	£	21,696
Bank fees & charges	£	3,250
Consultant fees & subscriptions	£	14,760
Depreciation	£	535,390
Earned Income Costs	£	136,580
Insurance	£	109,910

Equipment purchase	£	9,030
Other costs (not elsewhere specified)	£	1,450
Other office expenses	£	13,610
Rates	£	63,610
Travel	£	12,870
Utilities	£	386,279
Other Overheads		
<i>Access costs</i>	£	151,620
<i>Training</i>	£	3,460
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£	3,686,421
Income against Expenditure:	£	-

Staffing

RAMM currently has 51 members of staff, which equates to 42 full time equivalent positions.

A full organisational chart can be found in Appendix 4. In summary (as of October 2025), there are three teams: Collections, Audience Development and Operations. A reorganisation of the culture management team is currently underway, with the outcome to be finalised during the early part of 2026. This transformation is in response to rising financial pressures, evolving community needs, and a shifting cultural landscape, and commits to ensuring that Exeter's cultural services remain vibrant, inclusive and accessible. Through modernising the structure of cultural services and aligning resources more effectively ECC is not only responding to financial pressures but embracing an opportunity to reimagine how culture can enrich the lives of our residents and visitors.

RAMM's teams are highly-skilled and motivated and benefit from training provided through ACE funding. Staff turnover is extremely low in its collections and audience development teams. In the visitor services team, turnover is 18% (11% when retail and cleaning are taken into account), which is considerably lower than the industry average of 25% turnover for arts, entertainment and recreation.

RAMM's workforce is largely representative of its local population in terms of protected characteristics, but like most other museums in the UK, it is not representative when it comes to socioeconomic status, with fewer people from working-class backgrounds in museum roles.

Key actions for staffing

1. Implement the reorganisation of the museum's management team
2. Following the management team reorganisation a further reorganisation of the wider museum team will be required

Monitoring

The museum has robust processes in place to monitor performance against its aims and objectives.

- ▶ Performance against the KPIs of the ACE NPO plan (Activity Plan and Investment Principles plan) is reported at quarterly Oversight Panel meetings
- ▶ Quarterly finance meetings with the ECC finance officer ensure finances are on track
- ▶ RAMM's risk register is reviewed and updated quarterly and presented to the Oversight Panel – see Appendix 5 for most recent version
- ▶ Externally funded projects have targets which are reported to the funders
- ▶ Exhibitions, events, community engagement projects are evaluated using the Impact and Insight Toolkit and other methods
- ▶ Audience, staff, freelancer/artist and volunteer data is monitored through regular surveys.

Appendices

1. Environmental analysis (PESTLE and SWOT)
2. Economic value report
3. Audience demographics report
4. Current organisation chart
5. Risk register

Written by: Helen Hartstein (Audience Development Manager), Julien Parsons (Collections and Content Manager), ECC

Approved by: Exeter City Council

Date: 13 January 2026

Review date: September 2028, or sooner if the stated assumptions change.

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Appendix 1

Background to Forward Plan 2026-29

External environment

Political	Local Government Reorganisation; funding from DCMS and review of ACE; museum as council service reporting to elected members;
Economic	Reduced/standstill funding for public sector; high cost of living; inflation putting pressure on household incomes; partners losing funding, cost of services higher (fees for workshop leaders, transport costs etc.); Exeter's growth plans; RAMM's economic value to the city £6.8M+
Social	Increasing demands on public/voluntary sector; educated city with strong University; strong community feeling through community groups etc.; committed, passionate grassroots organisations working positively at a local level (Community Builders, Wellbeing Exeter, local foodbanks, charities etc.); socially-aware audiences requesting decolonisation and anti-racism; environmental awareness; increase in people experiencing mental health challenges and social isolation.
Technology	Audiences increasingly online but digital deficit for some; people expecting more experiential exhibitions; social media, more experiences being accessible due to hybrid events; hybrid working for teams; AI changing everything.
Environmental	Climate change, ecological crisis. ECC net carbon zero strategy, younger people in particular becoming more passionate about environmental issues; .

SWOT analysis

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collections of national and international significance. • Maximising value of Exeter City Council (ECC)'s core funding as leverage for external grants. • Profile, audience and stakeholder recognition of RAMM supported by strong past performance and reputation. • Dynamic and creative programming has relevance for the community served. • Experienced and committed staff team. • High levels of support from community volunteers. • Team has clear understanding of museum purpose and direction. • Cross fertilisation and convergence of different art forms; contemporary and historic practice. • Support from two associated independent charities enables developmental aspects of our work. • Good data and insight for decision-making • Able to demonstrate economic value of the museum • ECC net carbon zero strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local context of city's relatively buoyant economy and growth prospects. • City Council's ambition for city and its services. • Local government reorganisation • Labour government's focus on growth and skills development • Social and civic value of RAMM – reputation and goodwill • Strong partnerships • Co-production through RAMM's work with partnerships and audiences. • Democratisation of culture/content diversification. • Growing recognition of RAMM's value to health and wellbeing agendas. • Potentials of technological change to extend the reach of RAMM's collections and services, through digital, personalisation of experiences and targeted individual relationships. • Use of data to better understand audiences, shape and promote services. • Digital enables global reach, exchange and collaboration. • Potential of AI to streamline admin and data tasks • Socially aware audiences (e.g. decolonisation and anti-racism) • Opportunity to foster sense of belonging and civic pride through promoting connection and community • Strong community feeling committed grassroots organisations working positively at local level • People becoming more passionate about environmental issues.
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressures on public sector funding and position as discretionary service. • Competition for resources • Meeting multiple community needs and balancing conflicting demands/ interests. • Reduced marketing budget to compete for audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on public sector funding. • Local government reorganisation • Increased need to demonstrate impacts with same or less resource. • Need to recast and represent museum's work to meet new stakeholder priorities and interest.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to reinvest in ‘core offer’ updates/renewal. • Limitations of digital infrastructure, capacity and priority inhibits development and opportunity. • Lack of physical space (e.g. for venue hire) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for ‘air- time’ and need to advocate nationally, locally, to ACE and to sector. • People’s disposable discretionary income diminished – cost of living crisis • Changing demographics and community need. • Significant competition for people’s time and attention (multiplicity of choices and sophistication of competitor marketing). • Social media changing communication and peoples’ expectations. • Increased polarisation of audiences, particularly on social media • Visitor expectations of offer and demand for public access to collections continues to increase. • Premium placed on visitor ‘experience’. • Climate change, ecological crisis
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Alignment with Corporate Plan

Local Economy

We will build on Exeter’s thriving economy by attracting new businesses and continued investment in our city by collaborating with national, regional and local businesses and partners. We will work together on regeneration and growth activities designed to attract new businesses and continued investment in our public spaces, culture, heritage and tourism industries.

Outcomes	
A thriving, diverse and resilient city which can adapt to changing conditions.	RAMM’s economic value work shows how the museum contributes £6.8M to the local economy.
Businesses will be reporting increases in footfall and business success.	RAMM drives footfall to the city centre.
A vibrant cultural and tourism offer.	Alongside the Cathedral, RAMM is the city’s main visitor attraction. It is also a source of information for tourists.

People

We will encourage residents and community groups to be healthier and more active, promote inclusion and community cohesion and efforts to ensure people feel safe and welcome.

Outcomes	
Health inequalities will reduce.	Wellbeing projects including social prescribing work with Wellbeing Exeter, Museum Meet Up etc.
Communities will be more resilient.	Community engagement programme, collaboration with community groups
More residents, including those from our priority neighbourhoods and communities, will be participating in leisure and cultural events and activities.	Festivals and outreach projects targeted at priority neighbourhoods, voucher scheme, Time Odyssey schools programme
A safe and thriving city with great things to see and do for everyone.	Exhibition and event programme, Lates, schools programme, venue hire events.

Sustainable environment

We will reduce our own carbon emissions and work with the city's key partners, businesses, communities and residents to take action to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Outcomes	
A city taking action to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.	RAMM's programme of exhibitions and events shine a light on the action that people can take.
A carbon-neutral city	RAMM has a decarbonisation plan and an environmental forum for action team.

AUGUST 2024

Economic and Social Value of Culture in Exeter

by Daria Incarnato & Augustin Lagarde

SIMETRICA | **Jacobs**

Executive summary: overview

Cultural organisations deliver a wide range of benefits both to **society** and to the **economy**. Simetrica-Jacobs has been commissioned to estimate the value of these benefits, focusing on **seven organisations with different cultural offerings** within Exeter.

All work is consistent with best-practice methodologies such as those within the UK HM Treasury Green Book (2022) and DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital Programme. The aim is to provide robust evidence on the economic value of culture to the city of Exeter to inform decision-making around investment and priorities.

Page 190 It is estimated that between the 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, the seven organisations generated a total **aggregate value to society of c.£11.8m**. This consists of c.£11.2m with respect to TEV and ticket revenue (where appropriate) and c.£0.6m with respect to additional wellbeing impacts.

Among those, RAMM had the highest TEV value (c.£2.3m) followed by Phoenix (c.£1.9m) and Northcott Theatre (c.£1.7m). For comparison purposes, within the ACE Guidance Notes (2021), Bristol Museum and Art Gallery had a value of c.£3m and Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre of £4.4m.

Within the same period, the seven organisations also contributed to the local economy by generating **a local GVA of £5.2m**.

It is worth noting that based on calculations undertaken by Exeter City Council using the AIM (Association of Independent Museums) toolkit, which estimates net additional visitor impacts, for local, day trippers and overnight visitors, RAMM has an additional economic impact of £2.5m, taking RAMM's total value of benefits to society and the economy to £6.8m.



It is worth noting that *these results are conservative and could likely underestimate the full value of these cultural organisations.*

Executive summary: results

	RAMM	Northcott	Phoenix	Library	City of Literature	Corn Exchange	Literature Works (Quay Words)
Total Economic Value (TEV)	c.£2.3m	c.£1.7m (additional c.£1.7m in ticket revenue)	c.£1.9m* (additional c.£1.1m in ticket revenue)	c.£1m	c£8k	c.£0.4m (additional c.£0.9m in ticket revenue)	c.£50k
Additional wellbeing impacts	c.£104k	c.£7k	c.£393k	c.£111k	c.£8k	c.£1k	c.£5k
Total benefits to society (incl. ticket revenue)	c.£2.4m	c.£3.5m	c.£3.4m	c.£1.1m	c£16k	c.£1.3m	c.£55k
Aggregate total benefits to society	c£11.8m value to society over the year, across the seven organisations* (c.£8.1m value to society over the year if exclude ticket revenue)						
Local Gross Value Added	c.£1.9m	c.£1.1m	c.£1.2m	c.£541k	c.£149k	c.£283k	c.£24k
Aggregate total benefits to the local economy	Total GVA which can be attributed to local area c.£5.2m Supported employment of 734 local people GP cost saving of c.£60k in relation to being a Library organisation user						
Total benefits to society and economy (incl. ticket revenue)	c.£4.3m	c.£4.6m	c.£4.6m	c.£1.7m	c.£0.2m	c.£1.5m	c.£0.1m

* It is worth noting there may be some degree of substitution effect between the cultural offering of the seven organisations. However, given the benefit transfer studies are also based in cities with a side cultural offering, we think it is suitable to aggregate the benefits to society. However, this forms one of our recommendations.

A results breakdown can be found in Appendix A. The results are based on visitor and participant data shared by Exter City Council, part of which can be found in Appendix F.

1. Project overview

2. Methodology

- a) Approach
- b) Values
- c) Suitability and assumptions

3. Results

4. Sensitivity analysis

5. Recommendations

Appendix

1. Project overview

This project aims to support Exeter City Council in **understanding the value of culture** in the city by focusing on seven organisations, with different cultural offerings:

- Exeter Northcott Theatre,
- the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM),
- Phoenix (multi-arts venue),
- Corn Exchange,
- UNESCO City of Literature,
- Libraries Unlimited, and
- Literature Works (Quay Words).

The analysis in this report is based on the latest developments in cultural economics and applies them to Exeter's context as appropriate. All work is consistent with best-practice methodologies such as those set out in the **UK HM Treasury Green Book** (2022)¹ and **DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital Programme**².



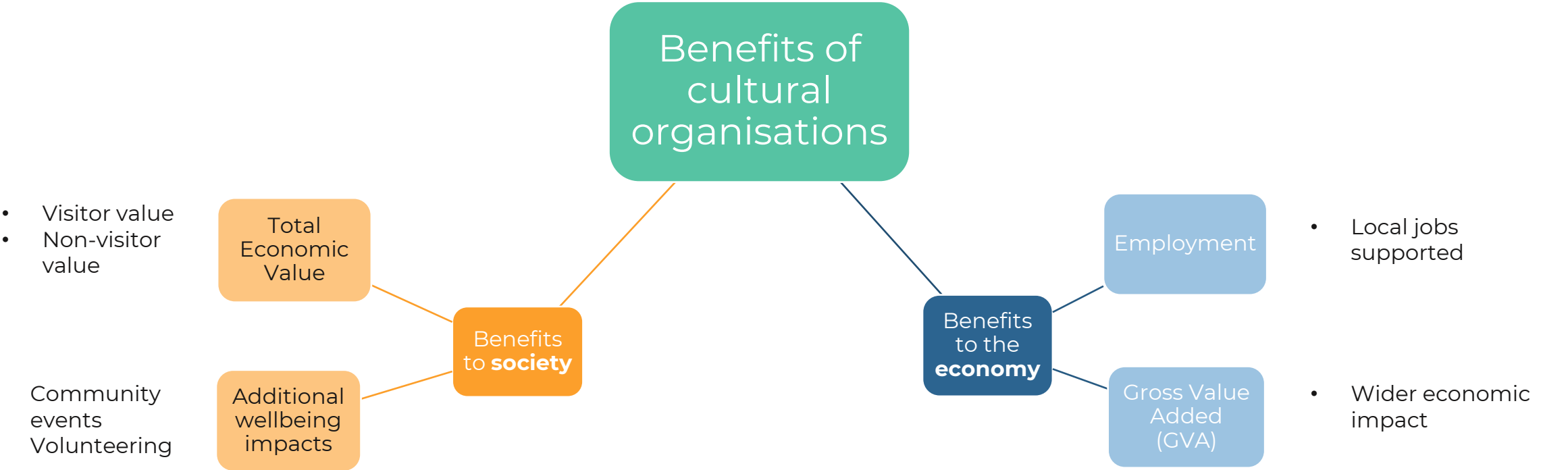
¹www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government

²www.gov.uk/guidance/culture-and-heritage-capital-portal

2. Methodology: Approach

Cultural organisations deliver both benefits to the economy and to society. The benefits to the economy are measurable through **market prices**, such as salaries and money spent on goods and services in the local economy. Conversely the benefits to society are not captured fully by market prices (particularly when free to access). As such, we rely on **non-market valuation** methods as per HM Treasury Green Book guidance.

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2. Methodology: Approach – Total Economic Value

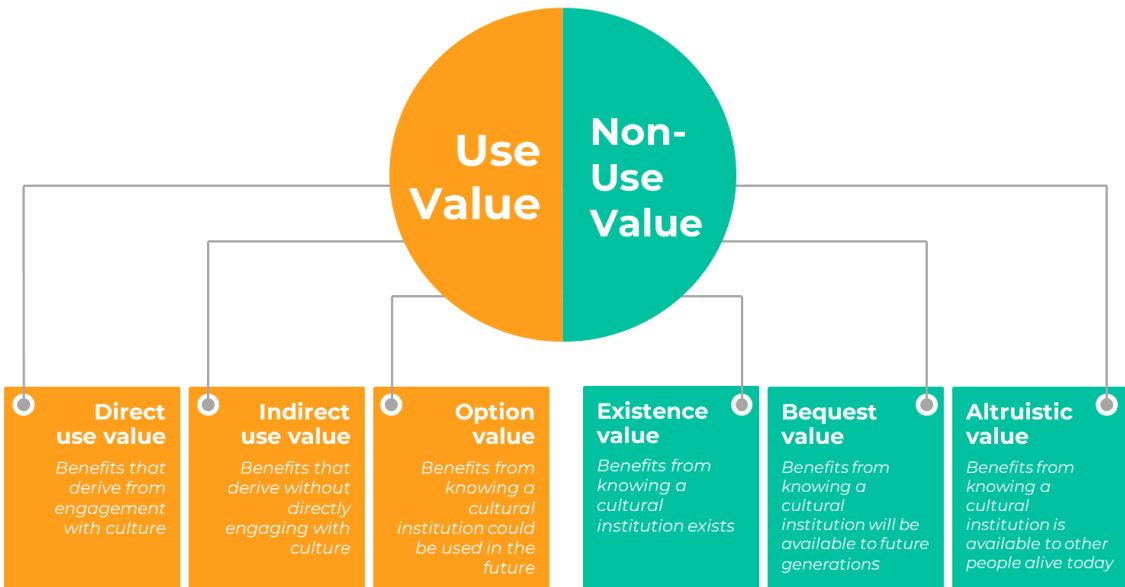
Individuals can derive value through several different ways depending on how they use, interact with, or benefit from a cultural good or service.

A common approach for understanding this value in the arts and cultural sector is the **Total Economic Value (TEV) framework**.

Use value includes:

- **direct use** benefits to visitors, for instance recreational, leisure, and entertainment activities, as well as education, inspiration and knowledge.
- **indirect use** benefits could arise in the form of enhanced community image, and social interaction
- **option value** refers to benefits from a potential future use of the institution and its services.

Total Economic Value



However, cultural services can be valued even by those who do not directly use them.

Non-use values can come from simply knowing that others will benefit, either now, or in the future (**altruistic** and **bequest value**). Non-use value may also be derived from simply knowing that the cultural good exists (**existence value**).

Stated Preference surveys, in particular **Contingent Valuation** (CV) surveys, can ask respondents to report their use and non-use values through **willingness to pay** (WTP) values.

2. Methodology: Approach – TEV

The DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital research and guidance contains **WTP values for visitors** and **non-visitors**. These values have been applied to estimate the TEV of each of Exeter City Council’s organisations through benefit transfer.

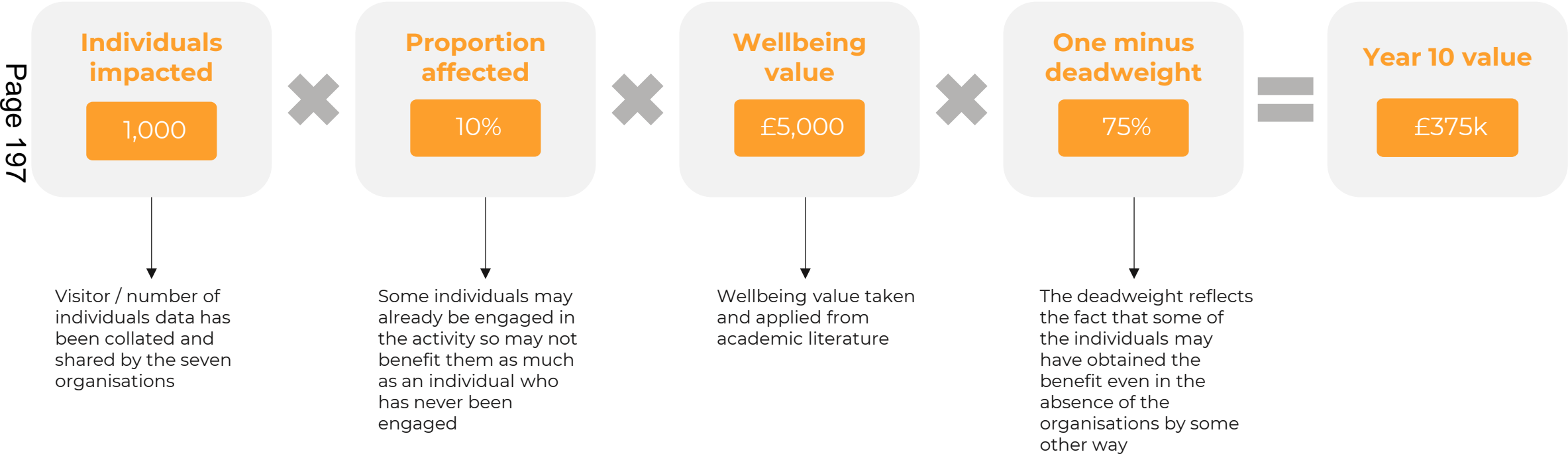
Step	Outline
1. Identify context for benefit transfer	Benefit transfer is the method of applying an estimated value of one or more sites to another site. In this case, we are applying values from the ACE Guidance Notes sites to the Exeter cultural organisations. Care has been taken to ensure the criteria for a regional museum, theatre and cinema venue in the guidance note are satisfied by Exeter’s organisations, respectively.
2. Calculate total visitor value	The total visitor value for the Exeter organisation has been calculated by multiplying the number of visitors to the organisation by the relevant visitor WTP value. Where the WTP value is per visit, it has been applied to the headcount number of unique visitors. Conversely, where the WTP value is per household, the number of visitors has been divided by the average Exeter household size . The WTP value from the guidance notes has been adjusted to reflect the difference in household income between the guidance note sites and Exeter. This has been done through Adjusted Unit Value Transfer (see Appendix C for the calculation and the adjusted WTP values).
3. Calculate total non-visitor value*	The total non-visitor value for the Exeter organisation has been calculated by multiplying the number of households within the organisation's local catchment area by the relevant non-visitor WTP value. To avoid double counting , visitor household numbers have been deducted from the catchment area numbers.
4. Aggregate for total non-market value	The total visitor and non-visitor values have been added.
5. Add ticket revenue (where appropriate)	Where the WTP value in the guidance note was expressed as a value beyond ticket prices , ticket revenue has been added to the total.

* If the non-visitor WTP value has been stated in the guidance as a one-off payment over the asset’s lifetime rather than an annual payment, an adjustment should be made. We would recommend annualising over a 30-year period to report a per year value. This has not been required for the local museums or theatre ACE guidance notes.

2. Methodology: Approach – Additional wellbeing impacts

Additional wellbeing impacts (e.g. volunteering and community events) not captured in the TEV, which focuses on the core function of those cultural organisations, have also been added. For that purpose, **wellbeing values** from the literature have been applied to estimate the benefits to society created by the organisations through those additional activities. The calculation is outlined below.

Wellbeing impact calculation

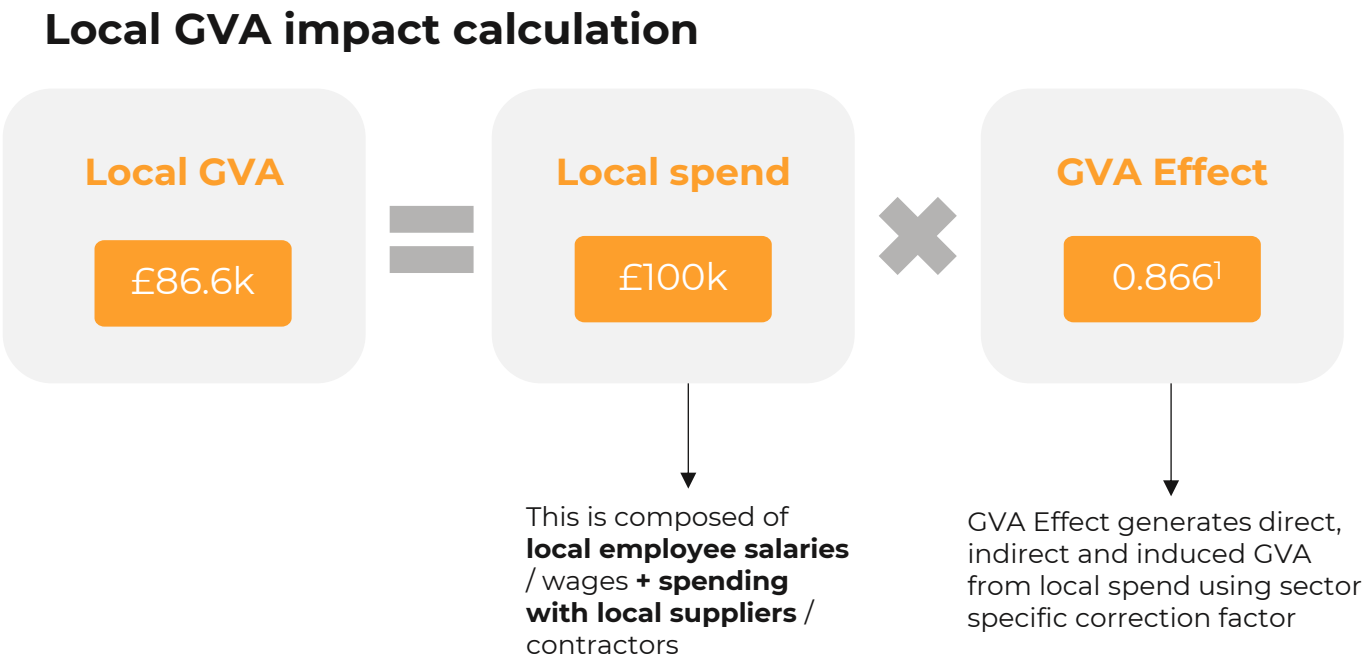


2. Methodology: Approach – GVA

The **Gross Value Added (GVA)** accounts for:

- **Direct** impact – the economic activity generated by the organisations, exclusive of the activity of suppliers of goods and services to these businesses,
- **Indirect** impact – the economic activity indirectly supported among suppliers of the organisations because of purchases of intermediate goods and services to support the delivery of services to organisation visitors,
- **Induced** impact – the economic activity created or supported by the organisations’ employees directly and indirectly through the supply chain, spending their salaries in other sectors.

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¹ GVA Effect for ‘Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural services’ taken from United Kingdom Input-Output Analytical Tables, 2020
www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/supplyandusetable/datasets/ukinputoutputanalyticaltablesindustrybyindustry/current

2. Methodology: Values

	RAMM	Northcott	Corn Exchange	Phoenix	Library	City of Literature	Literature Works (Quay Words)
Total Economic Value	Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Guidance Note Regional Museum (2021) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor - Lower bound WTP £6.01 per visitNon-visitor - Lower bound WTP per household per year £3.17	Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Guidance Note Theatre (2021) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor - Lower bound WTP £11.08 per person per year above ticket priceNon-visitor - Lower bound WTP per household per year £4.32	Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Guidance Note Theatre (2021) and BFI Measuring economic value of cinema (2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor - Lower bound WTP £18.04 per person per year above ticket price DCMS (2014) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Music audience value per person per year	Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Health & Wellbeing benefits of public libraries (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor – Mean WTP £19.51 per household per year, reduction in GP cost of £1.32 per person per yearNon-visitor – Mean £10.31 WTP per household per year	Application of wellbeing value DCMS Valuing the Wellbeing Impacts of Culture and Sport (2014) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Frequent library use – wellbeing value of £1,359 per person per yearWriting value per person per year		
Wellbeing impact Community	Application of wellbeing value of ‘ <i>talking, chatting, socialising</i> ’ from Krekel and MacKerron ‘Back to Edgeworth? Estimating the value of time using hedonic experiences’ (2024), for informal events <ul style="list-style-type: none">£10.08 wellbeing value per person per engagement activity Application of wellbeing value of ‘ <i>crafts activities</i> ’ from DCMS Valuing the Wellbeing Impacts of Culture and Sport (2014) for structured workshop events						
Wellbeing impact Volunteer	Application of wellbeing value of ‘ <i>volunteering</i> ’ from Lawton et al. ‘Does volunteering make us happier or are happier people more likely to volunteer?’ (2020) <ul style="list-style-type: none">£911 wellbeing value per person per year for volunteering						
GVA	Application of GVA Effects for ‘Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural services’ taken from United Kingdom Input-Output Analytical Tables, 2020						

11 Links to the literature used are provided in Appendix E.

2. Methodology: Suitability and assumptions

Given the catchment area and number of visitors to the RAMM, the application of the **regional museum values** (rather than local museum) is deemed suitable.

Given **Phoenix's multi-arts venue space**, a combined value (applying the values in relation to theatres cinema venues, music audience and socialising) rather than solely a theatre value, is deemed most suitable. Based on visitor split data shared by Phoenix, **15% of Phoenix's visitors (and non-visitors)** derives a value akin to a **theatre** WTP value, **23%** a value akin to a **cinema**, **57%** a value akin to **music audience** wellbeing value and **5%** akin to a **socialising** wellbeing value.

Wellbeing values rather than the benefit transfer of WTP values have been applied to **City of Literature and Literature Works (Quay Words)** visitor numbers. This is due to the special nature of the organisations and the programme nature of their activities. For example, Literature Works 'Quay Words Short poet's Journey Course' has a duration of 5 weeks. Literature Works is included because it produces a year-round programme at the Exeter Custom House and therefore the data relates solely to the Quay Words programme. It is worth noting that wellbeing values tend to generate higher results than WTP values, however given the context this is deemed suitable.

Two different wellbeing values have been applied to the community engagement activities reflecting the degree of involvement of the event. It has been assumed that **40% of community events are informal and 60% are structured** (e.g., crafts workshop). A higher wellbeing value has been assigned to the structured events. The events focus on the lower socio-economic status wards of the city which has the potential to generate additional wellbeing benefits not captured here.


Other assumptions made and their source can be found in Appendix B.

3. Results: 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 (in 2021 prices)

	RAMM	Northcott	Phoenix	Library	City of Literature	Corn Exchange	Literature Works (Quay Words)
Total Economic Value (TEV)	c.£2.3m	c.£1.7m (additional c.£1.7m in ticket revenue)	c.£1.9m* (additional c.£1.1m in ticket revenue)	c.£1m	c£8k	c.£0.4m (additional c.£0.9m in ticket revenue)	c.£50k
Additional wellbeing impacts	c.£104k	c.£7k	c.£393k	c.£111k	c.£8k	c.£1k	c.£5k
Total benefits to society (incl. ticket revenue)	c.£2.4m	c.£3.5m	c.£3.4m	c.£1.1m	c£16k	c.£1.3m	c.£55k
Aggregate total benefits to society	c£11.8m value to society over the year, across the seven organisations* (c.£8.1m value to society over the year if exclude ticket revenue)						
Local Gross Value Added	c.£1.9m	c.£1.1m	c.£1.2m	c.£541k	c.£149k	c.£283k	c.£24k
Aggregate total benefits to the local economy	Total GVA which can be attributed to local area c.£5.2m Supported employment of 734 local people GP cost saving of c.£60k in relation to being a Library organisation user						
Total benefits to society and economy (incl. ticket revenue)	c.£4.3m	c.£4.6m	c.£4.6m	c.£1.7m	c.£0.2m	c.£1.5m	c.£0.1m

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* It is worth noting there may be some degree of substitution effect between the cultural offering of the seven organisations. However, given the benefit transfer studies are also based in cities with a side cultural offering, we think it is suitable to aggregate the benefits to society. However, this forms one of our recommendations. A results breakdown can be found in Appendix A. The results are based on visitor and participant data shared by Exter City Council, part of which can be found in Appendix F.



3. Results: Summary

It is estimated that between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, the seven organisations generated a total **aggregate value to society of c.£11.8m**. This consist of c.£11.2m with respect to TEV and ticket revenue (where appropriate) and c.£0.6m with respect to additional wellbeing impacts.

Among those, RAMM had the highest TEV value (c.£2.3m) followed by Phoenix (c.£1.9m) and Northcott Theatre (c.£1.7m).

For comparison purposes, within the ACE Guidance Notes (2021), Bristol Museum and Art Gallery had a value of c.£3m and Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre of £4.4m.

The lower values for City of Literature and Literature Works (Quay Words) are explained by their smaller visitor numbers.

Within the same period, the seven organisations also contributed to the local economy by generating a **local GVA of £5.2m**.

It is worth noting that based on calculations undertaken by Exeter City Council using the AIM (Association of Independent Museums) toolkit, which estimates net additional **visitor impacts**, for local, day trippers and overnight visitors, RAMM has an **additional economic impact of £2.5m, taking RAMM's total value of benefits to society and the economy to £6.8m**.

3. Results: discussion

It is worth noting that **these results are conservative and likely underestimate the full value of these cultural organisations.**

For example, in terms of community engagement, these organisation also provide meaningful learning activities for 43,271 **school children*** across all organisations, through school visits, home education visits and creative activities. This is not reflected in the total aggregate value to society figures presented.

Furthermore, some of the **community programme are targeted specifically at the lower socio-economic status wards of the city.** This has the potential to generate additional wellbeing benefits for two reasons. Firstly, those are most likely to start with lower wellbeing in the first place. Delivering wellbeing outcomes to those with lower wellbeing has been demonstrated to be most effective. Secondly, those are also less likely to participate in such activities in the first place as well so would get more benefits than someone who engages more regularly. These wellbeing benefits have not been captured as part of this analysis.

These limitations form part of our recommendations discussed in Section 5.

* Information provided by Exeter City Council and does not refer to unique number of school children.

4. Sensitivity analysis: approach

In line with best practice guidance, upper and lower bound estimates have been calculated and presented for sensitivity purposes. For the TEV we varied the **catchment area**, while for the wellbeing component we varied the **WELLBY**.

Organisation	Total Economic Value			Wellbeing impacts		
	Lower bound	Main analysis	Upper bound	Lower bound	Main analysis	Upper bound
RAMM	Exeter	Exeter travel for leisure radius	Devon	Lower bound WELLBY Value of £10,000*	Central WELLBY value of £13,000*	Upper bound WELLBY Value of £16,000*
Northcott	Exeter	Exeter travel for leisure radius	Devon			
Phoenix	Exeter	Exeter travel for leisure radius	Devon			
Library	Midpoint Exeter and visitors	Exeter	Exeter travel to work radius			
Corn Exchange	Midpoint Exeter and visitors	Exeter	Exeter travel to work radius			
City of literature	Lower bound WELLBY Value of £10,000*	Central WELLBY value of £13,000*	Upper bound WELLBY Value of £16,000*			
Literature Works (Quay Words)						

*Our main wellbeing results are based on the central WELLBY value (i.e., the central estimate of the equivalent monetary value to a 1-point change in life satisfaction for one year). The central WELLBY has value of £13,000 (in 2019 prices), this was uprated to 2021 prices. See Appendix D for more information on the WELLBY and the wellbeing valuation approach.

4. Sensitivity analysis: results

	RAMM	Northcott	Phoenix	Library	City of Literature	Corn Exchange	Literature works (Quay Words)
TEV (excl. ticket revenue)	£2,317,350 (£1,527,020 - £3,232,125)	£1,746,120 (£631,454 - £2,860,785)	£1,891,772 (£1,385,995 - £2,397,549)	£1,024,072 (£713,276 - £4,562,753)	£7,988 (£6,144 - £9,831)	£398,050 (£287,337 - £1,548,265)	£49,930 (£38,408 - £61,452)
Additional wellbeing impact (Volunteering)	£36,944 (£28,418 - £45,469)	£7,080 (£5,446 - £8,714)	£25,101 (£19,308 - £30,894)	£13,516 (£10,397 - £16,635)	£1,159 (£891 - £1,426)	£644 (£495 - £792)	£386 (£297 - £475)
Additional wellbeing impact (Community)	£66,540 (£54,103 - £78,977)	-	£368,168 (£299,352 - £436,984)	£97,057 (£78,916 - £115,198)	£6,719 (£5,463 - £7,975)	-	£4,338 (£3,527 - £5,149)
Total benefits to society (excl. ticket revenue)	£2,420,833 (£1,609,541 - £3,232,125)	£1,753,199 (£636,900 - £2,869,499)	£2,285,041 (£1,704,655 - £2,865,427)	£1,134,645 (£802,589 - £4,694,586)	£15,865 (£12,499 - £19,232)	£398,694 (£287,829 - £1,549,057)	£54,654 (£42,232 - £67,077)
Total benefits to society (excl. ticket revenue)	£8,062,932 value to society over the year, across the seven organisations (excluding ticket revenue) (£5,096,245 - £15,297,002)						

5. Recommendations

Below we have outlined a set of recommendations for Exeter City Council to adopt to finesse the analysis presented in this report.

We recommend the organisations **collect additional data** on:

- **Household income** of visitors / participants in event / volunteers.

We recommend the organisations **take the following steps** with regards to their wider activities:

- Ensure they are **targeted** at those individuals who would benefit the most. There is a wide range of literature outlining who benefits the most from community events and volunteering and those organisation should aim to deploy such findings.¹
- **Evaluate and evidence** the wellbeing impact of their specific activities. The wellbeing benefit of volunteering within a cultural institution presented in the Lawton et al. report was unfortunately not found statistically significantly different from 0. We would recommend therefore that a bespoke evaluation of organisations' volunteering programme is undertaken to help demonstrate and understand how their programme may or may not improve wellbeing.

We recommend **further research** is undertaken to:

- Explore the potential substitution effect between the seven different cultural organisations.
- Further explore the suitability of some of the values used. This is particularly the case for the 'writing' wellbeing value applied to Literature Works (Quay Words) (taken from DCMS, 2014), which is not statistically significant.

¹ For example:

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Volunteer-wellbeing-technical-report-Oct2020-a.pdf>

https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Briefing_-The-social-value-of-place-based-arts-and-culture-final.pdf

Caveats and Limitations

The following caveats and limitations of the analysis must be noted:

- All figures have been estimated based on data shared by Exeter City Council and the respective seven organisations. Part of this data is outlined in Appendix F.
- Arguably, a local theatre value (rather than regional) would be more suitable for the Corn Exchange based on the number of visitors. Additional research would be required to understand how this value would differ and its applicability to Corn exchange.
- There may be additional benefits to society and the local economy that have not been captured here due to lack of data, limited research on the topic or outside the scope of the project (e.g., impact on the wellbeing of children in relation to the organisations community events).
- There may be a very specific impact on wellbeing of volunteering with specific organisations, such a UNESCO City of Literature. This nuance has not been explored as part of this analysis.
- The cultural value in Exeter extends beyond these seven organisations. This has not been explored as part of this analysis. For example, Historic England has explored the heritage value of Exeter City Council Guildhall: www.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/heritage-value-of-place. It is also worth noting this report has focused on Exeter Library specifically, however there are other libraries within the local area that bring societal benefits beyond those explored in this report.

Overall, further research and data is required in order to finesse the analysis and results from this project.

Appendix A: Detailed results

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	RAMM	Northcott	Phoenix	Library	City of Literature	Corn Exchange	Literature Works (Quay Words)
TEV	£ 2,317,350	£ 1,746,120	£ 1, 891,772	£ 1,024,072	£ 7,988	£ 398,045	£ 49,930
Exeter visitor	£ 199,397	£ 233,968	£ 816,412	£ 280,035	£ 5,584	£ 76,530	£ 25,464
Devon visitor	£ 464,678	£ 230,101	£ 715,014	£ 112,475	£ 1,873	£ 77,564	-
Outside Devon visitor	£ 725,293	£ 19,336	£ 158,804	£ 9,972	£ 530	£ 22,523	£ 24,466
Non-visitor	£ 927,981	£ 1,262,715	£ 201,542	£ 621,591	-	£ 221,432	-
Ticket revenue		£ 1,731,159	£ 1,139,772			£ 868,000	
Added Wellbeing	£ 103,483	£ 7,080	£ 393,269	£ 110,573	£ 7,878	£ 644	£ 4,724
Community	£ 66,540	£ -	£ 368,168	£ 97,057	£ 6,719	£ -	£ 4,338
Volunteering	£ 36,944	£ 7,080	£ 25,101	£ 13,516	£ 1,159	£ 644	£ 386
GVA	£ 1,869,549	£ 1,109,478	£ 1,178,165	£ 540,868	£ 148,960	£ 282,883	£ 23,949
Exeter	£ 1,043,877	£ 1,109,478	£ 786,574	£ 396,509	£ 148,960	£ 196,777	£ 11,245
Devon	£ 825,672	-	£ 391,590	£ 144,359	-	£ 86,106	£ 12,704
GP cost saving				£ 59,213			
Exeter visitor				£ 41,199			
Devon visitor				£ 16,547			
Outside Devon visitor				£ 1,467			

Appendix B: Assumptions

It is important to note that the assumptions that underpin this analysis are relatively conservative

Assumption	Value	Source
Exeter average household size (2021)	2.5	Office for Nation Statistics (ONS)
Exeter average household income (2021)	£39,168	ONS (Census 2021)
Exeter household population (2021)	52,554	ONS (Census 2021)
Exeter travel for leisure radius household population (2021)	291,362 Midpoint between Exeter and Devon household population	Simetrica-Jacobs and Exter City Council based on analysis of visitor post codes
Devon household population (2021)	530,170	ONS (Census 2021)
Average yearly frequency of crafts activities per person	20 times per year	Understanding Society (USOC) panel dataset – wave 5
Average yearly frequency of concerts per person	3	USOC – wave 18
Average yearly frequency of library visits per person	12	The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries' (2015)
Travel to work radius for TEV calculation	When adjusting the non-visitor figure to remove double counting, have assumed that half of the Devon visitors fall under the travel to work radius category	Simetrica-Jacobs

Appendix C: Adjusted unit value transfer

Adjusted unit value transfer has been used to adjust and control for the differences between the sites in the guidance notes and Exeter. We are focusing on the **differences in respondent's income*** as this could affect WTP estimates between the sites.

As per the ACE Guidance Notes, this has been calculated as:

$$\widehat{WTP}_{Exeter} = \left(\frac{\overline{Income}_{Exeter}}{\overline{Income}_{sites}} \right)^e \overline{WTP}_{sites}$$

where $\overline{Income}_{Exeter}$ and $\overline{Income}_{sites}$ is the average household income at Exeter and the study sites, respectively, and e is the elasticity of the marginal utility of income with respect to Willingness To Pay (WTP). As per the Green Book, e is assumed to equal 1.

Average household income in Exeter is in 2021 prices (Source: ONS).

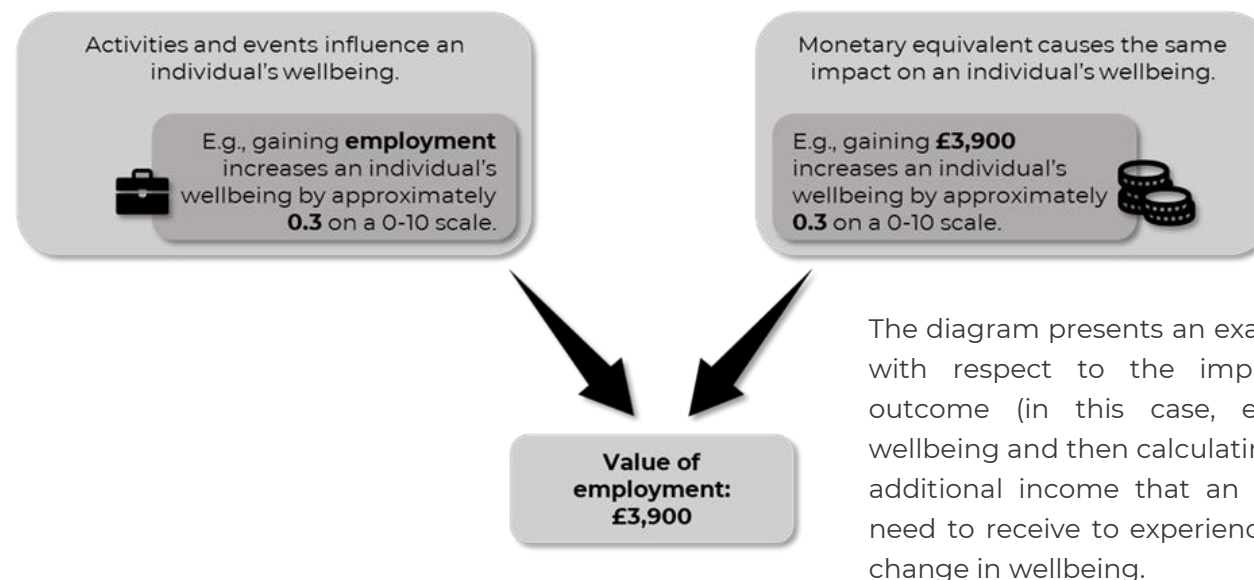
* Non-visitor household income with respect to regional museums was not reported, as such average UK household income in 2021 (ONS) was used instead.

Appendix C: Adjusted unit value transfer values

	RAMM	Northcott	Corn Exchange	Phoenix	Library
WTP value from report	<p>Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Guidance Note Regional Museum (2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor - Lower bound WTP £6.01 per visit• Non-visitor - Lower bound WTP per household per year £3.17	<p>Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Guidance Note Theatre (2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor - Lower bound WTP £11.08 per person per year above ticket price• Non-visitor - Lower bound WTP per household per year £4.32	<p>Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Guidance Note Theatre (2021) and BFI Measuring economic value of cinema (2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor - Lower bound WTP £18.04 per person per year above ticket price	<p>Benefit transfer of Contingent Valuation ACE Health & Wellbeing benefits of public libraries (2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor – Mean WTP £19.51 per household per year, reduction in GP cost of £1.32 per person per year• Non-visitor – Mean £10.31 WTP per household per year	
Adjusted Unit transfer values used in this analysis (in 2021 prices)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor - Lower bound WTP £5.83 per visit• Non-visitor - Lower bound WTP per household per year £3.55	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor - Lower bound WTP £10.50 per person per year above ticket price• Non-visitor - Lower bound WTP per household per year £4.89	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor - Lower bound WTP £14.13 per person per year above ticket price	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor – Mean WTP £25.47 per household per year• Non-visitor – Mean £14.96 WTP per household per year	

Appendix D: WELLBY and wellbeing valuation

The **wellbeing valuation** method estimates the impact of an outcome such as volunteering on an individual's wellbeing (measured as their life satisfaction) and then calculating the amount of money that would have the equivalent effect on wellbeing. This is then the estimate of wellbeing value associated with the outcome.



The diagram presents an example calculation with respect to the impact of a given outcome (in this case, employment) on wellbeing and then calculating the amount of additional income that an individual would need to receive to experience the equivalent change in wellbeing.

The HM Treasury Green Book and associated supplementary guidance¹ sets out a recommended approach to applying the wellbeing valuation approach. In particular, the guidance develops the concept of “**wellbeing adjusted life years**” (also called WELLBYs).

A WELLBY corresponds to the monetised value of a one-point change in life satisfaction (on a scale from 0 to 10), per person per year. The basis for the WELLBY concept is also set out in Frijters et al (2024)².

The UK uses a WELLBY value of £13,000 (in 2019 prices). This is the average value of a lower bound and an upper-bound value that are each based upon the relationship between health and life satisfaction and income and life satisfaction, respectively.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-book-supplementary-guidance-wellbeing

² www.nature.com/articles/s41599-024-03229-5

Appendix E: Literature sources

- **Arts Council England (ACE) Guidance Notes (2021):** www.artscouncil.org.uk/culture-heritage-capital
 - Lawton, R., Fujiwara, D., Bakhshi, H., Mourato, S., Arber, M., Davies, J. 'How to quantify the public benefit of your Museum using Value estimates, A Resource for Understanding the **Value of Museums**'
 - Lawton, R., Fujiwara, D., Bakhshi, H., Mourato, S., Arber, M. 'How to quantify the public benefit of your Theatre using Value estimates, A Resource for Understanding the **Value of Theatres**'
- British Film Institute (**BFI**), Lawton, R. McSwiney, S., Byrne, A., Philips, J., Davey, A., Hignell, S., Chowdhary, B., Garling, O., 'Measuring the Economic Value of **Cinema Venues**' (2023): <https://www.bfi.org.uk/industry-data-insights/reports/measuring-economic-value-cinema-venues>
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Appendix F: Exeter data

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Data for period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024		RAMM	Northcott	Phoenix	Library	City of Literature	Corn Exchange	Literature Works (Quay Words)
Value to society	Number of visitors - Exeter postcodes	24,000	-	150,000	326,338	29	-	339
	Number of visitors - Devon postcodes	68,000	-	125,000	130,983	10	-	-
	Number of visitors - outside of Devon	122,000	-	25,000	9,300	3	-	326
	Number of tickets sold - Exeter postcodes	10,200	55,439	28,913	1,710	129	18,134	339
	Number of tickets sold - Devon postcodes	11,700	54,523	25,322	796	43	18,379	-
	Number of tickets sold - outside of Devon	2,400	4,582	5,624	2,383	12	5,337	326
	Number of participants in events/community engagement activities	10,200	-	56,437	14,878	1,030	-	665
	Number of school children who have participated in activities	18,000	8,134	4,500	12,637	-	-	-
	Number of volunteers	287	55	195	105	9	5	3
Value to economy	Number of artists/freelancers contracted	71	24	70	58	21	101	23
	Number of staff (including casuals)	84	97	91	51	3	37	3



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RAMM demographics 2024-25: Visitors

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General points

1. The data presented in this report, unless stated, is for general (free entry) visitors rather than for ticketed events. Data is collected from face-to-face surveys.
2. We conduct two types of visitor survey to gain demographic data:

- Illuminate – this survey takes place every year, across the whole year and is carried out by volunteers. On average, 90-100 surveys per month were taken from April 24 – March 25, dependent on volunteer availability.
 - Visitor research carried out by an external market research agency, Power Marketing (PM) - 500 surveys are collected every two years during August, September and October. This tracking survey has been carried out since 2011. The last surveys were carried out in 2023. This report will be updated in Jan 2026 with the results of the 2025 tracking survey
3. This report compares RAMM demographic data with **Exeter** and **Devon** (sum of Torbay UA, East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge, West Devon and Plymouth). RAMM's catchment is defined as the area in which approximately 50% of UK visitors live. In 2024-25, RAMM's catchment is Devon.

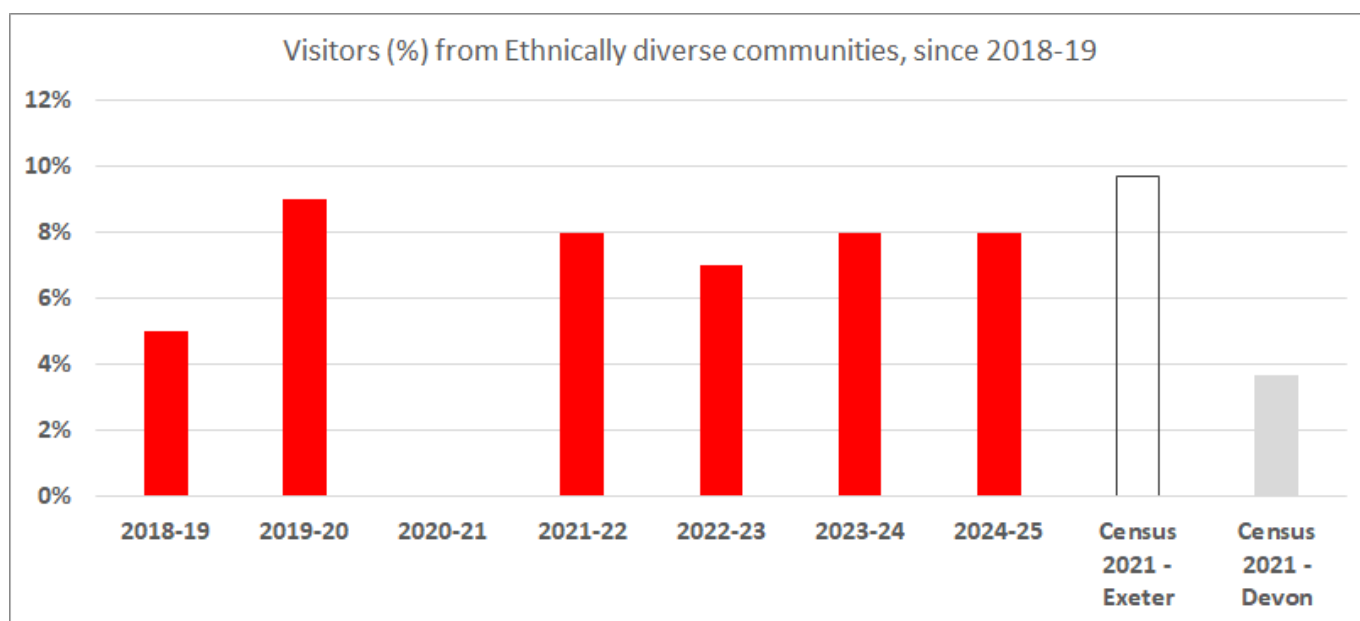


4. [RAMM demographic data](#) are stored in Data and Insight MS-Teams channel. Use filters to select required comparisons.

Ethnicity

Ethnically diverse communities are those not included in the white ethnic groups.¹

Since 2018, RAMM has seen similar numbers of visitors from ethnically diverse communities: 5% in 2018-19, **8%** in 2024-25.



Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size in 2024-25, 1123

The percentage of visitors from ethnically diverse communities is similar, within the margin of error, to the percentage in Exeter (9.7%)², but higher than the percentage in Devon (4.2%)³.

RAMM has a similar proportion of visitors from ethnically diverse communities compared with the South West region (7%) and visitors to other arts organisations in the South West (6%).⁴

¹ for more information see [Ethnic group, national identity and religion - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/people-and-population/ethnicity).

² ONS Census 2021

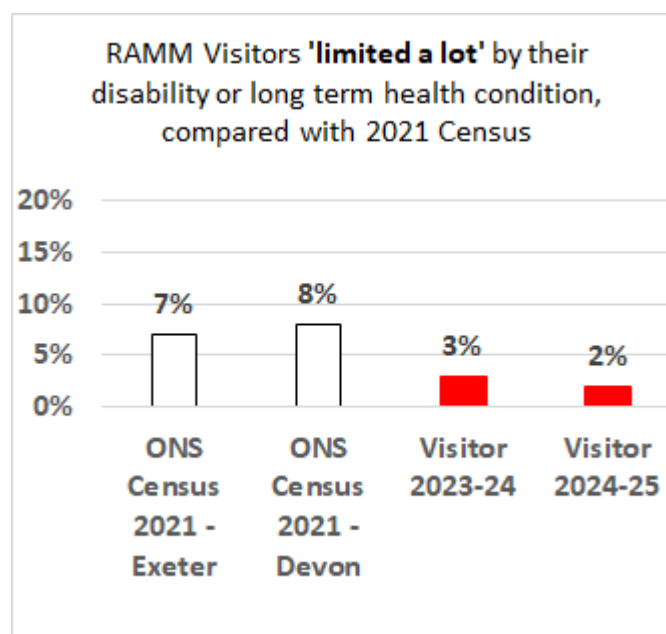
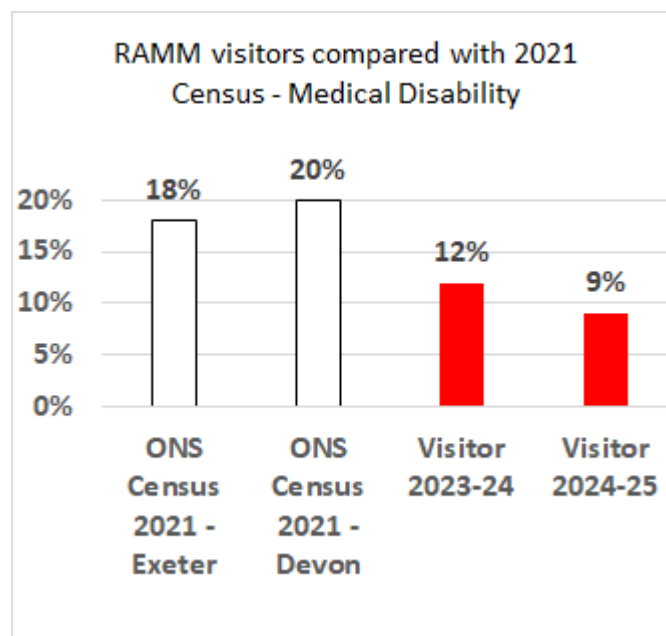
³ ONS Census 2021

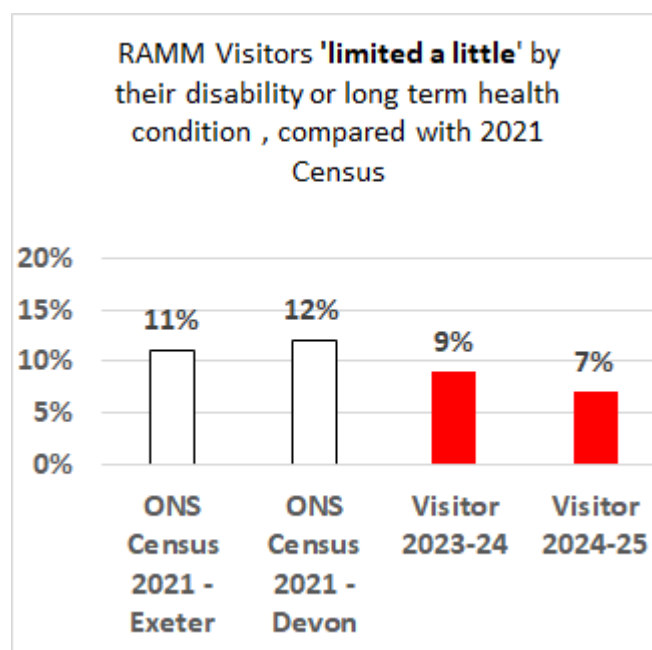
⁴ Audience Finder data is no longer being collected by ACE funded organisations, we await benchmarking from Illuminate (this was to be available post 2024-25 when survey data becomes mandatory, but is now likely to take much longer as the survey is no longer mandatory for NPOs)

Disability

RAMM had fewer visitors in 2024-25 limited by disability (**9%**) than the wider population in Exeter (18%) and Devon (20%). The nine percent is made up of:

- **7%** of visitors limited 'a little' by disability, this is lower than those resident in Exeter (11%)
- **2%** of visitors limited 'a lot' by disability, this is lower than those resident in Exeter (7%) and understandable due to the survey being collected for in person visits.





Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size, 1119

The percentage of visitors with disabilities is lower in 2024-25 than in 2023-24 where it was 9% for those limited a little and 3% for those limited a lot. The difference is within the margin of error of \pm 3%.

To help us understand whether there are any barriers to those with disabilities enjoying a visit to the museum, two additional questions were added to the 2024-25 survey:

1. A general question about whether visitor's enjoyment was affected by accessibility issues,
2. A question was asked to help us identify visitors' requirements, giving a range of suggestions and options to describe other requirements.

Over 96% of visitors surveyed (sample size 1184) answered *No, they did not experience any barriers to enjoying the museum due to accessibility issues*. Those who did were asked to provide feedback on their specific needs. Further results and conclusions are shown in this report [2025-08 Research on visitor accessibility needs.docx](#)

Notes on Disability Questions

In 2025-26, ACE combined the medical and social form of disability question. We ask:

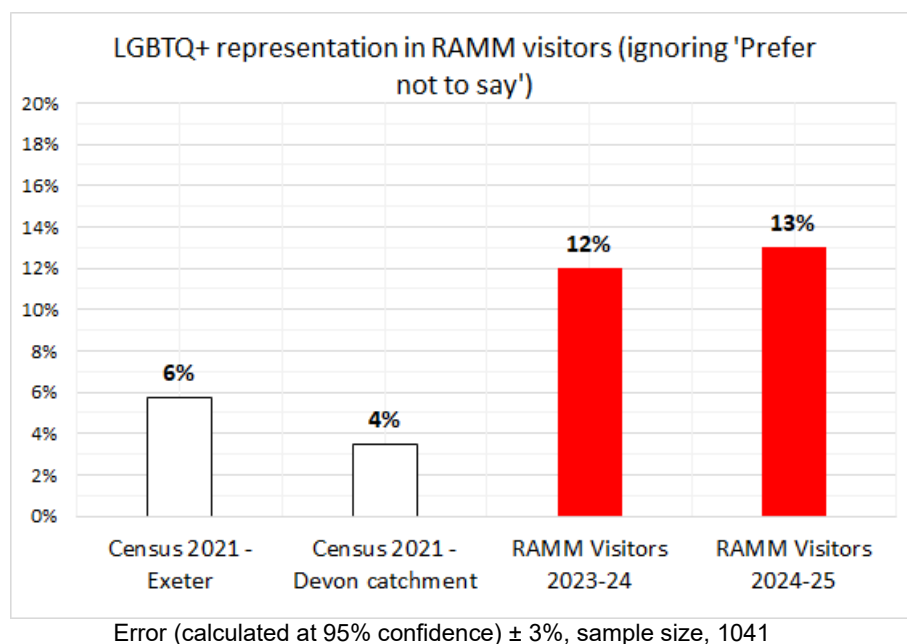
‘Do you have a long-term health condition or have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last more than 12 months or identify as disabled or D/deaf’.

This is not the same as the census question, but is similar enough to make a legitimate comparison. At RAMM we also ask a secondary question, the same as the one in the 2021 Census, to determine how much a person is limited by their disability.

During 2024-25, RAMM’s engagement team ran events attended by more than 250 people, where many of the attendees have disabilities. These visitors are not surveyed as part of a general visit. Work is being carried out to assess the percentage of attendees to our engagement programme that have disabilities.

Sexual orientation

The percentage of visitors who identify as LGBTQ+ is **13%**, higher than in the local populations of Exeter (5.8%) and Devon (3.5%)⁵.



Percentages are calculated by ignoring those who declined to answer the question or selected prefer not to say, which was 8% for RAMM Visitors (lower than in 2023-24 where it was 11%).

Notes on Sexual Orientation Question

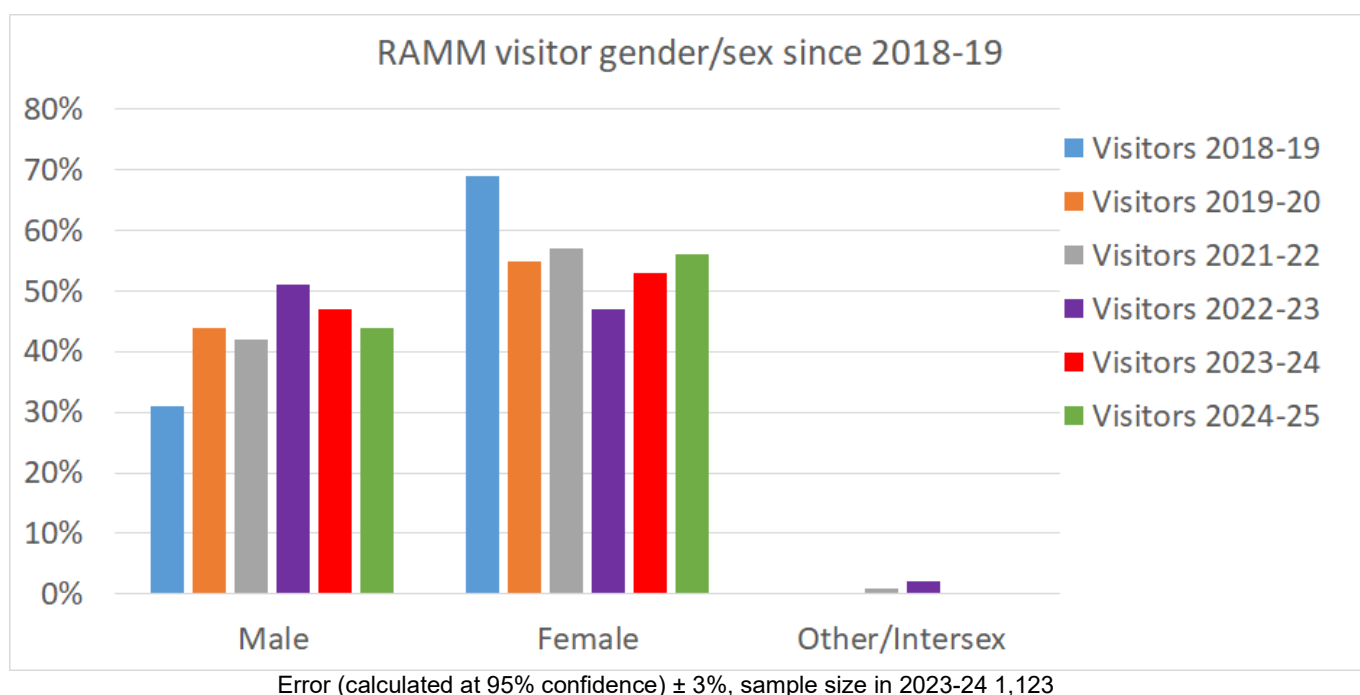
In 2023-24 visitors were asked to identify their sexual orientation in an anonymous survey. This was the first year this question was asked of visitors. The question in the ONS census asked respondents to elect one four categories: Straight/Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual and Other. The largest category in the ONS category other was Pansexual. This is not a category in ACE reporting and has been included in 'Other' (incl. queer).

⁵ Unlike most other questions in the ONS 2021 census, the question on sexuality can be 'Not answered' and we adopt a similar approach with RAMM people surveys.

Gender

Between 2018-19 and 2024-25 there has been an overall increase in male visitors. Since 2022-23 there has been a small decline in male visitors but not to 2018-19 levels.

2024-25 - 44±3% male, 56±3% female
 2018-19 - 31±3% male, 69±3% female,



RAMM visitors remain more representative of gender than local populations and other arts organisations in the South West:

Other arts organisations in South West - 61% female: 38% male⁶

Notes on gender question

The format of the mandatory ACE questions on sex and gender have changed nearly every year over the last seven years.

- In 2018-19- 'Are you? (male or female).

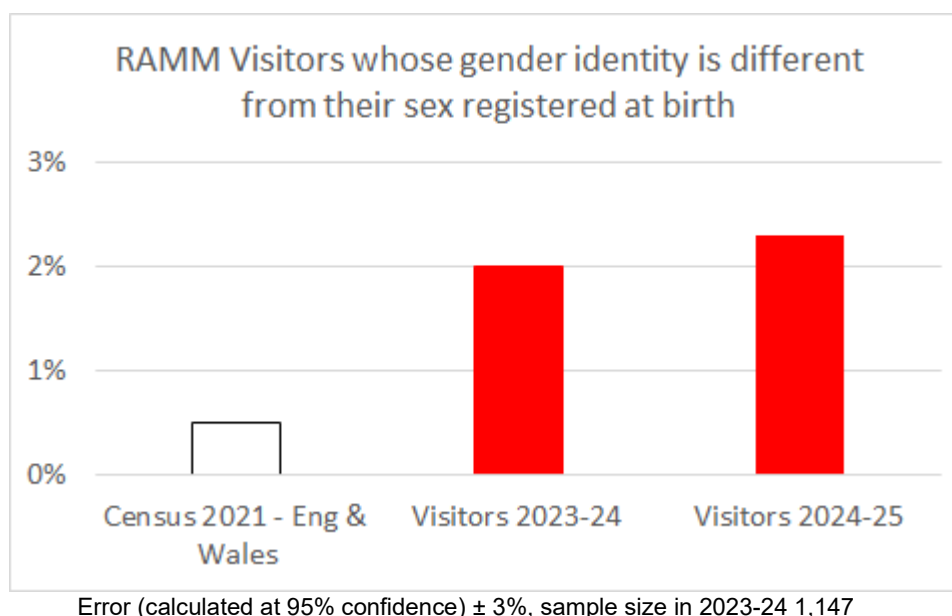
⁶ This is 2019 audience finder data. Illuminate insights data was not available at the time of writing

- In 2019-20 and 2020-21 - *'Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender identity? (male, female or in another way*
- In 2022-23 – there are separate questions for sex (male, female) and gender (male, female, in another way)
- In 2023-24 – ACE sex categories were male, female and intersex (rather than male and female only)
- In 2024-25 – ACE sex categories were male, female, in another way
- In 2024-25 – ACE removed the gender identity question but RAMM kept it in the survey

In the 2011 Census, there was one question on sex: *'What is your sex (male or female)'*. In the 2021 Census there was an additional question: *'Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth (yes/no, with options to select trans woman, trans man, non-binary, all other gender identities)*. This question was optional so 'Not answered' numbers were recorded.

Gender Identity

In 2024-25, 2% of visitors identified as a different gender from the sex they were registered at birth. This is more than in the population of England & Wales (2021 ONS Census), however the low numbers are more than the margin of error, so it is impossible to know whether RAMM visitors are more or less representative than the local population.



Notes on Gender identity Question

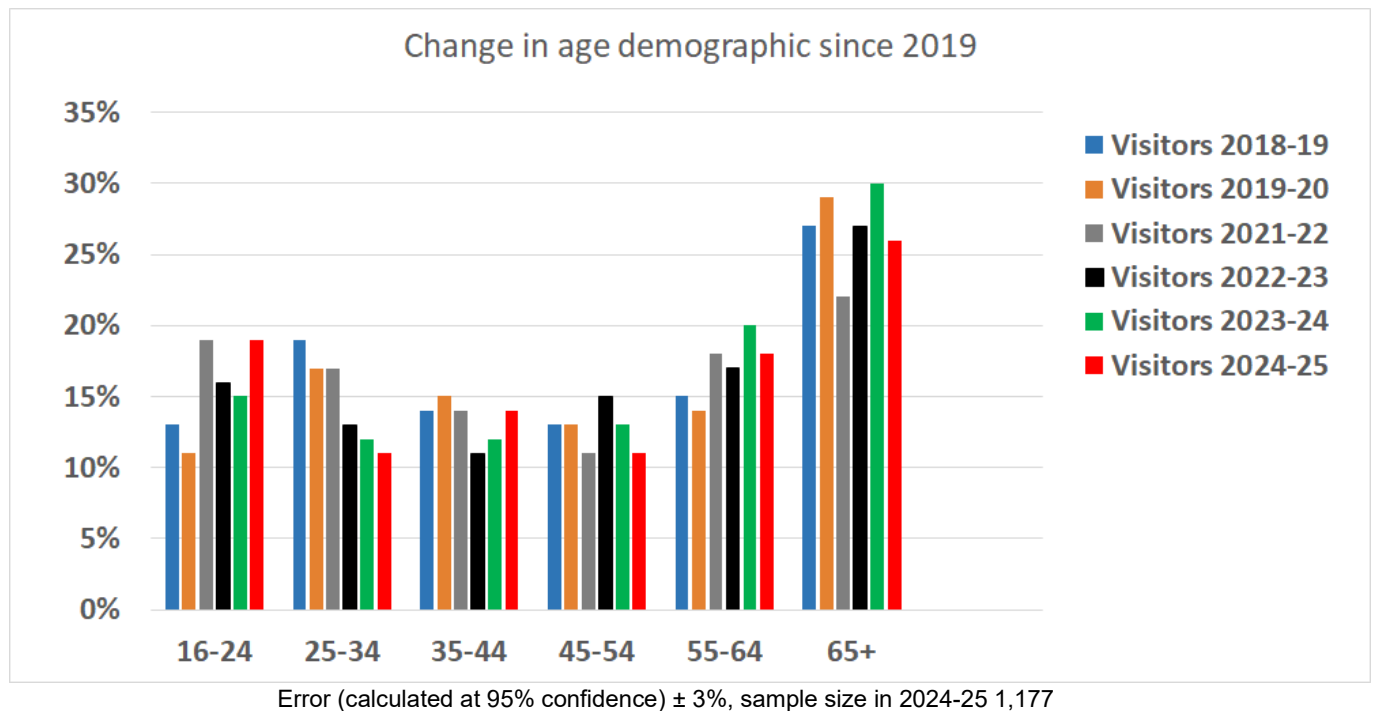
Gender identity refers to a person's sense of their own gender, whether male, female or another category such as non-binary. This may or may not be the same as their sex registered at birth. A question on gender identity was added to the 2021 Census to provide the first official data on the size of the transgender population in England and Wales. The question was voluntary and was only asked of people aged 16 years and over. People were asked '*Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?*' and had the option of selecting either "Yes" or selecting "No" and writing in their gender identity.

Age

In 2024-25 there was an increase in visitors aged between 16-24 years-old from 15% to 19%. The only year we have seen such large percentages in the younger age range was in 2021-22 post Covid, which corresponded to large decrease in older visitors.

In 2024-25 there was a small decrease in visitors aged 65+ years-old (26% compared with 30%) but not as large as the decrease seen post Covid.

There has been a decline in the percentage of visits from 25–34 year-olds since 2018-19 and 45-54 year-olds since 2023-24.

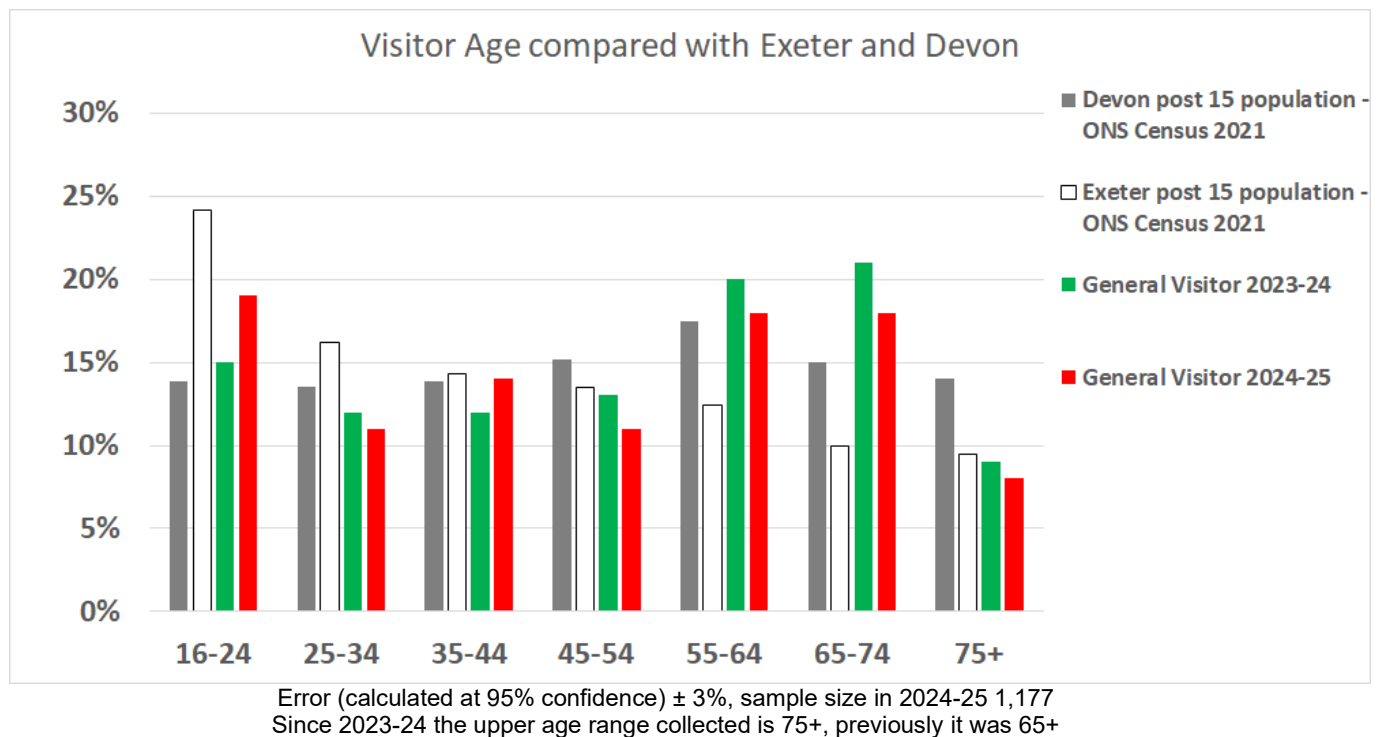


Visitors from age groups 55-64 and 65-74 years old are over-represented compared to Exeter. Visitors from age groups 16-34 and 45-54 years old are under-represented (see chart below).

The percentage of visitors aged between 16-24 years old are 5% fewer than those in Exeter and 5% more than those in Devon.

The percentage of visitors aged between 65-74 years old is 8% more than those in Exeter and 3% more than those in Devon. The percentage of visitors who are

75+ years old is similar to those in Exeter and lower than in Devon (because of an older population in Devon).



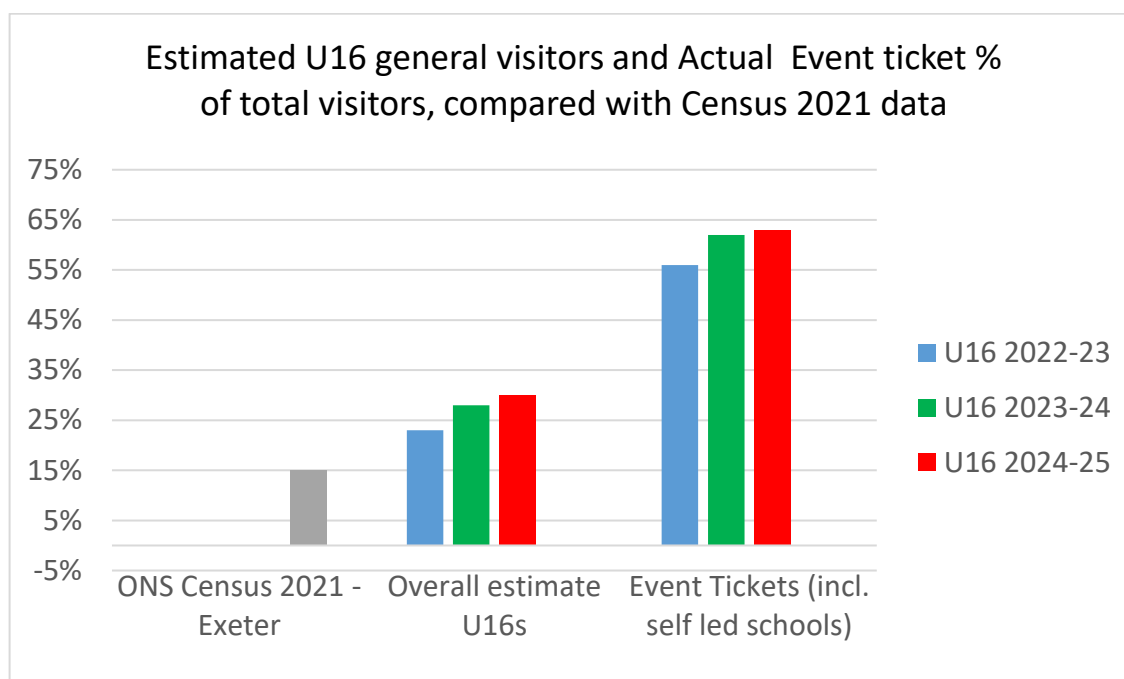
Notes on Age Question and Analysis

The age of visitors is determined by a survey which only includes over 15s, Therefore, 2021 census data for Exeter and the Devon catchment has been recalculated with over 15s as 100% of the population.

Under 16-year-old (U16) visitors

We estimate that **30±6%** of visitors to RAMM are under 16 years old (U16).

Estimated visits from U16s are higher than the proportion of U16s in Exeter and Devon (both 16%) and have increased since last year due to increase in museum led and self-led schools visits, without a corresponding increase in general visits.



Error estimated as $\pm 6\%$, sample size in 2024-25 General visit 979, Event tickets 27,000 incl. self-led visits

Notes on calculation method to estimate percentage of Under 16s

No single data collection method takes a representative sample of the whole visitor population, which includes exhibitions (permanent and temporary), events, engagement and schools. The U16 percentage is therefore an estimate based on:

- Ticket sales including schools work (ticket types) – **63% U16**
- General visitors with U16s in their group (ongoing general survey carried out by volunteers all year round) **17% U16**
- RAMM estimates using RAMM visits and ticket sales – **24% U16**
- General visitors surveyed who have U16s in their group (summer/autumn, Power Marketing 2023) **36% U16**
- **Estimate is calculated as an average of RAMM estimate and power marketing result.**

The U16 estimate uses 2023 Power Marketing data and will be adjusted once the 2025 results are analysed.

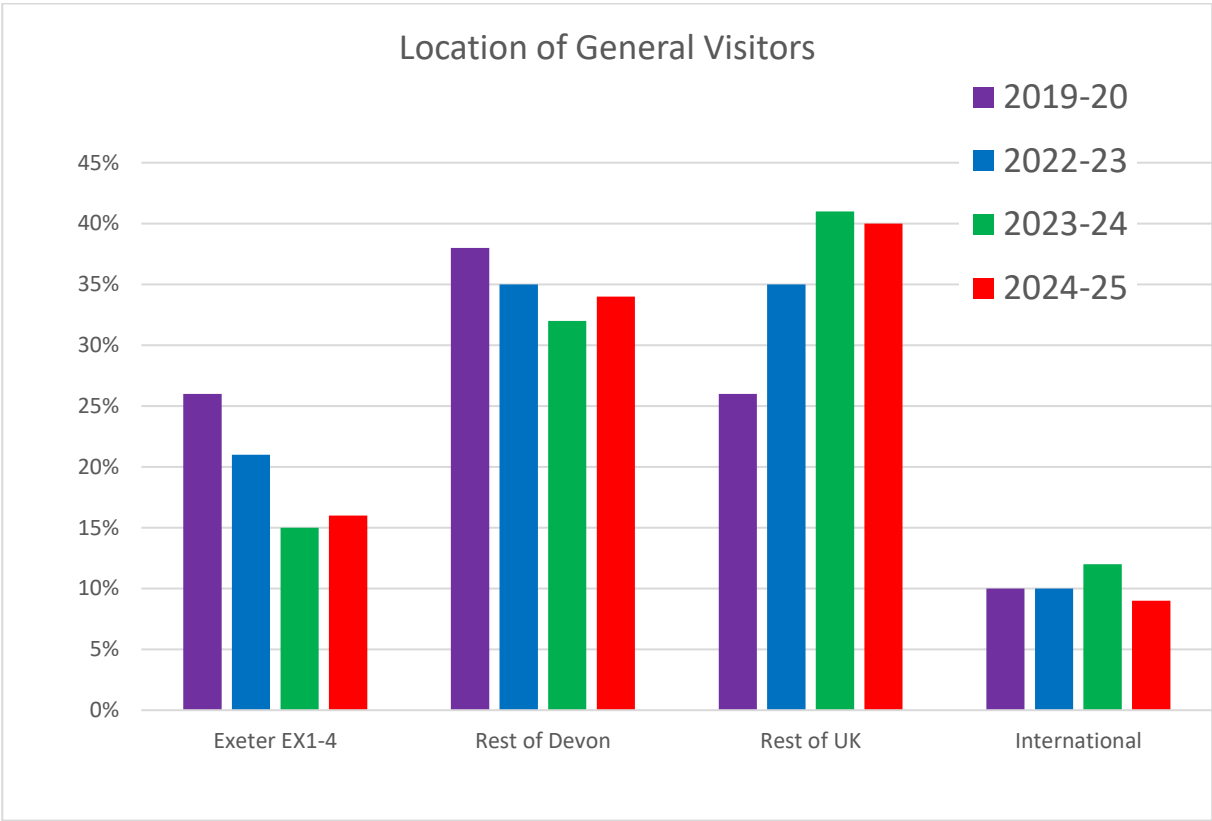
There is an increase from 13% to 17% in the number of general visitors with U16 in their group from 2023-24 to 2024-25. The data is gathered all year round by RAMM volunteers who have worked hard to approach families with U16s in their groups, we believe this is the reason for the increase.

Where visitors live

In 2024-25, 50% of general visitors live in Devon and Exeter, with 16% living in Exeter postcode areas (EX1-4 postcodes). 50% of general visitors come from outside Devon and overseas.

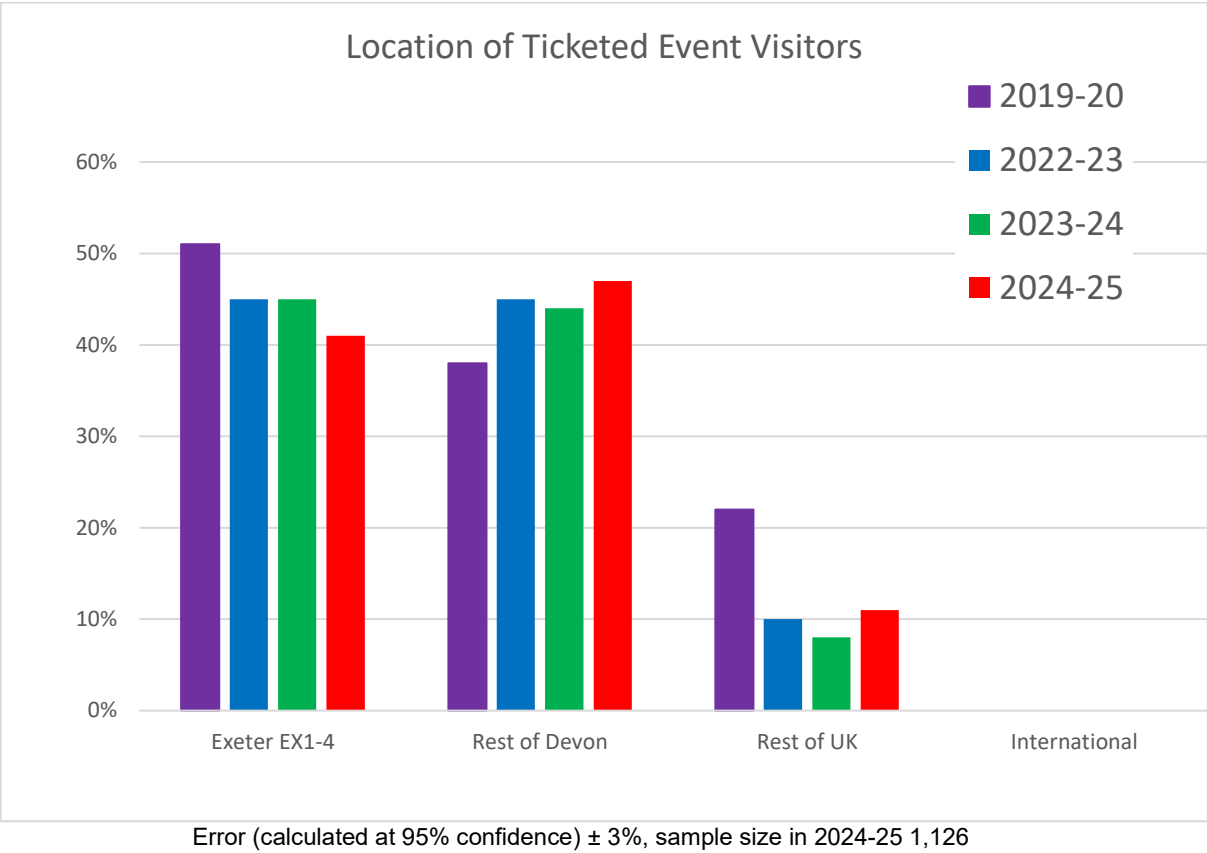
There has been an overall reduction in the percentage of local visitors attending RAMM for general visits.

In 2019-20, 64% were from Exeter and the rest of Devon (26% from Exeter). In 2024-25, 50% were from Exeter and the rest of Devon (16% from Exeter).



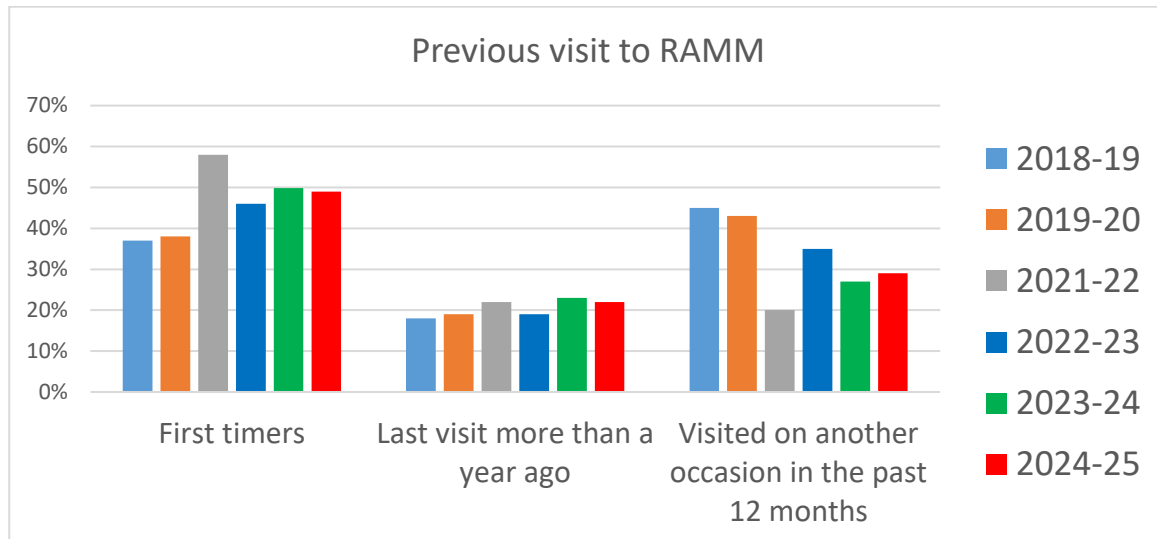
Error (calculated at 95% confidence) ± 3%, sample size in 2024-25 1,126

For ticketed events, 88% of visitors live in Devon (41% from Exeter) with very few visitors from overseas booking events (though this may not tell the whole story as most overseas visitors buy tickets in person, without creating a Spektrix account).

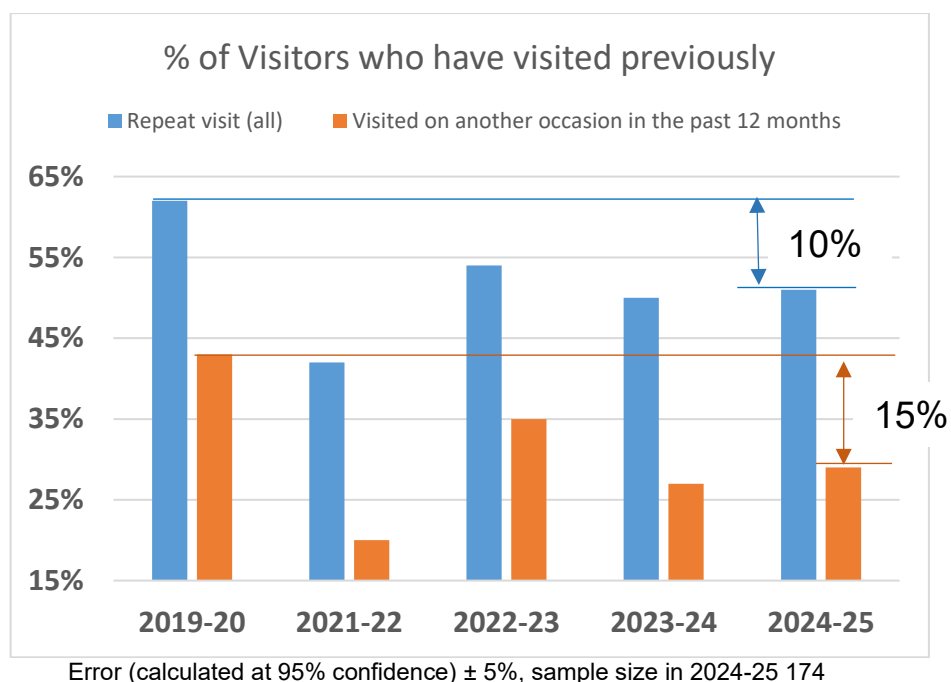


Previous attendance – repeat visits

The percentage of first-time visitors increased in the year following Covid but has not returned to pre-Covid levels. We now see 10% more first time visitors than pre-Covid.



Since 2019-20 the percentage of visitors who have visited previously (at any time) has declined by approximately 10%, and the percentage of visitors who have made multiple visits in a single a year has declined even more, by around 15%.



The increased percentage of first-time visits, along with reduced visit numbers in 2024-25 (191k) compared to 2023-24 (214k) suggests the reason for the reduction is lower multiple visits in a single year.

We have investigated the difference between local repeat visits and all repeat visits, however extracting only Exeter postcodes reduces sample size, leading to a large a margin of error ($\pm 7\%$), too large to make meaningful conclusions. More postcode data is required to understand these trends in more detail.

Socio-economic status

We have two ways of determining the social-economic profile of RAMM visitors:

- ▶ **By occupation** - since 2023-24, a question about occupation was added to the Visitor Survey.
- ▶ **By postcode** – Using Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) to determine the percentage of visitors living in more socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

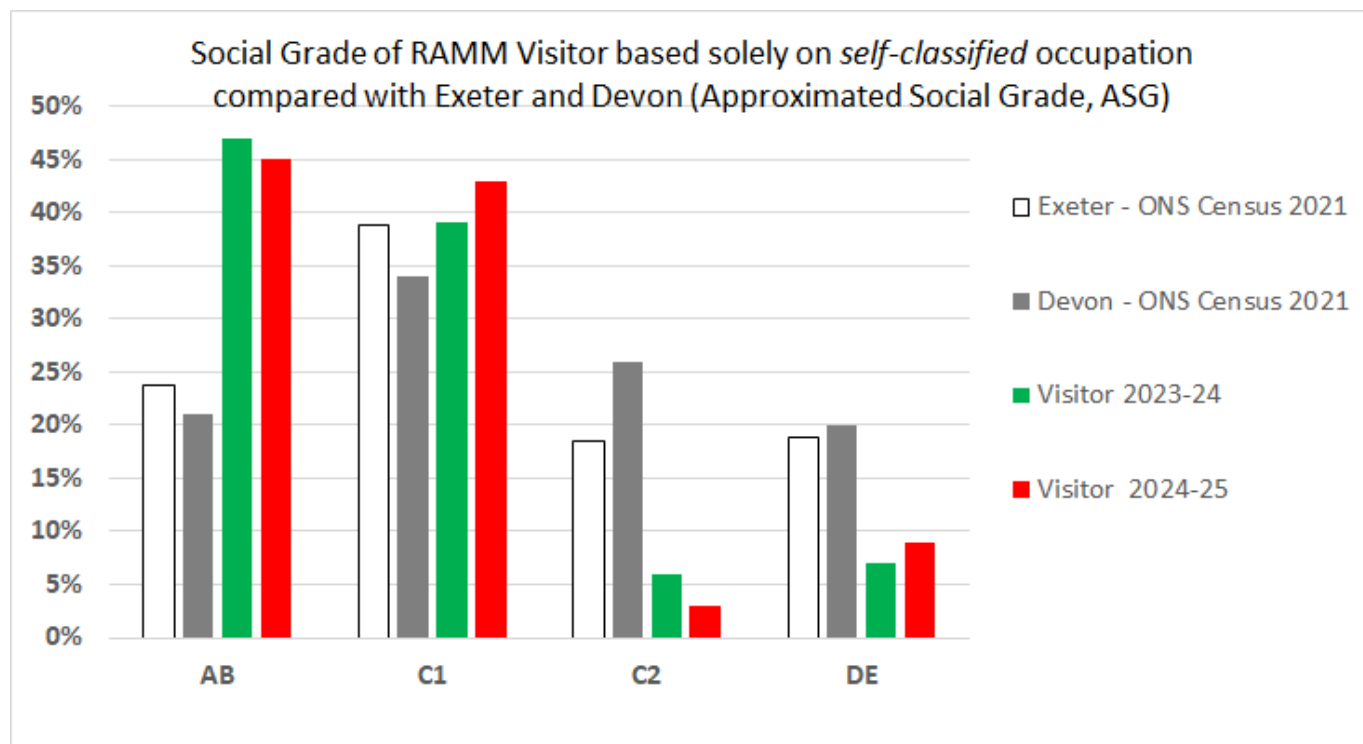
Socio-economic status determined by occupation

There are two types of social grade classification that RAMM visitor data can be compared with: Approximated Social Grade (ASG) and National Statistics-Social Economic Classes (NS-SEC). The table shows the range of answers a visitor can select for their occupation category and which socio-economic group this corresponds to.⁷ For more information and explanation on how social grade classification is carried out please see [2024-09 Social Grade and RAMM data.docx](#)

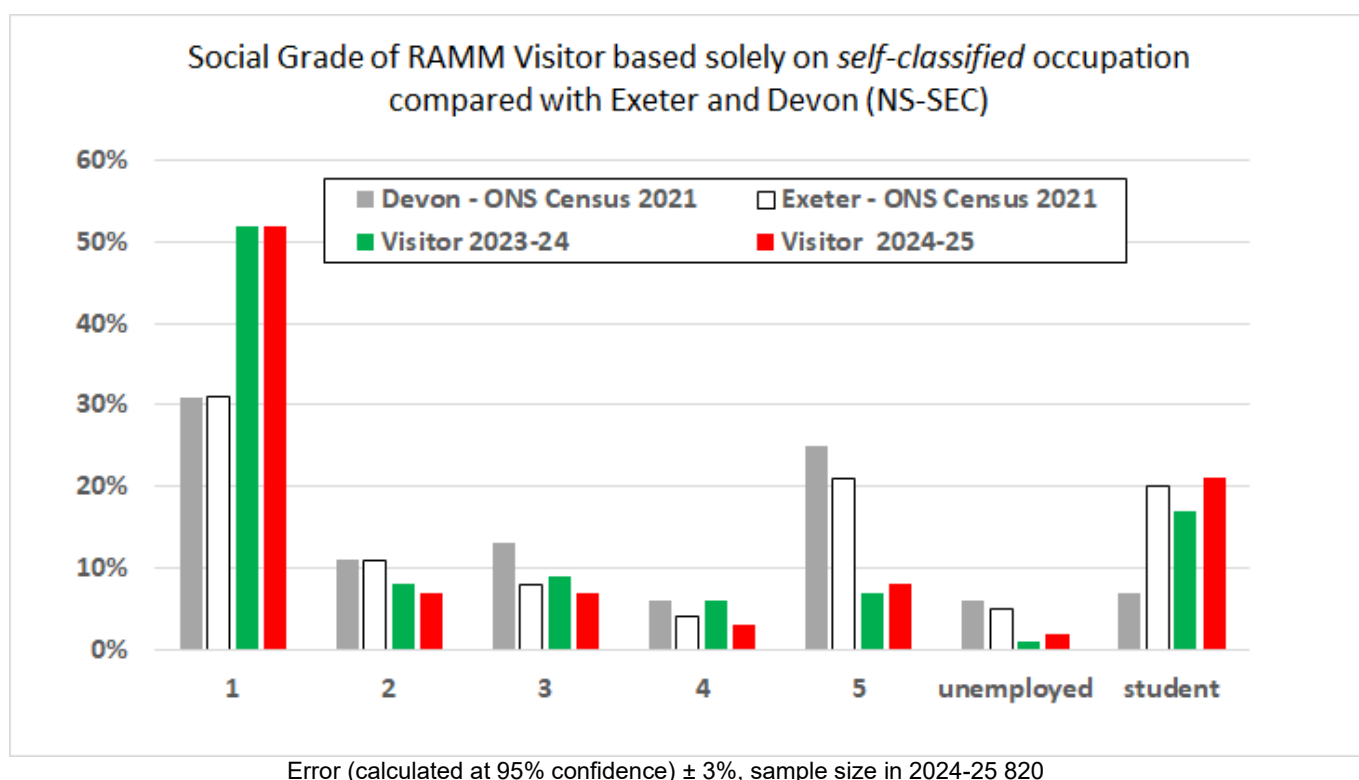
⁷ Self-coding occupation is not as accurate as researcher coding, and it may be that visitors are not categorising their occupation correctly. It would be more accurate to ask visitors to describe their occupation and then carry out a post survey analysis. At the moment practically, self-coding occupations is the most efficient option for visitor surveys.⁷

2024-25 Occupation categories in visitor survey	ASG category	NS-SEC five classes
Retired	Retired	Retired
Modern professional & traditional professional occupationse.g. teacher, nurse, social worker, musician, artist, police officer, designer, medic, engineer	AB	1
Senior, middle or junior managers or administratorse.g. chief executive, large business owner, office manager, restaurant manager, bank manager	40% AB & 60% C1	1
Clerical and intermediate occupations e.g. personal assistant, call centre agent, clerical worker, nursery nurse	C1	2
Small business ownerswho employed less than 25 people	C1	3
Technical and craft occupationse.g. mechanic, plumber, electrician, train driver	C2	4
Long term unemployede.g. claimed Jobseeker's Allowance or unemployment benefit for more than a year	DE	unemployed
Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupationse.g. postal worker, caretaker, farm worker, HGV driver, cleaner, labourer, waiter/waitress	DE	5
Short term unemployedclaimed Job seeker's allowance or unemployment benefit for a year or less	DE	5
Full-time educatione.g. studying for a degree or apprenticeship	Student	Student
Not applicablee.g. not currently working and not claiming benefits related to unemployment	n/a	n/a

The charts below show approximate social grade (ASG) and NS-SEC data for RAMM Visitors compared with Exeter and Devon Catchment data from ONS 2021 Census.



Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size in 2024-25 820



Both types of classification are showing that RAMM visitors are over-represented by the higher grades. It is estimated that 20% more RAMM visitors are from AB and NS-SEC Class 1 than in Exeter and Devon, and fewer visitors are from C2 and DE, NS-SEC Classes 4 and 5 than in Exeter and Devon.

In 2025-26 there was a slight decrease in visitors with routine and semi-routine occupations (C2 and 4) and a slight increase in DE social grades including those who are unemployed.

It is well known that museums tend to attract visitors from higher social grades, with people from higher social grades twice as likely to visit museums.⁸ This is also what we see at RAMM, but it does not tell the whole story.

Previously we have identified that different RAMM events and engagement activities attract different audience groups, based on postcode (page 23-25 in [2023-09-15 RAMM demographics 2022-23.docx](#)). It is more challenging to collect occupation rather than post-code data and far fewer people attend RAMM events than come for a free general visit. Work is underway to survey visitors to different events as well as general visits to confirm our view (based on postcode data) that

⁸ <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/opinion/2021/04/are-museums-failing-those-who-need-support-most/#>

there are likely to be fewer visitors from AB grades to our events and engagement programmes than in general visits.

Similarly we have an active schools programme with visits from many schools in socially disadvantaged areas but do not survey the occupations of the parents of the school children who visit.

Socio-economic status determined by postcode area

We have carried out an analysis of RAMM visitors based on postcodes collected during general visits (by survey) and event tickets (bought online or in person).

These postcodes provide information about the socio-economic status of visitors using their Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).

LSOAs are small geographic units used in England for statistical reporting. Each LSOA typically contains around 1,500 residents or 650 households. They were created to improve the reporting of small-area statistics and are more granular than wards or districts. Each LSOA has an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and this data from 2019 is available from [English indices of deprivation 2019: Postcode Lookup](#)

IMD is the UK government's official measure of relative deprivation for small areas.⁹ It ranks every LSOA in England from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived). The IMD is calculated using seven weighted domains:

- Income (22.5%)
- Employment (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment (9.3%)

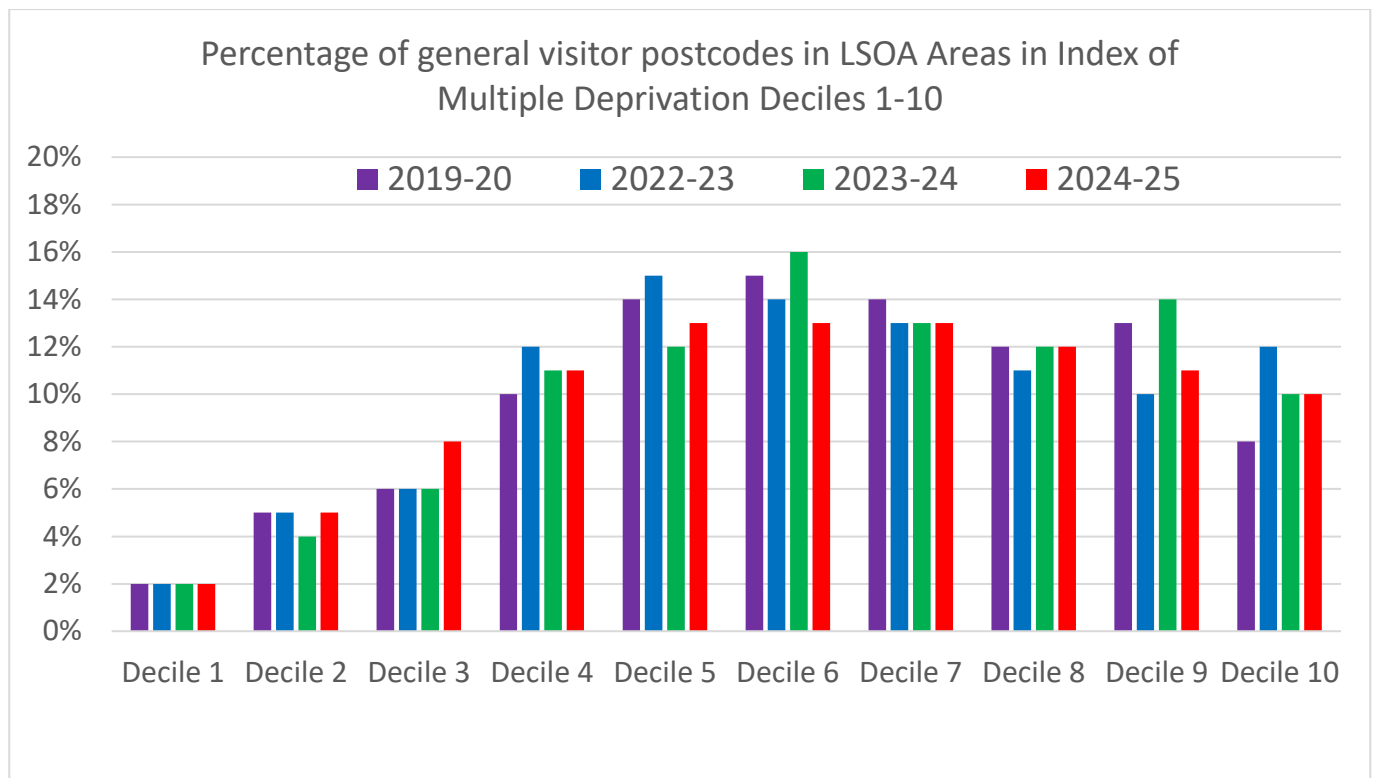
Each LSOA receives a decile score from 1 to 10:

- Decile 1 = among the 10% most deprived areas
- Decile 10 = among the 10% least deprived areas

The chart below shows the percentage of RAMM visitors from across England in each IMD decile in 2019 (pre-Covid and the last three years).

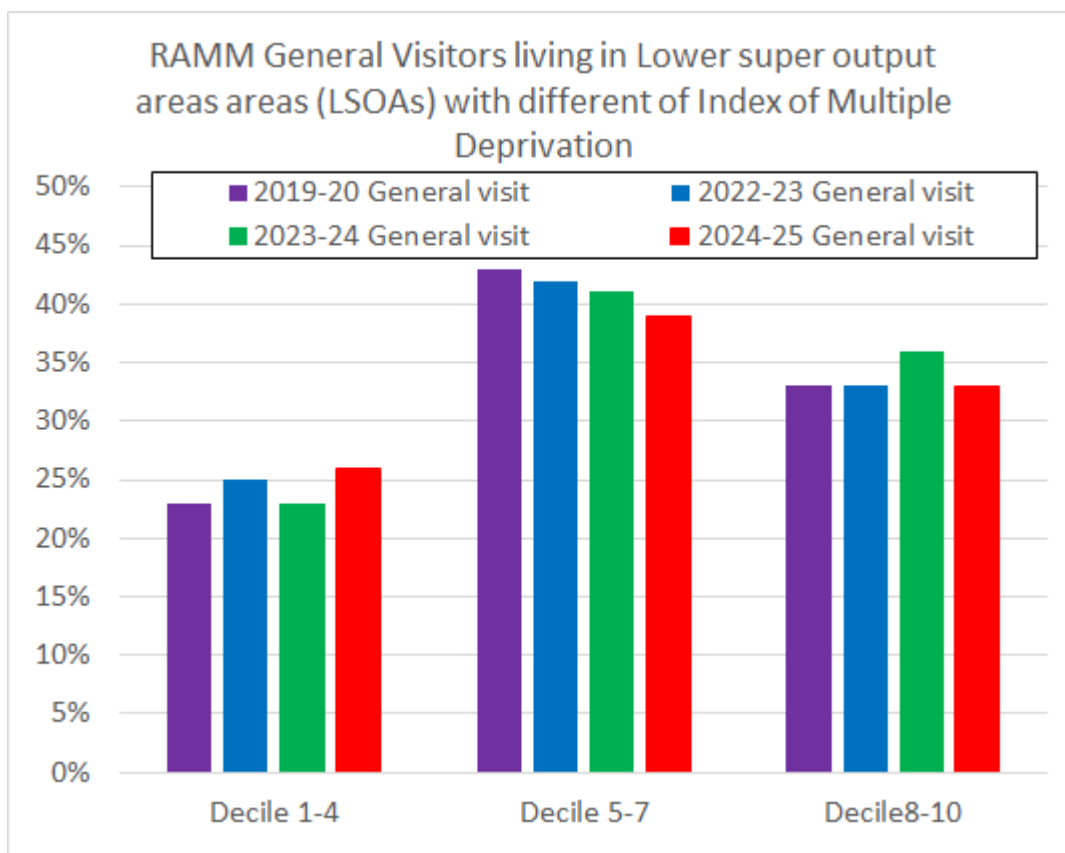
⁹ [English Indices of Deprivation 2019 FAQs](#)

The chart below shows that RAMM attracts visitors who live in areas with different multiple indices of deprivation, ranging from the most disadvantaged (IMD decile 1) to the least disadvantaged (IMD decile 10). Visitors from areas in deciles 1-4 make up around 25%, those from middle deciles 5-7 make up around 40%, and those from the deciles 8-10 (least deprived) make up around 35%.



Decile 1 = among the 10% most deprived areas, Decile 10 = among the 10% least deprived areas

Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size in 2024-25, 930



Decile 1 = among the 10% most deprived areas, Decile 10 = among the 10% least deprived areas

Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size in 2024-25, 930

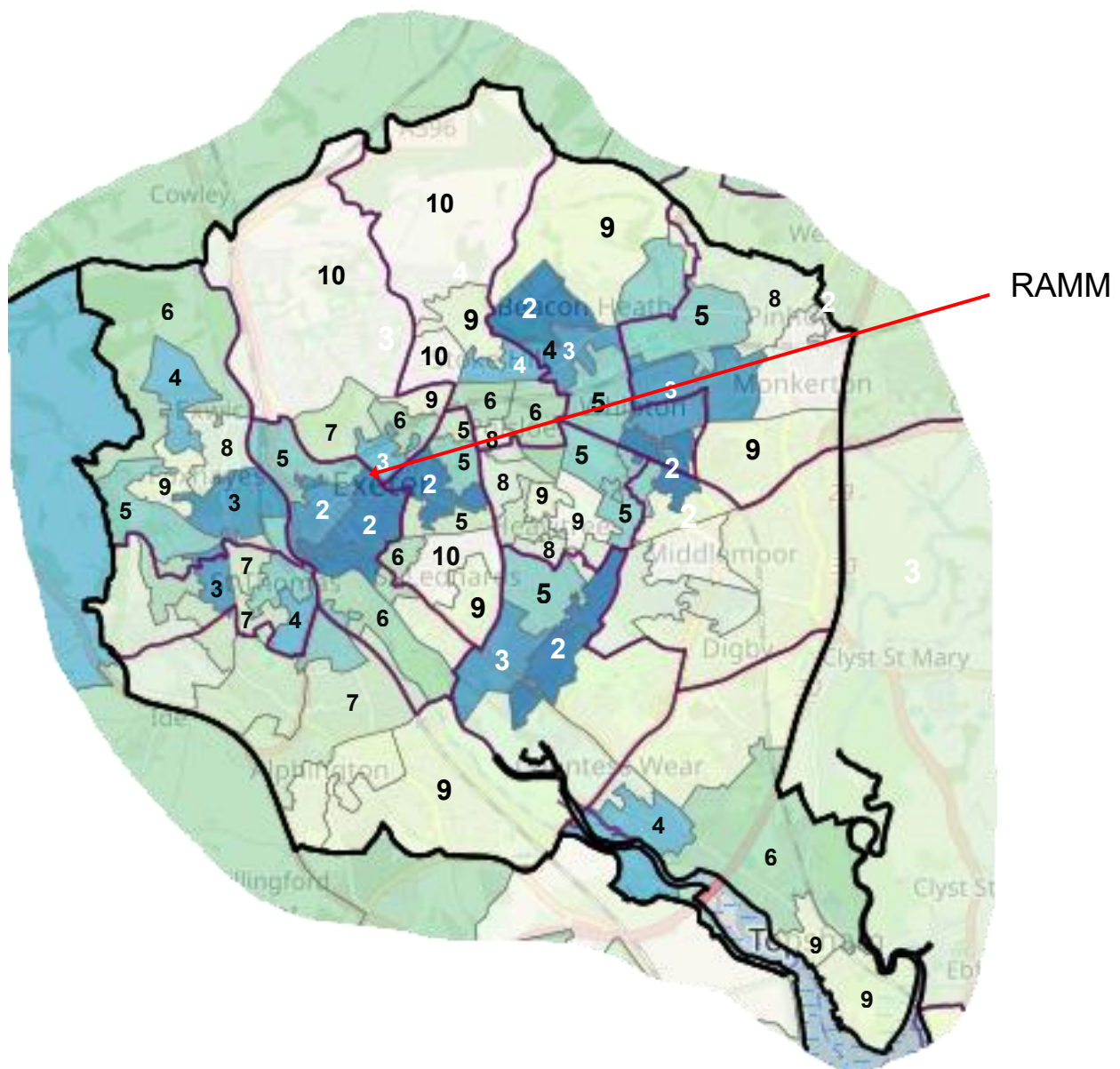
Exeter visitors postcode

Previously we have categorised Exeter postcode data by Exeter's Wards, but this data did not provide detailed insight, as a single ward can contain different LSOAs (e.g. St.Leonards & Newtown areas contain LSOAs in IMD decile 5 and IMD decile 10).

Therefore, rather than using wards to categorise the postcodes, this year the percentage of RAMM visitors living in each IMD Decile were calculated.

The picture below shows Exeter's LSOAs and Wards the darker the area the higher the ranking of deprivation. Exeter does not have any areas in the top 10% most deprived in England. For more information see the online mapping tool [Indices of Deprivation 2015 and 2019](#).

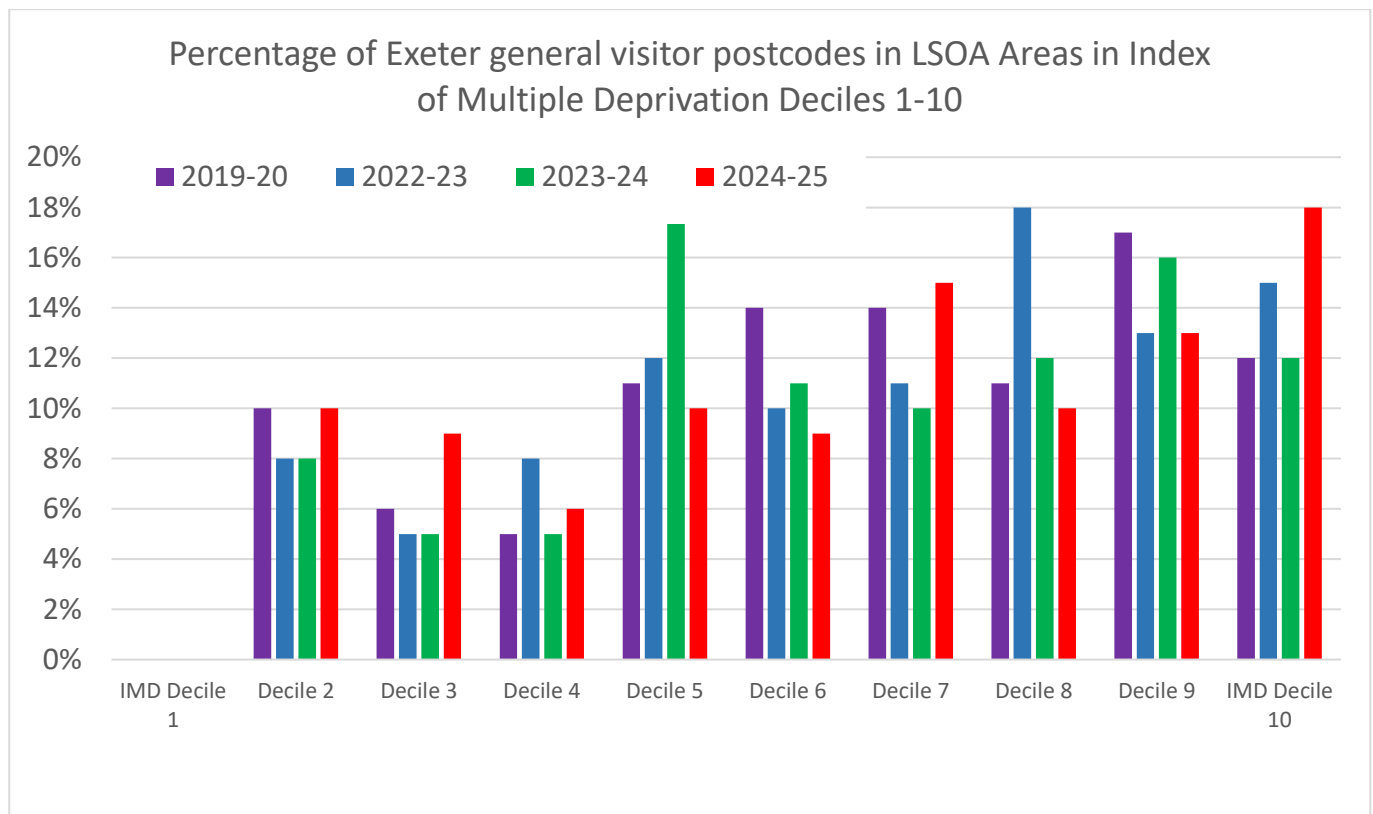
2019¹⁰ LSOA areas overlaid with Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile, purple lines are Exeter council wards. There are 74 LSOAs, 6 are among the 20 percent (deciles 1 & 2) most income-deprived in England. Of the 74 LSOAs in Exeter, 12 are in the 20 percent least income deprived (deciles 9 &10)



The chart below shows the IMD Decile profile for visitors in 2019-20 (pre-Covid) and the last three years.

¹⁰ 2025 IMD data should be released in 2026

In 2024-25, there was a slight increase in percentage of visitors from IMD deciles 2, 3 and 4 compared to previous years. We pleased about this uplift in Exeter visitors from more deprived areas but are tentative about whether this is an actual change in demographic or an improvement in our surveying method. The margin of error for this analysis is quite large as the number of postcodes collected are small for EX1-4 postcodes only.



Decile 1 = among the 10% most deprived areas, Decile 10 = among the 10% least deprived areas

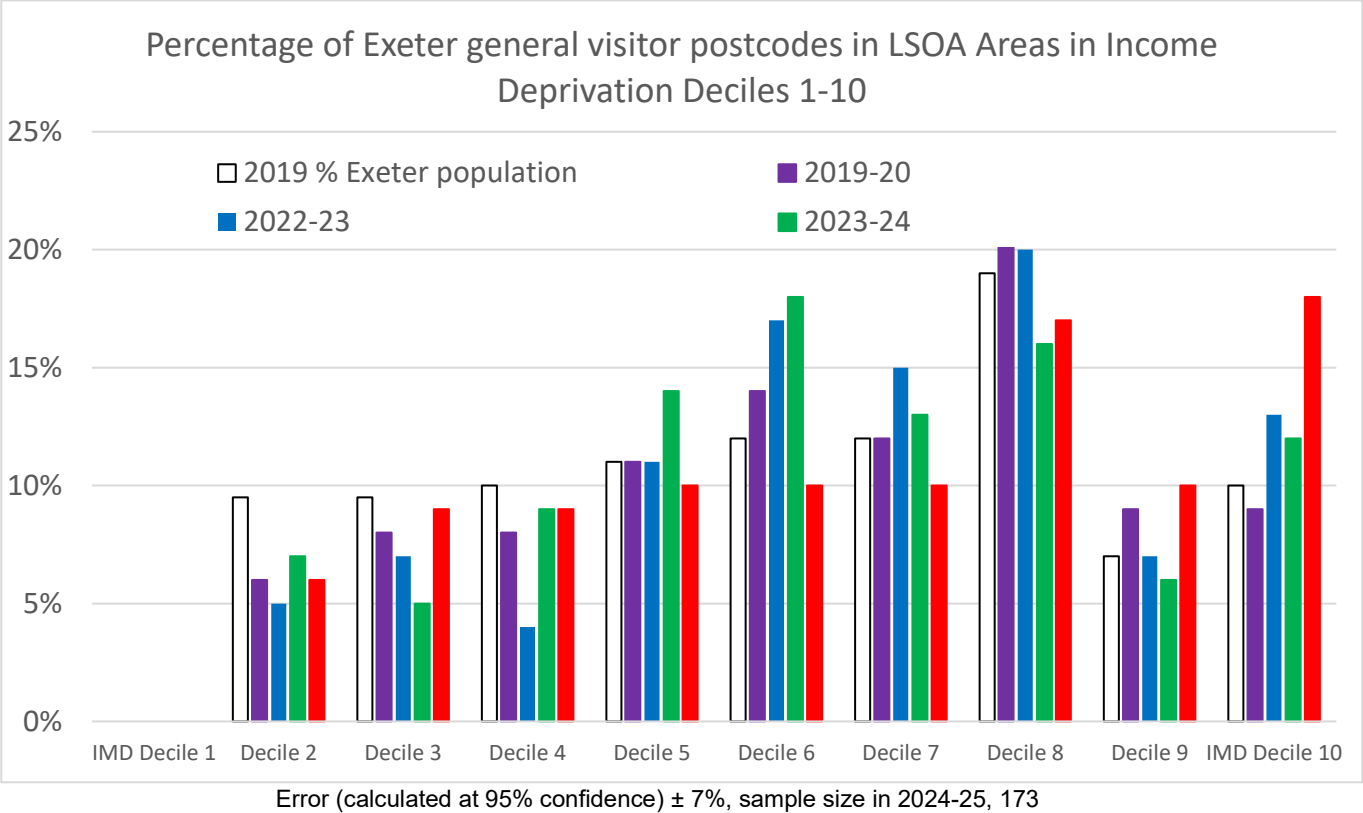
Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 7%, sample size in 2024-25, 173

The chart below shows a comparison of Exeter's population based on income deprivation compared with RAMM's Exeter visitors. Income deprivation is a subset of IMD (see page 22) and is also related to postcode and LSOAs. We have used this data as there is open source data available for Exeter.¹¹

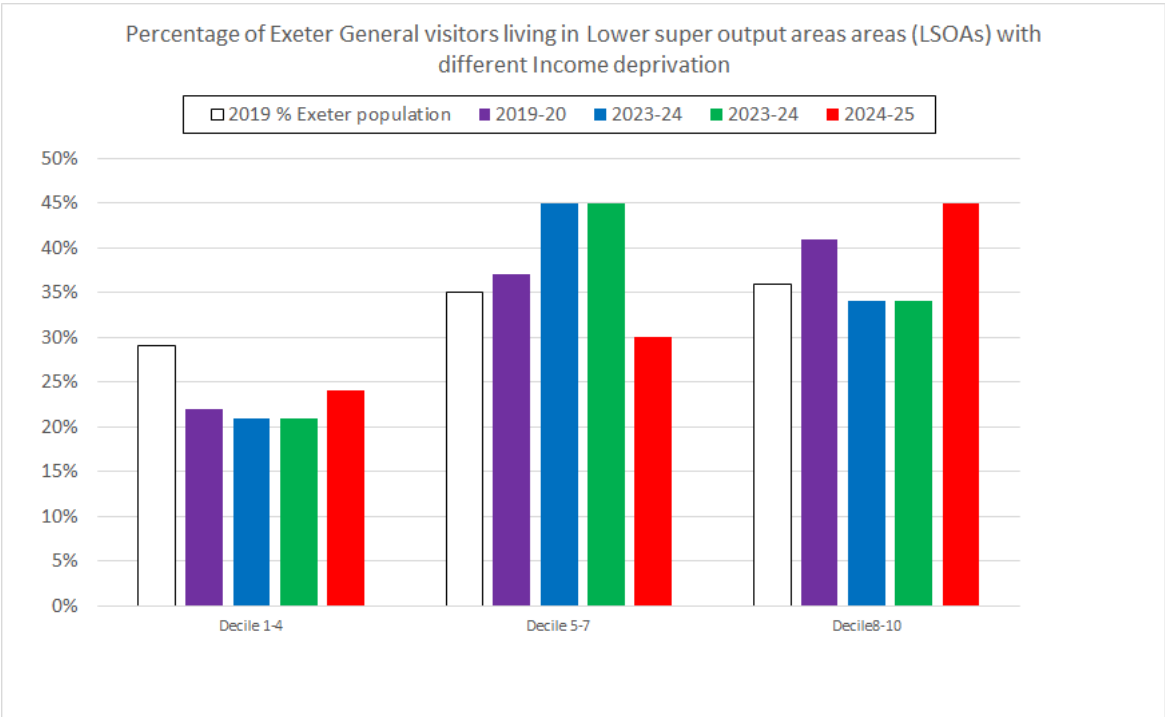
Our analysis shows that the percentage of visits from Exeter residents in lower income deprivation deciles 1-4 and middle deciles 5-7 are similar to the Exeter population, within the margin of error of the data collection method. Visits from

¹¹ [Exploring local income deprivation](#)

residents in the least income deprived deciles 8-10 are slightly more than the local population.



The chart below shows the same data in decile groups

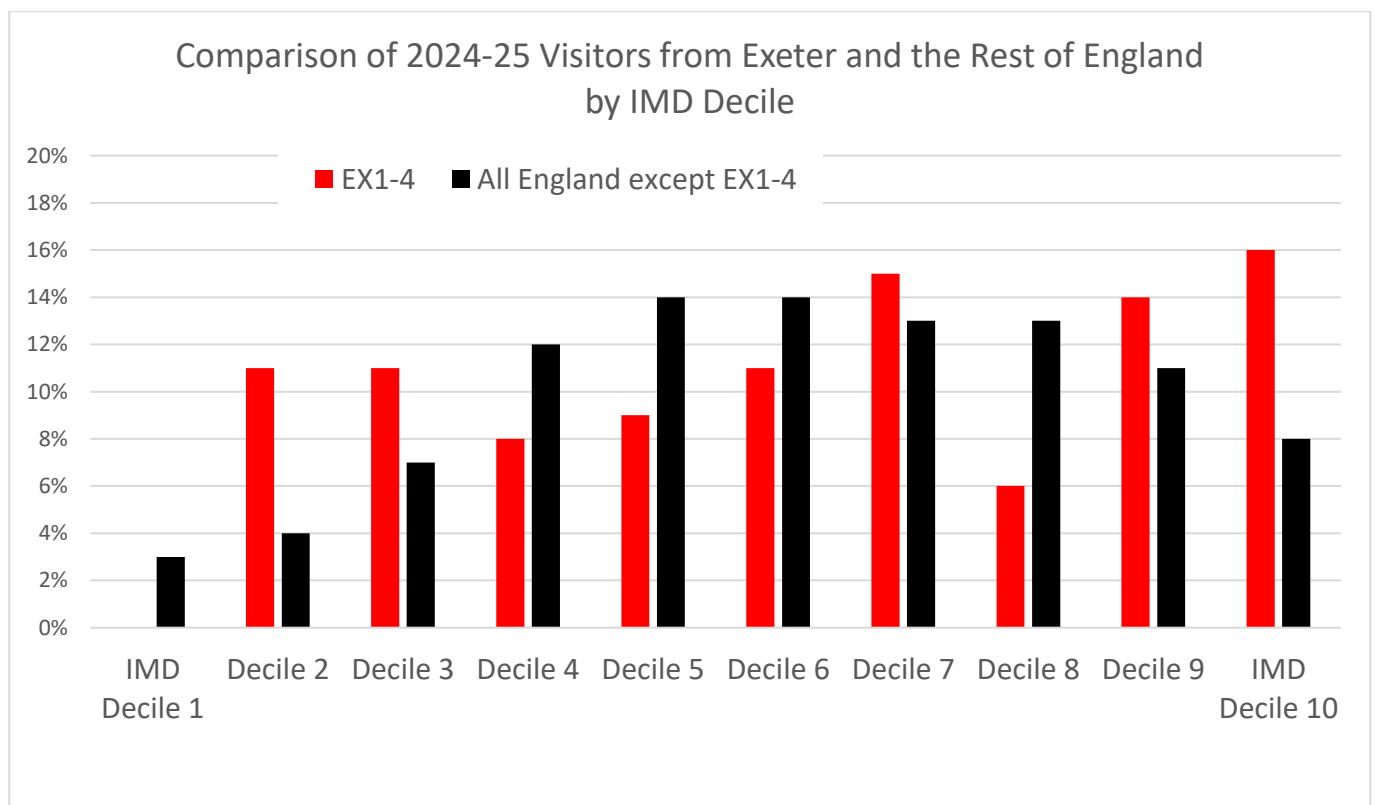


Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 7%, sample size in 2024-25, 173

Over the years we have worked hard on making sure every type of visitor has the opportunity to answer a survey which includes giving their postcode and have previously felt that the postcodes collected did not tell the whole story of who is visiting the museum. This is an ongoing challenge as visitors from more marginalised demographics are often the least willing to answer surveys.

Exeter visitors compared with National visitors

There is a higher percentage of local visitors who live LSOAs classed as IMD Decile 2 and 3 compared to visitors from outside Exeter. We hope this is because of RAMM's local reputation as a welcoming and free place to visit alongside the outreach and engagement work we do in socio-economically disadvantaged areas of Exeter. Work is underway to improve the evaluation and data collection in our engagement event.



Decile 1 = among the 10% most deprived areas, Decile 10 = among the 10% least deprived areas

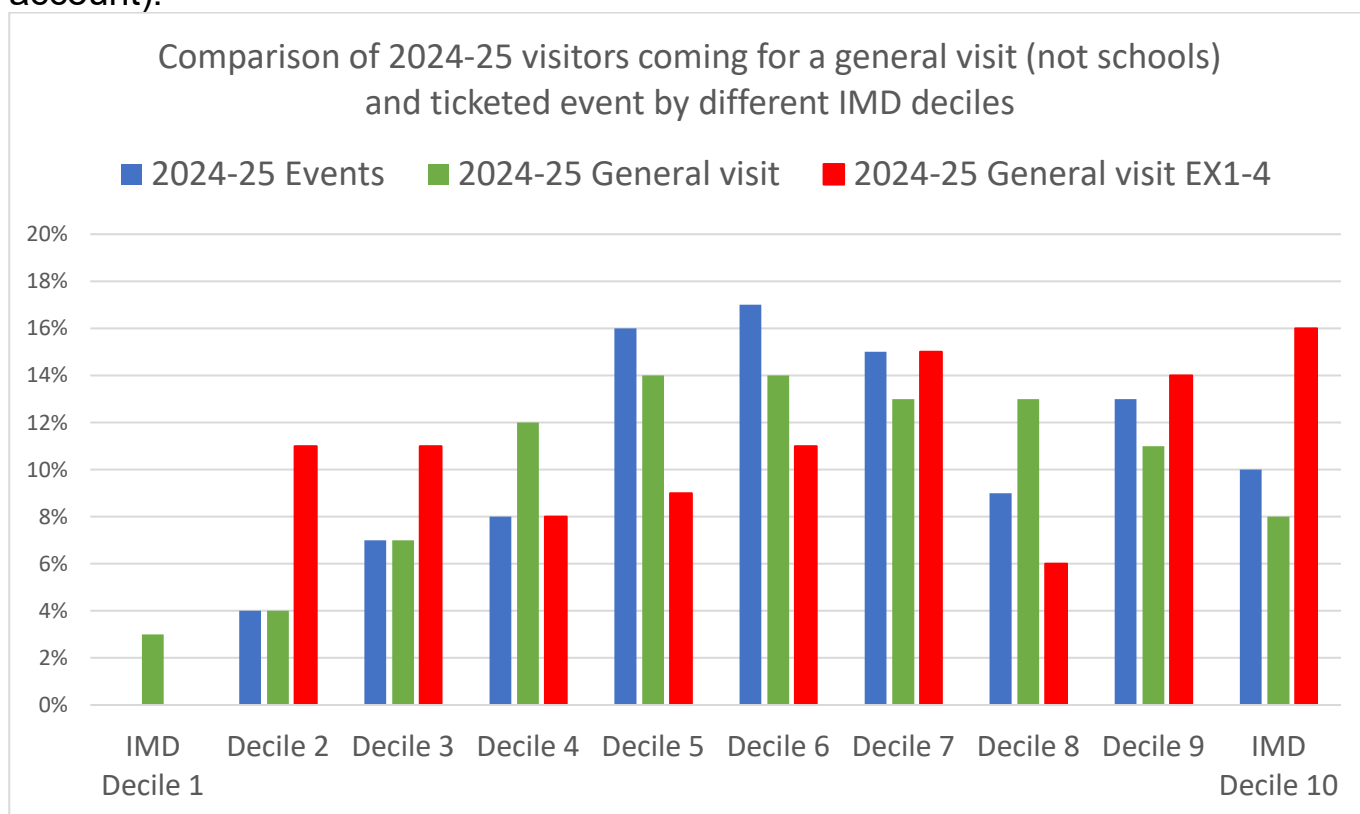
England, not EX1-4 residents, Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size in 2024-25, 930
Exeter residents, Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 7%, sample size in 2024-25, 173

Ticketed events compared with General visits

There is little difference in the IMD decile profile for visitors who come for a general visit compared with those who come to attend a ticketed event. However, a higher percentage of visitors from the lower IMD deciles come to a general visit than a ticketed events (88% of whom live in Exeter).

We have a wide variety of events and need further analysis to determine the IMD profile for different events and also are working on improving the percentage of visitors who buy their tickets through an online account, which has postcode data.

Also, it may be that visitors from lower IMD deciles are either not coming to ticketed events or not booking using our online booking system (with a linked account).



Decile 1 = among the 10% most deprived areas, Decile 10 = among the 10% least deprived areas

General visit EX1-4 residents, Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 3%, sample size in 2024-25, 930
 Exeter residents, Error (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 7%, sample size in 2024-25, 173
 Events (calculated at 95% confidence) \pm 2%, sample size in 2024-25, 5106

Conclusions

People who live in Exeter (16%) and Devon (34%) make up 50% of general visits to RAMM. The remaining 50% are made up of visitors who live outside Devon (40%) and overseas (9%).

The number of local visitors has reduced since 2019-20 when 64% were from Exeter and the rest of Devon (26% and 38% respectively).

Since 2019-20 the percentage of visitors who have visited previously (at any time) has declined by approximately 10% and the percentage of visitors who have made multiple visits in a single a year has declined even more, by around 15%.

A large proportion of visitors to our ticketed event programmes live in Exeter and Devon (88%, similar to last year).

The percentage of visitors from ethnically diverse communities are similar to the percentage who live in Exeter, but more than the percentage who live in Devon.

Visitors limited 'a lot' by disabilities are under-represented. Visitors limited 'a little' by their disabilities are slightly lower than the wider population.

Research in 2024-25 determined that over 96% of visitors surveyed (sample size 1184) answered *No, they did not experience any barriers to enjoying the museum due to accessibility issues*. This research highlighted areas of improvement for the 4% that were impacted and is summarised in [2025-08 Research on visitor accessibility needs.docx](#)

The percentage of visitors who are under 16-years-old is estimated to be 30±6% which is 15% higher than the proportion of under 16-year-olds in Exeter and Devon

63% of tickets booked are for under 16s (this includes schools work).

In 2024-25, there was an increase in general visitors (not schools) aged between 16-24 from 15% of all visitors to 19%. The only year we have seen such large percentages in the younger age range for general visits was in 2021-22 post Covid, which corresponded to large decrease in older visitors.

Visitors from age groups 55-74 years old are over-represented compared to Exeter. Visitors from age groups 16-34 and 45-54 years old are under-represented

Since Covid, RAMM has had more male visitors, changing from approximately 70:30 to 50:50.

RAMM visitors are over-represented by the higher socio-economic grades, based on occupation. It is estimated that 20% more RAMM visitors are from AB grades (and NS-SEC Class 1) than in Exeter and Devon, and fewer visitors are from C2 and DE (NS-SEC Classes 4 and 5) than in Exeter and Devon. In 2025-26 there was a slight decrease in visitors with routine and semi-routine occupations (C2 and 4) and a slight increase in DE social grades including those who are unemployed.

RAMM attracts visitors who live in areas with different multiple indices of deprivation, ranging from the most disadvantaged (IMD decile 1) to the least disadvantaged (IMD decile 10). Visitors from areas in IMD deciles 1-4 make up around 25%, those from middle IMD deciles 5-7 make up around 40%, and those from the IMD deciles 8-10 (least disadvantaged) make up around 35%.

We cautiously suggest there is a higher percentage of Exeter visitors from the most disadvantaged areas (IMD deciles 2, 3 and 4) compared to visitors from disadvantaged areas across England. We hope this is because of RAMM's local reputation as a welcoming and free place to visit alongside the outreach and engagement work we do in the areas of Exeter that have lower IMD deciles.

The percentage of visits from Exeter residents in the most income deprived areas (deciles 1-4) and middle deciles 5-7 are similar to the Exeter population, within the margin of error of the data collection method. Visits to RAMM from residents in the least income deprived deciles 8-10 are slightly more than the local population.

A higher percentage of visitors from the most deprived/disadvantaged areas (IMD decile 1-4) come to a general visit than ticketed events (88% of whom live in Exeter).

We cautiously suggest there is a higher percentage of Exeter visitors from deprived/disadvantaged areas (IMD deciles 2, 3 and 4) compared to previous years. We are pleased about this increase in 2024-25 Exeter visitors from more economically disadvantaged areas but are tentative about whether this is an actual change in demographic from previous years or an improvement in our

surveying methods reflecting more closely the true demographics of RAMM visitors.

We are continually improving our surveying methods to overcome the challenge that visitors from more marginalised demographics are often the least willing to answer surveys.

More postcodes need to be collected to reduce the margin of error in some of the IMD analysis

Sara Flint
14/10/25

AI report summary

The RAMM demographics report for 2024-25 presents detailed visitor data collected through face-to-face surveys, comparing visitor profiles with local populations in Exeter and Devon. It covers ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, visitor origin, repeat visits, and socio-economic status.

- **Ethnic diversity stable:** Visitors from ethnically diverse communities increased slightly from 5% in 2018-19 to 8% in 2024-25, aligning closely with Exeter's 9.7% and exceeding Devon's 4.2%. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

- **Disability representation lower:** In 2024-25, 9% of visitors reported being limited by disability, lower than Exeter (18%) and Devon (20%). Over 96% experienced no accessibility barriers during visits. [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#)

- **Higher LGBTQ+ identification:** 13% of visitors identified as LGBTQ+, higher than Exeter's 5.8% and Devon's 3.5%, with 8% declining to answer. [\[5\]](#) [\[6\]](#)

- **Gender balance shift:** Since 2018, male visitor proportion increased from 31% to 44% in 2024-25, moving towards gender parity (44% male, 56% female). [\[7\]](#) [\[8\]](#)

- **Gender identity data:** About 2% of visitors identified with a gender different from their sex at birth, slightly higher than the England & Wales population, though within margin of error. [\[9\]](#)

- **Youth visitor increase:** Visitors aged 16-24 rose from 15% to 19% in 2024-25, while those aged 65+ decreased slightly from 30% to 26%. Under-16 visitors are estimated at 30%, exceeding local population proportions. [\[10\]](#) [\[11\]](#)

- **Visitor origins:** Approximately 50% of general visitors reside in Exeter and Devon, down from 64% in 2019-20; ticketed event attendees are predominantly local (88%). [\[12\]](#) [\[13\]](#)

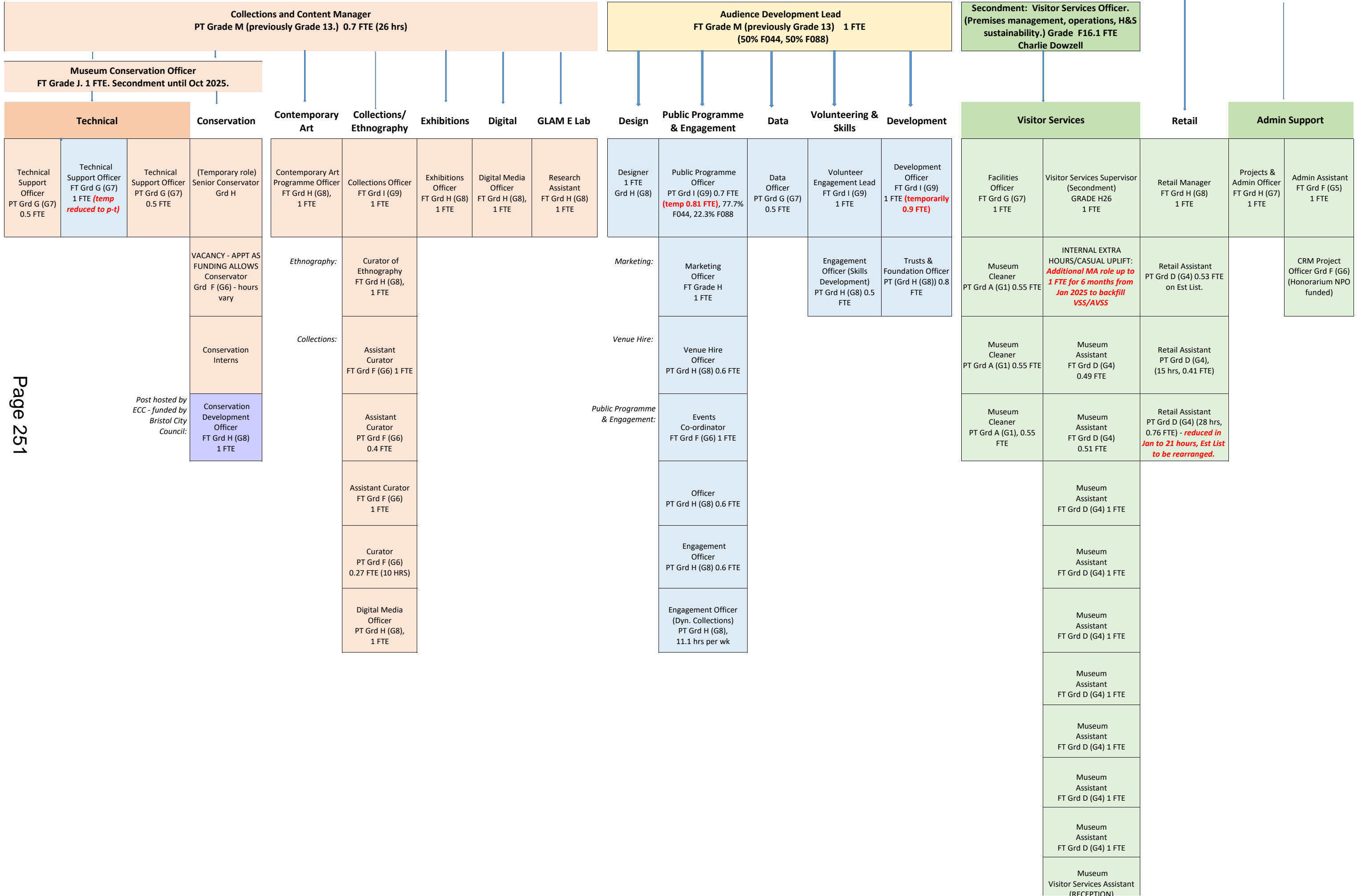
- **Decline in repeat visits:** Since 2019-20, first-time visitors increased by 10%, while repeat and multiple visits have declined by around 10-15%. [\[14\]](#) [\[15\]](#)

- **Socio-economic profile skewed:** Visitors are over-represented in higher socio-economic groups (AB/NS-SEC Class 1) by about 20% compared to Exeter and Devon, with fewer from lower grades. [\[16\]](#)
- **Deprivation decile distribution:** Visitors come from all Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles, with around 25% from the most deprived (1-4), 40% middle (5-7), and 35% least deprived (8-10); Exeter visitors from deprived areas increased slightly in 2024-25. [\[17\]](#) [\[18\]](#)

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RAMM Staff Structure 2025-26 as of 15 October 2025

COLOUR KEY: RED FOR ECC, BLUE FOR ACE NPO, GREEN FOR F050, YELLOW FOR ECC AND NPO, PURPLE FOR OTHER, ORANGE FOR ECC AND F050



RAMM Risk Register 2025-26

Date: 16 October 2025

NPO and IPSO programme (2023-2026)

Applicant name: Exeter City Council

Project number: NPIP-00535974-SW-0000005

Risk Register signed by: Councillor Bob Foale, Portfolio Holder, Arts, Culture and Tourism

RAMM Risk Register 2024-25: Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses:

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collections of national and international significance. • Maximising value of Exeter City Council (ECC)'s core funding as leverage for external grants. • Profile, audience and stakeholder recognition of RAMM supported by strong past performance and reputation. • Dynamic and creative programming has relevance for the community served. • Experienced and committed staff team. • High levels of support from community volunteers. • Team has clear understanding of museum purpose and direction. • Cross fertilisation and convergence of different art forms; contemporary and historic practice. • Support from two associated independent charities enables developmental aspects of our work. • Good data and insight for decision-making • Able to demonstrate economic value of the museum • ECC net carbon zero strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local context of city's relatively buoyant economy and growth prospects. • City Council's ambition for city and its services. • Local government reorganisation • New(ish) Labour government with focus on growth and skills development • Social and civic value of RAMM – reputation and goodwill • Strong partnerships • Co-production through RAMM's work with partnerships and audiences. • Democratisation of culture/content diversification. • Growing recognition of RAMM's value to health and wellbeing agendas. • Potentials of technological change to extend the reach of RAMM's collections and services, through digital, personalisation of experiences and targeted individual relationships. • Use of data to better understand audiences, shape and promote services. • Digital enables global reach, exchange and collaboration. • Potential of AI to streamline admin and data tasks • Socially aware audiences (e.g. decolonisation and anti-racism) • Strong community feeling committed grassroots organisations working positively at local level • People becoming more passionate about environmental issues.
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressures on public sector funding and position as discretionary service. • Competition for resources internally (and externally). • Managing the tension between public service and business needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on public sector funding. • Tension between political aspirations and ability to fund. • Local government reorganisation • Increased need to demonstrate impacts with same or less resource.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting multiple community needs and balancing conflicting demands/ interests. • Lack of marketing budget to compete for audiences. • No reinvestment in 'core offer' updates/renewal. • Limitations of digital infrastructure, capacity and priority inhibits development and opportunity. • Lack of physical space (e.g. for venue hire) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to recast and represent museum's work to meet new stakeholder priorities and interest. • Competition for political 'air- time' and need to advocate nationally, locally, to ACE and to sector. • People's disposable discretionary income diminished – cost of living crisis • Changing demographics and community need. • Significant competition for people's time and attention (multiplicity of choices and sophistication of competitor marketing). • Social media changing communication and peoples' expectations. • Increased polarisation of audiences, particularly on social media ('culture wars') • Visitor expectations of offer and demand for public access to collections continues to increase. • Premium placed on visitor 'experience'. • Climate change, ecological crisis
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RAMM Risk Register 2025-26: Risk Register

Reference Guide for 'Risk Title and Description': Organisational: O, Department: D and Objective / Task: T

Risk Matrix. RAMM has assessed the each risk by the **IMPACT** it will have by the **LIKELIHOOD** it will happen. This gives a score, or rating, and indicate if the risk is **Low**, **Medium** or **High**.

LIKELIHOOD	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
	IMPACT				

Risk Title and Description (O for Organisational; D for Department and T for Objective/Task)	Date Risk Identified	Risk Owner	Inherent Risk (before controls)			Existing Mitigations & Controls (What has been done to control the risk?)	Residual Risk (after controls)			Further Mitigations & Controls to be put into place	Target Implementation Date	Notes
			Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score		Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score			
Change of ECC political priorities Local authority reorganisation may result in change of ownership of and	April 2025	CH	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain communication channels and awareness of political developments. Create advocacy opportunities to highlight business plan; its 	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain awareness of emerging political priorities and interests. 	Ongoing	Unitary authority status may see a change in ECC priorities.

priorities for the museum						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> achievements and strategic relationship with ACE. Options for future unitary authorities presented to Government 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for alignment opportunities within RAMM programme. Ensure councillors are aware of RAMM's activities and invited to/host relevant events. Engage with other local authority museums and cultural services 		
Loss of critical partnerships and relationships	April 2025	CoLT	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a regular dialogue with partners. Check partner benefits meet their organisations requirements. Discuss need for development or adjustment. Engage ECC in strategic discussion when appropriate and necessary. Develop MOUs with partners. 	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renegotiate partnerships. Revise service delivery ambitions. Build continuity in key relationship personnel. 	Ongoing	
IT infrastructure and skill sets do not support	April 2025	JP	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early project discussions with STRATA. 	3	2	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert ECC to risk and seek their engagement with issue. 	Ongoing. Maintain dialogue with Strata	

RAMM's digital ambition						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish project requirements and STRATA's capability/ capacity to meet. • Consider alternative routes, suppliers and partnerships that will enable work to go ahead. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships with new head of service 		
Building/facility issues – including improvements - compromise operational delivery	April 2025	JH	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure ECC awareness of impact on partner investment and strategic relationships. • Good maintenance systems implemented for RAMM. • Careful planning and liaison with ECC colleagues to minimise disruption to public services and programme delivery. • Escalate issue within ECC for senior officer attention/ involvement. 	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise routes and/or scheduling to facilitate continuity of operations. • Communications plan shares challenge and any impacts, with stakeholders and public. • ECC colleagues share information and timeframes to enable formulation of alternative options and forward planning. 	Ongoing	ECC analysing corporate estate and capital needs longer term to inform future capital allocations and longer term planning.
Financial sustainability and investment decisions - There is a risk that pressures on budgets, unclear	July 2025	CH	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good engagement and support established with Councillor • Regular analysis and scenario planning exercises to consider impacts and implications 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum review to inform future planning and priorities for mitigating risk 	Ongoing	Review outcomes presented to ACE in November

prioritisation of delivery and limited forward planning may undermine sustainable funding						<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fund raising where appropriate• Income streams have already been diversified and future opportunities welcomed and considered on individual merit						
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Equality Impact Assessment: RAMM Forward Plan 2026-2029

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive Committee 16 December 2025	RAMM Forward Plan 2026-29	That Executive recommend Council approval of the Forward Plan for the Royal Memorial Museum and Art Gallery for the period 2026 to 2029.	age disability gender reassignment marriage and civil partnership pregnancy and maternity race religion or belief sex sexual orientation

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Age	Positive		<p>The breakdown of RAMM's visitors are as follows:</p> <p>Age 19 – 8% - 15,520 people (based on 194K visitors) 20-29 – 17% - 34,980 people 30-39 – 10.5% - 20,370 people 40-49 – 13.3% - 25,802 people 50-59 – 13% - 25,220 people 60-69 – 20% - 38,800 people 70+ – 17% - 32,980</p> <p>The plan sets out RAMM's aim to be welcoming to everyone whatever their background. As an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) RAMM must show how it contributes to the investment principles set out in ACE's Let's Create Strategy 2020-30. At the heart of ACE's Inclusivity & Relevance Principle is a commitment to achieving greater fairness, access and opportunity across the cultural sector, ensuring that England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that ACE supports and in the culture they produce. RAMM must demonstrate the Inclusivity & Relevance principle in the work it produces, both building a relationship with its communities, and demonstrating how its work is</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			<p>accessible and relevant to those communities. ACE requires NPOs, like RAMM, to agree targets for how their governance, leadership, employees, participants, audiences, and the work they make reflects the communities in which they work. These targets cover both protected characteristics and socio-economic background.</p> <p>The museum's Audience Development Plan and the museum's access statement, which both feed into the Forward Plan, set out how the museum will deliver on these commitments. The museum regularly carries out research into accessibility needs and this research is used to develop an access plan, which looks at how to remove barriers to engagement with the museum, based on the nine protected characteristics.</p> <p>RAMM actively collects data to ensure its audiences are representative of the local population. Its demographics report, which informs this plan, contains detailed information of the demographic profile of visitors to the museum, feedback from visitors in visitor surveys, feedback from schools, participants in events and community engagement projects all feed. We know there are barriers to accessing our museum and displays and we actively seek to address them. We listen to people and change our practices accordingly, working with local people and communities to ensure that they feel represented and therefore supported and encouraged to visit or engage with the museum.</p> <p>Since 2020 RAMM has received numerous awards and accolades relating to the accessibility of its offer including Gold in Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism at the Devon Tourism Awards (2021); Gold in Accessible and Inclusive Tourism at Devon Tourism Awards (2022); and Shortlisted for Accessibility Award at Museums + Heritage Awards (2025). In May 2025 RAMM passed its Visit England visitor attraction Quality Rating assessment with a score of 87%.</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			With regards to age, the programmes in this plan contain activities for people of all ages, from early years, primary and secondary school children, through to college and university students, families and adults as well as activities for older people.
Disability	Positive	Low	<p>9% of visitors are classified as disabled – 17,460 visitors to the museum each year</p> <p>As above for general information.</p> <p>With regards to disability, we use best practice resources and toolkits to ensure our accessibility work is up to date. Our current access and inclusion work is informed by resources from organisations such as the National Autistic Society, Living Options Devon, the Deaf Academy, In Focus, RNIB, RNID, as well as sector resources shared by peers within the heritage sector and critical friends with lived experience of a variety of access needs, such as the Anti-ableist museums resources from the Museums Association.</p>
Gender reassignment	Positive	Low	<p>13% of RAMM's visitors identify as LGBTQ+.</p> <p>As above for general information.</p> <p>With regards to LGBTQ+ visitors, over recent years, particularly through the Out and About: Queering the Museum project, RAMM has worked to ensure that the LGBTQ+ community feels welcome and represented in the museum. As a result, the percentage of visitors who identify as LGBTQ+ is 13%, higher than in the local populations of Exeter (5.8%) and Devon</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			(3.5%). RAMM's staff and volunteers who identify as LGBTQ+ are over-represented compared to the local population (in 2024-25, 29% of volunteers identified as LGBTQ+ compared to 6% in Exeter and 3% in Devon). RAMM continues to engage with creative practitioners from the LGBTQ+ community and promote activities such as the Rainbow Trail and the butterfly interactive, sharing LGBTQ+ perspectives on RAMM's collections.
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral		As above for general information. RAMM does not collect data on marriage and civil partnership. There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive		As above for general information. RAMM does not collect data on pregnancy and maternity status. RAMM aims to be welcoming of everyone, whatever their background or circumstances. There are baby change facilities on both levels of the museum. We welcome our visitors breastfeeding and bottle-feeding their babies. This protected characteristic is not an area of focus for the museum.
Race	Positive		8% of RAMM's visitors are from Global Majority communities As above for general information. RAMM's staff and volunteers from Global Majority backgrounds are broadly representative of the local population. RAMM works with creative practitioners from a wide range of diverse backgrounds. Through our community engagement programmes, working with community partner such as Hikmat, Inclusive Exeter, the Hindu Cultural Centre and Refugee

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			Support Devon, we ensure that diverse voices are represented in the museum and people feel welcome.
Religion or belief	Positive		<p>RAMM does not collect data on religion or belief.</p> <p>As above for general information.</p> <p>RAMM regularly engages with community groups which represent a broad range of faiths, for example, working with Hikmat, Inclusive Exeter, Refugee Support Devon and the Hindu Cultural Centre.</p>
Sex	Neutral		<p>44% of visitors are male – 85,360 people 56% of visitors are female – 108,640 people No visitors stated they were other/intersex in 2024-25</p> <p>As above for general information.</p> <p>There is no evidence available of specific impact.</p>
Sexual orientation	Neutral		<p>13% of RAMM's visitors identify as LGBTQ+</p> <p>As above for general information.</p> <p>With regards to LGBTQ+ visitors, over recent years, particularly through the Out and About: Queering the Museum project, RAMM has worked to ensure that the LGBTQ+ community feels welcome and represented in the museum. As a result, the percentage of visitors who identify as LGBTQ+ is 13%, higher than in the local populations of Exeter (5.8%) and Devon (3.5%). RAMM's staff and volunteers who identify as LGBTQ+ are over-represented compared to the local population (in 2024-25, 29% of</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			volunteers identified as LGBTQ+ compared to 6% in Exeter and 3% in Devon). RAMM continues to engage with creative practitioners from the LGBTQ+ community and promote activities such as the Rainbow Trail and the butterfly interactive, sharing LGBTQ+ perspectives on RAMM's collections.

Officer: Helen Hartstein
Date: 27 November 2025

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REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 16 December 2025

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 13 January 2025

Report of: Strategic Director People and Communities

Title: Exeter City Council Housing Services Hate Crime Policy

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The report summarises the revised Housing Services Hate Crime Policy It is proposed that the Policy 2026-2031 adopted and implemented. A copy of the Policy document is appended.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Executive recommends that Council approve the adoption of the new Hate Crime Policy for the period 2026-2031.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 Members will recall the introduction of a Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy in November 2024. This additional policy has been developed to address hate crimes and hate incidents within our Council housing communities.

3.2 In its 'Learning from severe maladministration report – November 2024'¹ the Housing Ombudsman recommends that landlords take firm actions and have policies that can deal with hate crime in a robust and timely manner. This policy is designed to comply with this recommendation.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources:

4.1 Fortunately, the number of hate incidences recorded in recent years has been very low, but there is a requirement to monitor these and report them through the Electronic Local Authority Housing Statistics (ELAHS) data return. Housing Officers will deal with these as part of their anti-social behaviour cases.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no financial implications contained in this report.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 Members approved the Exeter City Council Housing Services Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and Policy in December 2024. The ASB policy complies with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Members will note the purpose of the Residents' Hate Crime Policy is to address the issues raised in the Housing Ombudsman's report - Learning from Severe Maladministration Report – November 2024', particularly the sections of the report concerning hate crime in council-owned properties.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Members will note that this report sets out the reasons for the proposal to adopt a specific policy concerning 'hate crime'. The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equality Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

10. Report details:

10.1 This policy aims to provide clear guidelines for managing reports of hate crimes and incidents within our homes and estates, ensuring a victim-centred approach and reinforcing the Council's commitment to zero tolerance towards hate crimes.

10.2 It defines hate incidents and hate crimes, outlines the responsibilities of staff in reporting and recording these incidents, and emphasises the importance of supporting victims and witnesses. The policy also highlights the need for a multi-agency approach to effectively tackle hate crimes.

10.3 The police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes:

'Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.'³ (and for the purposes of this policy a person who identifies as nonbinary).

There is no legal definition of hostility so the CPS use the everyday understanding of the word which includes ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike.'

10.4 Hate incidents are non-criminal actions perceived to be motivated by similar prejudices. The policy categorises hate crimes and incidents as Category 1 anti-social behaviour offences, requiring a response within 24 hours.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

10.5 The policy includes references to the procedure for dealing with reports of hate incidence and hate crimes. reinforces outlines the following steps for implementation:

10.6 This policy was reported to our Tenants' Voice Group and reported to the Council Housing and Development Advisory Board (CHADAB) in June 2025.

10.7 It has also been taken to the Senior Management Board for their review.

10.8 As it is purely departmental and follows the guidelines as set out by the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator for Social Housing, it is not a requirement for this policy that further, public consultation is necessary.

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 The delivery of this strategy will contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan, in particular the Intended Outcomes include:

People: *'A safe and thriving city....we will address anti-social behaviour'*

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12.1 There are reputational risks in not having an up-to-date Hate Crime Policy; with the introduction of more stringent regulation any inspection of the housing service by the Regulator of Social Housing would include a review of our policies and strategies to ensure they are fit for purpose.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 There are no alternatives to the adoption of this policy as it is one of the 'required outcomes' within the Neighbourhood and Community Standard (part of the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards which came into force on 1st April 2024) which state:

'1.3 Anti-social behaviour and hate incidents

1.3.1 Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.

2.2 Anti-social behaviour and hate incidents

2.2.1 Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.

2.2.2 Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they deter and tackle hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.

Strategic Director People and Communities Jo Yelland

Author: James Turner

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

1. [Learning from severe maladministration report – November 2024](#)
2. [Neighbourhood and Community Standard - GOV.UK](#)

List of Appendices:

- Housing Residents Hate Crime Policy
- EQIA



Exeter
City Council



Council Housing
& Development Services

Exeter City Council Housing Services

Residents' Hate Crime Policy 2026 – 2031

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1.Introduction & Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out Exeter City Council Housing Services (ECC) zero-tolerance approach to hate crime in all its forms and our approach to managing reports of hate crime and hate incidences.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Hate Crime Policy is to strengthen our commitment to tackling hate crime and hate incidents by ensuring a victim-centred approach.

1. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The policy defines hate incidents and hate crime and associated behaviour: sets out the responsibilities of staff in relation to reporting and recording hate incidents, supporting victims and witnesses and dealing effectively with perpetrators.
- 2.2 This policy is designed to be used alongside our current Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, and our current Housing Residents' Vulnerability Policy provides guidance in the assessment of vulnerability of victims of hate incidences or hate crimes. This policy recognises that ECC Housing cannot deal with hate crimes and hate incidences alone, which is why it is important to have a multi-agency approach.
- 2.3 We will monitor hate crime incidents across our housing to identify persistent alleged perpetrators, trends and context sharing this data with partners as appropriate to improve services to tenants.
- 2.4 This policy is intended as guidance to set out a clear and effective response to deal with reports of hate incidents.

- 2.5 This policy is supported by operating procedures, guidelines and training for staff on risk assessment and action planning. This is to ensure a consistent and transparent response to all reports of a hate incident or hate crime.

3. Legal duties and statutory requirements

- 3.1 In its 'Learning from Severe Maladministration Report'¹, the Housing Ombudsman states that 'Landlords must also ensure they have robust procedures for handling distinct but sometimes related ASB issues on domestic violence, hate crime, and reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010'.
- 3.2 Under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard in the Consumer Standards it states that 'Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing'.²

4. Definition of Hate Crime and Hate Incidences

- 4.1 The police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes:

'Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.'³

There is no legal definition of hostility so we (the CPS) use the everyday understanding of the word which includes ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike.

- 4.2 A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.
- 4.3 Evidence of the hate element is not a requirement. People do not need to personally perceive the incident to be hate related. It would be enough if another person, a witness or even a police officer thought that the incident was hate related.
- 4.4 Hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault, bullying, incitement to hatred as well as damage to property.

- 4.5 When hate incidents become criminal offences they are known as hate crimes.
- 4.6 The Council's Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy sets out how we categorise and respond to incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- 4.7 Hate crime and hate incidences will be treated as Category 1 offences and a response will be made within 24 hours of the first report.

5. Implementation of the policy

- 5.1 This policy follows guidance from the Housing Ombudsman report 'On the record: Spotlight on Knowledge and Information Management'⁴ and its recommendations.
- 5.2 Staff will treat all reports seriously and confidentially and swiftly, responding to hate incidents by the next working day.
- 5.3 All staff will input data of any incidents and produce accurate, detailed reports via our housing management data system.
- 5.4 We will always treat tenants (or leaseholders) with respect and gather supporting information.
- 5.5 We will meet the victim at a location of their choosing within an agreed period to identify the facts and impacts of the incidents and complete a detailed risk assessment.
- 5.6 We will work with the police and relevant partner agencies to provide assistance, including referrals to a range of support service where appropriate.
- 5.7 Staff will investigate reports before drawing up an action plan and provide regular updates (at a frequency to be agreed) to complainants on progress made.
- 5.8 Contact with witnesses and other residents will only be made following consent from the victim.
- 5.9 Cases will be reviewed on a regular basis by senior officers and closed after discussion with the victim.

6. References

Legal duties and statutory requirements:

Equality Act 2010: Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standard Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code
(housingombudsman.org.uk)

The Care Act 2014

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Social Housing (Regulation) Act

Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Criminal Justice Act 2003

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Counter-Terrorism Security Act 2015.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Human Rights Act 1998

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Data Protection Act 2018

Related documents:

ECC Housing Strategy

ECC Tenancy Policy

ECC Housing Domestic Abuse Policy

ECC Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

ECC Safeguarding Policy

ECC Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy

ECC Residents' Vulnerabilities Policy

Footnotes:

1. [Learning from severe maladministration report – November 2024 \(housingombudsman.org.uk\)](https://housingombudsman.org.uk)
2. [Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2024 - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk)
3. <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/hate-crime>
4. [What is hate crime? | Devon & Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](https://devon-cornwall.police.uk)
5. [KIM-report-v2-100523.pdf](#)

6. [Anti-social behaviour powers: statutory guidance for frontline professionals \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/anti-social-behaviour-powers-statutory-guidance-for-frontline-professionals)

DRAFT

Equality Impact Assessment: Housing Hate Crime Policy

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive Committee Meeting on 16 th December 2025	Housing Hate Crime Policy 2026 – 2031	To agree the updated policy	All people with protected characteristics who are residents of Exeter City Council housing are potentially impacted by the policy under consideration.

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This is must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this

conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).	Positive	Medium	This group of people, where they are residents or visitors to council housing properties or sites may be adversely affected by Hate Crime therefore having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect.
Disability: as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	Positive	Medium	Residents (tenants and leaseholders) and visitors to our council housing properties and sites may have disabilities Tenants with learning disabilities are classed as 'vulnerable' and a note is made on their tenancy file to this effect-this also applies to members of the household who are not the tenants in their own right. The Police College reports that people with learning disabilities are e more likely to be the victim of violent crime compared to other crime types (4.3 times more likely). They are also more likely than other disability groups to be victims of violent crime (2.6 times more likely). Therefore, having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect on people with this characteristic .
Sex	Positive	Medium	

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			<p>This policy has been developed to address hate incidents and hate crimes affecting all council housing residents, visitors, and individuals with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act.</p> <p>Implementing this policy is expected to have a positive impact on people who share these characteristics.</p> <p>The most recent statistics do not include sex as one of the centrally monitored strands of hate crime ⁴</p>
Gender reassignment	Positive	Medium	<p>Hate crime data is centrally recorded for transgender identity as one of the five monitored strands. This policy aims to address hate incidents and crimes affecting council housing residents and visitors, including those who have undergone or are undergoing gender reassignment.</p> <p>Therefore, having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect on people with this characteristic.</p>
Religion and belief (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).	Positive	Medium	<p>Religion can intersect with race as it is sometimes unclear why someone has been targeted.</p> <p>Using data from Victims of racial and religious hate crime - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures. 7 in 10 of all hate crimes were racially motivated</p> <p>In the Devon & Cornwall Police Force area there were 399 crimes defined as racial or religious hate crimes in 2024/25. Percentage and number of victims of racially or religiously aggravated hate crime, by ethnicity (self-defined):</p>

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			<p>Asian 69 17%</p> <p>Black 89 22%</p> <p>Mixed 56 14%</p> <p>Other 44 11%</p> <p>Therefore, having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect on people with this characteristic .</p>
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).	Positive	Medium	<p>This policy has been drawn up to respond to hate incidents or hate crimes for all council housing residents and visitors and those with characteristics defined under the Equality Act might be</p> <p>Therefore, having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect on people with this characteristic .</p>
Age (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Positive	Medium	<p>The Crown Prosecution Service ¹ states 'Whilst crimes against older people do not fall under hate crime legislation, our approach to dealing with these crimes has much in common with how we tackle hate crime'.</p> <p>This policy has been drawn up to respond to hate incidents or hate crimes for all council housing residents and visitors and those with characteristics defined under the Equality Act.</p> <p>Therefore, having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect on people of all ages.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity including new and breast feeding mothers	Neutral	Low	As above
Marriage and civil partnership status	Neutral		<p>This policy has been drawn up to respond to hate incidents or hate crimes for all council housing residents and visitors and those with characteristics defined under the Equality Act.</p> <p>Therefore, having a policy to address these issues should have a positive effect on people of all ages.</p>

1. [Hate crime | The Crown Prosecution Service](#)
2. [Victims of racial and religious hate crime - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures](#)
3. <https://assets.college.police.uk/s3fs-public/2020-12/FOIA-2020-084.pdf?v=1608735744>
4. [Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion

To undertake further investigations into the statistics around Hate Crime for 2024/25 (usually published by the Government in mid-October) and use these to inform any procedure that will accompany this policy.

Officer: Sarah Hemming

Date: 09.12.25

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