

Appendix 1: Initial Aims for the HSBC Money Gallery

The basic aims and objectives for the gallery were decided at an early stage and were stated in the Initial Design Brief. They were:

1. The display will be appropriate to the size, shape and architecture of the gallery and take account of its position on a major route.
2. The display will present the history of money through the collections of the Museum, highlighting their quality and scope.
3. The display will follow a broad chronological scheme, so that visitors have a sense of the history of the forms of money familiar to them today.
4. The material will be grouped in thematic presentations, each devoted to particular aspects of money's history.
5. The themes will examine the economic, political, social and cultural roles of money in past and present societies at all levels.
6. The display will address the interests of all types of visitors, so that it will communicate with children, casual visitors, academics, etc.

Further documentation prepared for the purpose of attracting sponsors stated that:

It is intended, like the Museum, as a truly international gallery telling the story of money from its origins in pre-history down to the electronic revolution, which is transforming the role of money today.

The new gallery will display the treasures of the national collection as a guide to the development of money through the centuries, with special emphasis on the every-day use of money, the technology of its production, its artistry, and on its progress from precious metal to today's plastic money revolution.

The main aim of the new gallery is to show that the nature of money as they [the visitor] know it has its origin in a history reaching back over more than four thousand years... will be able to follow the development of money through the centuries. Each case in the gallery will focus on a particular chapter in the story of money.

Content

The most important theme in the opening section of the gallery will be the invention of coinage.... display will show how the idea of coining came about and how it quickly spread from its two birth-places.

The spread and development of money will be a recurring topic in all sections of the gallery.

As well as illustrating the work of banks today, the gallery will also display the origins of banking...the early

development of banknotes in the seventeenth and eighteenth century will also be featured.'

The gallery will trace the traditional methods of coin and paper money production and show the gradual process of mechanisation as hand power was replaced by horse, steam and electrical power. The impact on money of the electronic revolution will also be examined.

... and later paper money designers have reflected in their work the highest Art of their day. Throughout the gallery, emphasis will be placed on the changing face of money.

Architecture and Structure

It is the Museum's policy to maintain the architectural integrity of the interior of the Museum; major refurbishment of the gallery will therefore take place in keeping with this... The new gallery will follow the rhythm of the existing architecture, dividing the display to fit easily in the three pairs of alcoves: ancient, medieval and modern.

Other Stated Objectives

- Our aim in this new gallery is to introduce the general public to our collections by presenting them in a context which all visitors will recognise.
- '... hope to enable [visitors] to reach an understanding of why money takes the form of coins, paper money and bank money and how those forms have developed since the earliest records of payments... satisfy and provoke the curiosity of the casual visitor and reveal the immense breadth and depth of our holding to the specialist...'
- The material had to be presented in a way which made sense from whichever way it was entered.
- The material would be displayed in such a way as to allow close examination of individual objects whenever possible.
- Placing the main cases along the sides of the gallery would allow visitors to look at them without obstructing 'passing traffic'.
- Island cases with spectacular exhibits were intended 'to encourage as many of the passing visitors as possible to stop and look further.'
- Text was made as clear as possible by: placing introductions at head height; putting object descriptions as close to the objects as possible; the descriptive text should be easy to find and read without detracting from the view of the objects themselves.