

National Programmes 2020–22



The British Museum's work around the UK has contributed to the nationwide post-pandemic recovery. Through National Programmes, we've supported the cultural economy, bolstered tourism and shared skills.

In numbers	
2020/21	2021/22
1,453 objects loaned	1,594 objects loaned
500,000 visitors	3 million + visitors
77 venues	95 venues
	8 bespoke National Programmes touring exhibitions

National strategy 2022–2027

In 2022, the British Museum launched its five-year National strategy. We want the collection to inspire people everywhere and to be a vehicle for a shared understanding of human cultural achievement.

This will be delivered through:

- Digital engagement
- In-person engagement
- Outreach and sharing skills

*Ancient Iraq: new
discoveries at Great North
Museum, Newcastle.
Photo by Colin Davison.*



Digital engagement

We will build on the British Museum's digital offer, bringing the collection to life through data-driven online engagement, innovative virtual experiences and mobile-friendly options.

Samsung
Digital Discovery
Centre session.



Samsung Digital Discovery Centre

The Museum's digital learning programme reaches thousands of children and families on site every year. It also engages students across the UK through its Virtual Visits workshops, delivered live from the Museum into classrooms. Expanded to meet schools' need for cultural access during the lockdowns, the programme continues to grow and has attracted national and international interest as a leading example of digital learning in the sector.

In numbers

2020/21

287

Virtual Visits

8,897

Students
and teachers

143

Schools reached

2021/22

630

Virtual Visits

22,128

Students and
teachers

384

Schools reached

Knowledge Share online events 2021–22

The National Programmes team hosts major conferences and events at the British Museum for colleagues in the UK museum and cultural heritage sector. In 2020–22, these events went entirely online and reflected a wide range of topics, from young people shaping collections and feminist leadership in museums to community-led object interpretation.

In numbers

40
speakers

1,300
participants live

3,500
online views

Recordings from the sessions are freely available online on the British Museum Events YouTube channel.

Supported by the Vivmar Foundation

British Museum Young People's Programme

Every year the British Museum recruits 15 people representative of young Londoners to form a Youth Collective. The Youth Collective co-produces programming to grow the British Museum's engagement with young people. In 2020 and 2021 the collective devised virtual programmes to connect young people across the UK with the Museum.

In numbers

1.7million

Impressions
on social media

15.9K

Clicks on
social media

30

Youth Collective
members



Virtual youth engagement

In 2020 the Youth Collective co-produced a series of video conversations and presentations around the theme of 'change'. The group spoke with inspiring figures including South African youth activist and entrepreneur Amonge Sinxoto about her work to empower young South Africans to tackle social issues.

In spring 2021, the Youth Collective hosted *Unlocking the Museum*, a series of events looking at museum careers and how young people can break into the sector. This included an interview with the British Museum Director, Hartwig Fischer, who answered questions about how the Museum can better connect with young people.

Youth Collective Black Pride event, now available on the British Museum YouTube channel.

UK Museums Showcase

While museums were closed, our UK partners responded creatively to engage with audiences unable to visit physically. The British Museum profiled a selection of these online highlights on our website, including various virtual exhibition tours such as the British Museum Touring Exhibition, *Pushing paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now* at Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea.

*Pushing paper:
contemporary drawing
from 1970 to now* at
Glynn Vivian Art Gallery,
Swansea. Photo by
Polly Thomas.





Virtual exhibitions

At the start of the lockdown in 2020, the British Museum had four Touring Exhibitions on display at partner museums across the UK. *Ancient Iraq: new discoveries* opened at Great North Museum on 7 March 2020, with just over two weeks before the first lockdown. Adapting to the situation, Great North Museum made an online recreation of the exhibition by using 3D cameras to capture the exhibition space, reaching thousands of online visitors.

*Ancient Iraq:
new discoveries*
exhibition at the
Great North Museum:
Hancock, Newcastle.

Digital recording

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) was able to easily adapt to the increasingly digital post-pandemic world thanks to its online database. To record as many finds as possible, Finds Liaison Officers produced records on the database entirely from information and images provided remotely by finders.

In numbers

1,582,652
finds to date

49,045
Finds in 2020

45,581
Finds in 2021

100+
national and
local partners

40
Finds Liaison
Officers across
England

‘One of the best webinars I’ve been to... it is so valuable that it is online. It means that people out of London can attend, which wouldn’t be possible if it was in person.’

Museum Futures Summit attendee



In-person engagement

‘These are works by the superstars of the art world and we are absolutely delighted to have secured this exhibition, thanks to the British Museum... it’s a complete one-off and a real coup for Barnsley and Yorkshire.’

Cllr Tim Cheetham, Barnsley Council’s Cabinet Member for Culture

*Pushing Paper:
contemporary drawing
from 1970 to now at
the Cooper Gallery
in Barnsley.*





Nordic by nature: modern design and prints

Nordic by nature came to the end of its successful run in 2020. The exhibition profiled how artists and designers have been inspired by Nordic landscapes and offered audiences the chance to see beautiful examples of Finnish, Swedish, Danish and Norwegian art and design.

Weston Park Museum,
Sheffield, 4 May –
28 July 2019
(29,000 visitors)

Old Gala House,
Galashiels, 5 August –
31 October 2019
(1,168 visitors)

Thurso Art Gallery,
16 November 2019 –
1 February 2020
(888 visitors)

Kirkleatham Museum,
Redcar, 15 February –
19 March; 22 July –
20 September 2020
(7,218 visitors)

38,274

visitors

*Nordic by nature:
modern design and
prints* at Kirkleatham
Museum, Redcar.
Photo by Kev Howard.



Living with art: Picasso to Celmins

Highlighting key developments of 20th-century art in Europe and America, *Living with art* was an exhibition of 30 prints and drawings by prominent artists including Pablo Picasso, Bridget Riley and Vija Celmins, bequeathed to the Museum by film critic Alexander Walker.

F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio, Northern Ireland, 11–24 December 2020 (127 visitors – COVID-19 related closure)

National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, 20 February – 7 June 2021 (4,195 visitors)

Danum Gallery, Library and Museum, Doncaster, 24 July – 1 October 2021 (11,258 visitors)

The Burton at Bideford, Devon, 21 January – 24 April 2022 (10,844 visitors)

26,424
visitors

Living with art: Picasso to Celmins at the Danum Gallery. Photo by James Mulkeen.



A Ming Emperor's seat

Showcasing one of the largest porcelains in the Sir Percival David Collection at the British Museum, this Spotlight Loan tour marked the first time the seat had been displayed at a museum outside of London. Crafted

for the court of one of the longest-reigning of all the Ming dynasty emperors, the Wanli Emperor (r. 1573–1620), the *Ming Emperor's seat* Spotlight Loan gave a fascinating insight into Chinese court culture.

Manchester Museum,
7 February – 17 March 2020
(35,931 visitors)

Royal Albert Memorial
Museum, Exeter, 10 August –
21 November 2021
(42,000 visitors)

A Ming emperor's seat
at Royal Albert Memorial
Museum, Exeter. Photo
by Matt Austin.

70,431

visitors

Coventry City of Culture

The British Museum was proud to contribute to the Coventry City of Culture programming in 2021. The UK City of Culture programme demonstrates how investment in culture helps to create a lasting legacy of social, cultural and economic change.

The Lampedusa Cross
at Coventry Cathedral.
Photo by Mary Reed.





Spotlight loan

The British Museum was a significant part of the opening weekend, with the Spotlight loan *Crossings: community and refuge* displaying the Lampedusa Cross on the High Altar of Coventry Cathedral on 22 and 23 May 2021.

Collaboration

Continuing this relationship with Coventry, the British Museum collaborated with Historic England and a range of local partners, including Coventry Business Improvement District, to pilot a new way of bringing British Museum experiences to audiences. Co-curated with young people from the local charity Positive Choices, *The Show Windows: Reflections* saw reproductions of artworks from famous artists with a connection to Coventry including Geoffrey Clarke RA and Käthe Kollwitz on display in the City Arcade windows.

Co-curators of the *Show Windows: Reflections* exhibition in Coventry City Arcade as part of Coventry City of Culture. Photo by Jamie Gray.

Portable Antiquities and Treasure in focus: Shropshire sun pendant

The Bronze Age Shropshire sun pendant was found by detectorist Bob Greenaway and reported as Treasure via the British Museum Portable Antiquities Scheme. It has been exceptionally crafted, highlighting the skill of people from 3,000 years ago. Acquired by the British Museum in 2021, it was first displayed at Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

Bob Greenaway, finder
of the Shropshire Sun
Pendant at *Gathering light:*
a Bronze Age golden sun
at Shrewsbury Museum
and Art Gallery.





PAS in focus: Wickwar coin hoard

In May 2021, Mark Lovell and Mark Wilcox were metal detecting a field in South Gloucestershire when they discovered a Roman coin hoard in its original pot. Realising it was still in-situ, and the importance of preserving this information, they immediately called their local Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) who was able to organise a small excavation of the site. Three pots containing coins were discovered, all buried together in a line and nestled within building rubble from a previously unknown Roman structure and site. With the detectorists' help, further archaeological fieldwork is now being undertaken to find out more about the site.

The Wickwar Hoard
excavation in Wickwar,
South Gloucestershire.
Photo by Mark Wilcox.

*Nordic by nature: modern
design and prints at Old
Gala House, Galashiels.
Photo by Brian Cassidy.*

**‘A privilege to see
this collection of art
and artefacts –
gorgeous design!’**

*Visitor comment, Nordic by nature:
modern design and prints*



Outreach and sharing skills

We are a conduit for collaboration, co-design and networking for colleagues, young people and communities.

Young people collaborating with Harewood House and the Geraldine Connor Foundation in Leeds as part of the *Where we are...* programme. Photo by Tim Smith.



Where we are...

Where we are... is a UK-wide national programme for people aged 18–24 that co-designs and co-delivers meaningful local art and culture projects. The programme aims to engage young people who are under-served in the museum sector.

In 2021 the Key Partners for the programme were:

Museums and Galleries Edinburgh and Edinburgh Young Carers:

A group of 10 young people from Edinburgh co-produced a project titled *Edinburgh is Not the Royal Mile* which explored their feelings of alienation within Edinburgh's touristic city centre and showed their own special places.

Harewood House Trust and Geraldine Connor Foundation:

In Leeds, 13 young people from the African and Caribbean diasporas were invited to reflect on Harewood House's history of slavery and colonisation and bring new perspectives. In partnership with Sable Radio, the group produced a film titled *Not My House* and wrote a collective poem on their reactions to Harewood House.

Attenborough Arts Centre and Pedestrian:

12 young people from Leicester, who identify as LGBTQ+, explored activism and social justice. The *See Me as Me* project explored several art forms, including poetry, music, ceramics and performance, which were presented at the Attenborough Arts Centre.

Museum Futures

The Museum Futures programme was a three-year Skills for the Future programme run by the British Museum. The programme aimed to give a diverse group of young people with digital talents the chance to receive paid vocational training at museums across the country, culminating in each trainee completing a Level 3 Cultural Heritage Diploma/RQF.

Programme partners

Along with the British Museum, the following 20 organisations hosted trainees:

The Atkinson
Birmingham Museums Trust
Bristol Culture
Culture Perth and Kinross
Derby Museums
Fitzwilliam Museum
Garden Museum

Hastings Museum and Art Gallery
Horniman Museum and Gardens
Lisburn Museum and Irish
Linen Centre
Museum of Cardiff
Museum of East Anglian Life
National Football Museum

National Museums Liverpool
Norfolk Museums Service
Royal Pavilion and Museums
South West Heritage Trust
Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery
Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums
York Museums Trust

Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

In numbers

25

trainees were recruited over 3 years, 100% completion

96%

of trainees were 18–24 years old

76%

of trainees had not started or completed an undergraduate degree

100%

of trainees were without a post-graduate qualification

100%

of trainees had less than 6 months' prior work experience in the sector



Museum Futures Summit

This one-day online conference in March 2022, to celebrate and learn from 10 years of Heritage Fund Skills for the Future programming, marked the completion of the Museum Futures programmes.

Bringing together staff and young people from organisations across the country, the summit explored the impact and learning outcomes of these paid, entry-level training programmes.

Recordings from the Museum Futures Summit are freely available on the British Museum Events YouTube channel.

Museum Futures
trainees 2021 at the
British Museum.

Knowledge Exchange

This scheme has created week-long professional exchanges between arts and heritage organisations across the UK since 2010. In 2021–22, British Museum staff took part in exchanges with museum colleagues from Perth, the Isle of Lewis, Worcestershire, Sunderland and Torquay.

In numbers

130+

staff exchanges
at more than 45
UK museums
since 2010

16

placements with
five partners
delivered in
2021–22



In focus: collaborating on the kahu kākāpō

2022 saw the completion of a three-year collaboration between the British Museum and Culture Perth & Kinross on the conservation of the kahu kākāpō, a Māori feather cloak in the Perth Museum collection – the only one known of its kind.

Conservation staff from both organisations worked on the cloak in 2021–22, sharing conservation skills and developing a culturally appropriate treatment in collaboration with Māori curatorial and cultural advisors based in the UK and New Zealand.

Kahu Kākāpō conservation
partnership project with
Culture Perth & Kinross.
Photo by Nicole Rhode.

British Museum Portable Antiquities Scheme Internships

Since 2009, the Headley Trust has funded internships enabling people entering a career in archaeology or museums to train with British Museum Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officers across the UK. As the FLO role is unique, and covers a wider range of disciplines across the sector, interns gain a broad range of skills.

In numbers

71

interns to date

35

interns have
become Finds
Liaison Officers

50,000+

finds added
to the Portable
Antiquities
Scheme
database
by interns

Young people
collaborating with
Pedestrian and
Attenborough Arts
Centre in Leicester
as part of the *Where
we are...* programme.
Photo by Dean Leivers.

‘I’ve had space
here to learn how
to be unapologetic
about myself...
the massive mix of
different viewpoints
and ideas being shared
in a non-hierarchal way
helped me to see that
my own perspective
was also welcome.’

Young participant, *Where we are...*



Touring Exhibitions

Crossings: community and refuge
People's History Museum, Manchester
Hastings Museum and Art Gallery
Derby Museum and Art Gallery

Troy: beauty and heroism
Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology, Reading
Haslemere Museum

Gathering light: a Bronze Age golden sun
Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery

Pushing paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now
Oriental Museum, Durham
Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea
Cooper Gallery, Barnsley

Ancient Iraq: new discoveries
Great North Museum, Newcastle
Djanogly Gallery, Nottingham
Lakeside Arts

Living with art: Picasso to Celmins
F. E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio, Northern Ireland
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin
Danum Gallery, Library and Museum, Doncaster
The Burton at Bideford

A Ming Emperor's seat
Manchester Museum
Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter

Nordic by nature: modern design and prints
Weston Park Museum, Sheffield
Old Gala House, Galashiels
Thurso Art Gallery
Kirkleatham Museum, Redcar

Museum Futures

Birmingham Museum Trust
Bristol Culture
Derby Museums
Hastings Museum & Art Gallery
Horniman Museum and Gardens
Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum
Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery

Tyne and Wear Museums and Archives
The British Museum, London
Culture Perth and Kinross
The Atkinson
The Fitzwilliam Museum
Museum of Cardiff
The Food Museum
National Football Museum
South West Heritage Trust

Where we are... Programme

Harewood House Trust and Geraldine Connor Foundation
Attenborough Arts Centre and Pedestrian
Edinburgh Young Carers and Museums & Galleries Edinburgh

Knowledge Exchange

Culture Perth & Kinross
Museum & Tasglann nan Eilean, Outer Hebrides
Museums Worcestershire
Sunderland Culture
Torre Abbey, Torquay

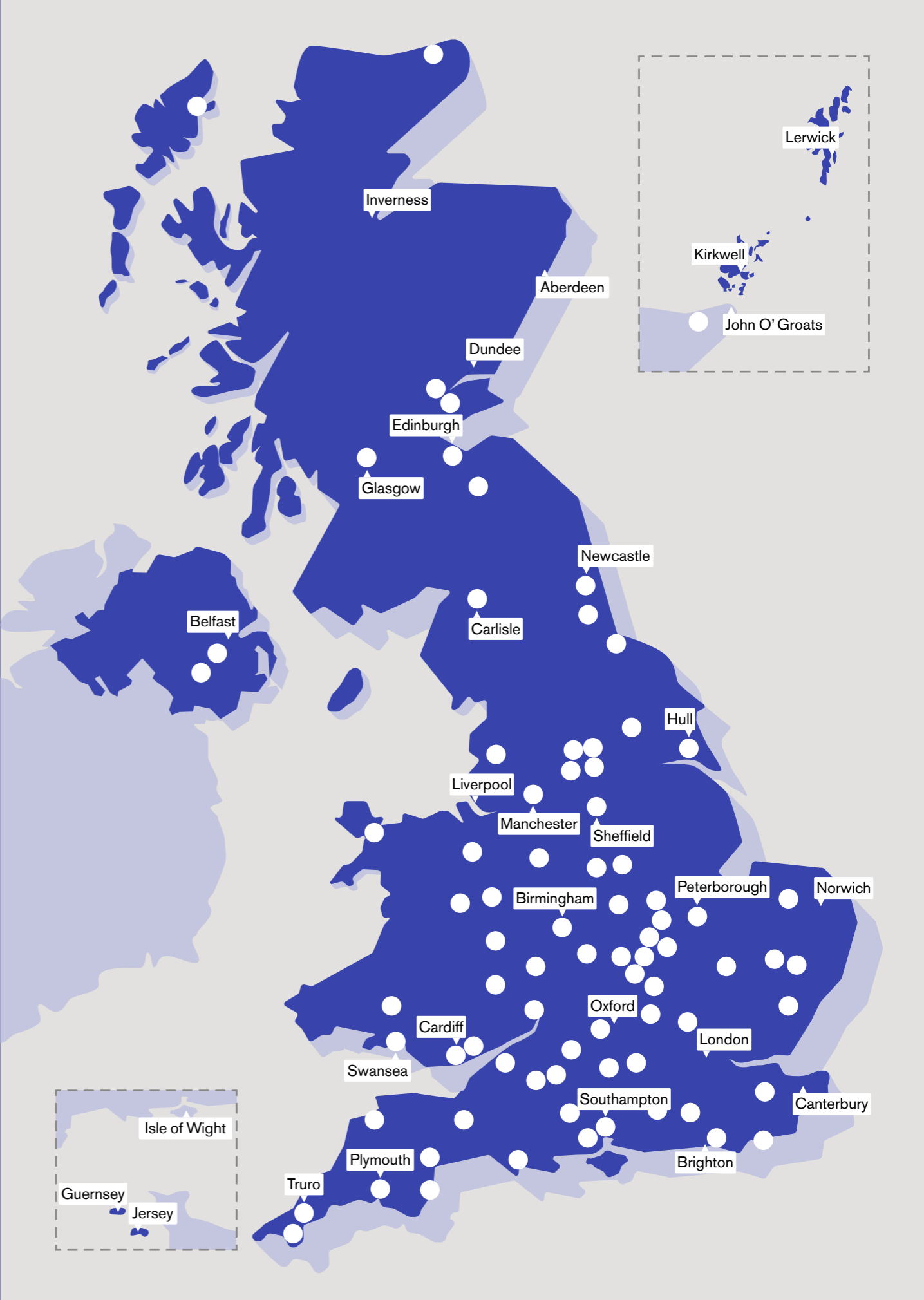
Partnership Galleries

Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery
Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery
Royal Cornwall Museum
Great North Museum
Yorkshire Museum

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Aberystwyth
Aylesbury
Bangor
Barnsley
Birmingham
Bradford
Bristol
Bury St Edmunds
Cambridge
Cardiff
Carlisle

Colchester
Corby
Daventry
Derby
Devizes
Doncaster
Durham
Exeter
Glenfield
Gloucester
Gressenhall
Halifax
Helston
Hereford
Horsham
Huddersfield
Hull
Kettering
Kingston-upon-Thames
Leeds
Lewes
Lincoln
Liverpool
Llandeilo
Ludlow
Lyndhurst
Maidstone
Manchester
Milton Keynes
Newbury
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Newport
Northampton
Nottingham
Oakham
Oxford
Peterborough
Plymouth
Preston
Reading
Rotherham
Salisbury
Scunthorpe
Sheffield
Southampton
St Albans
Standlake
Stoke-on-Trent
Swansea
Swindon
Taunton
Towcester
Trowbridge
Truro
Wakefield
Warwick
Wellingborough
Welshpool
Winchester
Worcester
Wrexham
Wycombe
York



Acknowledgements

The British Museum is grateful to the Dorset Foundation in memory of Harry M Weinrebe for their lead support of our national work and this publication.

The Museum wishes to thank the following for their support:

Art Fund
Arts Council England
Baring Foundation
Bridget Riley Art Foundation
Clare Duffield Foundation
Graham and Joanna Barker
The Greengross family
The Headley Trust
Leverhulme Trust
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Samsung
Vivmar Foundation

Contact

Learning and National Partnerships
The British Museum
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3DG

ukpartnerships@britishmuseum.org
britishmuseum.org
+44 (0)20 7323 8696

