

National Museums NI
Annual Report and Accounts
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly

Under Article 10 (2) (c) and 11 of the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998

By the Department for Communities

On

26 November 2024

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1. CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

As the new Chairman of National Museums NI, it is my great pleasure to present this Annual Report, reflecting on a remarkable year of achievements and looking forward to a future filled with promise for our organisation.

We are dedicated to delivering inclusive and compelling experiences across all four of our wonderful museum sites. Our museums challenge perceptions and encourage discussion across various themes including the conflict of our past and its legacy, our rich cultural heritage and our response to the pressing climate crisis, in a bid to inspire our visitors as they journey with us into a shared future. Some of our most ambitious plans lie in the 'reawakening' of the Ulster Folk Museum – a project which aims to empower individuals to reconnect with heritage and the environment in new ways. The vision and commitment of the team at National Museums NI has been truly impressive, and their dedication ensures that we remain at the forefront of museum excellence.

Collaboration is at the heart of our strategy as we strive to appeal to broader and more diverse audiences. By enhancing our partnerships with various organisations and sectors, we aim to enrich our collections, broaden learning opportunities and promote wellbeing across our community. This collaborative approach is essential as we continue to develop and expand our reach.

Alongside myself, National Museums NI gained seven new Trustees this year, each of whom bring with them a wealth of knowledge, skills and connections. Their collective experience will undoubtedly strengthen National Museums NI, as we champion and guide its future. Together, we are committed to building on the strong foundations that have been laid and progressing with the exciting plans for the future.



Gordon Milligan OBE
Chairman

1.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this year's Annual Report. I invite you to look back with us and explore our many highlights, successes and milestones as we reflect on the past twelve months. We have been on a long road of organisational development – a journey which has bolstered our resilience in meeting the needs and expectations of our partners and the public, ensuring our relevance in a time of exponential change.

As we move into 2024/25 it marks the culmination of our current Corporate Strategy, providing us with an opportunity to conclude this phase of our journey on a high note. This strategy has been instrumental in guiding our work in the past five years and achieving tangible progress across various fronts.

In spite of the continuing challenges of the financial environment we are in, characterised by political uncertainty, rising inflation and a continued increase in cost of living, our performance this year has been remarkably strong. Whilst success should not be measured by numbers alone, I am deeply encouraged by the results we have achieved, which point to the progress being made across our four sites. Our museums welcomed 724,257 visitors - an impressive 9% increase in comparison to last year.

There has been growth in general admission visitors, schools, volunteers, tourists, corporate functions and weddings – all of which demonstrates a real team effort, with each part of our museum service making a positive contribution to our shared success.

We track a wide range of performance indicators that go beyond visitor numbers. We generated 962,614 engagements in total this financial year through a wide range of activity beyond visitors through our doors. Online engagements, stores visits, research enquiries and volunteering are just some of the other ways we engage our audiences. This wider view of engagements shows the extent of our museum service and the impact we create. This is an incredible achievement and a measure of just how valued our museums and our work are.

From motorsports to bluegrass music festivals, foraging to fashion icons, our programming highlights have captured the imaginations of visitors throughout the year. The culmination of our programme marking the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in April 2023 was an exhibition that featured some of the inspiring women who have been influential to peace building in Northern Ireland.

In December 2023, we hit a major milestone for the 'Reawakening the Ulster Folk Museum' project by securing full planning permission with unanimous support from the planning committee. Most encouraging has been to hear the feedback from visitors, schoolchildren, partners, politicians and other stakeholders who have given their whole-hearted endorsement to our plans.

Now progressing to its next stage, this investment project will see the Ulster Folk Museum renewed with a purposeful realignment of its role as a multi-layered heritage and environment resource.

At the core of our responsibilities as a national museum lies the crucial task of caring for our collection, expanding it with new acquisitions and sharing its significance with the wider public. Over the last year our collecting efforts have been dynamic and purposeful, aimed at reflecting and encouraging dialogue about our shared history and contemporary experiences.

The work we have undertaken in managing and caring for our collections over the past year is a testament to our dedication and commitment to our organisational mission of telling the stories of our past, challenging our present and shaping our future. It is through these efforts that we ensure our collections remain relevant, engaging and representative of the world we live in.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our Minister and the Department for Communities, our funders, partners, donors and members, and to everyone who has visited and engaged with our museums over the past year. Your continued support is the vital driving force behind our success.

My thanks also goes to my amazing colleagues who bring creativity, passion and hard work to their roles every, single day. It is through their efforts that we continue to inspire, educate and engage the public, making a profound impact on our community and beyond.



**Kathryn Thomson
Chief Executive**

2. TRUSTEES' PERFORMANCE REPORT

2.1 Purpose, Objectives & Activities

The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (the "Order") established a Board of Trustees for National Museums NI and provided that all property, rights and liabilities of the Trustees of the Ulster Museum and the Trustees of the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum would transfer to this Board. It repealed previous legislation affecting the Ulster Museum and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. The Trustees of the Ulster Museum and the Trustees of the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum were thereby abolished. National Museums NI assumed responsibility for the Ulster American Folk Park from October 1998.

A subsidiary company, National Museums Northern Ireland Enterprises Limited, was incorporated in 2008 for the purposes of carrying on non-primary purpose trading activity ancillary to the core objectives and activities of the parent charity. The company is currently non-trading.

The Order requires the Trustees to:

- care for, preserve and add to the collections;
- ensure that the collections are available to the public through exhibitions, effective interpretation and availability for research and study; and
- promote the awareness, appreciation and understanding of;
 - art, history and science;
 - the way of life and traditions of people;
 - the migration and settlement of people;

with particular reference to the heritage of Northern Ireland.

In setting the objectives and planning the activities for the year, the Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

The requirements of the Order meet the following charitable purposes as defined by the Charities Commission:

- The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage and science; and
- The advancement of education.

National Museums NI: Who We Are

National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland has adopted the operating name of National Museums NI. This operating name has been adopted and used throughout the Annual Report and Accounts.

National Museums NI comprises four museums and serves as a custodian of the National Collection of 1.4 million objects which are multidisciplinary, diverse and span all time periods, referencing Northern Ireland within, and to, the wider world.

Ulster Museum

The Ulster Museum is Northern Ireland's treasure house of the past and the present – home to rich collections of art, history and natural sciences. It is a vibrant place where friends and family enjoy knowledge and stories drawn from local and global culture. It is a place of awe and wonder, but also a safe and trusted space which allows diverse voices to be heard and difficult questions to be explored.

Ulster Folk Museum

The Ulster Folk Museum is an open-air museum – rolling hills of countryside and a bustling town filled with authentic period buildings, meticulously transported from their original settings. The Museum reveals how we have shaped our natural environment over time creating a cultural landscape rich in traditions and diversity. Its commitment to preserving and interpreting our way of life from the early 1900s connects us with values, skills and customs that would otherwise be lost.

Ulster Transport Museum

The Ulster Transport Museum tells the story of transport and social change in this part of the world since the birth of the modern era. It is the journey of tenacious, local people finding more efficient ways to travel and to transport the essentials of daily life. It is a place to discover that story and offer inspiration for the designers, engineers and adventurers of the future.

Ulster American Folk Park

Embark on an epic journey across the centuries, and the vast Atlantic Ocean, as you recreate the story of Irish emigration. The Ulster American Folk Park is a place that preserves the importance of Ulster people's contribution to establishing modern North America and tells compelling stories of Irish emigration. It seeks to alter people's perceptions about emigration through personal stories of discovery.

Our Role and Purpose

National Museums NI's role is to work with the public to explore and share compelling stories about real objects and collections in unique settings that enable all of us to gain new knowledge and understanding.

We are passionate about playing a vital role at the heart of our community, making a difference to the lives of many individuals as well as contributing to the development of a vibrant society. The collections are at the centre of everything we do, and we are committed to working in partnership with people, local communities and organisations that share our aspirations. We want to ensure that the widest possible audience has access to our national collections.

We operate for the public and national benefit, not just for this generation but for future generations and for all visitors to Northern Ireland. We facilitate a better understanding of our collective heritage and foster dialogue, curiosity and self-reflection.

Our Vision:

Celebrate who we are: telling the stories of our past, challenging our present and shaping our future.

Our Mission:

- Develop, manage and care for our Collections to benefit current and future generations.
- Make our Collections accessible to the widest possible audiences.
- Play a leading role in the economic and social wellbeing and future of this place.
- Build an organisation where people feel valued.

Our Values:

- Striving for excellence – being the best we can be in everything we do; delivering excellent customer service internally and externally; and sharing our expertise.
- Being authentic – being true to our Collections; having integrity in everything we do; and creating unique experiences.
- Working together – promoting teamwork; building mutually beneficial partnerships; and being receptive to others and their ideas.
- Showing respect – valuing everyone; supporting diversity; and respecting the Collections.
- Being courageous – being ambitious in programming; embracing change; being brave and creative in the stories we tell; and empowering our people.

Our Journey:

In recent years, spurred by our passion for our museums and collections, National Museums NI has embarked on an ambitious programme of transformation to ensure that we achieve the maximum public benefit through everything we do.

Through our transformative agenda we are actively rethinking the role of museums in our society. We want to connect people to their interests and ambitions in a deeper way. But we also recognise that societal norms are changing in terms of lifestyle, identity, the climate emergency and the economy; and that this requires us to change too.

We believe that our museums can set an example in adapting to change, encouraging debate, promoting reconciliation and supporting diversity and sustainability. We need to be able to react as well as reflect.

Public Benefit Statement

Everything we do as an organisation is measured against the benefits we aspire to bring to the users of our Museums. The direct public benefit of National Museums NI is that people, individually and collectively, better understand the art, history, science and culture of Northern Ireland and its significance and relevance in wider national and global contexts. This is evidenced through the data we hold in relation to:

- visitor numbers and usage of our sites;
- the demographic profile of visitors;
- digital engagements;
- details of engagement and programmes with diverse community groups;
- specific learning programmes for formal learners, lifelong learners and communities;
- the diversity and scale of our exhibitions and public programming;
- evaluations, feedback and customer satisfaction rating of our programmes, events and exhibitions;
- membership;
- the extent of public access to our stores; and
- partnerships with academic and higher education institutions.

Beneficiaries include the people of Northern Ireland and people from outside the area who visit the museums, as well as online users of nationalmuseumsni.org

2.2 Structure, Governance & Management

As a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through the Department for Communities (DFC), National Museums NI has a public duty to meet the highest standards of corporate governance.

Under Article 10(2) of The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the organisation is required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis determined by DFC with the approval of the Department of Finance. The financial statements for National Museums NI are required to be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland.

Under Article 11 of The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Board is required to prepare an Annual Report for DfC and lay this before the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Annual Report and Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in Note 1 to the accounts, and complies with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), certain aspects of HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) in relation to the Annual Report and the disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance.

National Museums NI is governed by a Board of up to 15 Members who are appointed by the DfC Minister.

Appointment to the Board is by open competition with Members appointed for a term of up to five years. Members can additionally serve subsequent terms of up to a maximum of eight years subject to the approval of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI).

There were two committees of the Board during the year, as follows:

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- General Purposes and Finance Committee; and

Following their appointment, all Members attend public accountability training provided in respect of their responsibilities for corporate governance and accountability of the organisation.

Board of Trustees

During the year the following individuals served on the Board:

*Mr Miceal McCoy (Chairman)**
Miss Charlotte Jess (Vice Chair)
*Professor Garth Earls **
*Professor Karen Fleming**
*Mrs Hazel Francey**
*Mrs Daphne Harshaw**
*Dr Rosemary Kelly OBE**
*Dr Leon Litvack**
*Mr Alan McFarland**
*Dr George McIlroy**
*Mrs Catherine Molloy**
*Mrs Deirdre Devlin (nee Bryce) ***
Mr William Duddy
Dr Robert Whan
Mr William McMullan
Mr Gordon Milligan (Chairman) ***
Mr Keith Charlton ***
Mr Mark Walker ***
Mr Ryan Cornett ***
Dr Sally Montgomery OBE ***
Ms Therese Rafferty ***
Ms Fiona Ryan ***
Mr Peter Osborne ***

* Term completed on 30 April 2023

** Resigned on 30 September 2023

*** Appointed on 1 October 2023

Responsibility and delegated authority for the management of National Museums NI rests with the Executive Team, under the leadership of the Chief Executive, who is appointed by the Board of Trustees.

At the year end the members of the Executive Team comprised:

- Chief Executive and Accounting Officer: Kathryn Thomson
- Director of Collections: William Blair
- Chief Operating Officer: Colin Catney
- Director of Public Engagement: Aaron Ward

Reference and Administrative Details

Name

The charity is registered under the name National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland. The charity has adopted the operating name National Museums NI.

Charity Number

NIC103729

Principal Address

National Museums NI, Cultra, Holywood, Co Down, Northern Ireland, BT18 0EU.

Bankers

Danske Bank Limited
Donegal Square West
Belfast
BT1 6JS

External Auditors

Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1EU

Internal Auditors

Ernst & Young LLP
22 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7DT

Solicitors

Cleaver Fulton Rankin
50 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7FW

2.3 Performance Summary

Key Performance Indicators – Overview

The following section provides a headline overview of our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as set out in our 2023/24 business plan, and is followed by a narrative round up of achievements in the year under each theme.

Theme	KPI	Target 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Actual 2022/23
Audience Profile	First time and lapsed audiences	40% of total visitors	51%	53%
	Diversity measures	*C2DE 26% Disability 10% Minority Ethnic Group 4%	C2DE 29% Disability 6% Minority Ethnic Group 4%	C2DE 27% Disability 9% Minority Ethnic Group 3%
	Total engagements	1,200,000	962,614	1,194,601
	Tourism – out of state visitors	200,000	195,549	28% (of total visitors)
Visitor Experience	Maintain Tourism NI ratings	4*	4*	4*
	Net Promoter Score	> ALVA** Benchmark = +72	+78	+75 (on par with benchmark)
	Composite Visitor Engagement Score	> ALVA Benchmark = 9.01	9.20	9.07 (+0.07 above benchmark)
Depth of Engagement	Composite Engagement Score	> ALVA Benchmark = 8.62	8.82	8.71 (-0.01 below benchmark)
	Membership growth	+15%	+8.6%	21%
Collections	Records to Full Spectrum Standard	27%	24%	24%
	Specimens on collection database	78%	77%	77%
Environmental sustainability	Carbon emissions	1,804 tCO ₂ e	2,010 tCO ₂ e	1,872 tCO ₂ e
Volunteering	Volunteer hours	21,000 hours	21,011 hours	20,080
Learning	Quality of formal education experience	9.5/10 quality rating for Museum on the Move	9.62/10 quality rating for Museum on the Move	9.3/10
		9.0/10 quality rating for Onsite Programmes	9.62/10 quality rating for Onsite Programmes	<i>Not measured in 2022/23</i>
Income	Non Grant in Aid income	£3.4m	£4.0m	£3.7m
Staff Engagement	Staff Engagement score	73%	77.1%	74.7%

* C2DE is a National Readership Survey demographic class grading.

** Association of Leading Visitor Attractions

2.4 Performance Analysis

This annual Performance Report charts quarterly progress against our 2023/24 Business Plan.

The plan was developed by National Museums NI Senior Management, and then approved by the Board in March 2023.

As part of the Corporate Strategy, these KPI's were established as National Museums NI Management revised the metrics by which success would be measured in meeting the stated aims and objectives as laid out within our Corporate Strategy for 2021–2025.

National Museums NI have opted for KPI's that are instructive indicators of strategic thinking, sound management, ethical decision making and positive social impact.

We have set out below an evaluation of our performance during 2023/24 under nine main themes:

Engagement (Growth), Engagement (Quality), Engagement (Depth), Our Collections, Environmental Sustainability, Volunteering, Formal Education, Income and Staff Engagement.

Engagement (Growth)

Building on last year's performance, we continue to perform well against our target of first time and lapsed visitors and C2DE visitors, both of which are important indicators of audience growth and our ability to reach the widest possible audience.

All museums have experienced a significant year-on-year increase, except the Ulster Transport Museum which hosted the popular *Our Place In Space* trail in the 2022/23 which boosted numbers above average.

Ulster Museum comprised the majority with 489,643 visitors, which was an 11% increase on last year. Ulster Folk Museum recorded 91,354 visitors, a 9% increase on last year. Whereas there were 57,537 visitors to Ulster Transport Museum a 6% decrease as explained above.

Ulster American Folk Park welcomed 85,723 visitors, a 12% increase on the prior year.

Overall, it is an excellent visitor performance especially when considering the very wet weather conditions during the peak (summer) season.

We have generated 962,614 engagements in total this financial year through a wide range of activities. Of these engagements, 688,189 were visitors to our museums, as shown below in the breakdown of all engagements with our full range of services to the public. This wider view of engagements shows the extent of our museum service and the impact we create.

Method of Engagement	Total 2023/24
General Admissions to Events & Exhibitions	688,189
Collections Online	198,287
Schools Programme	48,600
Accessing Collections and Expertise	9,734
Volunteering or Participatory Programme	6,384
Attendance at Corporate Functions / Weddings	11,420
Total	962,614

Included within these admissions is a strong out-of-state tourism performance with 195,549 visits across our museums during the year (27% of visitors).

Engagement (Quality)

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is based on the likelihood of our visitors to recommend a visit to others and is widely used across various industries as a measure of customer experience. We benchmark our NPS performance against other museums and attractions throughout the UK using research undertaken by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA).

Our Net Promoter Score this year was 78 which is 6 points ahead of the ALVA benchmark. Our Composite Visitor Engagement Score, which measures various functional elements of our visitor experience (facilities, cleanliness, customer service, etc) was 9.20, which is also significantly above benchmark of 9.01.

We understand that the Tourism NI (TNI) rating scheme is under redevelopment by TNI with plans to roll out in late 2024.

Engagement (Depth)

The Composite Engagement Score is designed to measure depth of engagement and includes more emotional-and learning-based outcomes. Our score for the year on this measure was 8.82, which is above the ALVA benchmark, a considerable achievement.

Increasing membership is another indicator of our depth of engagement however it has been a challenging year in this regard in failing to meet our stated target of 15% growth. A membership database cleanse in Q1 rebased membership numbers to a lower number. By end of Q3, we were trending at a 14% growth year-on-year, but then a sharp fall off in the fourth quarter due to a lower level of programming and appetite for outdoor activities resulting in a full year result of 8.6% growth.

Our Collections

The KPI's for Records to Full Spectrum Standard and Specimens on a Collections Database KPI only recorded small incremental increases which keeps them at approximately 24%, and 77% respectively.

Our new Collection Management System (Collections Index+) went live in February 2023, therefore 2023/24 has been an important transitional year as the new system is operationalised and embedded. This has included data cleaning, data migration, staff training and system development. In Quarter 4, the Collections Information team was focused on completing the final phase of this multi-year capital project.

Whilst progress against our KPIs appears limited, a huge volume of work has underpinned this successful system upgrade. It is important to note that each percentage point in these indicators equates to 14,000 specimens.

In Quarter 4, the Collections Information Team also supported the decant of the fine art collection from the Picture Store at the Ulster Museum into temporary storage. This was necessitated by the work to upgrade a key section of the roof on the Ulster Museum.

A comprehensive collections audit of the folk textile collection in preparation for its move to the Ballycultra Store has continued. This is a slow and meticulous process, with Collections Information

staff working in tandem with curatorial. Whilst this has resulted in limit change to the KPI for Records to Full Spectrum Standard KPI figure, it has been invaluable in terms of the overall enhancement of information held on this internationally significant collection.

Other inventory, relocation and reconciliation projects have focused on Applied Art jewellery, Fine Art drawings and paintings, the Girona collection, and the Transport collection. The importation of new taxonomic data for natural sciences has been an important element of this programme of data improvement.

Environmental Sustainability

The emissions calculation for our carbon footprint (using 2022/23 data) has been completed and is regrettably 11.4% above the desired target. It is both higher than the 2021/22 emissions total of 1,872 tCO₂e and shows a slight increase on the 2018/19 baseline figure of 2,004 tCO₂e.

While the picture is complex, reasons for the increase do include the acquisition and full operationalisation of the Transport and Industrial Maritime Store (TIMS) building which added over 5% to the overall estate footprint, thereby not providing a like for like comparison to the previous years. We also had significant plant become operational in our other main Collections Store in the past year.

An alternative commonly used measurement tool for carbon emissions is kg CO₂e /m². as it is not subject to variations in estate size. Using this comparable metric shows a reduction in overall emissions from the baseline year, from 34.25kg CO₂e /m² in 2018-19 to 32.42 kg CO₂e /m² in 2022/23, a decrease of 5.36% over the period.

Volunteering

Over the course of 2023/24 we have continued to develop and enhance volunteer opportunities and the volunteer experience across our sites. These opportunities support skills development, health & wellbeing and engagement. They also support us in our service delivery with 21,000 hours equating to the contribution of approximately 12 full time people.

Volunteering activity in the early months of the year can sometimes be impacted by the harsher winter months, especially on our outdoor sites. However this quarter we benefited from new recruitment to the library as well as continued strong volunteer numbers in our Ulster Museum Discovery Centre and the Ulster Folk Museum Green Gym.

In January 2024 we piloted our family volunteering offer in partnership with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). Our ambition is to promote this to new audiences as well as extending the offer to existing visitors, as an accessible opportunity they can get involved in as part of their visit. We also involved volunteers for the first time as part of the NI Science festival at the Transport Museum.

Formal Education Programming

This has been a very successful year for our formal education service, with both KPI targets being comfortably exceeded.

These quality scores for our programmes are also significantly higher than in 2022/23, demonstrating how we continue to develop and improve our offer in response to feedback, including from our teachers' panels.

Recognition for our programmes is not just from formal education stakeholders but from our sector peers. Our *Museum on the Move* programme was shortlisted for a prestigious Museums & Heritage Award, in the ‘Learning Programme of the Year’ category, receiving a ‘Highly Commended’ award at special ceremony in London on 15 May 2024.

Income (Non Grant in Aid)

It was a positive commercial year for National Museums NI Non Grant in Aid, with £4.0m recorded between April 2023 and March 2024, exceeding the 12 month annual target of £2.6m.

Our Non Grant in Aid income is broadly comprised of revenue from (i) visitors and commercial customers (unrestricted income) and (ii) income from grant funded projects (restricted income).

See below reconciliation of the income KPI to the Statement of Financial Activity (SoFA).

Income Source	£m
Total reported income per SoFA	24.0
Less Grant in Aid (Capital & Revenue)	(18.5)
Less Restricted Capital Grants	(0.2)
Less Donated Gifts in Kind	(1.0)
Less Legal settlement receipts & Misc Income	<u>(0.3)</u>
Total Non Grant in Aid Income	<u>4.0</u>

(i) Income from Visitors & Commercial Customers (£2.8m actual vs £2.5m target)

This positive performance was achieved across each of the Self-Generated Income streams as per our highlights below.

Admissions, Events and Memberships (£1.4m actual vs £1.4m target)

- The Ulster Folk Museum welcomed over 91k visitors, while the Ulster Transport Museum welcomed over 57k visitors which together equates to pre-pandemic levels. The Ulster American Folk Park achieved almost 86k visitors which is about 94% of pre-pandemic levels. Overall, National Museums NI group welcomed 724,257 visitors in 2023/24 which was a 14% increase year-on-year. A contributing factor for admissions was the successful trial of the pay for entry Lavery Exhibition at the Ulster Museum.
- A cleansing of data at the start of year resulted in a drop of recorded members in Quarter 1 but has still seen 8.6% growth by year end reaching 1,197. An additional study commissioned by Audience Development to explore Value for Money has resulted in a re-visitation of the Corporate Aim of “re-imagining museum membership programmes as a means to supporting deeper relationships”. Whilst we explore these outcomes and await the digital infrastructure to support membership, we will continue to operate the current model. Membership will form part of the admissions and access strategy in FY2024/25.
- The appointment of the Travel Manager in Quarter 4 of the last financial year has enabled the development of a 5 Year Travel Trade Strategy. We have seen growth double that of 2022/23 with a total income of £128.8k versus an ambitious target of £124.3k. The Travel Trade Manager has attended 6 in person Business to Business (B2B) events since September, one of which

was representing National Museums NI at the World Travel Market in London, a first for the organisation.

- A new Travel Trade pilot event was successfully held with a Cruise Ship Event at Ulster Folk Museum, showcasing our traditional Crafts followed by a three course meal in the Parochial Hall. This was also the first time that our recently acquired Alcohol Licence had been activated for an event, with a pop up bar situated in the Parochial Hall. Useful marketing materials in the form of filming and photographs were taken during the evening so that this event format could be marketed to potential customers, for what would be a high margin commercial activity.

Retail (£0.9m actual vs £0.6m target)

- The ongoing linkage to the national collections range is proving successful, supported by regular range refreshment, making the retail relevancy stronger than ever.
- The retail ranging is carefully aligned to the Commercial Strategy Principles, with increased stock for sustainability products with ethical sourcing and environmental credential ranges.

Space Hire (£0.2m actual vs £0.2m target)

- This has been another strong performance that has been helped by the stabilisation of the Business Development Team staffing structure. There are approximately twice as many Corporate Events bookings compared to weddings, however, weddings have a much higher average income per booking. New seasonal rates have been introduced to drive occupancy during off season times as there an expected downturn in larger weddings across the hospitality sector in 2024/25.
- A total of 13 filming bookings have been accommodated across the National Museums NI Portfolio, however, these requests are ad hoc and difficult to predict within annual targets.

Catering (£0.2m actual vs £0.1m target)

- Now in the second year of our main catering contract, the volatility of the market and cost of living is still having an impact on the sector. We have been working closely with our Catering Partners to ensure there is closer alignment with our One Programme Plan and that the catering offering is elevated to match the site activation days. This has been working particularly well in support of the seasonal activation in addition to key events such as Bluegrass and the Cultra Hill Climb.
- The option to extend the term for the catering provider at the Ulster Folk Museum & Ulster Museum has been agreed and will secure the service until November 2025. A tender process to test the market at the Ulster American Folk Park will commence later in 2024 with an appointment due before January 2025.

Cash Donations & Gift Aid (£0.1m actual vs £0.1m target)

- Cashless donations were performing on a par with the previous year, however, physical cash donations continue to decline across all sites on account of the societal trends of people carrying less cash.
- The full pilot of the cashless donation terminals has come to an end and a successful tender process is now complete for the leasing of the cashless terminals. There has also been a rationalisation of units to eradicate those units that were not performing.

Picture Library (£0.03m actual vs £0.03m Target)

- Photographic print sales from our Picture Library totalled £30k for the year, achieving our annual target.

(ii) 3rd Party Revenue Grant Projects (£1.2m Actual vs Target £0.8m)

- Our revenue grant income was above target this year primarily due to the expansion of work carried out on the development phase of the (National Lottery Heritage Funded) Reawakening Project at the Ulster Folk Museum. There was a total of £0.6m claimed versus the original target of £0.1m. This expansion of the planned work has meant that RIBA stage 3 of the project has been completed with planning approval also now achieved.
- We also received £0.4m of grant revenues from our main recurring grant funded programme CeDAR (Centre for Environmental Data and Recording). The target for CeDAR was £0.7m at the start of the year, however with delays in recruiting and onboarding staff associated with the programme, this has meant that the amounts reclaimable from the grant funder have been less than target.
- Other smaller grant funded activities totalled c.£0.1m combined, and these were all favourable to budget.

Staff Engagement

- As part of our commitment to staff engagement and organisational development, we operated our 'Pulse Survey' twice in the year – in quarter 1 and quarter 3.
- The survey asks nine questions with three relating to Corporate matters (Corporate Strategy, Business Plan, views of the Organisation), three relating to Leadership and three relating to the Individual (personal motivation and the team). Set against a baseline composite staff engagement score of 67.3% in the previous year, we achieved a score of 73.1% in quarter 1, rising to 77.1% in quarter 3.
- Following the operation of the 'Pulse Survey' we ask teams to develop their own action plans to improve levels of engagement. We have seen a drop off in completion rates for the survey and will take steps to encourage future improved participation.

2.5 Annual Review

Welcome to our Annual Review where we provide a detailed account of the significant and wide-ranging work undertaken by National Museums NI for the financial year 2023/24.

As the organisation responsible for managing four diverse museums Ulster Museum, Ulster Folk Museum, Ulster Transport Museum and Ulster American Folk Park we are the custodians of the National Collection which includes an extraordinary 1.4 million objects from here and all across the globe, and which spans thousands of years.

Our vision is to celebrate our shared heritage by telling the stories of our past, challenging the present and shaping the future. Guided by our founding legislation, National Museums NI holds several key responsibilities related to Northern Ireland's rich heritage. Our aims include to build awareness, appreciation and understanding of the national collections of: art, history and science; the way of life and traditions of people; and the migration and settlement of people.

Our legislative duties include the care, preservation and growth of our collections; ensuring public access through insightful interpretation and engaging exhibitions and events; and ensuring opportunities for research and study.

In this review we will set out how we have fulfilled these responsibilities during the financial year ending on 31st March 2024. National Museums NI's Corporate Strategy 2021-25 outlines four key areas where we have committed to making progress:

- Championing inclusion, diversity and accessibility
- Creating more ways to get involved
- Extending the impact of our collections
- Building the museum infrastructure of the future

Throughout this report, we make reference to these four core commitments and how we have set our substantial accomplishments this year against them.

Developing the Collections

Throughout 2023/24 we have added new strength and depth to the national collection, ensuring it is representative of our people, our times, our environment and the challenges we face in society.

In April 2023, we marked the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and our collecting has captured this milestone moment, looking both backwards and forwards, to our troubled past and the continuing legacy of conflict today.

Through our 'Inclusive Global Histories' programme, to decolonise our museums, we are connecting with newcomer communities across Northern Ireland as well as source communities internationally and embedding their previously marginalised stories within the collection.

Across all our museums we are seeking to better represent the different facets of cultural identity and their expression here in Ulster, ensuring our audiences and partners feel that the collection speaks of, and to, them.

In Natural Sciences, the focus on fieldwork is strengthening our understanding of the environmental changes and challenges we face, as well as revealing species that had been unknown to science here.

Finally, our Art acquisitions further cement our role as the national art gallery for Northern Ireland, being local, national and international in scope and representing exceptional talent.

We are grateful to the donors who have generously gifted to us this year, and to our funders for their vital financial support – Department for Communities, Art Fund and National Parks & Wildlife Service.

Here are ten of our acquisition highlights from this year.

1. Two iconic sculptures commissioned from Elisabeth Frink (1930 –1993) in 1962. They were affixed to the façade of the Ulster Bank building that was then under construction in Shaftesbury Square, Belfast. The sculptures were unveiled on the opening of the building in 1964. In 2023, Ulster Bank ended its connection with the building and so decided to gift the sculptures to the national collection, with the aim of ensuring that the public can continue to have access to these internationally important works. Plans are now in development to display the sculptures at the Ulster Museum.
2. Leathers worn by Robert Dunlop (1960-2008), one of the most famous motorcycle racers from Northern Ireland. In 2022/23, we acquired one of Robert Dunlop's racing motorbikes and these leathers further help us to tell his story. Robert Dunlop's racing career saw him triumph in the North West 200 and the Isle of Man TT, be twice named Enkalon Motorcyclist of the Year, and awarded the Freedom of Ballymoney in 2007. He was tragically killed in a biking accident during the North West 200 in 2008.
3. A collage by artist Tony Bell in April 2023. The collage was created as the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement was marked. It is made from the cover and text of original copies of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement referendum booklet, including some Irish language copies. An impactful and emotive piece of artwork, it shows reactions to the 25th anniversary of the Agreement and represents the artist's hopes for the future.
4. A contemporary poster by Belfast artist Niall Conlon in response to posters that some London boarding houses put up in the 1950s stating 'No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs'. The artist feels it important to acknowledge the progress that has been made in promoting inclusion and diversity since then. The poster is part of our collecting for our 'Inclusive Global Histories' programme, and helps explore themes of sectarianism and racism in the UK and the ongoing development of decolonisation, inclusion and diversity initiatives.
5. *Original Sin - Last Supper (2023), oil on canvas diptych, Jennifer Trouton.*
These paintings by Jennifer Trouton (b. 1971), a Northern Irish artist whose practice incorporates paint, embroidery, wallpaper and textiles. Through her charting of spaces, objects and experiences, Trouton creates contemporary coded dramas that subtly express ideas around gender, class and identity within Irish history. *Original Sin* and *Last Supper* are the culmination of eight years' research and development of work that looks at women impacted by the Church and State's attempts to suppress reproductive rights on the island of Ireland.
6. *Untitled #15 (2023), ash wood and copper wire sculpture, Heechan Kim.*
Heechan Kim was born in 1982 in Seoul, South Korea and received a BFA in metal craft from Seoul National University in 2006. Kim's works explore the human desire that wants to keep one's individuality and, at the same time, wish to be in a community or group. His methodology, which is mainly stitching thin strips with metal wire, represents his belief that everyone is connected, bounded and destined to live together against their will. Kim was awarded the Artist of the Collect 2024 Fair for this piece.

7. A small painted plaster statue of St. Patrick by John Luke. John Luke (1906-1975) was a Belfast-born artist who studied at the Belfast School of Art and the Slade School of Fine Art, London. His work is well represented in the Ulster Museum collection, but this is his first artwork to enter the Ulster Folk Museum collection. It speaks to themes of religious and cultural identity and their expression within communities.
8. A contemporary blouse made from an early 1900s tablecloth, similar to those found in the Ulster Folk Museum collection. Rosina Hoyland (Spilt Milk) is one of a number of textile designers who have established businesses in the last few years specialising in the reworking or upcycling of mid-20th century household linens into fashion items. An upcycled piece such as this tells a story of the past, whilst also exhibiting an awareness of present day issues around sustainability and recycling.
9. Collecting in Natural Sciences is predominantly through fieldwork, such as the targeted survey of freshwater-associated taxa in The Burren that took place in August 2023. Thanks to funding from the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), National Museums NI worked with partners Buglife, staff from the NPWS and several other independent experts to survey water-related habitats and collect, identify and catalogue specimens as voucher material for the national collection.
10. This year we had a rare opportunity to acquire material from one of the buildings we have represented on-site at the Ulster American Folk Park. W.G. O'Doherty's, a grocery and public house, has its shopfront on Ulster Street. The etched glass from W.G. O'Doherty's would have formed part of the door on the way into the public house. It dates from around 1900. Establishing his business in 1871, on Bishop Street in Derry/Londonderry, W.G. O'Doherty imported food from all over the world, including tea, sugar, dried fruit and spices for the locals to enjoy. Some of the family involved in the business emigrated to North America in the early 20th century.

A New Disposal Process

Collections review, rationalisation and disposal are part of responsible collections management within museums. Disposal helps us to ensure that our collections are more sustainable in the long term and for public benefit, and enables us to continue to fulfil our statutory obligations to collect and fully record and represent the world around us.

In June 2023, the Museums Association launched new guidance for the sector on the ethical, transfer, reuse and disposal of collections. This was developed through a consultative process and National Museums NI was part of the discussions. In response to this guidance, we have developed our own new disposal process, which includes a risk-based approach to assessing and approving disposals. This new process was approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2024.

Where possible, museums will always seek disposal through transfer to another organisation in the public domain. An excellent example of this is the work we have been doing with Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre. Previous conversations with Hydebank Wood, an educational centre for young male offenders aged 17-24 and a women's prison, had made us aware of their training programmes and their interest in borrowing vehicles to use for a motor vehicle engineering course. Loans had not been possible but disposal offered a new opportunity. To date four vehicles have been transferred to Hydebank Wood and there are plans for further vehicles, identified for disposal, to be transferred for inmates to work on, enabling them to develop new skills and achieving new qualifications in the process.

Collections Care and Access

We continued to enhance our collections access through investments in the stores, in the Collections Services team and developing online access.

The Collections Online web portal remains a vital resource for public access to the collections, with over 40,000 records now available online. New objects are regularly added, broadening the scope and accessibility of our collections.

This year we made further investment in our collections storage infrastructure including at the Transport and Industry Museum Store, facilitating the relocation of the transport and maritime collection.

During the European Heritage Open Weekend, both the Transport and Industry Museum Store and the Ulster Folk Museum Store were opened with guided tours provided for the public. A further open day event at the Transport and Industry Museum Store in September provided audiences with additional access and engagement with the collections.

Efforts to catalogue the library collection continue, providing increased access for students and researchers. The Library and Archives team have facilitated access for dozens of students and researchers, and collaborated with volunteers to assist in the cataloguing process. With funding from the National Archives, a one-year contract was secured for an archivist to catalogue the Languages of Ulster collection, a project that concluded in March 2024.

The Library and Archives team also successfully digitised the Ulster Folk Life magazine collection and it will soon be available online through the Collections Online portal.

Significant strides were made in the redevelopment of the Ulster Museum Collections Store, as well as the Picture Store at the museum. On completion, these works will be transformational in terms of collections access, research, exhibitions and programming at Ulster Museum.

We are committed to continually improving our collections care and management practices as well as developing bigger and better collections storage facilities. Through dedicated investment in collections care, collections management and conservation, National Museums NI safeguards the national collection for future generations. It enables us to connect our diverse audiences and stakeholders more intimately to the national collection, supporting new kinds of exploration and discussion.

New Exhibitions

At National Museums NI we want to use our collections to encourage curiosity, build knowledge and stimulate discussion. Our commitment to enriching cultural engagement was reflected in an array of vibrant exhibitions presented this year. Working alongside partners and with some exciting loans, these exhibitions also brought our rich collection to the fore - offering fresh perspectives and inspiring imaginations.

Principled and Revolutionary: Northern Ireland's Peace Women

Working with Belfast Photo Festival, this exhibition was part of our programme to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. Showcasing the work of artist Hannah Starkey, it consisted of a series of portraits of prominent women who have helped bring peace to Northern Ireland.

A Century of Style: Fashion Photography from the National Portrait Gallery

This exhibition brought together some of the most famous fashion photographers and models (sitters) to showcase the art of fashion photography and its role in defining style, imagery and contemporary culture. The exhibition was created in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery.

Colin Middleton: Among this Peace and Noise

Colin Middleton was born in Belfast in 1910. He came to be regarded as one of the leading Irish painters of his generation. The exhibition examined the artist's relationship with Belfast and his development through paintings and drawings spanning six decades. Works on display were drawn from private lenders as well as our own collection of Middleton's work.

Royal Ulster Academy Annual Exhibition

The RUA's annual exhibition is one of the most eagerly anticipated exhibitions in the Northern Irish cultural calendar, providing a unique platform for acclaimed artists and emerging talent to showcase their artwork in the Ulster Museum.

Kelpra: Artists and Printmakers

The Kelpra print studio was where Richard Hamilton, Bridget Riley, Eduardo Paolozzi and Elisabeth Frink had their prints produced. This exhibition, with Seacourt Print Workshop, allowed visitors to explore the art of print-making and the collaboration between artist and printmaker.

Lavery on Location

The exhibition celebrated Sir John Lavery's connection to his birthplace of Belfast, offering our visitors new insights and a fresh perspective on his work by bringing together an array of his most notable paintings. This major exhibition of Lavery's work was the result of a partnership with the National Gallery of Ireland and National Galleries Scotland.

Film as Art: Brian Desmond Hurst, Film Director Exhibition

This exhibition celebrated the life and work of a man who is often hailed as one of Northern Ireland's best film directors - Brian Desmond Hurst. His filmmaking portfolio was extensive and well-respected internationally, and he was perhaps best known for the 1951 'A Christmas Carol' adaptation of Scrooge. This exhibition presented film posters, invitations, lobby cards, original press clippings from Hurst's own scrapbooks, film footage and photographs - all of which were on loan from the estate of Brian Desmond Hurst and other friends.

North South 25

This exhibition was part of the wider programme to mark 25 years since the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The Agreement has three parts or 'strands'. Each of the strands created new institutions and relationships between people and governments here. This exhibition celebrated the work of eight different bodies and their North/South cooperation across the island of Ireland.

The Troubles and Beyond

We have an important and unique role to play in offering shared and safe spaces that support transformative, as well as reflective, experiences of our contested history through multiple perspectives and voices being curated together. In partnership with community representatives,

support groups, academia and others, we are using our collections to encourage discussion and debate, challenging perceptions, building greater empathy and understanding, and progressing peace and reconciliation.

Since opening *The Troubles and Beyond* exhibition at the Ulster Museum, we have made substantial progress with the dynamic and ongoing process of curating conflict. From the outset, our aim has been to create a gallery at the Ulster Museum that is dynamic and that offers opportunities for people to respond and contribute their own stories. One such story is that of Marie Therese Rogers-Moloney. When she was two years old she was placed in Nazareth House Children's Home in Belfast, investigated as part of the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry. She came forward with her story, recorded an oral history interview with us and donated a photograph and a copy of her book 'For the Sins of My Mother', which are now displayed in *The Troubles and Beyond* exhibition.

Working with individuals and community groups, our approach has been an inclusive one, to ensure people have direct involvement in developing our collection and its subsequent interpretation. This year the exhibition has continued to evolve in response to feedback and the development of our collection and collaborative relationships.

Over the last number of years we have developed important partnerships and worked in collaboration with many individuals and groups to progress peace and reconciliation and to allow for better navigation of the conflict legacy landscape in Northern Ireland. The Conflict and Legacy Interpretive Network was established through collaboration between National Museums NI, the Bloody Sunday Trust/Museum of Free Derry and Healing Through Remembering. This network aims to connect museums and heritage organisations actively engaged in conflict and legacy issues, highlighting their important role in promoting dialogue and building mutual understanding of ongoing legacy and reconciliation issues.

The sensitive nature of Troubles related work means it is laden with difficulties and challenges. We continue to work in partnership with organisations like WAVE Trauma Centre, Northern Ireland's largest cross community victims' support group. We commissioned WAVE to provide training in relation to how trauma affects us; dealing with vicarious trauma; how to manage confrontation/difficult conversations and how to safeguard colleagues and participants.

As a platform for marginalised voices, oral histories help to diversify and enrich the narratives presented at the Ulster Museum. They also facilitate a deeper understanding of complex historical events and the impact of these events on individuals and communities. The Ulster Workers' Council strike of 1974 represented a significant turning point in the history of The Troubles, marking a culmination of the early 1970s descent into conflict. 'Voices of 74' is a project which further expands our oral history collection at the Ulster Museum. This project, in partnership with Nottingham Trent University, is built around oral testimonies from a broad cross-section of perspectives that will seek to develop work already carried out by National Museums NI and our academic partners to date. This work is particularly significant in relation to the role of oral history in discussions around the broader question of the legacy of the past.

The Education team at the Ulster Museum has developed a new workshop for schools connected to our *The Troubles and Beyond* exhibition. Working in collaboration with teachers from Northern Ireland we explored new and better ways of navigating the teaching of this complex topic. This new workshop is a unique, active learning experience designed to enhance KS3 and KS4 pupils' understanding of the background, contested perspectives and impact of The Troubles in Northern Ireland.

National Museums NI has long held a responsibility to play a part in place making, community relations and building a shared society. At the Ulster Museum, *The Troubles and Beyond* project continues to be the primary vehicle for our work in this area – not solely through the gallery itself, but

also through an extended programme of engagement including new exhibitions, schools engagement, community engagement and digital content.

Inclusive Global Histories

Decolonisation can be a potentially confusing and divisive term in today's world. We have chosen to frame our work in this area as 'Inclusive Global Histories', which brings greater clarity and positive intent. Our Inclusive Global Histories approach is informed by, and respectful to, source and marginalised communities who are prioritising progress and healing. It does not ignore the colonial violence and injustices of the past, but sets out how decolonisation activity can and should be a positive force for encouraging mutual respect and understanding, tackling racism and promoting community pride.

At the Ulster Museum, the *Inclusive Global Histories* exhibition positions the need to better understand the complex, global stories of thousands of items within the World Cultures collection - how and why they came to be here, how they may be shared with audiences, and what options there might be for their future.

Our programme of Inclusive Global Histories events this year enabled people to explore cultures different to their own, developing mutual respect and understanding and also, importantly, empathy. We have developed an Inclusive Global Histories trail which includes objects, from the permanent galleries in the Ulster Museum, such as our Chinese ceramic collection on display in the George and Angela Moore Applied Art Gallery, our display of migratory birds in the Natural Sciences gallery and the Cook Atlas on display in our Modern History gallery.

An important part of our Inclusive Global Histories work this year was the culmination of the Global Voices, Local Choices project. National Museums NI, in partnership with the African and Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Museums Council, worked together on this ground-breaking decolonisation project, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund.

One of the aims of the Global Voices, Local Choices project was to provide people, from all communities and backgrounds, a fair opportunity to make choices relating to Ulster Museum's World Cultures collection, and how the objects within it might be interpreted in museum spaces in the future. The project was designed to engage marginalised communities.

"It's been wonderful to witness how this project has raised awareness and understanding of the World Cultures collection and amplified the voices of people from various ethnic backgrounds. Our museums are for everyone, so this commitment to community engagement is crucial. By bringing diverse cultures and perspectives into Northern Ireland's local and national museums, our hope is that marginalised global experiences are represented as we consider and develop our decolonisation approach."

Agrippa Njanina, Assistant Curator and former Project Engagement Officer for Global Voices, Local Choices

The project has equipped us with a deeper understanding of the collection, enabling us to present more nuanced and informed representations. The partners have also developed a united and informed approach to decolonisation, through the project itself and through dialogue and learning from one another.

The reflections of the participants, whether through art and crafts, music and dance, poetry or creative writing, were displayed and interpreted in the museums to encourage better public understanding and celebration of diversity in Northern Ireland.

“We all have tags (labels), then we live our lives by them. During this project it was about coming together as a community, we came together and we put our tags aside. This project was something we could do together. It was important to come into a museum to do that. In the museum we don’t feel different, we feel part of the community.”

A participant who took part in the Global Voices, Local Choices project

The success of the Global Voices, Local Choices project was celebrated at an event in Parliament Buildings at Stormont in November 2023.

The legacy of the Global Voices, Local Choices project will be significant to our work long into the future. By increasing representation and facilitating respect, tolerance and understanding, we are strengthening the considerable role National Museums NI plays in promoting diversity and inclusivity.

“Diversity enhances every aspect of our lives. It makes us more creative, more accepting, more inquisitive. I commend the work of Northern Ireland’s local and national museums and partners for bringing diverse perspectives to the fore. This transformative decolonisation project doesn’t just raise awareness and understanding of different perspectives, it inspires us all to be more inclusive.”

Kate Nicholl MLA, speaking at the event in Parliament Buildings at Stormont

Ballintaggart Court Tomb

In September, we officially opened the newly reconstructed Ballintaggart Court Tomb at the Ulster Folk Museum. The Ballintaggart Tomb first entered National Museums NI’s collection more than 50 years ago when the ancient site was threatened by a quarry expansion. The site was excavated by Laurence Flanagan, then Keeper of Antiquities at Ulster Museum. He was able to save the tomb’s stones and reconstruct it outside Ulster Museum. When Ulster Museum was renovated in 2006 the stones were brought to storage at Ulster Folk Museum, and there they stayed until earlier this year when the restoration project began.

The tomb’s journey to Ulster Folk Museum began with the assistance of researchers from the Centre for Community Archaeology at Queen’s University Belfast, who created models of each of the stones of the court tomb. These models were then 3D scanned, which provided a full 360-degree examination of each of the stones allowing them to be accurately situated and installed on-site.

Following this reconstruction process, the tomb now stands prominently at the Ulster Folk Museum. The Ballintaggart Tomb provides an important new layer of ‘pre-history’ at the museum and illustrates how the museum can connect Ulster’s unique heritage spanning thousands of years to the present day.

“It’s important that people can understand the rich local history of County Armagh through the Ballintaggart Court Tomb, or ‘Giant’s Grave’ as it is known locally. We’re proud to be involved in seeing it reconstructed at the Ulster Folk Museum where people will be able to enjoy it for generations to come.”

Joe Garvey, Chairman of the Richmount Rural Community Association, Portadown

Reawakening the Ulster Folk Museum

This year we made significant progress at the Ulster Folk Museum through the 'Reawakening' project, which has begun to unlock new potential for the museum as a dynamic heritage and environment resource. The term 'resource' carries significance in how we want to shape the future of the museum and how people engage with it. For us, a resource is a place where individuals can tap into new knowledge, gain insights and find relevance pertinent to their lives and interests.

In December Ards & North Down Borough Council Planning Committee gave full approval to the planning application and unanimous support for the redevelopment of the Ulster Folk Museum. This was testament to the clear rationale for the project, the high quality of design and the wider economic and societal outcomes it seeks to achieve.

We continue to improve the visitor experience at the Folk Museum. In June we were able to serve our very first drink to visitors in McCusker's Pub, a replica exhibit building at the museum, which is now a fully licensed premises.

We have built support with key stakeholders and have strengthened our Reawakening engagement programmes including education, volunteering, events and digital content. Epitomising all of the progress, we successfully delivered an inaugural 'Making Festival' at Ulster Folk Museum which took place over the weekend of 19 and 20 August. The two-day event celebrated traditional crafts and supported the continued revival of our most cherished heritage skills.

Planned in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board NI, the event included exciting and informative demonstrations from many traditional craft makers in woodturning, thatching, musical instrument making and stone masonry, to name a few. We had an array of talented makers sharing their crafts in signwriting, stained glass and straw rope making; as well as our own fantastic team of in-house craft demonstrators who work in blacksmithing, willow, textiles, wood and much more. The Festival also hosted a craft fair in collaboration with Craft NI, coinciding with August Craft Month.

The Making Festival gave us an opportunity to showcase our unique building traditions by informing visitors of our built heritage construction and conservation work. The 'Reawakening the Ulster Folk Museum' project offers a real opportunity to bring the care and conservation of our buildings and collections to the fore to allow us to better present and interpret the importance and methods around the maintenance and conservation of our historic buildings.

Over 2,200 people attended the Making Festival with the programming attracting a broad audience mix. The festival was a wonderful example of how Ulster Folk Museum can forge fresh and innovative ways to engage people with our heritage.

Championing Sustainability

At National Museums NI we believe it is incumbent on us to lead by example, promoting sustainable practices and encouraging visitors and stakeholders to join us in safeguarding the environment for future generations. We are custodians, educators, enablers. By adopting sustainable practices ourselves, by offering opportunities for others to get closer to nature, by informing people and encouraging awareness about environmental issues we are offering solutions, thereby fostering a culture of sustainability.

The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 have recently introduced new requirements for climate change reporting duties for specified public bodies. National Museums NI will continue to show leadership by playing our role in delivering and supporting climate action in Northern Ireland.

Our sustainability practices are helping us reduce operational costs and resource consumption, improving our long-term viability in the context of the climate and biodiversity emergency.

We have committed to reduce our Scope 1 (direct) and Scope 2 (indirect) emissions by 50% towards net zero by 2030. As signatories to 'Pledge to Net Zero' we have published our calculated carbon emissions on our website (www.nationalmuseumsni.org/sustainability).

Carbon emissions within National Museums NI have remained relatively stable for Scope 1 and 2 at 2,010 t CO₂e in 2023/24 against a target of 1,804 t CO₂e. Although our carbon intensity has reduced from 34.25kg/m² in 2018/19 (when we undertook a baseline audit) to 32.42kg/m², we have had an increase of 3,500m² in our estate.

During spring and summer 2023, we implemented the 'No Mow May' and 'Let it Bloom June' initiatives at Ulster Folk Museum and Ulster Transport Museum, by not cutting nearly eight hectares of meadow, as part of our commitment to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

In December 2023 we established our Environmental Sustainability Working Group with a team drawn from across different areas of our organisation. This group will continue to drive forward our environmental sustainability action plan, encouraging the exchange of ideas and making progress on sustainability issues throughout our museum estate.

We are building partnerships with like-minded organisations to support our environmental sustainability and biodiversity efforts. We have been working with The Conservation Volunteers to revive previously dormant green spaces across our museum sites, inviting volunteers and visitors to actively participate in initiatives like native tree planting, creating willow walkways and learning about sustainable practice.

We have been also working with the Woodland Trust to activate and deliver a woodland restoration management plan at Ulster Folk Museum and Ulster Transport Museum. This year some of this work entailed identifying specific conservation threats and determining ecological priorities including the removal and control of damaging invasive species.

This work will also help to clear the way for the Woodland Walkway entrance to the Ulster Folk Museum, planned as part of 'Reawakening the Ulster Folk Museum'. We have been working with Hedgerows Ireland and other conservation organisations to research the history of hedgerows in Ireland and also obtain any details that can help us to authentically recreate hedgerows on-site.

As part of our commitment to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, within the last year, nature sensitive management techniques have been trialled on meadows and hedgerows. These are vitally important habitats for our pollinators and many other species, providing food, shelter and refuge.

As a result of our work to improve sustainability standards across our estate we have continued to build on our accreditations. This year, Ulster Museum and Ulster Folk Museum have both achieved a Bronze Award in the Green Tourism programme which recognises the commitment of tourism businesses which are actively working to become more sustainable. National Museums NI also achieved a Silver Award in the Business in the Community NI 2023 Environmental Benchmark Awards.

We care for a vast natural science collection. By using this collection, our museum landscapes and using heritage crafts we are raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity and sustainability.

Working in collaboration with other organisations, institutions and partners, our natural sciences curators continue with vital fieldwork. Some of this work is leading to important new discoveries, new additions to the collection and contributing to new species records for Ireland. One such

example is work completed during the year following a bioblitz in The Burren in Co. Clare which took place in August 2023. This work has provided many new records for Burren, bringing important new material to the natural science collections and has contributed new species records for Ireland. It shows that undiscovered species can still be found.

Education

Engaging people of all ages through learning has always been one of the cornerstones of National Museums NI's mission. It underscores the pivotal role of education and learning to inspire and engage diverse audiences. Our focus on the schools audience highlights the transformative power of museums as dynamic spaces for discovery and enrichment. By integrating curriculum-based programmes with tailored experiences and innovative outreach initiatives, we provide students of all ages with unique, hands-on learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom.

The Education team had a remarkable 2023/24 year, demonstrating fantastic engagement and achieving new heights in the quality of our educational programmes. We had 48,600 engagements in total for the year for our schools programme. We achieved our highest ever quality rating from teachers for both our blended learning programme 'Museum on the Move' and the on-site education programmes at each of our museums.

"They loved getting hands on experience with the artefacts - an experience we can't offer in school."

"It was perfect! We had the perfect amount of guided talk and workshop slots with free time to explore. Staff were friendly and so welcoming to us all. They were so complimentary about our children and their knowledge of the topic which made the children enjoy it even more."

Feedback from teachers

Our Discovery Centre team, based at the Ulster Museum, delivered the very popular programme of 'Discover More' learning sessions for schools whilst also delivering a daily programme of interactive, family-focused activity in our Art, History and Nature centres.

"The Discovery Centre was a great space to explore... the children were able to ask questions, which they loved. They were so excited by the fact that they could stroke the stuffed animals. The whole trip was a huge success!"

Feedback from a teacher

This year we were delighted to announce a new multi-year partnership with Liberty IT and the Nerve Centre to support STEAM learning for young people across Northern Ireland. The STEAM Studio at Ulster Museum is an initiative designed to ignite young minds and cultivate their technological acumen. It is an exciting collaborative workspace where schoolchildren are upskilled in coding that will enable them to design and create their own arcade game inspired by the rich tapestry of the museum's applied art collection.

Another highlight of the year was Explore: Urban Nature, a partnership project with the Natural History Museum, which continued to engage local schools for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at the Ulster Folk Museum. The aim of this project is not only to provide these students with new opportunities to engage with the nature around them, but to better inform the development of our future education programme at the museum.

Our approach to the project saw a combination of outreach visits to the participating schools, and on-site visits by the classes to the museum. Each school then designed and planted their own nature plot, increasing the biodiversity of the museum site. Throughout the project teachers also had opportunities to improve their professional development by attending training sessions at the museum to discover ways to take science learning outdoors.

In September we were thrilled that Ulster Folk Museum was awarded a prestigious Sandford Award for Heritage Education for the first time. The Sandford Awards focus on formal, curriculum-aligned, heritage learning programmes that take place in an historical setting or natural environment and use the history and collections or natural resources to engage, inform and inspire visitors.

“The Education Programme at the Ulster Folk Museum, Cultra, rises to the challenge of immersing school pupils in the rich history of early 20th century Ulster. Its hands-on, engaging, educational activities facilitate effective learning and assist children’s understanding of what life was like for previous generations in Ulster. There is also attention to detail in the properties, the publications and within the learning activities that warrants credit. The Education Programme at the Ulster Folk Museum, therefore, is fully deserving of a Sandford Award.”

Lead Assessor, The Sandford Award for Heritage Education 2023

Volunteering

As part of our current Corporate Strategy, we made commitments to champion inclusion, diversity and accessibility and also to create more ways to get involved with our museum service. The development of volunteering has been one of the key enablers to achieving significant progress against both these commitments. By fostering meaningful engagements and creating a supportive environment we are empowering volunteers to make a positive difference in our museums whilst providing them with a real sense of connectedness and wellbeing. In a recent survey, 95% of our volunteers said their experiences with us have had a positive impact on their wellbeing.

“I can confidently say the experience built my skills. The project itself was a great opportunity to learn more about the art collection at the museum as well as visitors' perceptions. Overall, a very enjoyable and worthwhile experience!”

Volunteer at the Ulster Museum

Nine new Volunteer Champions have been recruited across our organisation. The role of a Volunteer Champion is to help their department colleagues to develop new volunteer roles and opportunities. Volunteer Champions are a welcoming point of contact and are invited to feedback and contribute to volunteer resources.

We have grown our volunteering opportunities across all our sites, enabling us to invite communities to play a meaningful role in shaping what we do. This year over 200 people have contributed more than 21,000 hours to our museums through a myriad of diverse ways including cataloguing collections, research, engaging visitors, assisting with events and much, much more.

“This was an amazing experience for me! I really enjoyed helping out families during the Halloween event, I found it to be a great confidence builder. I definitely recommend volunteering at the Ulster Folk Museum.”

Volunteer

By unlocking new understanding of the Ulster Folk Museum's potential as a rich heritage and environmental resource, we have been able to expand volunteering opportunities and deepen partnerships with a wider range of stakeholders. During the development phase of the Reawakening project, volunteers have supported our living, making, growing experiences at Ulster Folk Museum. Supported by our staff, volunteers have been involved in growing heritage fruit and vegetables in our cottage gardens, supporting seasonal events, getting hands-on experience of heritage farming, dying and spinning our sheep's wool and sharing this craft with our visitors.

We continue to work in partnership with The Conservation Volunteers, activating our green spaces through initiatives such as the 'TCV Green Gym at the Folk Museum', bringing our heritage gardens back to life as well as tree planting opportunities.

At the Ulster Folk Museum in January, we launched our Saturday volunteering offer with The Conservation Volunteers, which resulted in different groups, individuals and families creating a willow walkway and a folklore tree trail for our visitors to enjoy.

Bogs are an integral part of this island's natural landscape and we are fortunate to have native bog land at the Ulster American Folk Park. As a whole ecosystem for wildlife and plant life, this is an important resource for biodiversity. This year we extended our partnership with The Conservation Volunteers to the Ulster American Folk Park where we hosted three volunteering action days, carrying out maintenance on our precious bog.

As part of our commitment to inclusion and accessibility we launched our Access Pledge during the year. This new initiative sees us provide supported placements within National Museums NI, where we work with an access partner, to facilitate short term placements for individuals who may require some additional support. We have facilitated a number of these placements to date with some of the participants going on to become regular volunteers.

Volunteer Scott is a great example. Scott initially carried out a six week placement with our Education team at Ulster Folk Museum carrying out research, as well as supporting the family crafts on offer over the summer months as part of the Reawakening project. We are delighted that Scott is now a regular volunteer in the Discovery Centres, as well as carrying out some observation studies at Ulster Museum.

Scott says: "Being part of the museums has been a long-time dream for me. The opportunity to do different things with different departments has taught me so much. Everyone has been so accommodating and welcoming. Starting from my time at Ulster Folk Museum for a 6 week placement, I've been able to make connections and contacts to be able to put my skills to their fullest potential at Ulster Museum. I look forward to a great future volunteering with Ulster Museum and the staff at National Museums NI."

Thank you message

We extend our gratitude to our funding partners, with special recognition to our principal supporter, the Department for Communities. We are also deeply appreciative of the tremendous support from all our stakeholders and partners, board members, our staff, our members, our volunteers and, most importantly, to everyone who has walked through our doors or engaged with us this year – thank you.

2.6 Financial Review

Financial Objective

National Museums NI's financial objective is to achieve a sustainable financial position at year end.

Going Concern

The Board is satisfied that the organisation is a going concern on the basis that it has a reasonable expectation that it will continue in operation for the foreseeable future. The financial statements are therefore prepared on a going concern basis.

Financial Results

In the financial year to 31 March 2024, National Museums NI reported net expenditure of £1.1m (2022/23: reported net expenditure £0.6m).

The total income for the year was £24.0m, an increase of £0.8m from 2022/23 (£23.2m). This includes £2.1m of capital funding.

Total expenditure was £25.1m compared to £23.8m in the prior year.

Depreciation and amortisation of £4.3m was charged in the 2023/24 year (2022/23: £3.8m), an increase resulting from an increased asset base.

The organisation retains significant reliance on Grant in Aid for its principal source of funding, largely from recurrent grants. In 2023/24, the Department for Communities provided 77% of the total income through allocated recurrent and capital grants (2022/23: 83%).

Reserves

National Museums NI has accumulated reserves of £104.9m (2022/23: £104.6m). The policy on reserves is included in Note 1, Accounting Policies, to the accounts. Restricted reserves total £24.0m (2022/23: £22.5m) and unrestricted reserves total £30.8m (2022/23 Restated: £33.3m). Revaluation reserves totalling £50.1m (2022/23 Restated: £48.9m) have accumulated through revaluations on land and buildings.

Within unrestricted reserves, National Museums NI has two designated funds, the Board reserve and the Board Capital reserve with funds totalling £1.0m at 31 March 2024 (2022/23: £0.7m). The funds have been designated for purposes that are for the public benefit and related to either the advancement of education, the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science or a combination of both. The reserves total at 31 March 2024 after taking out designated and restricted reserves was £79.9m (2022/23: £81.5m). The organisation had cash balances totalling £3.0m at the year end (2022/23: £3.6m).

Liquidity & Credit Risk

In 2023/24, £18.45m (77%) of National Museums NI gross income derived from funding received from the Department for Communities (2022/23: 83%).

The remaining non-Departmental operating expenditure was financed from self-generated income, which tends to be more seasonal in nature compared to Grant in Aid. National Museums NI is therefore exposed to some liquidity risk.

National Museums NI has credit policies and procedures in place and currently do not extend material credit facilities. National Museums NI is not therefore exposed to any material credit risk.

Payment Performance

The Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, which came into force on 1 November 1998, requires organisations, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, to make payments to suppliers within 30 days of either the provision of goods and services or the date on which the invoice was received. The target set by the Treasury for payment to suppliers within 30 days is 95%.

During the accounting period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, National Museums NI paid 96% of its invoices within 30 days (2022/23: 100%). The organisation incurred no interest charges in respect of late payment for this period.

The Northern Ireland Executive is committed to paying suppliers as quickly as possible, within 10 working days. During the accounting period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, National Museums NI paid 77% of its invoices within 10 days (92% in 2022/23).

The decline in prompt payment performance is on account of the revision and enhancement of procedures following the implementation of a new Finance System, with Accounts Payable adopting a stricter approach to documentation and billing references, to ensure best practice is embedded from the outset, and in support of longer term efficiency for the Accounts Payable function.

Land and Buildings

Land and buildings were subject to a full valuation by Land and Property Services (LPS) on 31 March 2024.

Included in land and buildings is a cleared site of approximately 0.25 acres located at Landseer Street, Belfast with a market value of £550,000 following an open market process which commenced in September 2023, concluding with a sale which completed in July 2024.

National Museums NI's estate as at 31 March 2024 consists of land and buildings valued at £75.5m (2022/23: £75.8m).

Financial

Net assets at 31 March 2024 were £104.9m (2022/23: £104.6m).

2.7 Plans for Future Periods

National Museums NI's current Corporate Strategy covers the period 2021-25.

There are a number of related contexts for the development of this strategy; the UN Sustainable Development Goals; the NI Government 'New Decade New Approach' document; the draft Programme for Government; and an understanding of the changes in society and the role of Museums into the future. At its heart is National Museums NI's core purpose 'Here for Good' and associated Vision, Mission and Values.

The Corporate Strategy continues to build on the foundations laid by the previous strategy with regards to securing relevance and sustainability in the future. It is designed to reshape our thinking and set a broader and more ambitious future for the organisation than ever before.

Our current Corporate Strategy is built around four strategic commitments:

1. We will champion inclusion, diversity & accessibility
2. We will create more ways to get involved
3. We will extend the impact of our collections
4. We will build the museum infrastructure of the future

The next Corporate Strategy (2025-30) is currently in development and will be launched in April 2025.



G Milligan
Chairman of the Board of Trustees
Date: 5 November 2024



K Thomson
Chief Executive
Date: 5 November 2024

3 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

The purpose of the accountability section of the annual report is to meet key accountability requirements to the Assembly. The requirements of the accountability report are based on the matters required to be dealt with in a Directors' Report, as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and Schedule 7 of SI 2008 No 410 and in a Remuneration Report, as set out in Chapter 6 of the Companies Act 2006 and SI 2013 No. 1981. The requirements of the Companies Act are adapted for the public sector.

3.1 Remuneration and Staff Report

Remuneration Policy

The Chairman of the Board is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Chief Executive in accordance with the Senior Civil Service Pay Strategy.

The Chief Executive is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Executive Team of National Museums NI in accordance with the SCS Pay Strategy (for those Directors employed under SCS terms) and in accordance with the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay Strategy for other Directors.

The pay of National Museums NI staff is based on the NICS system of pay scales for each grade, including SCS, containing a number of pay points from minimum to maximum, allowing progression towards the maximum based on performance. NI public sector pay policy guidance was published on 22nd April 2024. The pay award for National Museums NI staff, including SCS, for 2023/24 has been finalised and was paid in July 2024.

Policy on duration of contracts, notice periods and termination payments

Senior staff, including the Chief Executive, are permanent employees of National Museums NI. The notice period for senior staff is three months. Termination payments are in accordance with contractual terms and those of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI).

Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the most senior management (i.e., Directors) of National Museums NI.

Senior Management Total Remuneration (Audited Information)

	2023/24				2022/23			
	Salary £'000	Bonus £'000	Pension Benefits ¹ (to nearest £1,000)	Total £'000	Salary £'000	Bonus £'000	Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)	Total £'000
K Thomson Chief Executive	110-115	-	56	165-170	100-105	-	(8)	95-99
C Catney Chief Operating Officer	85-90	-	33	120-125	80-85	-	32	110-115
W Blair Director of Collections	85-90	-	(12)	70-75	75-80	-	(1)	75-80
A Ward Director of Public Engagement (From 1 December 2023)	25-30 (75-80 full year equivalent)	-	10	35-40 (85-90 full year equivalent)	-	-	-	-

2023/24 salary includes the 2023 accrued pay award.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any severance or ex gratia payments. This report is based on accrued payments made by National Museums NI and thus recorded in these accounts.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. There were no benefits in kind provided during the financial year (2022/23: £nil).

Bonuses

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. There were no bonuses paid in the 2023/24 year (2022/23: £nil).

Pension Benefits

Benefits are shown in real terms and outcomes are dependent on the pension scheme each employee belongs to. Please see below to explanation for any negative outcomes:

¹ The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increases or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

- In some cases, the real increase in CETV and the pension benefits accrued for the single total figure of remuneration can be negative – that is, there can be a real decrease. This is particularly likely to happen during periods of pay restraint and/or where inflation is higher than pay increases.
- The final salary pension of a person in employment is calculated by reference to their pay and length of service. The pension will increase from one year to the next by virtue of a member having an extra year’s service and by virtue of any pay rise during the year. Where there is no pay rise, the increase in pension due to extra service may not be sufficient to offset the inflation increase – that is, in real terms, the pension value can reduce, hence the negative values.
- For example, this is particularly likely to happen for members in the ‘Classic Plus’ scheme where no service after 30 September 2002 counts towards the calculation of the lump sum.

Fair Pay Disclosures (Audited information)

Pay Ratios

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the lower quartile, median and upper quartile remuneration of the organisation’s workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in National Museums NI in the financial year 2023/24 was £110,001 - £115,000 (2022/23: £100,001 - £105,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the organisation’s workforce is disclosed below.

2023/24	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
Total Remuneration (£)	£21,933	£24,692	£34,462
Pay Ratio	5.13:1	4.56:1	3.26:1

2022/23	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
Total Remuneration (£)	£19,815	£23,188	£32,290
Pay Ratio	5.17:1	4.42:1	3.17:1

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, benefits-in-kind as well as severance payments. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £21,933 (2022/23: £19,815), £24,692 (2022/23: £23,188) and £34,462 (2022/23: £32,290) respectively.

In 2023/24 and 2022/23, no employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director.

Remuneration ranged from £21,053 to £112,500 (2022/23: £19,815 to £102,500).

Changes in the pay ratios in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23 were as a result of how the pay award impacts the grades throughout the staffing structure.

Percentage Change in Remuneration

Reporting bodies are also required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in the:

- a) salary and allowances, and
- b) performance pay and bonuses

of the highest paid director and of their employees as a whole.

The percentage changes in respect of National Museums NI are shown in the following table. It should be noted that the calculation for the highest paid director is based on the mid-point of the band within which their remuneration fell in each year.

Percentage change for:	2023/24 v 2022/23	2022/23 v 2021/22
Average employee salary and allowances	+9.35%	+2.99%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	+9.76%	0.00%

No performance pay or bonuses were payable in these years.

Remuneration of Board Members

No emoluments were paid to members of the Board for the year ended 31 March 2024 except for an honorarium to the Chairman (appointed 1 October 2023) amounting to £2,500 (2022/23: £10,200).

Pensions of Senior Management (Audited Information)

	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/24 and related lump sum	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31/3/24	CETV at 31/3/23	Real increase in CETV
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
K Thomson Chief Executive	50-55	2.5-5	905	702	42
C Catney Chief Operating Officer	10-15	0-2.5	222	157	25
W Blair Director of Collections	40-45	0-2.5	670	530	(14)
A Ward Director of Public Engagement	5-10	0-2.5	87	78	5

Note: Any members affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy may have been reported in the 2015 scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 in 2022/23, but are reported in the legacy scheme for the same period in 2023/24.

Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Pension Arrangements

Pension benefits are provided through the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension schemes which are administered by Civil Service Pensions (CSP).

The alpha pension scheme was initially introduced for new entrants from 1 April 2015. The alpha scheme and all previous scheme arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted each year. The majority of members of the Classic, Premium, Classic Plus and Nuvos pension arrangements (collectively known as the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) [PCSPS(NI)]) also moved to alpha from that date. Transitional protection measures introduced alongside these reforms meant any members who on 1 April 2012 were within 10 years of their normal pension age remained in their previous scheme arrangement (full protection) and those who were between 13.5 years and 10 years of their normal pension age were given a choice between moving to alpha on 1 April 2015 or at a later date determined by their age (tapered protection).

McCloud Judgment

In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the transitional protections put in place back in 2015 that allowed older workers to remain in their original scheme, were discriminatory on the basis of age. As a result, steps have been taken by the Department of Finance to remedy this discrimination.

The Department has now made regulations which remedy the discrimination by:

- ensuring all active members are treated equally for future service as members of the reformed alpha scheme only from 1 April 2022, and
- providing each eligible member with options to have their pension entitlements for the period when the discrimination existed between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 (the remedy period) retrospectively calculated under either the current (reformed) scheme rules, or the old (pre-reform) legacy rules which existed before 2015.

This means that all active NICS Pension Scheme members are in the same pension scheme, alpha, from 1 April 2022 onwards, regardless of age. This removes the discrimination going forwards in providing equal pension provision for all scheme members.

The Department is now implementing the second part of the remedy, which addresses the discrimination which was incurred by affected members between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.

Eligible members with relevant service between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 (the Remedy Period) will now be entitled to a choice of alternative pension benefits in relation to that period. i.e. calculated under the pre-reformed PCSPS(NI) 'Classic', 'Premium' or 'Nuvos' rules or alternatively calculated under the reformed alpha rules. As part of this 'retrospective' remedy most active members will now receive a choice about their remedy period benefits at the point of retirement. This is known as the Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU). For those members who already have pension benefits in payment in relation to the Remedy Period, they will receive an Immediate Choice which will be issued by 31 March 2025.

At this stage, allowance has not yet been made within CETVs for this remedy. Further information on the remedy will be included in the NICS pension scheme accounts which, once published, are available at [DoF Annual Report and Accounts | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk).

As part of the remedy involves rolling back all remediable service into the relevant legacy PCSPS(NI) arrangement for the 7-Year Remedy Period, the value of pension benefits may change

for affected members and some figures previously reported may change. The 2023/24 pension disclosures above are calculated based on HM Treasury guidance using;

- a. Rolled back opening balance
- b. Rolled back closing balance
- c. CETV calculated by CSP on the rolled back basis
- d. No restatement of prior year figures where disclosed.

Alpha

Alpha is a 'Career Average Revalued Earnings' (CARE) arrangement in which members accrue pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of scheme membership. The current accrual rate is 2.32%.

From 1 April 2015, all new entrants joining the NICS can choose between membership of alpha or joining a 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (Partnership Pension Account).

Information on the PCSPS(NI) – Closed Scheme

Staff in post prior to 30 July 2007 were eligible to be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' legacy defined benefit arrangements (Classic, Premium and Classic Plus). From April 2011, pensions payable under these arrangements have been reviewed annually in line with changes in the cost of living.

New entrants who joined on or after 1 October 2002 and before 30 July 2007 will have chosen between membership of Premium or joining the Partnership Pension Account. New entrants who joined on or after 30 July 2007 were eligible for membership of the legacy PCSPS(NI) Nuvos arrangement or they could have opted for a Partnership Pension Account. Nuvos was also a CARE arrangement in which members accrued pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of scheme membership. The rate of accrual was 2.3%.

Benefits in Classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For Premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike Classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic Plus is essentially a variation of Premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per Classic.

Partnership Pension Account

The Partnership Pension Account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Active members of the pension scheme will receive an Annual Benefit Statement. The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach their scheme pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age. The normal scheme pension age in alpha is linked to the member's State Pension Age but cannot be before age 65. The Scheme Pension age is 60 for any pension accrued in the legacy Classic, Premium, and Classic Plus arrangements and 65 for any benefits accrued in Nuvos. Further

details about the NICS pension schemes can be found at the website [Civil Service Pensions \(NI\) | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civil-service-pensions-ni).

All pension benefits are reviewed annually in line with changes in the cost of living. Any applicable increases are applied from April and are determined by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) figure for the preceding September. The CPI in September 2023 was 6.7% and HM Treasury has announced that public service pensions will be increased accordingly from April 2024.

Employee contribution rates for all members for the period covering 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 are as follows:

Scheme Year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Annualised Rate of Pensionable Earning (Salary Bands)		Contribution rates – All members
From	To	From 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
£0	£26,302.49	4.60%
£26,302.50	£59,849.99	5.45%
£59,850.00	£160,964.99	7.35%
£160,965.00 and above		8.05%

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member’s accrued benefits and any contingent spouse’s pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the NICS pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations 1996 (as amended) and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may have been due when pension benefits are taken. The Lifetime Allowance will end in April 2024 and will be replaced by the Lump Sum Allowance and The Lump Sum And Death Benefit Allowance.

HM Treasury provides the assumptions for discount rates for calculating CETVs payable from the public service pension schemes. On 27 April 2023, HM Treasury published guidance on the basis for setting the discount rates for calculating cash equivalent transfer values payable by public service pension schemes. In their guidance of 27 April 2023, HM Treasury advised that, with immediate effect, the discount rate adopted for calculating CETVs should be in line with the new SCAPE discount rate of 1.7.% above CPI inflation, superseding the previous SCAPE discount rate of 2.4% above CPI inflation. All else being the same, a lower SCAPE discount rate leads to higher CETVs. The HM Treasury Guidance of 27 April 2023 can be found at [Basis for setting the discount rates for calculating cash equivalent transfer values payable by public service pension schemes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/basis-for-setting-the-discount-rates-for-calculating-cash-equivalent-transfer-values-payable-by-public-service-pension-schemes).

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period (which therefore disregards the effect of any changes in factors).

Compensation for loss of office

No compensation for loss of office was payable in the year.

Staff report

Total Staff Costs (Audited Information)

Staff Cost	Permanently employed staff £	Others £	2024	2023
			£	£
Salaries and wages (includes temporary non-payroll staff)	9,328,539	416,779	9,745,318	8,507,520
Social security costs	888,252	-	888,252	765,040
Pension costs	2,524,346	-	2,524,346	2,281,896
Apprenticeship levy	29,106	-	29,106	25,664
Other staff costs	10,798	-	10,798	24,580
Release of Historic Payroll Provision	(812,575)	-	(812,575)	-
Total	11,968,466	416,779	12,385,245	11,604,700

The Northern Ireland Civil Service main pension schemes are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes but National Museums NI is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities.

The Public Service Pensions Act (NI) 2014 provides the legal framework for regular actuarial valuations of the public service pension schemes to measure the costs of the benefits being provided. These valuations inform the future contribution rates to be paid into the schemes by employers every four years following the scheme valuation. The Act also provides for the establishment of an employer cost cap mechanism to ensure that the costs of the pension schemes remain sustainable in future.

The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) is responsible for carrying out scheme valuations. The Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following the scheme valuation. The 2020 scheme valuation was completed by GAD in October 2023. The outcome of this valuation was used to set the level of contributions for employers from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027.

The 2016 Scheme Valuation required adjustment as a result of the 'McCloud remedy'. The Department of Finance also commissioned a consultation in relation to the Cost Cap element of Scheme Valuations which closed on 25 June 2021. The Cost Cap Mechanism (CCM) is a measure of scheme costs and determines whether member costs or scheme benefits require adjustment to maintain costs within a set corridor. By taking into account the increased value of public service pensions, as a result of the 'McCloud remedy', scheme cost control valuation outcomes will show greater costs than otherwise would have been expected. Following completion of the consultation process the 2016 Valuation has been completed and the final cost cap determined. Further information, including a copy of Unpause Cost Cap Valuation Report, can be found on the Department of Finance [Unpause Cost Cap Valuation Report \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://finance-ni.gov.uk/unpause-cost-cap-valuation-report).

A case for approval of a Legislative Consent Motion (LCM) was laid in the Assembly to extend the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill (PSP&JO) to Northern Ireland. The government responded to the Cost Control Mechanism consultation in October 2021. [CCM_RESPONSE.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1000000/ccm_response.pdf) Under the LCM agreed by the NI Assembly on 1 November 2021 provisions are included in the Act for devolved schemes in NI. A second LCM was laid in the Assembly to implement the CCM changes in the Westminster Bill for devolved schemes. The second LCM, as agreed by the Assembly on 31 January 2022, ensured the reformed only scheme design and the economic check will now be applied to the 2020 scheme valuations for the devolved public sector pension schemes, including the NICS pension scheme. The PSP&JO Act received

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ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Royal Assent on 10 March 2022. The UK Act legislates how the government will remove the discrimination identified in the McCloud judgment. The Act also includes provisions that employees will not experience any detriment if the adjusted valuation costs breach the set cost cap ceiling but any breaches of the cost cap floor (positive employee impacts) in the completed valuations will be honoured.

For 2023/24, employers' contributions of £2,519,397 (2022/23: £2,277,433) were payable to the NICS pension arrangements at one of three rates in the range 28.7% to 34.2% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £4,749 (2022/23: £4,281) were paid to one or more of the panel of three appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and range from 8% to 14.75% (2022/23: 8% to 14.75%) of pensionable pay.

The partnership pension account offers the member the opportunity of having a 'free' pension. The employer will pay the age-related contribution and if the member does contribute, the employer will pay an additional amount to match member contributions up to 3% of pensionable earnings.

Employer contributions of £200, 0.5% (2022/23 £182, 0.5%) of pensionable pay, were payable to the NICS Pension schemes to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees. Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the reporting period date were £Nil (2022/23: £Nil). Contributions prepaid at that date were £Nil (2022/23: £Nil).

No persons (2022/23: None) retired early on ill-health grounds; the total additional accrued pension liabilities in the year amounted to £Nil (2022/23: £Nil).

Staff costs apportioned by activity (Audited Information)

Activity area	2024	2023
	£	£
Trading (Primary & Non Primary)	594,432	553,259
Care of Collections	2,604,607	1,895,102
Curatorial & Education	1,771,513	2,249,334
Experience & Enterprise	4,781,985	4,342,082
Audience Development	1,010,701	1,022,595
Operations	1,622,007	1,542,328
Total	<u>12,385,245</u>	<u>11,604,700</u>

The average number of persons employed (Audited Information)

The average number of full time equivalent employees employed during the year analysed by category of staff was as follows:

	2024	2023
Permanent contract	250	237
Temporary agency contract	11	11
Fixed term funded contract	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>
Total	<u>273</u>	<u>261</u>

The number of full time equivalent employees as at 31 March 2024 analysed by activity was as follows:

	2024	2023
Experience & Enterprise Development	96	99
Care of Collections	42	42
Operations	32	33
Curatorial and Education	31	32
Audience Development	21	24
Support	22	24
Trading	7	7
Chief Executive's Office	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	<u>256</u>	<u>266</u>

Further analysis of full time equivalent employees is as follows:

	2024		2023	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Chief Executive	-	1	-	1
Directors	3	-	2	-
Employees	<u>108</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>149</u>
Total	<u>111</u>	<u>145</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>150</u>

Number of senior civil service staff (or equivalent) by band

The number of staff serving as senior civil servants (or equivalent) based on a full year equivalent as at 31 March 2024 is as follows:

Annual Salary Band	2024	2023
£75,001 - £80,000	1	-
£80,001 - £85,000	-	3*
£85,001 - £90,000	2	-
£90,001 - £95,000	-	-
£95,001 - £100,000	-	-
£101,001 - £105,000	-	1
£105,001 - £110,000	-	-
£110,001 - £115,000	1	-

**Included in this banding was a senior staff member on temporary secondment to National Museums NI, from another public body, and was not a permanent member of Senior Management.*

Other Disclosures

- Staff Turnover Percentage was 10.81% for the year (2022/23: 13.28 %).
- Per our Staff Pulse survey in November 2023, the composite staff engagement score was 77.1%.
- There were no off-payroll arrangements with any individuals during the year (2022/23: £nil).
- There was nil expenditure on external consultancy during the year (2022/23: £nil).
- Travel expenses of £616 were reimbursed to nine Trustees (2022/23: £4,248).
- Further information on staff costs is contained in note 6.

Sickness Absence

National Museums NI employed 273 staff (expressed as full-time equivalents). Overall staff absenteeism for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 was 4.58% (2022/23: 7.53%), which equates to an average per FTE of 6.33 days (2022/23: 20 days).

The majority of sickness absence continues to be attributable to staff on long term sickness.

Staff Policies

As an equal opportunities employer, National Museums NI do not discriminate against staff or applicants for posts on any grounds, including disability. Care is taken to ensure the needs of disabled applicants are considered in the recruitment and promotion processes. National Museums NI also considers and introduces reasonable adjustments to support the employment of people with disabilities and to support the continuing employment of staff who have a disability.

National Museums NI is committed to the priorities as set out in legislation on equality, disability discrimination, dispute resolutions, health and safety, safeguarding, data protection and freedom of information.

In line with our corporate commitment to champion inclusion, diversity and accessibility we developed a new Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Policy which was approved by the Board in March 2022.

Within the policy, we have outlined specific initial priority outcomes, including workplace culture which we shall continue to monitor and improve throughout the period of our Corporate Strategy 2021-25.

Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages (Audited Information)

Exit package Cost Band	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
<£10,000	-	1	-	1	-	2
£10,000-£25,000	-	-	1	-	1	-
£25,000-£50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£50,000-£100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,000-£150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£150,000-£200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of exit packages	-	1	1	1	1	2
Total resource cost (£)	-	£5,968	£10,798	£7,538	£10,798	£13,506

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (Northern Ireland), a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation (Northern Ireland) Order 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in the year in which the relevant exit packages are agreed.

There was one exit package agreed in 2023/24.

Any ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table.

Katrina Thomson

K Thomson
Chief Executive
Date: 5 November 2024

3.2 Statement of Trustees' and Chief Executive's Responsibilities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Under Article 10(2) of the Museums and Galleries (NI) Order 1998 the Museum is required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis determined by the Department for Communities with the approval of the Department of Finance. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of National Museums NI's state of affairs at the year end and of its financial activities and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Board are required to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Department for Communities, including relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that National Museums NI will continue in operation; and
- ensure the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Accounting Officer for the Department for Communities has designated the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer for National Museums NI. The relevant responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including the responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping of proper records and for safeguarding National Museums NI's assets, are set out in the Managing Public Money NI, issued by the Department of Finance. As Accounting Officer I can confirm:

- as far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the National Museums NI's auditors are not aware; and
- I have taken all the steps I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that National Museums NI's auditors are aware of that information.

3.3 Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Governance Framework

National Museums NI is a Non-Departmental Public Body established under the Museums and Galleries (NI) Order 1998 and sponsored by the Department for Communities (DfC).

National Museums NI is governed by a Board of up to 15 Members and sub-committees that report to the Board. Members are appointed by the Minister. The Board has ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of National Museums NI and for fulfilling the functions set out in the Museums and Galleries (NI) Order 1998.

The Accounting Officer is designated by DfC's Accounting Officer and has responsibility for the day to day management of National Museums NI and is supported and challenged by the Board.

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a satisfactory level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of National Museums NI's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and their impact should they be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in National Museums NI for the year ended 31 March 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and accords with Department of Finance (DoF) guidance.

The governance framework also includes a number of additional elements that contribute to the effective governance of the organisation. These comprise:

- Board Standing Orders;
- Board Operating Framework;
- Terms of Reference for Committees;
- The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum;
- The Corporate Plan 2021-25 and Business Plan 2023/24;
- The Performance Excellence Framework;
- The Risk Management Framework;
- Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy; and
- Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan.

Compliance with Corporate Governance Code

National Museums NI, in so far as it is relevant for a Non-Departmental Public Body, complies with the Corporate Governance Code.

Process for Identifying and Managing Conflicts of Interests

National Museums NI has a 'Managing Conflicts of Interest and Representation on Outside Bodies Policy'. The purpose of the policy document is to set out the principles for minimising and managing potential conflicts of interest and, in so doing, provide protection to National Museums NI and its staff from reputational damage and other liabilities. Board Members and employees of National Museums NI are required to disclose areas of actual, potential or perceived conflict with the interests of National Museums NI. There are codes of conduct for both employees and Board Members which require adherence to the Seven Principles of Public Life as defined by the Committee of Standards in Public Life.

A Register of Interests is maintained for Board members and the Executive Team and is available for inspection at the principal address and on the National Museums NI website nationalmuseumsni.org. Appropriate action is taken in line with the policy where any conflicts or perceived conflict arise.

Related party transactions are disclosed in note 22 of the financial accounts.

Review of Effectiveness

Accounting Officer

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal governance that supports the achievement of the aims and objectives of the National Museums NI. I also have responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances allocated to National Museums NI and for safeguarding public funds and assets, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned. As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the Internal Auditors; the managers within National Museums NI who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework; and, comments made by the External Auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

In my role as Accounting Officer, I function with the support of the Board of the National Museums NI ("the Board"). This includes highlighting to the Board specific business risks and, where appropriate, the measures that could be employed to manage these risks.

At meetings of the Board the following standing agenda items are addressed (either directly or through reporting from one of the sub-committees):

- Minutes of Previous Meeting;
- Strategic Priorities;
- Chief Executive Update;
- Progress Against Budget;
- Progress against business and corporate plan and risks in achieving stated objectives; and
- Risk Management.

The Board operates as a collegiate forum under the leadership of the Chair. It ensures that the appropriate strategic planning processes are in place and that there is effective operational management of their implementation. Day-to-day operational matters are my responsibility and that of senior colleagues. Each Board Member participates in the high-level corporate decision making process as a member of the Board; contributes to the operation of corporate governance arrangements within the organisation; and, supports me in my roles of Chief Executive and Accounting Officer.

As Chief Executive, I am responsible for agreeing the agenda for quarterly Board meetings with the Chair and ensuring the Chair and Board Members are provided with timely information to support full discussion and decision-making at each meeting. The Board receives written reports on key strategic areas and on the status of delivery against Business Plan objectives. The quality and timeliness of the information and reports has been acceptable to the Board.

I meet formally with our Sponsor Branch in the Department for Communities quarterly. At these meetings National Museums NI is assessed against its delivery of the Ministerial and Departmental

priorities as agreed in the Corporate Plan and Museums Policy as well as the review of the management of risk within National Museums NI.

The Board

The Board takes an objective long-term view of the business of the organisation, leading its strategic planning process and supporting and challenging the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer in setting and meeting its corporate aims and objectives.

The key aspects of the Board's role include:

- Setting the strategic direction for the organisation, including its vision, values and strategic objectives;
- Overseeing the implementation of its Corporate and Business Plans, monitoring performance against objectives and supervising its budget;
- Leading and overseeing the process of change and encouraging innovation, to enhance the organisation's capability to deliver;
- Overseeing the strategic management of staff, finance, information and physical resources, including setting training and health and safety priorities; and
- Establishing and overseeing the implementation of the corporate governance arrangements including risk management.

The Board has delegated to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee responsibility for an assessment of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

As part of their induction, all Board Members attend training in respect of their responsibilities for corporate governance and accountability of the organisation.

In order to manage any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest the Chairman asks those present at the start of each meeting if they are conflicted with any of the agenda items.

For further information on any actual or potential conflicts arising at National Museums NI board meetings, minutes are available for review on the National Museums NI website nationalmuseumsni.org.

Board Membership and Attendance

During 2023/24 the following served as Board Members:

	Attendance at Board meetings	Maximum Possible in Year	Percentage Attendance
<i>Mr Miceal McCoy (Chairman)*</i>	1	1	100%
Miss Charlotte Jess (Vice Chair)	6	7	86%
<i>Professor Garth Earls*</i>	-	1	0%
<i>Professor Karen Fleming*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Mrs Hazel Francey*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Mrs Daphne Harshaw*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Dr Rosemary Kelly OBE*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Dr Leon Litvack*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Mr Alan McFarland*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Dr George McIlroy*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Mrs Catherine Molloy*</i>	1	1	100%
<i>Mrs Deirdre Devlin (nee Bryce)**</i>	3	3	100%
Mr William Duddy	6	7	86%
Dr Robert Whan	6	7	86%
Mr William McMullan	7	7	100%
Mr Gordon Milligan (Chairman)***	3	3	100%
Mr Keith Charlton***	2	3	67%
Mr Mark Walker ***	3	3	100%
Mr Ryan Cornett ***	3	3	100%
Dr Sally Montgomery OBE***	2	3	67%
Ms Therese Rafferty ***	3	3	100%
Ms Fiona Ryan ***	2	3	67%
Mr Peter Osborne ***	3	3	100%

* Term completed on 30 April 2023

** Resigned on 30 September 2023

*** Appointed on 1 October 2023

The Board will now meet at least eight times a year following a review of governance arrangements during 2023/24.

The Board receives reports covering key performance indicators, business plan performance, financial performance, capital programme activity, loans (to and from the organisation) for agreement and minutes from each of the sub-committees. The Board has assessed its effectiveness and has identified areas where it can improve. These areas include induction for new Board Members, committee membership, advocacy and conduct at meetings.

Appointments to the Board are for a period of up to five years.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) met three times during the year to review reports on risk management, the control environment, matters arising from internal and external audits,

progress on the implementation of audit recommendations, and to review and endorse the Annual Report and Accounts to the Board to approve.

The Committee discharged its oversight responsibilities in accordance with the Terms of Reference and it has the requisite skills (including governance, financial reporting, risk management, auditing, strategic planning and understanding the core functions of the organisation) to discharge its responsibilities effectively.

Other Committees and the Executive Team

Following a review of Corporate Governance Arrangements the Board now meets eight times a year. The other sub-committees of the Board, The General Purposes and Finance Committee (GP&F): and the Remuneration Committee have been stood down with the final meeting of the GP&F taking place in May 2023, and the Remuneration Committee did not meet in 2023/24.

During the year the following Members attended meetings of the Committees as follows:

	Attendance at ARAC meetings (max 3)	Attendance at GP&F Committee meetings (max 1)
Ms Deirdre Devlin	1	N/A
Mr William Duddy	3	1
Miss Charlotte Jess	N/A	1
Dr Robert Whan	N/A	1
Mr William McMullan	3	N/A
Mr Keith Charlton	2	N/A
Mr Ryan Cornett	2	N/A
Mr Mark Walker	2	N/A
Dr Sally Montgomery	1	N/A

In addition to its members, the following normally attend the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:

- The Accounting Officer
- The Chief Operating Officer
- The Director of Collections
- The Head of Finance & Governance
- Representative(s) from the NI Audit Office
- Representative from the Department for Communities
- Internal Audit

Business Planning and Risk Management

Business Plan

The 2023/24 Business Plan was approved by Trustees at the March 2023 Board meeting.

Risk Management

The Risk Management Framework sets out the process whereby the National Museums NI methodically identifies, assesses and responds to the risks attached to its activities. It assigns responsibility and accountability for risk management; defines the processes for risk review and

reporting; describes a format for the organisation's corporate risk register; and explains the organisation's approach to training in risk management.

Each risk is allocated a risk rating based on an evaluation of its impact and likelihood in two stages:

1. Assessment of inherent risk before any controls are identified.
2. Assessment of residual risk taking account of current risk response and controls and the required action plan.

Residual risk ratings are compared to the risk appetite and if the controls are judged to be inadequate to manage risk within the risk appetite then further action is identified to strengthen these controls.

Any strategic and/or key risks are escalated and included within the Corporate Risk Register. The Corporate Risk Register identifies risks and agreed actions and allocates responsibility for those to a risk owner. The Register is reviewed regularly by the Executive and Senior Management Team and quarterly by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and reported to the Board at each meeting.

In addition to the Corporate Risk Register, Internal Project Boards have developed project risk registers with project Senior Responsible Owners responsible for risk management. The Senior Management Team are fully involved in the continual review and management of risks and are trained and equipped to manage risk in a way appropriate to their authority and duties. The Internal Auditors provide advice and guidance on good practice in the management of risk throughout the audit process. Changes in the risk environment during the year have been dealt with by considering the impact of the risks assessed and taking action to manage the risks.

During the year the following key strategic risks relating to business objectives were identified:

1. The external macro environment creates significant uncertainty, volatility & inertia
2. Fulfilment of Statutory Obligations are placed at risk due to unaddressed structural underfunding
3. Our public engagement does not offer equal opportunities.
4. The organisational systems and processes do not support the business need
5. Approval and investment is not secured to deliver the major capital programme
6. A cybersecurity event occurs on National Museums NI systems which allows exposure or loss of data
7. Lack of agility and flexibility within public sector systems and processes inhibits business responsiveness and effectiveness
8. Inability to recruit and retain necessary people resources to fulfil statutory obligations

In 2023/24 there were no instances where the Committee determined that risk(s) lay outside the organisation's risk appetite and were thus unacceptable. The Board continue to review corporate risks and provide their views on a quarterly basis.

Fraud Risk and Information Risk

The management and control of the risk of fraud is set out in the Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan. Further related guidance is provided in the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy, the Conflicts of Interest Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and the Raising Concerns Policy.

The Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan were updated in March 2024 to continue promotion of a culture within the organisation which raises awareness of the risks and consequences of fraud, and incorporates all relevant fraud related guidance and good practice.

There were no gifts provided to any parties during the year.

There were no personal data related incidents during the year.

There were no fraud incidents or attempts during the year.

Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

National Museums NI, has continued to comply with guidelines and principles of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and will comply with the resultant Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Disclosure of Audit Information

So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Board's auditors are unaware. The Accounting Officer has taken all necessary steps to make herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Board's auditors are aware of that information.

Important events since the end of the financial year

There were no events since the end of the financial year requiring disclosure.

Northern Ireland Audit Office

The Northern Ireland Audit Office will complete the audit of the 2023/24 financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) issued by the Financial Reporting Council; with Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'; and with the Audit Strategy presented to the Audit Committee in March 2024. The 2022/23 financial statement received an unqualified audit opinion, without modification from NIAO.

Sources of Independent Assurance

National Museums NI draws assurance on its system of internal control and governance arrangements from independent sources, in particular:

Internal Audit

The primary objective of internal audit is to provide an independent and objective opinion to the Board and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control. The work of internal audit is informed by an analysis of the risks to which National Museums NI is exposed.

National Museums NI and the Board contracts out its internal audit services. The appointed firm of Internal Auditors operates to Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 was approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in June 2023. The Committee considered reports on the following audits performed in 2022/23:

AUDIT ASSIGNMENT	ASSURANCE OPINION
Review of capacity and expertise to fulfil statutory responsibilities	Satisfactory
Review of corporate governance arrangements	N/A – Advisory
Review of workforce planning arrangements	N/A – Advisory
Review of safeguarding arrangements	Satisfactory
Review of Sustainability Arrangements (Advisory)	N/A – Advisory
Follow Up Review	N/A

During 2023/24 the Internal Auditors identified no Priority 1 issues.

For the 12 months ended 31 March 2024, the Head of Internal Audit opinion for National Museums NI is as follows:

“On the basis of the programme of work undertaken during the 2023/24 financial year, we can conclude that the National Museums NI has established a framework of controls that provides Satisfactory assurance regarding the effective and efficient achievement of its objectives, and the management of key risks.”

Financial Management

Responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated rests with the Accounting Officer supported by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The systems of internal financial control provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, that transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or will be detected within a timely period.

Internal financial control is based on a framework of management information, financial regulations and administrative procedures, which include the segregation of duties, management supervision and a system of delegation and accountability.

National Museums NI has established Financial Policies and Procedures that address areas of risk as well as operational efficiency and effectiveness. These documents act as a reference point detailing all Financial Policies and Procedures that have been approved by the Board of National Museums NI.

All staff are briefed on these policies during their induction and at regular staff meetings. Any needs identified are addressed through the National Museums NI annual training and development plan.

Internal Governance Divergences

During the year there were no Priority One recommendations which have been described in the statement by the Head of Internal Audit.

It should be further noted that no ‘ministerial directions’ have been issued to the National Museums NI and there have been no reported lapses of protective security.

Conclusion

As Accounting Officer, I am satisfied that an appropriate system of internal governance is in place within National Museums NI.



Kathryn Thomson
Chief Executive
Date: 5 November 2024

3.4 Assembly Accountability & Audit Report (Audited Information)

Losses and Special Payments

There was a payment of £1,862.32 to HM Revenue & Customs relating to interest on late payment of a Corporation Tax following submission of legacy corporation returns dating back to the 2017/18 financial year. (2022/23: £Nil).

Remote Contingent Liabilities

National Museums NI has no remote contingent liabilities (2022/23: None).



Kathryn Thomson
Chief Executive
Date: 5 November 2024

3.5 The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the National Museums Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2024 under the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. The financial statements comprise: the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement; and the related notes including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting standards including the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

I have also audited the information in the Remuneration and Staff Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of National Museums Northern Ireland's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its total incoming resources and expenditure of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102); and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 and Department for Communities directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this certificate.

My staff and I are independent of National Museums Northern Ireland in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that National Museums Northern Ireland's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified any material uncertainties that relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may

cast significant doubt about on the National Museums Northern Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The going concern basis of accounting for National Museums Northern Ireland is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the Government Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees and the Chief Executive with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' annual report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Accountability Report described in that report as having been audited, and my audit certificate and report. The Trustees and the Chief Executive are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with Department for Communities directions made under the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998; and
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the National Museums Northern Ireland and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by the Government Financial Report Manual are not made; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or

- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Trustees and Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Trustees and Chief Executive's Responsibilities, the Trustees and the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer are responsible for:

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- such internal controls as the Trustees and Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- assessing the National Museums Northern Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees and Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by National Museums Northern Ireland will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to examine, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Museum and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISA's (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud.

My procedures included:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the National Museums Northern Ireland through discussion with management and application of extensive public sector accountability knowledge. The key laws and regulations I considered included Museum and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998;
- making enquires of management and those charged with governance on National Museums Northern Ireland's compliance with laws and regulations;
- making enquiries of internal audit, management and those charged with governance as to susceptibility to irregularity and fraud, their assessment of the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and irregularity, and their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud and irregularity;

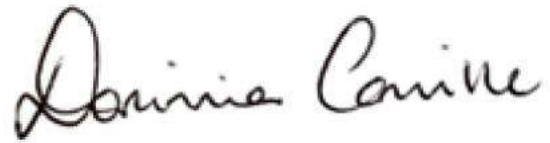
- completing risk assessment procedures to assess the susceptibility of National Museums Northern Ireland's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. This included, but was not limited to, an engagement director led engagement team discussion on fraud to identify particular areas, transaction streams and business practices that may be susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the following areas: management override of controls through the posting of unusual journals, revenue recognition, and the extent of management bias within key accounting estimates;
- engagement director oversight to ensure the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework throughout the audit;
- documenting and evaluating the design and implementation of internal controls in place to mitigate risk of material misstatement due to fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- designing audit procedures to address specific laws and regulations which the engagement team considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements in terms of misstatement and irregularity, including fraud. These audit procedures included, but were not limited to, reading board and committee minutes, and agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation and approvals as appropriate; and
- addressing the risk of fraud as a result of management override of controls by:
 - performing analytical procedures to identify unusual or unexpected relationships or movements;
 - testing journal entries to identify potential anomalies, and inappropriate or unauthorised adjustments;
 - assessing whether judgements and other assumptions made in determining accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
 - investigating significant or unusual transactions made outside of the normal course of business; and

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dorinnia Carville". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dorinnia Carville
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
BELFAST
BT7 1EU

13 November 2024

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS NI
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS NI
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 £	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 £
Income from:							
<i>Donations and Legacies</i>							
Donations	2	-	105,115	105,115	-	101,687	101,687
Gifts in kind	2	1,027,890	-	1,027,890	99,725	-	99,725
<i>Charitable activities</i>							
Grant-in-aid	3	2,152,000	16,320,000	18,472,000	3,143,000	16,131,000	19,274,000
Admissions	3	-	1,294,665	1,294,665	-	1,159,035	1,159,035
Other grants	3	1,350,015	-	1,350,015	1,039,679	-	1,039,679
<i>Other trading activities</i>							
Sponsorships	4	-	-	-	9,739	-	9,739
Trading	4	-	1,400,954	1,400,954	-	1,288,798	1,288,798
Investment income		-	46,065	46,065	-	8,254	8,254
Other income	5	-	280,080	280,080	-	191,976	191,976
Total income		4,529,905	19,446,879	23,976,784	4,292,143	18,880,750	23,172,893
Expenditure on:							
<i>Raising funds</i>							
Trading	6	54,787	1,506,496	1,561,283	41,134	1,435,405	1,476,539
<i>Charitable activities</i>							
Care of collections	6	260,771	3,520,947	3,781,718	197,144	2,431,420	2,628,564
Curatorial & Education	6	771,990	2,453,815	3,225,805	616,994	2,814,399	3,431,393
Experience & Enterprise	6	516,161	6,999,905	7,516,066	274,588	5,947,247	6,221,835
Audience Development	6	131,318	1,784,021	1,915,339	145,100	1,652,986	1,798,086
Operations	6	237,553	6,811,324	7,048,877	106,208	8,133,489	8,239,697
		1,972,580	23,076,508	25,049,088	1,381,168	22,414,946	23,796,114
Net income/(expenditure)		2,557,325	(3,629,629)	(1,072,304)	2,910,975	(3,534,196)	(623,221)
Transfers between funds		(1,057,947)	1,057,947	-	(2,383,286)	2,383,286	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)							
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	8	-	1,322,186	1,322,186	-	4,277,853	4,277,853
Net movement in funds		1,499,378	(1,249,496)	249,882	527,689	3,126,943	3,654,632
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		22,456,180	82,164,091	104,620,271	21,928,491	79,037,148	100,965,639
Total funds carried forward		23,955,558	80,914,595	104,870,153	22,456,180	82,164,091	104,620,271

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS NI
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**BALANCE SHEET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	8	89,716,041	90,440,184
Heritage assets	8	13,902,708	12,671,032
Right of use assets	9	-	68,759
Intangible assets	10	885,677	954,002
Investment in subsidiary	11	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
		104,504,428	104,133,979
Current Assets			
Stock	12	299,052	276,117
Debtors	13	1,650,339	1,250,753
Cash at bank and in hand	14	<u>3,023,058</u>	<u>3,573,919</u>
		4,972,449	5,100,789
Liabilities			
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(4,606,724)</u>	<u>(3,752,065)</u>
Net current assets		<u>365,725</u>	<u>1,348,724</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		104,870,153	105,482,703
Creditors - amounts falling due after more than one year	16	-	(29,856)
Provision for liabilities and charges	17	<u>-</u>	<u>(832,576)</u>
		-	(862,432)
Total Net Assets		<u><u>104,870,153</u></u>	<u><u>104,620,271</u></u>
Represented by:			
Restricted funds	18	23,955,558	22,456,180
Unrestricted funds	18	30,846,774	33,296,182
Revaluation reserve	18	<u>50,067,821</u>	<u>48,867,909</u>
		<u><u>104,870,153</u></u>	<u><u>104,620,271</u></u>

The notes on pages 67 to 82 form part of these accounts.

The accounts on pages 64 to 82 were approved by the Board of Trustees of National Museums NI on 5 November 2024 and are signed on its behalf.



G Milligan
Chairman of The Board of Trustees



K Thomson
Chief Executive

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS NI
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	21	<u>3,134,034</u>	<u>3,276,635</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest received		46,065	8,254
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment		-	-
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		(299,565)	(318,956)
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		<u>(3,431,395)</u>	<u>(3,392,881)</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities		<u>(3,684,895)</u>	<u>(3,703,583)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Payments of lease liabilities		-	(38,672)
Interest on lease liabilities paid		<u>-</u>	<u>(975)</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>(39,647)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(550,861)	(466,595)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2023	21	<u>3,573,919</u>	<u>4,040,514</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2024	21	<u><u>3,023,058</u></u>	<u><u>3,573,919</u></u>

Further detail to this cash flow statement is reported in Note 21.
The notes on pages 67 to 82 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board and disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance in so far as those requirements are appropriate. They also comply with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) (2019).

The charity is a public benefit entity.

There are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the ability of National Museums NI to continue as a going concern.

The principal policies which have been adopted in the preparation of these accounts are as follows:

Incoming resources

Grant income from the Department for Communities is shown in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which it is received. Undrawn grant-in-aid is not available to be carried forward from one year to the next.

Other grant income is recognised as and when the conditions for its receipt have been met.

Deferred income will be matched and released as and when the conditions for its application have been met.

Gifts in kind donated, where a third party is bearing the cost, are included at the cost to the third party.

Admissions income, trading income and donations are accounted for on an accruals basis.

No amounts are included in the accounts for services donated by volunteers.

Resources expended

Resources expended are accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under principal charitable activities or costs of generating funds in order to provide more useful information to the users of the accounts.

Expenditure is classified to be in furtherance of charity objectives when it is directly attributable to the projects undertaken. All other expenditure is allocated either to support costs or costs of generating funds, as appropriate. Support costs comprise the costs of the Chief Executive's Office, Human Resources, Finance and Governance costs and are allocated to the charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources. The support costs are allocated according to the number of full time equivalent staff employed in each activity. Governance costs are the costs incurred to ensure proper standards of public accountability within National Museums NI and are made up of internal audit, external audit and professional fees associated with governance.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Tangible Assets and Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost or valuation.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than land, assets under construction and heritage assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, on a straight line basis for each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

Buildings	2% - 5%	per annum
Permanent exhibitions	2% - 20%	per annum
Computer equipment	5% - 20%	per annum
Fixtures and equipment	5% - 20%	per annum
Plant and machinery	5% - 15%	per annum
Motor vehicles	7% - 15%	per annum

Land and buildings are professionally revalued every year. With the exception of permanent exhibitions, the cost of all other fixed assets are restated annually to reflect their current value using the relevant price indices at the year end and to identify any impairment of value. The revaluation surplus or loss, net of the corresponding adjustment to accumulated depreciation, is credited to the revaluation reserve.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted, if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period.

The minimum level for capitalising tangible fixed assets is £1,000, although lower valued items may be pooled and capitalised where they constitute a unit or group.

Heritage Assets

Objects purchased since 1 April 2001 are included in the balance sheet at cost. Depreciation is not charged and the objects are not revalued.

Objects donated since 1 April 2001 are included at valuation based on the amount paid by the donor or an estimate of fair value based on the opinion of National Museums NI's specialist staff. Where obtaining a value is not practicable, donated heritage assets are not recognised in the accounts.

Collections acquired before 1 April 2001 are assets of historical and scientific importance held to advance National Museums NI's educational and cultural objectives. These assets were not capitalised in past accounting periods as reliable cost information was not available and a reliable valuation approach was not considered to be commensurate with the benefits to users of the financial statements.

Nature & scale of heritage assets

The collections of National Museums NI are multidisciplinary, diverse and span all time periods, referencing Northern Ireland within, and to, the wider world. Historically, they have grown on the site-based framework of the Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk & Transport Museums and the Ulster American Folk Park. However, since similar collection types can relate to more than one site, they are more appropriately classified within six broad and complementary subject areas. National Museums NI will continue to collect within these subject areas and the time periods and geographic areas to which they relate:

1. Art;
2. Emigration;
3. Folk Life and Agriculture;
4. Human History;
5. Natural Sciences; and
6. Transport, Industry and Technology.

Policy on acquisition and disposal of Heritage Assets

National Museums NI has a Collections Development Policy in place. This policy provides further information on the nature of heritage assets held. It is available online at www.nationalmuseumsni.org.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Policy on management and preservation of heritage assets

Three policies outline National Museums NI's intent towards the development, management, care, conservation of, and access to the collections: the Collections Development Policy; the Collections Care and Conservation Policy; and the Collections Information and Access Policy. These policies were developed as part of National Museums NI's successful application renewal for Museum Accreditation in 2015, approved by the Board of Trustees in March 2015 and it is currently being reassessed and reviewed. In addition, a National Museums NI Collections Documentation Plan exists which outlines the tasks required to progress the management of the collections in alignment with the minimum industry standard known as SPECTRUM.

Intangible assets

Intangible assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is calculated, using the straight-line method, to allocate the depreciable amount of the assets to their residual values over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

Software	4 - 5 years
On-Trade License	10 years

Development costs that are directly attributable to the design and testing of identifiable and unique software products controlled by National Museums NI are recognised as intangible assets when the following criteria are met:

- it is technically feasible to complete the software so that it will be available for use;
- management intends to complete and use it;
- it can be demonstrated how the software will generate probable future economic benefits;
- adequate technical, financial and other resources to complete the development and to use the software are available; and
- the expenditure attributable to the software during its development can be reliably measured.

Other development expenditures that do not meet these criteria are recognised as an expense as incurred.

The minimum level for capitalising intangible fixed assets is £1,000, although lower valued items may be pooled and capitalised where they constitute a unit or group.

Stocks

Stocks have been valued at the lower of cost and estimated net realisable value.

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the net amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand include deposits held at call with banks and petty cash and float balances.

Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities and provisions are recognised as resources expended as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing National Museums NI to expenditure.

Reserves Policy

National Museums NI forecasts to operate on an annual basis within a balanced funding formula of grant-in-aid, sponsorship and donations, and self-generated income. Annual operating surpluses (or deficits) are kept to a minimum and are transferred to the Unrestricted General Reserve at 31 March each year.

The Charities SORP requires capital grants to be included within the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable. The only expenditure against this is depreciation. Therefore during periods of high capital investment, surpluses will arise on the Statement of Financial Activities.

The balance on the Restricted General Fund available at 31 March 2024 was £24.0m. The Trustees consider that sufficient funds are held in an appropriate form to enable funds to be applied in accordance with any restriction imposed. The balance on the Unrestricted General Fund, together with this policy, is reviewed on an annual basis.

National Museums NI receives various types of funding which require separate disclosure. These are differentiated between restricted and unrestricted funds.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds are those funds which are subject to specific restriction imposed by the donor, by the purpose of an appeal or are received for a specified purpose. They comprise the following:

Collection acquisition fund - this fund represents the value of heritage assets funded by restricted donations and grant-in-aid since April 2001.

Government grant for fixed assets - this fund represents funding from the Department for the acquisition of fixed assets which following acquisition have no restriction on use and therefore transfer to the unrestricted funds.

Exhibition fund - this fund represents the net book value of National Museums NI's permanent exhibitions.

The Art Fund - the 2010 Art Fund Prize fund, to be used on a curatorial programme.

Curatorial Projects fund - funds to be used on specific curatorial projects.

O.L. Nelson Legacy fund - donated to National Museums NI for the specific purpose to purchase prints and drawings.

Patrick Donald Legacy Fund - donated to National Museums NI for the specific purpose to purchase artefacts of Irish interest.

General fund - this fund is to enable National Museums NI to manage its working capital relating to restricted activities.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are those funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of National Museums NI. They comprise the following:

Capital reserve - represents fixed assets transferred to National Museums NI from the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum when National Museums NI was established under the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. This fund is reduced annually by depreciation.

Revaluation reserve - this fund represents the revaluation surplus or loss, net of the corresponding adjustment to accumulated depreciation on the revalued assets.

Government grant for fixed assets - this fund together with the capital fund and the revaluation reserve represents the net book value of all unrestricted assets, namely land and buildings, fixtures and equipment and motor vehicles.

General fund - this fund is to enable National Museums NI to manage its working capital relating to unrestricted activities.

Unrestricted Designated Fund

Board Reserve general fund - donation monies set aside to fund future projects approved by the Trustees, in the furtherance of our general objectives.

Board Reserve capital fund - proceeds of sale of assets to re-invest in capital projects approved by the Trustees.

Taxation

All income and expenditure is stated exclusive of VAT, which is fully recoverable.

National Museums NI has been granted charitable status by HM Revenue & Customs.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations:		
Gift Aid	30,156	14,972
Other donations	74,959	86,715
	<u>105,115</u>	<u>101,687</u>
Gifts in kind:		
Donated assets	1,027,890	99,725
Donated services	-	-
Total	<u>1,027,890</u>	<u>99,725</u>

The income from donations of £105,115 are unrestricted (2022/23: £101,687). Gifts in kind income at March 2024 comprises donations to the collections of £1,027,890. At March 2023 this included donations to the collections of £99,725. In addition to above, is the contribution made by volunteers. Volunteers make a significant and diverse contribution to the success of National Museums NI. They support us in many areas of the organisation, in roles ranging from assisting curatorial staff, to assisting with visitor services and education staff.

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Grant-in-aid from the Department for Communities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Resource grant-in-aid (Unrestricted)	16,320,000	16,131,000
Capital grant (Restricted)	2,152,000	3,143,000
Total received	<u>18,472,000</u>	<u>19,274,000</u>

Admissions	<u>1,294,665</u>	<u>1,159,035</u>
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Other grants

	2024	2023
	£	£

Capital grants:

National History Museum	165,144	-
Friends of the Ulster Museum	-	10,100
National Heritage Memorial	-	90,000
Art Fund	32,000	41,700
Esmee Mitchell Trust	-	6,000
IFPDA Foundation	-	8,532
Total capital grants	<u>197,144</u>	<u>156,332</u>

Revenue grants:

National Lottery Heritage Fund	617,868	429,090
Northern Ireland Environment Agency	414,048	350,534
Esmee Fairbairn	51,133	29,054
National Archives	19,856	-
Other	33,436	38,785
National History Museum	6,257	10,008
Tate (British Art Network)	5,250	1,750
National Portrait Gallery	5,000	5,465
Imperial War Museum	23	11,471
British Library	-	800
Peace IV	-	4,496
Pilgrim Trust	-	1,894
Total revenue grants	<u>1,152,871</u>	<u>883,347</u>
	<u>1,350,015</u>	<u>1,039,679</u>

With the exception of resource grant-in-aid all of the grants are held in a restricted fund (further detail on restricted funds is given in note 1).

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

4. INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Sponsorships	<u>-</u>	<u>9,739</u>
Trading:		
Retail	862,608	791,286
Hire of facilities	231,841	104,470
Consultancy fees	42,934	42,648
Photographic sales	29,888	33,127
Events income	83,105	140,139
Franchise income	<u>150,578</u>	<u>177,128</u>
	<u>1,400,954</u>	<u>1,288,798</u>

Sponsorship income relates to specific programmes and events and is restricted. Trading income is unrestricted.

5. OTHER INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other Income	<u>280,080</u>	<u>191,976</u>
	<u>280,080</u>	<u>191,976</u>

6. EXPENDITURE

	Staff costs	Other Direct costs	Indirect costs	Depreciation & impairment	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Trading	594,432	621,310	82,436	263,105	1,561,283	1,476,539
Care of Collections	2,604,607	107,644	432,178	637,289	3,781,718	2,628,564
Curatorial & Education	1,771,513	552,578	358,108	543,606	3,225,805	3,431,393
Experience & Enterprise	4,781,985	455,704	1,011,782	1,266,595	7,516,066	6,221,835
Audience Development	1,010,701	324,561	257,307	322,770	1,915,339	1,798,086
Operations	<u>1,622,007</u>	<u>3,890,692</u>	<u>348,313</u>	<u>1,187,865</u>	<u>7,048,877</u>	<u>8,239,697</u>
	<u>12,385,245</u>	<u>5,952,489</u>	<u>2,490,124</u>	<u>4,221,230</u>	<u>25,049,088</u>	<u>23,796,114</u>

Expenditure on charitable activities was £25,049,088 (2022/23: £23,796,114) of which £1,972,580 were restricted (2022/23: £1,381,168).

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

6. EXPENDITURE (continued)

Staff costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages (includes temporary non-payroll staff)	9,745,318	8,507,520
Social security costs	888,252	765,040
Pension costs	2,524,346	2,281,896
Apprenticeship levy	29,106	25,664
Other staff costs	10,798	24,580
Release of Historic Payroll Provision	<u>(812,575)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total costs within expenditure	<u>12,385,245</u>	<u>11,604,700</u>

Included in the above costs is £416,779 (2022/23: £431,301) paid in respect of employment agency staff. Included in other staff costs are £10,798 (2022/23: £13,506) of redundancy costs.

Staff costs of £319,770 (2022/23: £310,068) have been capitalised in relation to capital project management time and are not included in resources expended.

Further information on the release of historic payroll provision can be found within note 17.

Further information on staff costs is contained within the Remuneration and Staff Report.

Support costs

	Trading	Care of collections	Curatorial & Education	Experience & Enterprise Dev	Audience Dev	Operations	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Finance/CEO office/ Human Resources	119,222	625,028	517,906	1,463,268	3,721,125	503,741	6,950,290	3,034,372
Governance - included in above	<u>6,245</u>	<u>32,737</u>	<u>27,126</u>	<u>76,642</u>	<u>19,491</u>	<u>26,385</u>	<u>188,626</u>	<u>220,082</u>

Governance costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Audit and accountancy fees	75,135	39,755
Other governance costs	<u>113,491</u>	<u>180,327</u>
	<u>188,626</u>	<u>220,082</u>

7. NET INCOMING RESOURCES

Net incoming resources is stated after charging:	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration:		
in respect of audit services	29,100	18,100
in respect of internal audit	46,035	21,655
Depreciation	3,852,184	3,613,531
Amortisation	436,646	98,110
Impairment Charges	(67,600)	117,600
(Profit)/Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	<u>1,066</u>	<u>-</u>

The 2023 impairment charge relates to the write down of a site located near Landseer Street, Belfast to market value. This asset was put up for sale and the 2024 figure reflects the increase in value of the asset up to the agreed sale price. More information on this can be found in note 8.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Land and Buildings £	Permanent Exhibitions £	Fixtures and Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Sub Total £	Heritage Assets £	Total £
Cost or valuation							
At 1 April 2023	75,853,090	13,394,131	16,667,191	533,754	106,448,166	12,671,032	119,119,198
Additions	801,054	237,116	701,151	-	1,739,321	1,231,676	2,970,997
Disposals	-	(7,931)	(462,117)	-	(470,048)	-	(470,048)
Reversal of Impairment	67,600	-	-	-	67,600	-	67,600
Revaluation	(1,233,998)	-	229,432	14,551	(990,014)	-	(990,014)
At 31 March 2024	<u>75,487,746</u>	<u>13,623,316</u>	<u>17,135,658</u>	<u>548,305</u>	<u>106,795,024</u>	<u>13,902,708</u>	<u>120,697,732</u>
Accumulated depreciation							
At 1 April 2023	8,086	4,411,270	11,249,226	339,400	16,007,982	-	16,007,982
Depreciation	2,445,665	336,096	1,034,846	35,577	3,852,184	-	3,852,184
Impairment Charges	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	(7,931)	(461,051)	-	(468,982)	-	(468,982)
Revaluation	(2,443,671)	-	126,304	5,167	(2,312,200)	-	(2,312,200)
At 31 March 2024	<u>10,080</u>	<u>4,739,435</u>	<u>11,949,324</u>	<u>380,144</u>	<u>17,078,984</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17,078,984</u>
Net book value							
At 31 March 2024	<u>75,477,666</u>	<u>8,883,881</u>	<u>5,186,333</u>	<u>168,161</u>	<u>89,716,041</u>	<u>13,902,708</u>	<u>103,618,749</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>75,845,004</u>	<u>8,982,861</u>	<u>5,417,965</u>	<u>194,354</u>	<u>90,440,184</u>	<u>12,671,032</u>	<u>103,111,216</u>

Land and buildings at net book value comprise:

	2024 £	2023 £
Leasehold Improvements	1,995	3,989
Long leaseholds	<u>75,475,671</u>	<u>75,841,015</u>
	<u>75,477,666</u>	<u>75,845,004</u>

Included in land and buildings is a cleared site of approximately 0.25 acres located at Landseer Street, Belfast which has been agreed for sale at £550,000. The sale of this asset completed in July 2024.

A full valuation for all other land and buildings was carried out by Land and Property Services (LPS) at 31 March 2024.

The valuations and basis of valuation, across all sites were as follows:

Property	Value	Basis of Valuation
Ulster Museum	27,457,072	Land at existing use value and buildings at depreciated replacement cost
Ulster Folk Museum	14,341,391	Land at existing use value and buildings at depreciated replacement cost
Ulster Transport Museum	19,379,016	Land at existing use value and buildings at depreciated replacement cost
Ulster American Folk Park	5,364,773	Land at existing use value and buildings at depreciated replacement cost
Residential Centre	1,633,419	Land at existing use value and buildings at depreciated replacement cost
Land at Landseer Street	550,000	Land at market value less disposal costs
Stores	6,750,000	Market value and Land at existing use value and buildings at depreciated replacement cost
	<u>75,475,671</u>	

All other assets of National Museums NI were revalued in line with appropriate indices at 31 March 2024.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS (continued)

Heritage assets acquired since 1 April 2001 have been capitalised at either purchase cost or at a valuation based on the amount paid by the donor or an estimate of fair value based on the opinion of National Museums NI's specialist staff. The analysis of additions between purchases and donations for the current year and the preceeding four years are summarised below. No assets have been disposed of, depreciated or impaired.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Acquisitions at cost	203,786	500,851	623,075	418,234	173,996
Donated assets at valuation	<u>1,027,890</u>	<u>99,725</u>	<u>442,670</u>	<u>865,782</u>	<u>625,375</u>
	<u>1,231,676</u>	<u>600,576</u>	<u>1,065,745</u>	<u>1,284,016</u>	<u>799,371</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

9. OPERATING LEASES

Financial commitments under operating leases:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Buildings:		
Not later than one year	22,000	33,000
Later than one year and not later than five years	-	21,277
Later than five years	-	-
	<u>22,000</u>	<u>54,277</u>
Other:		
Not later than one year	4,459	4,459
Later than one year and not later than five years	3,716	7,946
Later than five years	-	-
	<u>8,175</u>	<u>12,405</u>
 Total commitments under operating leases	 <u><u>30,175</u></u>	 <u><u>66,682</u></u>

The recognition of leases on the Balance Sheet in 2022/23, amounting to £68,759, has been reversed to comply with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) (2019). The difference between this and the 2022/23 liability of £66,682 disclosed above is to account for the present value of the lease obligations. The total expenditure relating to operating leases recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities during 2023/24 is £39,536.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

10. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer software	On-trade licence	Total
Cost or valuation	£	£	£
At 1 April 2023	994,481	199,588	1,194,069
Additions	<u>368,321</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>368,321</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>1,362,802</u>	<u>199,588</u>	<u>1,562,390</u>
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2023	236,741	3,326	240,067
Charge for year	<u>414,839</u>	<u>21,807</u>	<u>436,646</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>651,580</u>	<u>25,133</u>	<u>676,713</u>
Net book value	£	£	£
At 31 March 2024	<u>711,222</u>	<u>174,455</u>	<u>885,677</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>757,740</u>	<u>196,262</u>	<u>954,002</u>

11. INVESTMENTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Investment in Subsidiary - National Museums Northern Ireland Enterprises Limited	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

National Museums NI owns the whole of the issued share capital of National Museums Northern Ireland Enterprises Limited (NMNIEL), a registered company. The registered office of NMNIEL is Administration Office, Ulster Folk Museum, Bangor Road, Holywood, Northern Ireland, BT18 0EY. At 31 March 2023, NMNIEL had net assets totalling £2.

12. STOCK

	2024	2023
	£	£
Shop goods for resale	233,499	201,790
Academic publications for resale	19,625	22,300
Maintenance materials and consumables	27,249	28,975
Farm stock	<u>18,679</u>	<u>23,052</u>
	<u>299,052</u>	<u>276,117</u>

13. DEBTORS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	243,799	119,672
Prepayments and accrued income	901,333	642,792
Other debtors	<u>505,207</u>	<u>488,289</u>
	<u>1,650,339</u>	<u>1,250,753</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

14. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>3,023,058</u>	<u>3,573,919</u>

15. CREDITORS (amounts falling due within one year)

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	1,067,931	603,198
Other taxes and social security	191,289	181,654
Accruals	3,171,006	2,738,809
Deferred income	173,611	191,100
Other creditors	2,887	478
Lease liabilities	-	36,826
	<u>4,606,724</u>	<u>3,752,065</u>

Movement on deferred income

	Contract / grant £	Sponsorship £	Event deposit £	Advance admin charge £	Total £
Balance as at 1 April 2023	125,876	3,000	58,474	3,750	191,100
Amounts released from previous years	(53,001)	(3,000)	(33,390)	(3,750)	(93,141)
Incoming resources deferred in the current year	12,901	-	59,001	3,750	75,652
Balance as at 31 March 2024	<u>85,776</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>84,085</u>	<u>3,750</u>	<u>173,611</u>

Deferred income will be matched and released as and when the contractual obligations have been discharged.

16. CREDITORS (amounts falling due after more than one year)

	2024 £	2023 £
Lease liabilities	-	29,856
	<u>-</u>	<u>29,856</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

17. PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES

	Payroll	Other	Total
	£	£	£
Balance as at 1 April 2023	812,576	20,000	832,576
Provided in year	-	-	-
Provisions not required written back	(657,508)	-	(657,508)
Utilised in year	(155,068)	(20,000)	(175,068)
Balance as at 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Following final judgement in the (PSNI v Agnew) legal case in the Supreme Court, and legal advice sought by National Museums NI, the provision of £812,576 has been released, with a revised estimate of £155,068 made for the likely financial outlay. This sum is included within the total accruals amount disclosed within note 15. The funding of this likely outlay has been provided by the Department for Communities.

Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows

	Payroll	Other	Total
	£	£	£
Less than one year	-	-	-
Later than one year and not later than five years	-	-	-
Later than 5 years	-	-	-
Balance as at 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

18. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Revaluation £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted Funds						
Collection acquisition fund	12,671,032	1,123,875	-	-	107,801	13,902,708
Government grant for fixed assets	(5,084)	1,818,899	-	-	(1,705,379)	108,436
Exhibition fund	8,982,861	237,116	(336,096)	-	-	8,883,881
Voluntary Exit Scheme fund	9,484	-	-	-	-	9,484
Payroll Provision	(812,576)	-	(155,068)	-	812,576	(155,068)
The Art Fund	100,000	32,000	(100,000)	-	(32,000)	-
Curatorial Projects Fund	8,099	-	-	-	-	8,099
O.L. Nelson Legacy	438,340	-	-	-	(27,223)	411,117
P Donald Legacy	319,734	-	-	-	(48,578)	271,156
Natural History Museum	-	165,144	-	-	(165,144)	-
General fund	744,290	1,152,871	(1,381,416)	-	-	515,745
	<u>22,456,180</u>	<u>4,529,905</u>	<u>(1,972,580)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,057,947)</u>	<u>23,955,558</u>
Unrestricted Funds						
Designated fund:						
Board Reserve fund	226,961	105,116	-	-	-	332,077
Board Reserve capital fund	473,719	227,000	-	-	-	700,719
Undesignated funds:						
Capital reserve	1,857,606	-	(488,027)	-	-	1,369,579
Revaluation reserve	48,867,909	-	(122,274)	1,322,186	-	50,067,821
Government grant for fixed assets	31,685,813	-	(3,274,833)	-	1,869,457	30,280,437
General fund	(947,917)	19,114,763	(19,191,374)	-	(811,510)	(1,836,038)
	<u>82,164,091</u>	<u>19,446,879</u>	<u>(23,076,508)</u>	<u>1,322,186</u>	<u>1,057,947</u>	<u>80,914,595</u>
Total Funds	<u>104,620,271</u>	<u>23,976,784</u>	<u>(25,049,088)</u>	<u>1,322,186</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>104,870,153</u>

The transfer of £1,705,379 from Restricted Funds: Government grant for fixed assets, represents the acquisition of assets during the year which have no restrictions on use.

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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

19. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Fixed Assets	22,786,589	81,717,839	104,504,428	104,133,979
Current Assets	3,430,990	1,541,459	4,972,449	5,100,789
Liabilities	<u>(2,026,959)</u>	<u>(2,579,765)</u>	<u>(4,606,724)</u>	<u>(4,614,497)</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>24,190,620</u>	<u>80,679,533</u>	<u>104,870,153</u>	<u>104,620,271</u>

20. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

There were no capital commitments at 31 March 2024 (2022/23: £200,000) relating to multi year capital projects.

21. NOTES TO CASHFLOW

Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities	2024 £	2023 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period as per the statement of financial activities	(1,072,304)	(623,221)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	3,852,184	3,613,531
Amortisation	436,646	98,110
Impairment Charges	(67,600)	117,600
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	1,066	-
Decrease/(increase) in stock	(22,935)	(1,603)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(399,586)	823,162
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	1,283,127	(754,740)
Increase/(decrease) in provision	(832,576)	11,075
Deposit interest receivable	(46,065)	(8,254)
(Gain)/loss on derecognition of right of use assets	2,077	-
Interest on lease liabilities paid	<u>-</u>	<u>975</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>3,134,034</u>	<u>3,276,635</u>

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>3,023,058</u>	<u>3,573,919</u>

Analysis of change in net debt

	At 1 April 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash	3,573,919	(550,861)	3,023,058
Cash equivalents	-	-	-
Overdraft facility	-	-	-
Loans due within one year	-	-	-
Loans due after one year	-	-	-
Finance lease obligations	-	-	-
Total	<u>3,573,919</u>	<u>(550,861)</u>	<u>3,023,058</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

22. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

National Museums NI is a Non-Departmental Public Body funded by the Department for Communities.

The Chief Executive is a non executive director of Strategic Investment Board (SIB). During the year £50,464 was paid to SIB for secondee services to provide Asset Management support. No money was received by SIB during the year (2022/23: £695). The Chief Executive is a non executive director of Visit Belfast and during the year £4,200 was paid to Visit Belfast for annual partnerships and publications (2022/23: £6,300). Visit Belfast paid nothing to National Museums NI in the current year (2022/23: £nil). The Chief Executive is a non executive director of Tourism Ireland. During the year nothing was paid to Tourism Ireland (2022/23: £nil) and £2,720 was received as a donation (2022/23: £2,720).

National Museums NI has had a number of transactions with other Government Departments and other Central Government Bodies. These have been mainly with Central Procurement Directorate and Civil Service Pensions Branch within the Department of Finance and Personnel.

23. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

National Museums NI's resources are met through grant-in-aid funding received from the Department for Communities and also through grant funding from other sources and from income generated through admissions, trading activities and donations. National Museums NI does not hold any complex financial instruments. The only financial instruments included in the accounts are receivables and payables, cash and short term investments. Trade receivables are recognised at fair value less a provision for impairment (bad debt). The provision is made when the National Museums NI is of the view that the debt may not be collectable in full, or in part, in accordance with the terms. The organisation has no borrowings and relies primarily on departmental grants for its cash requirements. Other than the financial assets and liabilities which are generated by day to day operational activities, National Museums NI holds no financial instruments.

Liquidity Risk

National Museums NI secures funding for inescapable core activities in advance of expenditure being committed. National Museums NI however relies on Self -Generated Income to discharge its full statutory obligations therefore is exposed to some liquidity risk.

Credit Risk

National Museums NI have credit policies and procedures in place and currently do not extend material credit facilities. National Museums NI is not therefore exposed to any material credit risk.

24. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

With regards to the (PSNI v Agnew) legal case referred to in Note 17, uncertainty exists in relation to whether interest or any other uplift will become payable on the sums due to the Claimants to reflect the effluxion of time. As this matter is not agreed, no provision has been made in Note 17, however a contingent liability is being disclosed in the event that the position changes during the remaining course of settlement proceedings.

25. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING DATE

There were no events since the end of the financial year requiring disclosure.

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 13 November 2024