

Museum Development Yorkshire Case Study

Harewood House Trust – Market Research Project and Education Development

What was the issue?

Visitor numbers at Harewood had stagnated at 160,000 to 190,000 between 2014 and 2017, with visitor numbers and income beginning to fall. This was a trend that Harewood wanted to reverse by attracting new visitors and supporters, mitigating threats to the finances, and deepening Harewood's value to Yorkshire and their local community. MDY were able to provide assistance.

How did Museum Development Yorkshire help?

Harewood received an Implementation Fund Grant from MDY which enabled them to fund customer service training, market research, and development of their education programme. 37 members of staff, volunteers or trustees received training relating to audiences, including museum learners. Harewood has been able to develop or revise its Audience Development Plan, Social Media Plan, and Interpretation Plan. Furthermore, it has been able to improve its use of audience data to inform activities.

What happened?

The market research project funded by the Implementation Fund Grant from MDY provided new insights and a deeper understanding of Harewood's audiences and their interests. They now have insightful segmentation of the current and potential market. This has increased their level of awareness of the 'days out' market, identifying a potential audience of 8.6 million within 1.5 hours drive of Harewood. The research has identified the top three culture segments most likely to grow and they have detailed pen portraits of those segments. They are now reviewing their trading offer, have enhanced visitor experience staff training and have created a new Education Vision and Strategy, which includes a focus on health and wellbeing. The training provided to the Visitor Experience team will be used during the 2018 season

onwards to develop staff confidence and competence, thereby enhancing the visitor experience. Seasonal staff join the small core Visitor Experience team and need to receive intensive, specialist training to deliver the very best visitor experience. The team is now more confident and experienced in delivering this training and ongoing support for the seasonal staff. The MDY Health and Wellbeing Cohort delivered training to the Harewood Education Manager has inspired a completely new focus to the Harewood Education programme. The training has helped them to realise that Harewood's combination of heritage, culture and the outdoors makes it uniquely placed to make a positive impact on children and young people. As a result, the new Education Vision responds to the general rise of mental health issues, people's disconnect to nature, and the disparity in access to arts and culture. The improvements made are visible in the visitor numbers. 19,507 additional visitors were recorded, with an increase in school visits as well as an increase in the number of children visiting by 1104.

Find out more

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