



# MONDAYS AT THE MUSEUM



**Ravensknowle Park, Wakefield Road, Moldgreen, Huddersfield HD5 8DJ**



**[The Tolson Museum](#)**

## WHAT IS THE MONDAYS AT THE MUSEUM PROJECT ABOUT?

**Mondays at the Museum** is an innovative partnership that aims to **reduce health inequalities in areas of deprivation** by providing **accessible health and wellbeing activities and services** at the centrally located Tolson Museum.

Museum staff work together with Social Prescribers, Primary Care Networks (PCN) and Local Anchor organisations to **expand access to mental and physical health support outside of clinical settings**. The council-run **Tolson is uniquely** placed to **provide a welcoming space, accessible without stigma**. Activities provided include **Big Drum, Wellbeing walks, Yoga, Thai Chi, Flex and Stretch and Crafts** among many others. Mondays at the Museum is a **key example of the delivery of Kirklees Heritage Strategy approach to Heritage in Action**.

This project aims to **gather evidence of this model of working**, with the potential to **roll it out across the museums and galleries sector**, as part of the newly established **creative health system for West Yorkshire**.

**This co-creation project will collaborate with the Mondays at the Museum team to investigate:**



**The benefits** (e.g., social, physical, mental) of the Mondays at the Museum approach for both users and providers. This may include the collection of new data from participants, such as testimonials or stories in various media, or a deeper dive into existing monitoring and evaluation data collected by Mondays at the Museum to communicate or visualise the benefits in a different form.



**Developing creative activities/artefacts/approaches** that engage the museum collection around creative health and heritage. This will link to the development activities that bridge connections between creative health and heritage, to be tested out by participants.



**Investigating how this model may be rolled out to other locations** e.g., developing a toolkit for other museums and heritage sites to work in this way, exploring sustainable funding models, or how the programme feeds into existing local and regional strategies.

## HOW IS THE PROJECT BEING FUNDED?

The project has been funded through grants, the majority of which have been through the **Impact Accelerator Award programme**. Awarded by UKRI, these strategic awards provide funding to research organisations to use creatively for a wide range of impact activities.

## WHAT ASPECTS OF HEALTH DOES THE PROJECT ADDRESS?

The Mondays at the Museum project addresses **mental health, physical health, health inequalities, health prevention and social isolation**.

## WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT?

The Mondays at the Museum initiative **primarily benefits local residents in Kirklees, across all ages and abilities, who are experiencing challenges to their wellbeing**, including **mental health issues, social isolation**, or other related concerns. The cultural demographic is mixed. The majority ethnic group is white British, but also encompasses participants from European, Asian, South Asian and African-Caribbean communities.

**The toolkit being developed** will enable the Mondays at the Museum model to be rolled out across West Yorkshire's heritage sites, **ultimately expanding the reach and allowing more communities to benefit**.

## HOW DO YOU DEMONSTRATE IMPACT AND SUCCESS?

The success of the initiative has been demonstrated through **the collection of testimonials from PCN, Service providers, organisers, workshop facilitators, and participants in the activities**. A number of **workshops have also been conducted and analysed for their effectiveness and participant engagement**.

## HOW HAS THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S WELLBEING?

The workshops have helped staff and visitors see the collections in new ways, and they've brought together people across generations.

*"Leading the reminiscence workshops at Mondays at the Museum has been one of the most meaningful parts of my practice. I've seen how powerful memory can be when it's shared – not just as nostalgia, but as a way to connect people, boost confidence, and foster a sense of belonging. Each session brings moments where someone recalls a forgotten story or makes an unexpected connection – often sparked by an object, sound, or image. These small moments create real emotional impact. For many participants, especially those who are isolated or living with memory loss, the workshops offer space to be heard and valued. What's been especially rewarding is seeing how the museum becomes more than just a place to look at history – it becomes a space where history is lived and shared"*

-Charlotte Goldthorpe, Principal Investigator.

## WHAT KEY LEARNINGS HAVE EMERGED FROM THE PROJECT AND HOW ARE THESE INFORMING YOUR PRACTICE?

One of the most important insights to have emerged from the initiative is how **heritage can be a powerful vehicle for wellbeing**. However, this is dependent on the condition of heritage **being made personal, accessible, and social**.

The initiative has also observed that **low-pressure, informal spaces are crucial, and venue plays a key role**. The tone of the session matters just as much as the content. Accessible and adaptable spaces are essential for hosting a range of workshops and sessions, as well as for social prescribers.

*"People engage most meaningfully when they feel safe, welcomed, and not put on the spot".*

*"It's not an add-on, but a vital part of how museums can serve their communities".*

Finally, the initiative has highlighted the **importance of embedding this work into broader networks**, whether through **partnerships, referrals, or alignment with local health and wellbeing strategies**, to achieve reach and sustainability.

## HOW IS THE INITIATIVE ENSURING LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY?

**The toolkit is central to ensuring the long-term sustainability of this work**. It's designed not just as a set of practical resources, but as **a holistic model that other museums, heritage sites, and community spaces can adapt**. It brings together **key learning from the initiative**, from session planning and facilitation tips to guidance on partnerships, volunteer involvement, and wellbeing outcomes, **so that other venues and groups can confidently run their own version of Mondays at the Museum**. By embedding the values and structure of Mondays at the Museum into a flexible, user-friendly format, the **toolkit supports long-term impact beyond a single site**. It also **strengthens the case for future funding and integration into cultural and health-based services, positioning heritage spaces as vital contributors to community wellbeing**.

## MONDAYS AT THE MUSEUM FILM.



**View the short film about Mondays At The Museum  
HERE. - COMING SOON!!**



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