

Macclesfield Town Council

**Grant Funding to the Silk Heritage Trust  
Impact Report - March 2024**

Funding: - To support the 3 year project 'A Stronger Future: Developing the Silk Heritage Trust's vision for culture and heritage in Macclesfield'

Key delivery areas	Delivery in Quarter 1 Jan – March 2024
<p>1. Achieving substantial fundraising towards capital development and building improvements, as well as ambitious engagement projects</p>	<p>In this period The Trust has secured two small grants – £5000 from the Radcliffe Trust towards traineeships and volunteer development in Paradise Mill; and £5000 from the Arts Scholars Trust to work with children and young people to interpret the historic childrenswear collection. This will allow us to explore new and innovative ways to include the thoughts of children and young people in the interpretation. This will result in an exhibition of the collection on site and online, with childrenswear displayed across the Museum and Mill.</p> <p>The Director is developing a number of substantial grant applications:-</p> <p>To the Arts Council's MEND scheme for funding towards roof repairs at the Silk Museum – a Costed Conservation Survey has been commissioned towards this. EoI to be submitted by mid April – grant request likely to be c.£100k depending on Conservation Survey</p> <p>To the Arts Council's Unlocking Collections for £30k towards new interpretation and community engagement with Paradise Mill to strengthen the offer and relevance to local people. Application to be submitted by the end of March</p> <p>To the Headley Trust – to strengthen the Museum staff capacity for managing our heritage buildings. This will involve arranging visit to Macclesfield by the Headley Trust's Lead Executive in order to raise profile of the town's heritage with this funder</p>
<p>2. Making our buildings accessible to all</p>	<p>The reinstatement of the passenger lift now makes Paradise Mill accessible to all visitors, particularly those with mobility issues or visual impairment. We are now encouraging visits from disabled groups for whom the Mill has been inaccessible in recent years.</p> <p>Look Around Tours were held during half-term, to mark the reopening of Paradise Mill, by opening up the Mill to local people after the long closure. They took place on 17th, 21st – 25th February. The History Hunters and members of the Museum staff supported the Mill Guides in carrying out the Tours. Look Around Tours were an experiment to test new ways to engage new audiences for and raise the profile of the Mill.</p>

	<p>We are continuing to develop relationships with East Cheshire Eye Society to programme events for their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015</p> <p>ProjectInc – several of their neuro-diverse young members are completing work experience with us and have been involved with co-curation of exhibitions.</p> <p>JustDropIn – this charity support young people with their mental health. We co-run an annual writing camp and host their ‘Have your say’ consultation day.</p> <p>Body Positive – hold their ‘Tea &amp; Tattle’ sessions in our café for older members of the LGBTQ+ community.</p>
<p>3. Reducing the environmental impact and energy consumption in our buildings</p>	<p>We are currently reviewing energy providers across our buildings and monitoring energy consumption to reduce environmental impact.</p> <p>The application to the Arts Council’s MEND scheme for funding towards roof repairs at the Silk Museum is focussed on reducing energy consumption</p> <p>A Pending application to the Arts Council’s Capital Improvement Scheme will – if successful - significantly reduce energy consumption through improvements to obsolete lighting systems</p>
<p>4. Establishing strong local partnerships and buy-in to our vision with key organisations, communities, and stakeholders</p>	<p>The Trust is developing a strong partnership with the Silk Men Supporters Club to develop displays and exhibitions relating to the heritage of Football in Macclesfield, and its links with the textiles industry. This is connecting the Museum with new communities and stakeholders and will represent an important development in 2024.</p> <p>A fundraising event with Youth Fed for the Our Space project was hosted at the Silk Museum and connected the organisation new stakeholders.</p> <p>The Museum team is working very closely with Macclesfield Town Council’s Events Team in order to deliver creative activities that attract residents and visitors to the town centre. The Lantern Parade and Lunar New Year attracted 700 visitors to the Silk Museum. We have welcomed 500 visitors to the Museum and Mill over half-term. The Spider Man exhibition was extremely popular with local families.</p>
<p>5. Putting local people and local voices at the heart of engagement of the stories we tell of Macclesfield’s heritage</p>	<p>The Museum is continuing to develop work with our History Hunters group of local volunteers, who are exploring hidden histories in the Museum collections and archives – particularly exploring the role of women and young people in the silk industry.</p>
<p>6. Strengthening its financial resilience</p>	<p>The reopening of Paradise Mill is central to developing financial resilience across the Trust through Coach parties and Group visits. For 2024 we currently have 40 pre-booked visits of groups travelling to Macclesfield from</p>

	<p>across Shropshire, Lancashire and the Midlands, securing an income of at least £8000.</p> <p>The Trust is focussing on developing secondary spend from retail and catering in the Silk Museum, to ensure the financial return from the increase in visitor numbers.</p>
<p>7. Raising our profile, increasing audiences and participation in our work.</p>	<p>The Reopening of Paradise Mill has attracted significant press attention:</p> <p>I LOVE MACC  <a href="https://www.ilovemacc.com/2024/02/14/paradise-mill-to-reopen-this-month/">https://www.ilovemacc.com/2024/02/14/paradise-mill-to-reopen-this-month/</a></p> <p>MACC NUB NEWS  <a href="https://macclesfield.nub.news/news/local-news/paradise-mill-will-reopen-in-macclesfield-this-weekend-220645">https://macclesfield.nub.news/news/local-news/paradise-mill-will-reopen-in-macclesfield-this-weekend-220645</a></p> <p>MACCLESFIELD EXPRESS      21<sup>st</sup> February 2024      CHESHIRE LIFE      Due to be published in April      I TRAVEL WEEKEND      Due to be published on Easter Saturday      Place North West  <a href="https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/thing-of-the-week-340/">https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/thing-of-the-week-340/</a></p> <p>I Online  <a href="https://inews.co.uk/inews-lifestyle/free-half-term-activities-families-2883708?ico=related_article_inline">https://inews.co.uk/inews-lifestyle/free-half-term-activities-families-2883708?ico=related_article_inline</a></p> <p>Museums and Heritage Advisor  <a href="https://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/news/restoration-project-sees-historic-cheshire-silk-skills-revived/">https://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/news/restoration-project-sees-historic-cheshire-silk-skills-revived/</a></p> <p>BBC North West Tonight      The School of Textiles newsletter</p>