

Macclesfield Town Council
Grant Funding to the Silk Heritage Trust
Impact Report Quarter 1 2025

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 2025
1. Achieving substantial fundraising towards capital development and building improvements, as well as ambitious engagement projects	<p>The major headline is that we have been awarded a major National Lottery Heritage Grant to support the next phase of developing the Silk Museum & Paradise Mill.</p> <p>The Trust is extremely grateful to the Town Council for letters of support and for the revenue funding which helped demonstrate Macclesfield's commitment to the development of its heritage. We were also able to include evidence of support from local community groups and organisation.</p> <p>The overall project is £277000 and the grant is £227000 – the difference is made up of match funding from the grants we have secured over the last six months or so.</p> <p>We understand that it was an extremely competitive funding round, so it is a real vote of confidence in Macclesfield that we were successful. We were congratulated by the Lottery for the quality of the application.</p> <p>The project describes how the Trust will seek to develop Paradise Mill and the Silk Museum into a vibrant campus of economic activity, skills development and heritage participation to keep alive the stories and memories of Macclesfield as the centre of the nation's silk heritage. This is an 18-month project that seeks to transform the Trust into an organisation that is sufficiently skilled and financed, with adequate reserves and resources to better protect and make accessible nationally important collections, with audiences at the heart of planning.</p> <p>Strategic initiatives achieve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial resilience with increased voluntary and commercial income, a revised business plan and more supporters for future sustainability. 2. Organisational development with upskilled workforce, volunteers trained, endangered silk weaving skills preserved and stronger governance. 3. Audience development with new collaborations and digital marketing promoting a dynamic and inclusive offer, links with football and social heritage increase relevance for more and a wider range of visitors. <p>The Grant will enable us to recruit new staff to strengthen capacity at the Museum and Mill, in order to take these plans forward.</p>

	<p>The Trust is very keen to work closely with Macclesfield Town Council to ensure that plans fit closely with the strategic vision for the town's regeneration. We will want to organise consultation, discussion and planning sessions with Councillors and residents, so that these voices are at the heart of our plans.</p> <p>At the completion of the project, we hope to have a realistic and costed vision for developing the site as a major attraction for the town; but funding for an actually capital development is likely to follow on from this – so it is a long term initiative.</p>
2. Making our buildings accessible to all	Further information to be presented to Councillors at the meeting
3. Reducing the environmental impact and energy consumption in our buildings	Further information to be presented to Councillors at the meeting
4. Establishing strong local partnerships and buy-in to our vision with key organisations, communities, and stakeholders	Further information to be presented to Councillors at the meeting
5. Putting local people and local voices at the heart of engagement of the stories we tell of Macclesfield's heritage	Further information to be presented to Councillors at the meeting
6. Strengthening its financial resilience	<p>Data for 1 April 2024-31 March 2025 Total visitor numbers = 14,312 Total volunteer hours = 4,869.41 hrs Total retail spend = £41,187.96 Average retail spend per head = £2.88 Average total spend per head = £5.34 Total spend through the till = £76,389.45 Average Transaction value = £14.47 (+ £0.41 from previous year) Total number of transactions = 5,308 (up 34% from previous year)</p> <p>Impact of our Community Exhibitions Programme Visitor numbers to: East Cheshire Eye Society exhibition = 628 (12 days, 1 opening and workshops, 52.33 visitors per day average) £254.34 donations to Good Box for the period</p> <p>Ava Reid's exhibition = 207 (4 days, 1 closing party, 51.75 visitors per day average) £53 donations to Good Box for the period</p> <p>Scientific Rambles exhibition = 556 (8 days, 1 opening, 69.5 visitors per day average) £226 donations to Good Box for the period</p> <p>Mike Thorpe and his wife's 40th Wedding anniversary exhibition = 629 (7 days- opening and closing party, inclusive of plant sale figures, 89.86 visitors per day average) £90 donations to Good Box for the period</p>

	Recent Plant Sale = 159 (over 2 days, 79.5 visitors per day average) £35 donations to Good Box for the period
7. Raising our profile, increasing audiences and participation in our work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further information to be presented to Councillors at the meeting