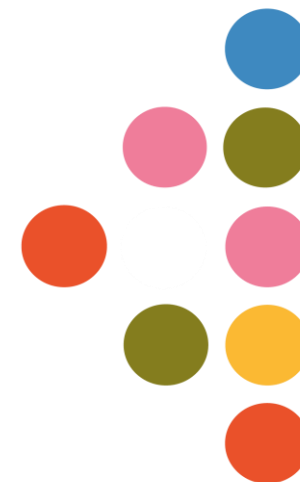


Report: Quarter 3 25/26

Date: 1st Dec 2025

1. Visitor Data
2. Curatorial update
3. Volunteer and staff update
4. Social Media update
5. Events
6. Exhibitions
7. Consultation update
8. Upcoming activities
9. Finances and grants
10. Additional updates



1. Visitor Data

Museum Visitors	Year to Date	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Full Year
24/25	9,761 (19 th Nov)	3942	3505	3464 (2314 same period)	3154	14065
25/26	10108 (19th Nov)	3809	4309	1990 (1st Oct-22nd Nov)		

School Visitors	Year to Date	Summer term	Autumn term	Spring term
24/25	1902	922	483	497
25/26	1321	824	679 bookings confirmed	295 bookings confirmed



1. Visitor Data

- School visit numbers very positive for this term. Bookings starting to come in for the Spring and Summer terms too. Launch of a new outreach offer linked to Ancient Egypt hoped to increase numbers further.
- Museum visitors for this quarter are down. This is linked to a reduction in the number of coach groups. Marketing resource has been put in place to improve this moving forward.
- The first Elmer weekend saw good visitor numbers and great engagement. This, twinned with the Christmas programme, is expected to boost visitor numbers for December.



2.1 Silk Museum Collections update

Full Council 15 12 25 Agenda 8.3

- Audited the **Godwin Collection – 34 Pattern Books**, a unique archive of working and middle class designs – all have no copyright issue for use in the future. Research is on going.
- **5 Research Visits** including another visit from Tristan Dot, a Cambridge University PHD student, an Egyptologist, a Stamp Collector and Weavers in residents.
- **History Hunters have spread the word** about the museum to external groups through 3 talks, 1 reminiscence sessions, 3 PR events, 2 internal events and 1 online exhibitions. They are also taking part in the GEMS project and have started recording Oral Histories.



2.1 Silk Museum Collections update

- **9 sets of objects donated** to the collection this year, such as a design archive from a young award winning designer – Connie Cooper.
- **Over 300 books have allocated for disposal** in the Library Collection. The Collection Policy will be reviewed by the board in January.
- **4 New videos** are being created of the working machinery as a guide to run them and for visitor information - available through QR codes in the museum.
- **A new Community display case** installed with a changing program to highlight community projects and stories, co curate displays.



See this machine in action:
BRAIDING MACHINE

Scan this QR Code using your phone's camera, or visit the link below on your internet browser.

SILK MUSEUM
www.thesilkmuseum.co.uk/machine-braiding-machine

2.1 Silk Museum Collections Christmas Events

We have built a Winter Wonderland in the Machine Gallery, including 12 Christmas Trees.

- **Festive Weaving Workshop 6th December** – SOLD OUT . As a result of its popularity we are looking at holding further workshops with Jackie Stephens in the New Year.
- **Father and Mother Christmas event 5th, 6th and 13th**. The event involves craft activities, a Christmas story, Victorian games and meeting Father Christmas – receiving a small gift – only if you have been good of course!
So far 90 children have signed up to see Father Christmas!!

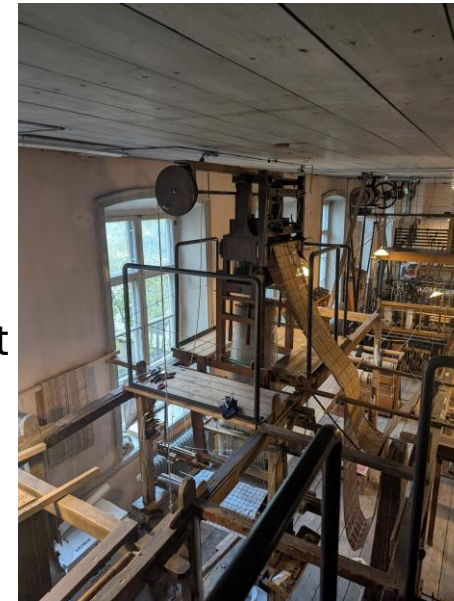
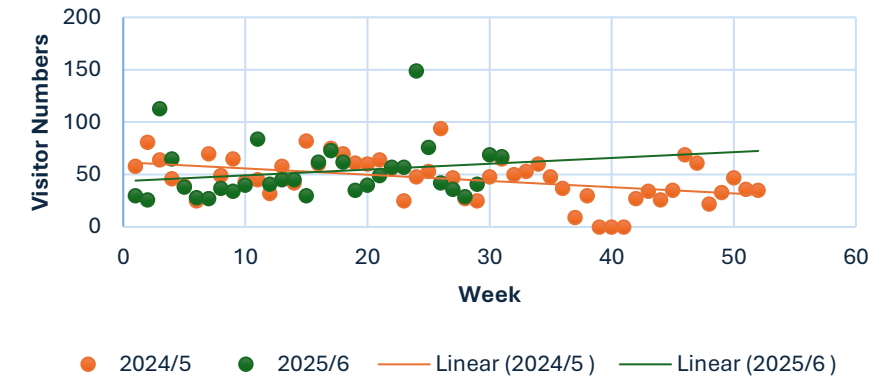
Any Help advertising Father Christmas event would be much appreciated.



2.2 Paradise Mill Update

- **Visitor figures to Paradise Mill** have been **increasing** throughout the year.
- We have seen an **increase in visitors** since Paradise Mill was featured on Channel 5's "**Britain's Most Scenic Counties: Cheshire**" on Friday 24th October. The episode is available to watch on catch up until **12th December**.
- Bryony Renshaw visited **K. A. Almgren Silk Mill and Museum in Stockholm** to find ways for us to **collaborate**. We are in talks to **combine knowledge** and accommodate their resident weaver on an **international exchange**.
- Work has begun on a **£4200 project** funded by the **Decorative Arts Society** to research **Macclesfield School of Art** and audit its collections ahead of the building's **150th anniversary in 2027**. Many of the students went on to work in Macclesfield mills, including **Paradise Mill**.

Weekly Visits Paradise Mill



2.2 Paradise Mill - Weavers

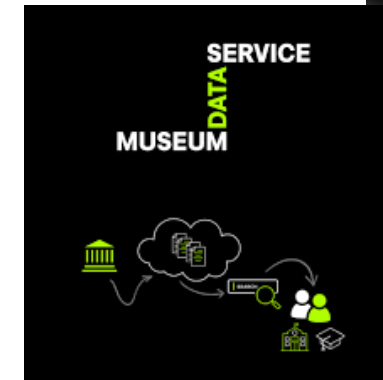
- Weavers **Bea Uprichard and Ruth Farris** were recently featured by **Selvedge Magazine** ahead of their winter fair. Bea and Ruth are **testing the financial viability** of establishing a weaving business in the mill and **will be selling their products at the fair and online.**
- **New weavers Halle Sivyour and Cecile Driver** have started **NLHF funded** placements to design and **weave a new fabric** on one of our Jacquard looms. They have been taking inspiration from our **World War 2 collection.**
- **Weaver in Residence Eleanor Godfrey** is due to finish her **Granada Foundation** funded residency in **December.** Her **exhibition** of new designs inspired by the ancient Egyptian collection finished on **21st November** and received **over 500 visitors.** She plans to **sell products** using her designs in the **museum shop.**



2.3 Update for Future Collections Projects & Exhibitions



- **History Hunters 3 Annies Display** in the Community Case – Feb – April. Planning on bringing out the Suffragist Banner to link to this display in March to link with International Womens History Month in March.
- **Jan** – Collections will be joining the **Museum Data Service**. This will add our collections to a wider museum collection platform, where visitors can search hundreds of Museum Collections in one place. We hope this will improve our profile and draw awareness to the collection.
- **Feb** – We will be joining **Bloomberg Connects cohort**. This app will improve visitor navigation on and off site to the museum, highlight collections and advertise events.
- **Feb** – We hope to be **joining Flickr**, where we will be sharing just our photographic collection. Again another way to improve our profile and widen the reach of visitor engagement.
- **Body Positive activities will begin around Macc Pride 2026** and prep for the Drag Exhibition in 2027 will start next year also.

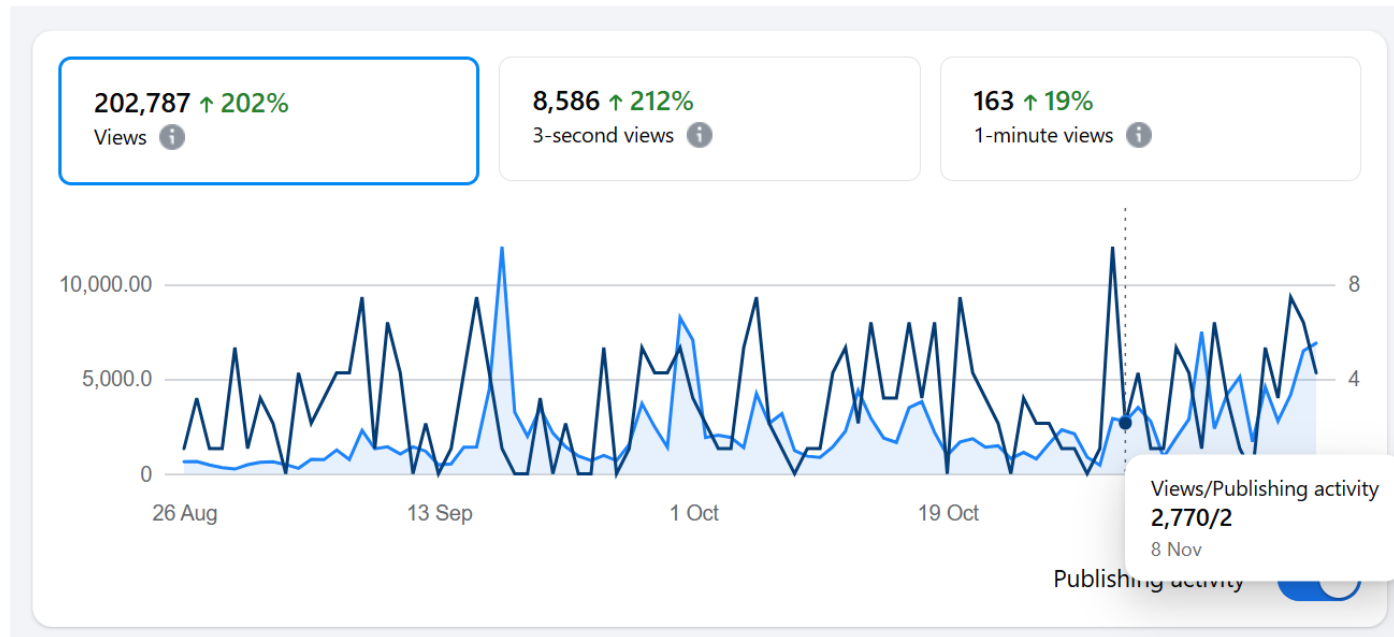


3. Volunteer and Staff update

- Volunteer hours (1st Oct – Nov 19th) - 578.50 (560.50 same period last year)
An **increase of almost 4%** on 2024. Value of **over £5,000** to the museum.
- Supported by Kids in Museums we are in the process of **recruiting 3 young trustees** (18-30 year olds) to our Board of Trustees. We have received 15 high quality applications and have arranged 6 interviews.
- New appointments:
 - Amy Bishop – Marketing & Communications Manager
 - Dr Clare Harding - Director



4. Social Media update



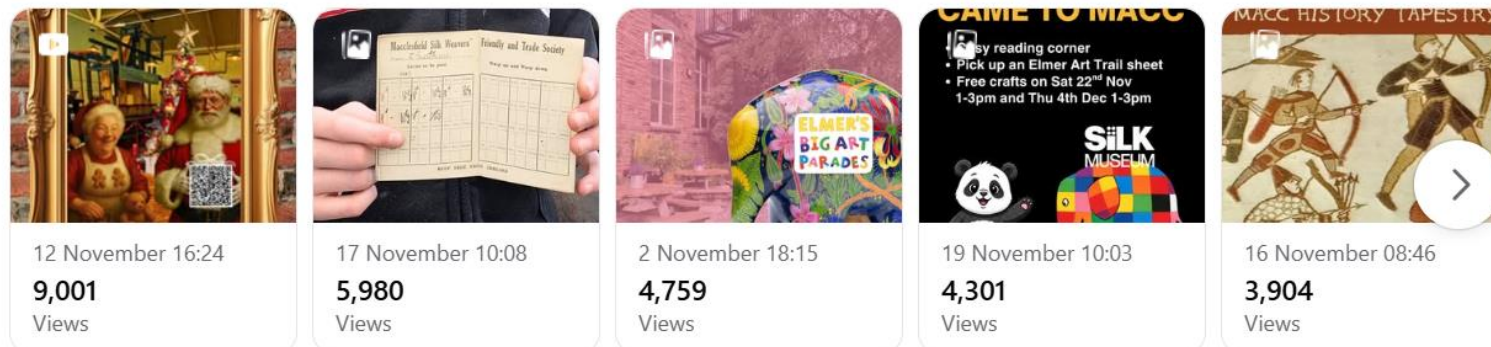
Views significantly increased over this period, and linger times.

Views highest when shared on local groups, especially Macclesfield Memories, linked to Town Council events, or stories of local people.

Engagement

“History coming back to life, it's brilliant stuff.”

“Great find and a lovely story too.”



5. Events update

Date	Event	Audience	Feedback / Comments
September '25	World Harvest Festival - workshops and 'Giant Vegetables' exhibition	Family audience	The vegetables are quirky! They are really bright and fun. Good connection with the plants in the garden too.'
September '25	Heritage Open Day	Adult audience	Over 100 people visited the mill on Heritage Open Day. Thank you to MTC for funding this event. It was a great opportunity to trial our new interpretation.
September '25	Dye Plant workshops linked to the garden	Adult audience (art workshop)	~60 people Being able to take plants directly from the garden and use them in the dyeing is really special. The smells and colours were fantastic.'
October '25	Consultation workshops on the future of the museum	Adults / teenagers	A report will be published at the end of January compiling the findings of the consultation. We have learnt a lot!
October half term	Creative Bumbles / Spooky story times	Families / Out of town visitors	80 visitors New and returning families. 'Storytime with Jodie was loads of fun, we can't wait to come back!



6. Exhibitions update

Full Council 15.12.25 Agenda 8.3
Wonderful variety of techniques. Colourful and inspiring!

Dates	Exhibition Title	Artists	Comments / Feedback
Sept / Oct	Growing Colour	Becca Smith / Ailsa Holland	Connected the dye garden with the museum. Used work from workshops. Scope for larger exhibition.
Nov / Dec	Let the Land Draw Itself	Becca Smith	Contemporary local artist. Launch event attracted 40 people including Manchester artist community.
Sept / Oct	The Fabric of Life	Cheshire Artists Network	A fascinating exhibition showcasing so many diverse skills.'
Nov / Dec	When Elmer came to Macc	Silk Museum	Tie-in exhibition linked to the Elmer Art Parade. The exhibition is being used as part of the ongoing consultation and will see the Panda tell a brief history of Macc.



7. Consultation update

The National Heritage Lottery Funded consultation about the future of the museum is underway, with a report due by the end of January.

- **Survey** – Internal survey = 55 participants / External survey = 135 participants (to date)
- **My Macclesfield Museum Competition** – entries from local school children, Just Drop In, Tytherington School, Hurdsfield Primary School and adult visitors. Winners to be announced next week.
- **When Elmer came to Macc** – Elmer sculpture in the Tunnicliffe garden, interactive exhibition in the upstairs gallery



8. Q4 Headline Community Activities

Coming up:

- **New exhibitions** – When Elmer Came to Macc / Just Drop In community portrait exhibition / Foremothers / Space 4 Autism ‘Inspired by...’
- Ongoing **consultation** linked to NHLF
- Launching regular **Home Ed** sessions
- Lantern Parade and workshops / Elmer workshops / Festive Tots (all linked with Town Council events)
- **Christmas** offer including art workshops, music and Father Christmas
- New for 2026 – programme of events around **Women’s History Month** (March ‘26)
- Involvement in **Textile Week** (Sept ‘26)
- Hosting **Bayeux Tapestry** project linked with New Macclesfield School of Art



8. Finance and grants

Finance update (Q1 + Q2) = 23,386.16 + 19,542.70 = 42,928.86

Time Period	Total number of transactions	Total retail spend	Average retail spend per head	Average total spend per head	Total spend through till	Average transaction value
2024/25	2919	21,668.58	2.91	5.73	42,675.67	14.69
2025/26	2923	16,906.83	2.08	5.29	42,928.86	15.19
Change	+0.14%	-21.98%	-28.5%	-7.68	+0.59%	+3.3%

Finance update (Q3 1st Oct – 19th Nov)

Time Period 1st October – 19th November	Total number of transactions	Total retail spend	Average retail spend per head	Average total spend per head	Total spend through till	Average transaction value
2024/25	770	5518.65	2.38	4.47	10,335.72	13.46
2025/26	839	6171.74	3.10	6.55	13,038.50	15.94
Change	+8%	+10%	+23%	+31%	+20%	+14%



9. External Funding Pipeline

Projects underway with funding from public bodies, Trusts & Foundations

Paradise Mill

£4200 Decorative Arts Society to research the Macclesfield School of Art Collection

£2500 Granada Foundation for Weaver in Residence

£28000 Arts Council Unlocking Collections for new interpretation

£125,250 Headley Trust Senior Curator Paradise Mill - 3 years

£29000 Pilgrim Trust for Cartwright & Sheldon collections care & development

Silk Museum

£15000 Foyle Foundation for developing Café as a Community Hub

£5000 Museum Development North to establish Audience Baseline

£165000 Arts Council Capital Improvement Programme – Jacquard Studio

£227,223 National Lottery Heritage Fund – Resilience programme





10. Additional Updates

*** We are so proud of our brilliant garden volunteers (Shirley, Diane, and Sue) whose hard work was rewarded by Britain in Bloom. They returned with a Gold Award (for the second year running!), and as Category Winners for Best Small Tourist Attraction! ***

*** Renovations are underway in our café! We can't wait to invite more people in for a higher quality experience ***

