



# Inspire

Annual Review  
2022/2023





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**'We had a wonderful experience visiting the museum this week. The welcome was brilliant ... the whole site is a great experience and staff are very helpful with information. All and all a visit to remember. We are coming back.'**

Frank and Frans, Denmark



# Welcome

## Welcome to the Royal Air Force Museum's review of 2022-23.

We were delighted that Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II granted a Royal Charter to the Museum in 2022, but of course were deeply saddened by her death in September. It was a privilege to receive our Royal Charter in the Museum's 50th birthday year, when we showcased fifty of the best art works from our collection in a new exhibition, 'To the Stars', at our London site. With generous support from the Art Fund, we were also thrilled to purchase and display a contemporary work by artist Fiona Banner alongside the exhibition.

As we emerged from Covid to the shock of Putin's invasion of Ukraine and a cost-of-living crisis affecting so many of our visitors and colleagues, the Museum was ever-conscious of our responsibility as a National Museum to collect and share today's RAF stories, and to ensure that we continue to offer a warm welcome for **everyone**. Visitors responded by returning in pre-pandemic levels to both our sites, and our team was also very busy engaging with people within communities and online.

2023 opened with the Museum leading a major campaign to save the Victoria Cross and medal bar of Squadron Leader Arthur Scarf from being exported abroad and lost to the Nation.



Warm thanks to all who helped keep the medals in the UK for people to see at our London site and online. As the only Victoria Cross awarded to the RAF for services in the Far East during the Second World War, it is a story that needs to be shared.

We also celebrated a very generous award from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the RAF Museum Midlands Development Programme. Developed hand-in-hand with our communities and wider partners, the plan comprises an immersive, globally relevant exhibition focusing on the RAF's role now and into the future; a state-of-the-art learning centre; and a new Collections Hub sharing our stored collections with the public for the first time, all set in beautiful outdoor spaces. The award initiated the development stage of the project, which is due to open in Summer 2027.

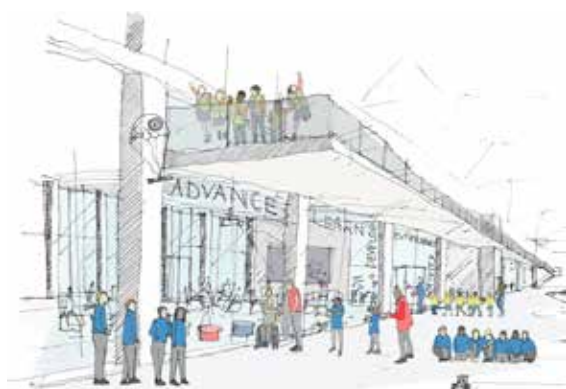
We hope you enjoy our review, do come to visit soon.

**Maggie Appleton MBE,**  
Chief Executive

**Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier GCB CBE DFC,**  
Chair of Trustees

# Inspiring everyone

Our RAF Midlands Museum Development Programme is underway with a boost from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the support of the public and other funders.



Initial concept design for the Midlands Development Programme

The project also has the financial support from other funders and our own ring-fenced reserves.

We are now well into the development phase, working with local communities to develop partnerships, programming and designs for the new spaces and exhibitions.

Building work is expected to start in early 2025, and to be complete by summer 2027.

## WORKING WITH US

**Quantity Surveyor:** Greenwood Projects

**Capital Project Manager:** Focus Consultants

**Exhibition Designer:** AOC Architects

**Multidisciplinary Team:** led by GSS Architects who have appointed, as part of their team:

- Landscape Architects: LDP Design
- Structural Engineers: SWJ Consulting Ltd
- M&E Consultants: CPWP or Couch Perry & Wilkes LLP

## FACT FILE

**£5M**

awarded by National Lottery Heritage Fund; towards

**£22.1M**

Development Programme

**'I'd like to thank The National Lottery Heritage Fund on behalf of all our staff, volunteers and Trustees for the generous support they have given us - we could not be happier! We're one step closer to our ambitious plans becoming a reality, made possible thanks to National Lottery players.'**

Maggie Appleton, RAF Museum CEO



## GOING GREEN

In line with our commitment to hit Carbon Net Zero by 2030, we are working with the RAF and their environmental think-tank to invest in sustainable technologies and operations. The new, greener landscape will provide an opportunity for carbon capture, increase biodiversity and create spaces where visitors, staff and volunteers can improve their physical and mental health.



## YOUNG DESIGNERS

As part of our co-creation programme, Level 5 and 6, BSc (Hons) Architectural Design Technology students from the University of Wolverhampton have been working on a module to design options for our new Collections Hub and the refurbishment of Hangar 1.

An exhibition of their work included their 2D plans, 3D models and a short film giving their thoughts on the project.



Students from the University of Wolverhampton present their designs to the Project Team

## TELLING YOUR STORIES

We aim to tell the RAF story in ways that better reflect the diverse communities across the region. Community partners will help us select the artefacts we display, ranging from aircraft to films. Multisensory display interpretation will be developed through co-design.

One of the first uses of the Collections Hub will be as a venue for volunteering, preparing objects for the new exhibition.

## IGNITING CURIOSITY

Learning spaces on site and online will encourage exploration of STEM (Science Technology Engineering Maths) subjects, including space and cyberspace, as well as art, history and design.



## MISSION ENGAGE

**'Taking a Spitfire out and about is such a great thing to do. People loved it! And to take the blue reconnaissance Spitfire was something a bit different. The Spitfire tour was a great opportunity to meet people from all around the Midlands. It gave me the opportunity to talk to people about the Museum and find out what kind of things they would like to see here.'**

Paula Kovacs, Community Engagement Manager, Midlands



## FACT FILE

<b>58</b> engagement events	<b>32</b> staff
<b>2,192</b> people engaged	<b>42</b> volunteers

## WATCH THIS SPACE!

Alongside a transformed site at Cosford we will have:

- an immersive exhibition exploring the RAF from 1980 to today
- a new Learning Centre
- a purpose-built Collections Hub to share our stored collection with the public for the first time
- a woodland landscape to encourage outdoor learning, discovery, and contemplation.

Find out more at [rafmuseum.org.uk/midlands/](https://rafmuseum.org.uk/midlands/)

# Integrity

For over 50 years we have been telling the story of the RAF and its people. In this first full year since Covid-19 lockdowns we were thrilled to see visitors return to share key anniversaries and events.

## ROYAL CHARTER UNVEILED

Our Royal Charter was unveiled by Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, Chair of our Trustees, and Martin Russell, Representative Lord Lieutenant of Barnet, in our newly refurbished entrance to Hangar 3 at RAFM London.

Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had granted our petition for a Royal Charter. On 1 April 2022, following a Transfer of Deeds, we moved from being an unincorporated charity to a new incorporated charity of the same name with Royal Charter status.



Members of the Museum's Senior Leadership Team at the Royal Charter unveiling

**'It is a great honour to have been granted a Royal Charter by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We are inspired even further to fulfil our dual role as a National Museum and community resource and partner, collecting and sharing globally significant stories for and with everyone.'**

Maggie Appleton, Chief Executive Officer, RAF Museum

## CORONATION QUIZ

The Coronation of HM King Charles III was marked with the creation of a Coronation Quiz featuring military music and marching, and a new blog post about the Royal aircraft in our collection.

## HIGH FIVES!

Five remarkable objects spanning our five decades were made available through our Adopt-An-Artifact fundraising project. They include a remarkable piece of footage showing Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II officially opening the Museum and the pen she used to sign the visitors' book that day. Adoptions have so far raised more than £300 with:

- The pen used by HM Queen Elizabeth II, adopted by Karen Phoenix
- Joseph Air Raid by Cyril Power, linocut, Mark Russell
- Boulton Paul Defiant I plane, Wilco Krul.







The RAF Museum London Art Gallery



The exhibition was a chance to share some hidden gems

## 50 AT 50

Our 50th anniversary was a golden opportunity to celebrate.

Our 'To the Stars' art exhibition at RAFM London features 50 works spanning the first days of Royal Flying Corps to today's Space Age.

It takes its name from the RAF motto, 'Per Ardua Ad Astra' (Through Adversity to the Stars). It shines a spotlight on women artists of the Second World War who were overlooked or sidelined by the War Artists' Advisory Committee. It also celebrates lesser-known official war artists.

## DATELINE 2072

A time capsule made by our apprentices has been buried at RAFM Midlands. It contains letters from our Chair of Trustees, Sir Stephen Hillier, and Chief Executive, Maggie Appleton, as well as birthday cards and site models designed by children, and copies of key documents.

**'We worked with local schools and asked colleagues what they thought would be important to pass on to the next generation, giving a snapshot of the Museum ... I can't help but wonder how we'll feel about these items in the future, and what will go into the next time capsule once these re-emerge.'**

Dierdre Cuss, RAF Museum Access & Learning Assistant



# Sharing

With visitor numbers back up to pre pandemic levels, we are proud to share our collections and stories. These highlight technical and engineering innovation, values and camaraderie, and tell of courage against all odds.



## WELCOME BACK!



**'This award will spur us on to continue making improvements to the overall Museum experience, ensuring that we remain a top attraction for many years to come. I can't think of a better way to celebrate our 50th anniversary than with a Gold Award!'**

Alan Edwards, RAF Museum Midlands Head of Operations



RAFM Midlands was awarded Gold in by VisitEngland and awarded a 2023 Travellers' Choice award winner as a top attraction by Tripadvisor.

## STRICTLY HANGAR 6

Fans of Strictly Come Dancing may have spotted Strictly Come Dancing filming Matt Goss in the Buccaneer at Hangar 6 - just one of several filming and corporate events we were able to host.



Gal Gadot filming 'Heart of Stone' at our Midlands site



Matt Goss at London

## FACT FILE

**427,980**

visitors RAF Museum London up 41%,  
89% enjoyment rating

**395,704**

visitors RAF Museum Midlands up 60%,  
91% enjoyment rating



**'We had an amazing day! The staff couldn't do enough for us, including helping us charge up an electric wheelchair that had ran out of power! One of our gents, Edwin, is 102 soon and flew some of the planes we had the pleasure in seeing, they treated him like royalty! We will definitely be bringing him back when the Wellington is ready!'**

Katie Griffin, one of four members of nursing home staff accompanying five residents



**'It was brilliant. We loved the make your own rocket'**

Family attending the weekend Festival of Flight in July



**'Our visit was fantastic! For some kids it was their first time in a museum ever. We all had an amazing time! Thank you so much for all your support.'**

Care4Calais Group Leader





## ONLINE

**Website** 5.4m unique visits up 74%  
**Facebook** 148k, up 8%  
**Instagram** 41k, up 5%  
**Twitter (X)** 61k, up 5%  
 All stats based on previous year

**f** Our top performing Facebook post marked the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War and received:  
**3,705** reactions,  
**189** comments  
**232** shares.

**📷** On Instagram, the Curator's Pick of The Coronation Review of the RAF on 15 July 1953 reached:  
**18,784** people  
**1516** likes  
**16** comments.



## NEW STORIES

### FACT FILE

**150**

new pieces of content for RAF Stories. They include interviews with the Air Bearer Party who carried Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's coffin.

## ON TOUR

### FACT FILE

**1,081**

items out on loan nationally and internationally; at

**151**

venues

These included:

- Cosford Air Show (14 objects including six aircraft)
- Pima Air & Space Museum (one aircraft: Yokosuka MXY7 Ohka - 65/O/879)
- Jet Age Museum (one engine).



Yokosuka MXY7 Ohka - 65/O/879

## MOVING OUT

- Folland Gnat F.1 (1987/0025/A): RAFM Midlands to Midlands Air Museum
- Gloster Meteor T.7mod (1986/0038/A) and Bristol Sycamore HR. 14 (84/A/1168): RAFM Midlands to Ulster Aviation Society
- De Havilland Dominie Mk II (69/A/218): RAFM Stafford to South Yorkshire Aircraft Museum.



Folland Gnat F.1



Gloster Meteor T.7mod



Bristol Sycamore HR. 14



De Havilland Dominie Mk II

# Passion

Our unique collections require incredible expertise and dedication from staff and from our amazing volunteers. Thank you everyone.

## SPITFIRE ON TOUR

Nothing can be more iconic than the Spitfire!

During the Second World War the Midlands was home to the largest Spitfire factory in the UK. RAF Castle Bromwich in Birmingham produced 11,939 Spitfires by 1945, more than half of the 20,000 produced across the UK.

Our Spitfire PR. XIX toured Birmingham, Telford, Shrewsbury, Coventry and Leicester to reach out to local communities.



**'This year the RAF Museum Midlands is celebrating 50 years of sharing RAF stories. The RAF has a long history in the Midlands, and we're excited to share these stories within the community, and with new audiences who may not have visited the Museum before.'**

Barry Smith, RAF Museum Director of Visitor and Commercial Development



## BRAVO NOVEMBER

The sole surviving Chinook helicopter flown by the RAF during the Falklands campaign is Bravo November. It went on display at RAFM Midlands for the first time, marking the 40th anniversary of the conflict alongside new displays online and onsite.

New stories include first-hand accounts from those who served on Bravo November. Four of her pilots have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.



**'As the Station Commander at RAF Odiham and the Commander of the Chinook Force, it has been a pleasure to be part of the dedication of this iconic aircraft. It is fitting that we remember her, and all who have served on her...'**

Group Captain Donal McGurk, Station Commander  
RAF Odiham



## HERE TO STAY!

Welcome Hosts are here to stay. The volunteer role was initially developed to support visitor confidence post Covid-19 lockdowns but excellent visitor feedback means they are now a permanent feature.

Volunteers also supported:

- the Spitfire Tour
- the Hendon Pageant to celebrate Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Jubilee
- the Family Festival of Flight weekend and a host of other on-site events.

Large Objects Volunteers worked on:

- the Nimrod, illuminating many of the consoles and instruments
- uncovered the RTTL boat ready for inspection
- checked and recorded firearm markings and identified ammunition
- prepared the Halifax for TV filming, inspected the Lancaster and did much more!

## FACT FILE

**384**

volunteers; contributed

**9,543**

hours



## ON THE MOVE

The Michael Beetham Conservation Centre at RAFM Midlands prepared large objects for the Museum's new Bomber Command and Interwar displays. Work continued on restoration and conservation of the Hampden, Lysander and Wellington aircraft for future display.

### FACT FILE

- 11** aircraft moved to or within RAFM Midlands
- 4** moved to RAFM London
- 2** moved to other locations



The De Havilland Dominie Mk II, De Havilland Gipsy Queen III and De Havilland Gipsy Six series III on their way to South Yorkshire Air Museum; gifted as part of the Collections Review process

## GREEN LIGHT

It was a busy year for our Collections Services:

### FACT FILE

- 1,737** objects assessed
- 4,270** objects analysed/evaluated
- 111** objects conserved
- 44** objects condition assessed.



Archive, Library and Research Manager, Nina Hadaway in our archive store



# #SAVETHESCARFVC

Thank you to all who helped us raise £660,000 to buy the Victoria Cross medal awarded to an extraordinary Squadron Leader. You have helped save it for the nation.



**'Not only does Sqn Ldr Scarf's Victoria Cross represent his outstanding devotion to duty and supreme act of bravery, it is also a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by all the British and Commonwealth service personnel fighting in the Far East, and the role of the RAF within this context.'**

Dr Harry Raffal, RAF Museum Historian and Head of Collections

**'A heartfelt thank you to every single person who supported us. Whether you donated or shared our campaign with friends and family, we couldn't have done this without you. To have raised £660,000 in three months is simply amazing.'**

Maggie Appleton, RAF Museum CEO

Arthur Scarf was the recipient of the only Victoria Cross (VC) awarded to the Royal Air Force for services in the Far East during the Second World War.

This incredibly rare medal, and Arthur's story, is a national treasure, representing an extraordinary and poignant story of great personal courage.

We had just a few months to match the auction bid placed by an overseas buyer after a temporary export ban was put in place.

A public appeal raised £250,000 which was matched by a contribution from our own funds, and a grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund.

**Only 22 Victoria Crosses were awarded to RAF personnel during the Second World War, and just one, for their service in the Far East - the VC awarded to Arthur Scarf.**

The medal is now on display in Hangar 1 at our London site.

Our thanks for generous support in helping ensure that this piece of our shared heritage and Scarf's story can be shared for generations to come also go to

- The Adrian Swire Charitable Trust
- Hobson Charity
- Richard Peskin
- Aerospace Museum Society
- RAF Historic Society.

## ARTHUR'S STORY



Scarf joined the RAF in 1936 aged 23. Three years later he was sent to Singapore with No. 62 Squadron to join the Forces in the Far East.

On the 9 December 1941 he led a formation of Bristol Blenheim aircraft in a daylight attack on Japanese forces occupying airfields in what is today Thailand. As Scarf became airborne, Japanese bombers swept over the airfield destroying every British aircraft on the ground.

Realising none of his squadron's aircraft had survived the bombing, Scarf was determined to complete his squadron's allotted task.

Flying low, he evaded attacks by Japanese fighters and released the bombs whilst his crew manned the machine guns. As he headed home more Japanese fighters attacked at close range.

Scarf was mortally wounded but continued to fly the aircraft while being held upright by his crew. He made a controlled crash landing without injury to his crew, but died from his wounds shortly afterwards.

The Victoria Cross was awarded posthumously in 1946 and presented to his widow, Elizabeth, by King George VI at Buckingham Palace.





## COMPELLING ADDITIONS

Other notable additions to our collection included:

- 26 large drawings by contemporary artist Fiona Banner, purchased with support from a £15,000 Art Fund Acquisitions Grant. The Bastard Word Studies comprises drawings of RAF and international military aircraft formed into the shapes of letters of the alphabet. The work symbolises how the failure of language and communication fuels conflict
- The papers of Warrant Officer Bill Beale, 1932-1961, relating to Cold War service and Operation Grapple
- 6,000 colour slides and other materials collected by Richard Wilson, one of the foremost aviation photographers of his generation. He worked closely with RAF Public Relations.



Fiona Banner's artwork on display in our London gallery



The Museums Spitfire tour across the Midlands attracted huge crowds

# Innovation

The Royal Air Force Museum never stands still - either in the collections we share or the attractions we offer.

## DROPPING IN

Paradrop - new Virtual Reality experience at RAFM Midlands - gives participants a multi-sensory flying experience as they 'glide' through the skies on an immersive paragliding flight, channelling their inner RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team abilities.

'We see attractions such as ParadropVR playing an important role in education and learning in the future, as it uses new technologies to deliver realistic RAF inspired experiences to our visitors. It will form part of our new Flight Zone, where visitors can also enjoy a range of virtual flying experiences.'

Barry Smith, RAF Museum Director of Visitor and Commercial Development



## EXHIBITIONS AT THE READY

New Bomber Command and Interwar exhibitions at both Museum sites are opening in 2023-24.

This meant hanging the Avro Rota as an eye-catching welcome to our planned Interwar exhibition at RAFM London.

A Second World War Vickers Wellington bomber, one of only two remaining, has been restored to its former glory after more than a decade of conservation at the RAFM Midlands. The exhibition marks the 80th anniversary of the 'Dambusters' raid. New displays explore the complex Bomber Command story in an interactive and engaging way.



Uniforms on display in our new Bomber Command exhibition



The Avro Rota is now suspended from the ceiling of our Hangar 3 entrance in London



## WELCOMING ALL

**'We're really excited about becoming accredited, but this isn't the end of the story. We're continuing to assess and change how we work in order to make us even more dementia friendly.'**

Toni Donston, Access and Learning Officer and Rhiannon Watkinson, Community Engagement Manager on RAFM London becoming accredited as a Dementia Friendly Venue.



Staff at London celebrate our accreditation as a Dementia Friendly Venue

## SUPPORTING ALL

- RAFM Midlands hosted its first Itfar event – the fast-breaking evening meal of Muslims in Ramadan - in collaboration with Equalinks. More than 100 people attended. For many it was their first visit to the Museum.
- RAFM Midlands became the first Midlands Museum to sign the Care Leavers Covenant to support young people leaving the care system.
- RAFM London supported pupils who receive benefit-related free school meals. We provided engaging and healthy activities during the school holidays in partnership with BACE Holidays. The scheme is organised and run by Barnet Council and Young Barnet Foundation and fully funded by the Department for Education.

**'We are keen to harness the RAF Museum collection for everyone's inspiration, learning and enjoyment and this Memorandum of Understanding underlines our intent and formalises our partnership and friendship.'**

Maggie Appleton, RAF Museum CEO, on celebrating Interfaith Week by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Telford & Wrekin Interfaith Council.



Cllr Raj Mehta, Chair of Telford & Wrekin Interfaith Council, with our CEO Maggie Appleton

# Relevance

The stories we tell and the incredible technologies on display are inspiring new generations and engaging more communities.



## SMASHED IT!

We smashed our targets for learners at both sites!



**'The workshops were excellent - the children were engaged from start to finish. The content enriched their understanding of WW2 and we loved how hands on the sessions were.'**

Year 6 Teacher, on Battle of Britain (Online)



**'Watching the application of skills and stepping-up into roles they often do not assume in class was tremendous.'**

Year 4 Teacher on Wartime Classroom (Onsite)



## FACT FILE - LONDON

**580** school visits (up 35% on 2020-2021)

**40,316** learners (target: 31,000) of whom:

**34,244** were students in education:  
89% visited, 8% online,  
3% outreach activities

**6,072** informal learners

**91%** rating the overall learning experience as 'good' or 'excellent'

The London Access and Learning Team has been granted the Sanderford Education Award for their innovative work on heritage education.

## FACT FILE - MIDLANDS

**549** school visits (up 35% on 2020-2021)

**40,371** learners (target: 28,000) of whom:

**31,730** were students in education: 70% visited,  
5% online sessions,  
27% outreach sessions

**100%** rated teaching staff as 'good' or 'excellent'



## STAAR PERFORMANCE

- **353** students applied for our STAAR programme (SummerTime Advanced Aerospace Residency)
- **39** students took part, with four allocated slots from the Jon Egging Trust Blue Skies Programme.

Now in its fifth year, this ground-breaking programme works in partnership with RAF Cosford and is sponsored by Northrop Grumman and the Northrop Grumman Foundation.



**'The Royal Air Force is proud to be working in partnership with the RAF Museum to provide such an exciting free opportunity for over 1000 young people to explore the opportunities STEM has to offer.'**

Wing Commander Russ Barnes, RAF Youth STEM



**'Overall, I really enjoyed the entire experience as I got to work with other people that I didn't know beforehand, along with very enjoyable activities that taught me a lot and were educational along with being fun.'**

Student feedback



## HANDS ON WITH STEM

- More than **1100** pupils and home educator learners took part in the **Forces in STEM** (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) event. Activities were devised by companies, universities, RAF and the RAF Museum in partnership with the RAF Youth and STEM team.
- **225** students from over **24** schools took part in the **First UK Robotics** challenge competing for a place in the final in the USA.
- Teams of students were cracking codes and flying drones as they took part in **Op System Secure**, a special STEM day written and delivered by the Midlands Access and Learning team for the **Aero Society**.

## COMMITTED TO COMMUNITIES

We are growing and evolving community engagement from the Care4Calais refugee crisis charity to the growing partnership with the Royal British Legion (Network for Carers) which has gone from strength to strength.



**'Age UK Barnet have a wonderful collaboration with the RAF Museum. A series of informative and entertaining talks for our clients has enriched their lives, helping them to engage with community activities and preventing isolation.'**

Helen Nicolaou, Age UK



# Excellence

Everything we do is underpinned by six guiding values: Integrity, Sharing, Passion, Innovation, Relevance and Excellence.

## ACCREDITED

**'Accreditation demonstrates that the Museum is fit for the future and taking all the right steps on its journey to raise its professional standards, develop its engagement with people and manage its nationally important collection.'**

Adam Shepherd, Head of Collections Services as we were awarded Accredited Museum status by Arts Council England becoming accredited as a Dementia Friendly Venue

## MOVING TO CARBON NET ZERO

RAF Museum has pledged to match the RAF's Carbon Net Zero 2030 target.

Highlights this year have included\*:

- 15% reduction in waste generated
- 72% of waste recycled – 2% above target

\* Measured against the Greening Government Commitments (GGC) 2021–2025 and against 2017–2018 baseline

From May 2022, we started recording food waste and are partnering with our contract catering partners to reduce food wastage.

## SILVER AWARD

**'We are particularly proud of our staff team who have served in the armed forces or who currently serve as reservists, and the Silver Award is a testament to our commitment of support as a national museum.'**

Kam Sandhu-Patel, RAF Museum Head of HR and Volunteering on news of our Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Silver Award. It recognises our support of the Armed Forces Covenant.

## ENCOURAGING DIVERSITY



We became members of The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei), a UK-based, not-for-profit organisation that helps employers build and maintain diverse teams and inclusive cultures.



Paula Kovacs and Amy Pitchford join other winners of the MoD ERS Silver Award

## APPRENTICESHIPS FINALISTS

Our apprentice scheme was launched in 2005 at our Michael Beetham Conservation Centre and includes Heritage Aircraft Conservation & Restoration, Aircraft Carpentry and Welding & Fabrication.

**'I am proud that our Apprenticeship scheme is being recognised ...There are not a lot of Apprenticeship schemes where one minute you are restoring an undercarriage door from a Bristol Brigand, and preparing aircraft for exhibitions, and the next minute you're building a Spitfire.'**

Darren Priday, Manager, Michael Beetham Conservation Centre on hearing we are finalist in the Nachural Awards for Promoting Apprenticeships



RAF Museum Apprentices assist with the Wellington move

## RESEARCH

219 researchers hosted in our Reading Room  
3,927 enquiries answered

Doctorial projects

- continued supporting an existing doctoral student
- began supervision of three new doctoral projects
- secured funding for a further doctoral project 2023-24.

Lectures were offered in a hybrid format (virtually and in person) to the Royal Aeronautical Society with additional Air Power lectures with Lancaster University Centre for War and Diplomacy, the University of Wolverhampton, and at our Midlands site.

We also:

- delivered papers and talks at national and international conferences
- hosted membership and stakeholder events.

## CONGRATULATIONS

To:

- Jack Read, University of Birmingham, winner of the Royal Air Force Museum Masters Prize for his dissertation, 'Seven men against the Reich': How was aircrew cohesion developed and sustained within RAF Bomber Command during the Second World War?'
- Matthew Bruce, Staffordshire University, winner of the Royal Air Force Museum Undergraduate Prize for a collection of essays on 'Issues in European Security, Intelligence in Peace and War, and Conflict Analysis'.



Jack Read



Matthew Bruce

# Financial review 22-23

The RAF Museum's Annual Report and Financial Statements 2022-23 were approved by the Board of Trustees July 2023 and certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament with an unqualified audit report. The full report is submitted to the Charity Commission and is available on the RAF Museum website.

In this first full year of opening since the Covid-19 pandemic we are pleased to have achieved our overall target of breakeven with a small operational surplus. Total income for the financial year 2022-23 amounted to £19,854,000 (2022: £15,179,000).

The increase year-on-year related to higher trading income at both sites and £3,750,000 funding from our MOD sponsor body, the RAF, to deliver planned essential building works and support exhibition projects.

Turnover amounted to £4,035,000 (2022: £3,031,000). The increase on 2022 (and corresponding increase in cost of sales) was mainly due to the impact of higher visitor numbers on commercial activity.

The Museum is fortunate to be in a relatively stable financial position, partly because we are 70% funded through Government Grant in Aid, and partly because we have a reserves policy in place to mitigate risk and build available funds for delivery of Strategy 2030.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Chair of Trustees

Air Chief Marshal  
Sir Stephen Hillier  
(appointed 21 March 2022)  
John Banks  
Laurie Benson  
(Resigned December 2022)  
Dr Carol Cole  
David Cooper  
Dr Rodney Eastwood  
Jonathan Field  
Matthew Gilpin  
Waseem Mahmood  
Julie McGarvey  
Air Marshal Peter Ruddock  
Nick Sanders  
Helen Selby  
(Resigned March 2022)





## LOOKING AHEAD

Continuing challenges are anticipated to retention and recruitment as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, mitigated by an acknowledged pride in working for the Museum, a clear commitment to investing in our staff team and the development of a dynamic, diverse and collaborative culture.

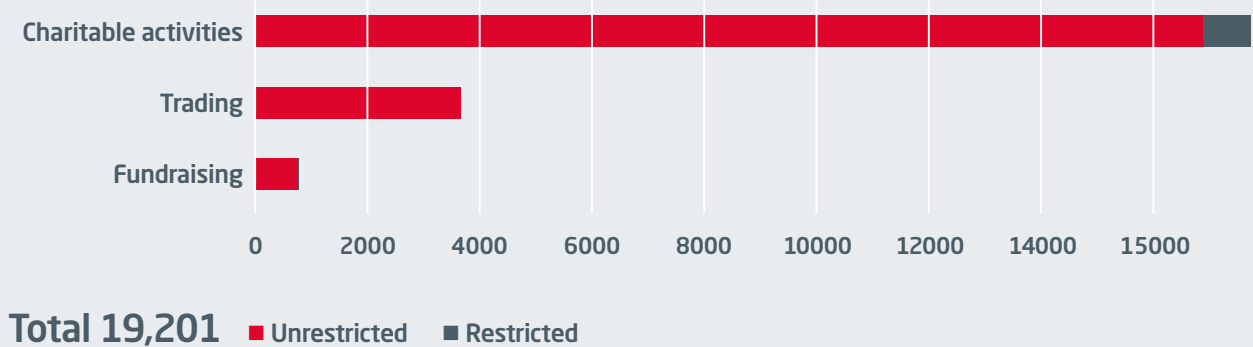
There is also pressure on Government funding and funding from trusts and foundations. RAF Museum is acutely conscious of the need to be agile in its approach and to build financial resilience against the background of a challenging economic landscape, high levels of inflation, the need to continue to rebuild visitor confidence.

To achieve our Strategy 2030 ambitions we must grow our commercial and fundraising success significantly.

## Income (£'000s)



## Expenditure (£'000s)



## PROPERTY VALUES RISE

The Museum's property assets are revalued on a quinquennial (five-year) basis. A revaluation of both the freehold (London) and leasehold (Cosford and Stafford) properties as at 31 March 2023, have seen a total adjustment for recognised gains of £17,095,000. These are reflected in the year-end accounts.



The new Astra Training accommodation block

## RAF100 APPEAL

This was formally dissolved on 4 April 2023. Funds raised, £2.5 million, were shared equally between the appeal parties in 2019-20 (RAF Museum the Royal Air Force, the RAF Benevolent Fund, RAF Association and the RAF Charitable Trust). An additional £0.5 million grant was awarded in 2021-22 to fund the new Astra training accommodation block at RAF Cosford, which will enable the growth of STEM outreach work with young people there.

## FUNDRAISING

Entry to the Museum is free to the public but fundraising remains an important aspect of our business plan. We are a member of the Institute of Fundraising and a registered member of the Fundraising Regulator. We work to the Fundraising Code and Promise set out by the Regulator and are signed up to their Code of Practice.

### ALL OUR FUNDRAISERS

£118.5k was raised in onsite donations

- £80,544 from our Goodbox machines across both sites (£50,895 in London; £29,649 in Cosford)
- £39,700 from cash donation boxes (£18k in London; £21k in Cosford)

And more was raised from off site events. Thank you every penny counts!

- For instance:
- More than 470 Chinook Challenge participants, walked, ran or cycled 100km raising nearly £10,000
- 64 artefacts were adopted.



Participants at the Chinook Challenge

## OUR DONORS



The Locker Foundation

The David Pearlman Charitable Foundation

Bomber Command Association

### Corporate Supporters

- BAE Systems
- Northrop Grumman
- MBDA
- Mars Wrigley

### The founding members of our Giving Circles programme

- David Richardson
- Richard Holman

### Charitable Trusts, Foundations, and Statutory Bodies

- Air Command
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- The RAF Museum American Foundation
- The National Heritage Memorial Fund
- Art Fund
- Shropshire Council
- The Swire Charitable Trust
- The Rigby Foundation

- The Locker Foundation
- The David Pearlman Charitable Foundation
- Bomber Command Association

### Continued Support

- Sir Lloyd Dorfman (the Dorfman Family Charitable Trust)
- Paul Phillips (the Philips and Ruben Charitable Trust)
- Malcolm Carter (the Locker Foundation)
- John Mars

### Legacies

From the Estates of:

- Peter Douglas Jerden
- Francis Patricia Hill
- Betty Tildsley

and others whose families wish to remain anonymous.

**THANK YOU TO  
ALL WHO HAVE  
SUPPORTED US**





# In pictures

2022-2023 saw a joyous return on site to many events that were cancelled over the past two years during the Covid pandemic. Many more events have also been introduced.

## BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND



### Spitfire 10k

Race with over 1,500 participants over both sites on August Bank Holiday weekend.



### The Spitfire Scramble

Taken by over 620 people.



### Vintage and Handmade Festival Midlands

From vintage retailers and craft stalls to live music from the 1920s, 30s, 40s, 60s, 70s alongside, vintage cars and caravans and re-enactment groups.



### Outdoor Cinema

At RAFM Midlands launched with Top Gun followed Grease, Elvis and Encanto while at London there were six screenings of Moana and other Disney classics.



### Pillows and Pilots

Sleepover events enjoyed by Guides and Scouts.



### Cosford Food Festival

Enjoyed by 10,000 families and foodies. Foodie stories on the Hercules and a rationing activity linked back to the RAF sat alongside 100 artisan producers and street food vendors.



### Large Model Air Show

Hundreds of models piloted by some of the UK's best model flyers at Cosford and watched by 3000 visitors.



### Summer Reading Challenge

Our London team partnered with Barnet Libraries to launch their reading challenge.

## NEW FOR THE YEAR



### Up an' at 'em!

Future pilots aged four and over were invited to train like a Second World War RAF pilot at the RAF Midlands during the Easter school break!



### Summer picnic

The Grahame Park Independent Living Group included music from a live band.



### Cuban Missile Crisis

brought to life by re-enactors marking 60 years since the Soviet Union and the United States came close to war.



### #ThanksToYou

We took part in National Lottery Open Week with special offers to players to recognise the £30m raised for good causes every week by players.



### Battle of Britain Proms

At the RAFM Midlands enjoyed by over 2000 people.



### HM Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee

was marked with a Royal Trail which was created by our Access and Learning Team which involved those objects in our collection at each site which have a Royal connection.



## ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE



### Key Stage 3 Glider Challenge

90 students joined us on site at RAFM Midlands for the final of the Glider Challenge. 540 students joined us nationally online.



### Youth Panel

The Museum's Youth Panel spent a week in residency in London, where they scripted and produced a new display for Hangar 6 – 'RAF Net Zero 2040'.



### Engineering UK Robotics Challenge

Cosford welcomed 120 students for a day of STEM activities.



### Scouts Air Researcher Activity Badge

We welcomed over 700 scouts to our award-winning take over days, sponsored by RAF Youth STEM.



### The Great British School Trip

Our Midlands teams hosted schools and filming for the launch of a Hyundai-funded programme. The programme will see 25,000 young people get out on inspirational school trips, funded through bursaries.

## MARKING MOMENTS



### Children's Art Week

London saw drop-in workshop for families as children created a RAF uniform past, present or future for their very own peg doll.



### Black History Month

Featured Pilots of the Caribbean and Flying Colours workshops. Jamaican RAF Story videos were offered to schools for free and we worked with the youth organisation Urban Flyers.



### Commonwealth Games

To mark the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, our Adopt an Artefact initiative added:

- the Cranwell Boys' Wing Sports Cap worn by the apprentices at RAF Cranwell in the 1920s
- the Physical Training Instructor Badge, circa 1923-1949.



## RECOGNISING AND REMEMBERING



### No 601 (County of London) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force

Was presented with its new Squadron Standard by the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston, at RADM London, which was home for the squadron.



### Armed Forces Day

The London Borough of Barnet marked Armed Forces Day with a parade and flag raising ceremony in partnership with the RAFM London.



### Service of Remembrance

The RAFM Midlands held a Service of Remembrance, supported by RAF Cosford personnel and with a bugler sounding 'The Last Post', followed by two minutes of silence.



### Meaning, Memory and Misremembered Past

This year's annual conference Meaning, Memory and Misremembered Past was delivered by International scholars in person and remotely. Professor Richard Toye gave the keynote address.

- 65 attended in person
- 202 attended online
- 181 watched the recording.

## HOUSEKEEPING AND IMPROVEMENTS

A specialist team of dustbusters with a head for heights were called in to spring clean aircraft, including a Vulcan bomber, at RAFM Midlands.

While much of our Development work is around the Inspiring Everyone RAF Museum Midlands there was plenty of work going on in London:

- Hangar 3 foyer refurbishment
- upgrading glazing around the historic colonnade of Hangars 3 and 4
- concept design proposal for a commercial zone and a new Research Centre
- redevelopment of our immersive learning spaces.





**Royal Air Force Museum London**

Grahame Park Way,  
London NW9 5LL

020 8205 2266

[london@rafmuseum.org](mailto:london@rafmuseum.org)

[rafmuseum.org](http://rafmuseum.org)

Registered Charity No. 1197541

**Royal Air Force Museum Midlands**

Lysander Avenue,  
Cosford TF11 8UP

01902 376 200

[midlands@rafmuseum.org](mailto:midlands@rafmuseum.org)

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