



## **Background to Eyam Museum**

The foundation of Eyam Museum was inspired by Clarence Daniel, a lifelong resident of Eyam, who collected local fossils, minerals, archaeological material, with various documents and papers relating to the village and its history, which he displayed in his home. He died in 1987, bequeathing his collection to Eyam Village Society, the local civic society, members of which formed Eyam Museum Limited as a charitable organisation in 1989 and began to seek a suitable building.

In 1994 Eyam Museum was opened on the current site, a former Methodist chapel. Much of the building adaptation work was carried out by the founders themselves, with other volunteers cataloguing the collection under the guidance of the then Derbyshire Museums service. Despite being a small, volunteer-run museum, it always sought to aim for professional standards. We have maintained our Accreditation status within the Arts Council England scheme since its inception, recently renewed in 2023.

Although relatively small in terms of building footprint and infrastructure (a chart showing the staffing structure of the museum is provided below), our visitor numbers are considerably high; we have averaged more than 30,000 visitors over the past several years and have now slightly exceeded our pre-Pandemic figures. Our financial position is strong, with large reserves. Our income is derived from admissions, and our [retail operation](#) has flourished in recent years, with an increasing range of quality products and price points and an emphasis on local, independent suppliers.

Since 1994, there have been some minor additions to the building and a small number of changes to the internal configuration, but apart from a substantial temporary exhibition to commemorate the centenary of the First World War, there have been few changes to the core of the exhibition. In recent years, several consultants have been commissioned to advise separately on access, interpretation and other areas of audience development. Trustees acknowledge the need for a major redevelopment over the next 3-5 years, the first stage of which is the Options Project detailed below.

In the interim period, a refurbishment project was completed over the winter of 2022-3, to open up the ground floor entrance and shop area and to create a new temporary exhibition space. New family-friendly interactive elements were incorporated into the main exhibitions and the first new [temporary exhibition](#) was opened in July 2023, showcasing items from the collection that had not previously been displayed. This followed a successful application to Arts Council England's Unlocking Collections fund. Since 2020, the museum has been successful in a number of modest grant applications, which have enabled greater staff capacity (now mainstreamed) and new project development and partnerships.

Over the past two to three years, the Trustees have undertaken a skills audit and a review of organisational health and effectiveness as a new vision for the future has been defined. A new Chair was appointed in October 2023 and further recruitment of new Trustees in 2024 has led to a broader range of expertise on the Board.

## Options Project

In June 2024 we were awarded a grant of £72,996 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to commission an extensive consultancy project to appraise and cost out various options for a significant redevelopment of the museum. A tender for this work will be awarded in October. The consultancy will review all aspects of the museum's operational model, including audience development, use of the building, interpretation and organisational infrastructure.

## Role of Museum Manager

This is a new role for the museum, building on various equivalent predecessor versions of the post. There is no existing post-holder, giving a great opportunity for the successful candidate to make the role their own. This is an exciting time to join Eyam Museum, as it enters a key transitional period in its development as an organisation.

## Staff structure

*Provisional reporting lines, to be confirmed after appointment*

