

How do you know how well your museum measures up to the Hallmarks?
These indicators can help you think about how your museum is doing.
There are more suggestions on the AiM website at www.aim-museums.co.uk



**Association of
Independent
Museums**
Helping Heritage
Organisations Prosper

1 PURPOSE

- Organisation has a clear written purpose or set of goals
- Decision-making always links back to the purpose
- Staff and volunteers feel motivated by the purpose
- The purpose remains relevant as circumstances change

5 FINANCE

- Diversifies and increases income or cuts costs e.g. Gift Aid, AiM Energy Action Group
- Has a clear business plan which is used to manage activities and finances over a one to three year cycle
- Trustees consider finances at every meeting
- Senior staff or volunteers are confident about financial planning and management

2 LEADERSHIP and CULTURE

- Leadership is open, accessible and willing to listen
- Staff/volunteers work across 'departments', not in 'silos'
- Successes and improvements are celebrated, failures reviewed and lessons embedded from both
- Suitable performance indicators are shared regularly with volunteers and staff
- Makes changes and adapts to improve the organisation and its outcomes

6 COLLECTIONS

- Seeks, secures and maintains appropriate national standards in the care of its collections
- Actively seeks to protect its collection
- Actively seeks to maximise access to the collection

3 GOVERNANCE

- Signs up to and practises the AiM 10 Golden Rules of Good Governance
- Board has shared understanding of the museum's strengths and weaknesses
- Actively seeks to refresh membership of the board and its committees
- Benchmarks with Charity Commission guidelines

7 VISITOR FOCUS

- Uses AiM Visitor Verdict, or other research and monitors and discusses the results
- Takes part in Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme, Welcome Host or similar
- Frequently assesses and improves the visitor experience

4 INNOVATION and RISK

- Identifies and tries new ideas and innovations
- Holds a simple register of risks that are rated and reviewed on a regular basis
- Identifies its assets and seeks to maximise them
- Does not hesitate to seize any opportunity that offers itself

8 AWARENESS and NETWORKS

- Membership of AiM, and other relevant organisations
- Works in practical partnerships with others when useful
- Trustees and senior staff or volunteers consider the external environment and ask 'what's next' on a regular basis

The AiM Hallmarks of Prospering Museums

September 2016

A framework that brings together the key characteristics and behaviours that make heritage organisations prosper and thrive



The AiM Hallmarks of Prospering Museums

The UK boasts some of the best museum and heritage experiences in the world, sharing a rich range of stories, collections and historic sites with as many people as possible, in fun and exciting ways.

Many of these organisations are independent-thinking, ready to try new things, resourceful and passionate.

They benefit from the insight of people from a wide range of backgrounds and with varied skills and experiences.

The AiM Hallmarks share the experiences of two generations of leaders of these independent and imaginative museums and heritage organisations, along with respected current research.

This framework combines the fruits of that passion and experience, and helps enable every organisation, from the largest to the smallest, the longest standing to the youngest to grow stronger – to prosper.

PURPOSE: You have a clear, compelling and people-oriented purpose (or charitable goals) that is shared by everyone in your organisation. You actively use it to keep your organisation on course as it flexes and adapts to changes.

LEADERSHIP & CULTURE: The leadership of your organisation is clear, directed, delegates freely and fosters a positive culture that is open to new ideas and ready to seize opportunities. Your organisation is independent-thinking and entrepreneurial. It is focused collectively on outcomes. Key information on performance is shared within the organisation.

GOVERNANCE: All trustees are proactive advocates for the organisation and its purpose. They focus on strategic and significant issues. They avoid conflicts of interest and always wear only one hat at a time. The Trustees, and senior staff or volunteers understand their different roles and work well together towards the purpose.

INNOVATION & RISK: The organisation encourages innovation and creative thinking. It adapts, invests and takes planned risks, in order to find new and better ways to achieve its purpose. No one accepts that the status quo is fixed and unchangeable.



FINANCE: The organisation nurtures a diversity of income sources. Some of these are predictable and it has sound business planning skills. All leaders understand the key drivers of their business model. The organisation actively identifies, develops and utilises its assets to generate income in order to fulfil its purpose.

COLLECTIONS: The organisation actively seeks to understand what does or does not constitute its collection or heritage assets, and seeks to fulfil its purpose through best practice care of and maximum access to them.

VISITOR-FOCUS: The organisation actively seeks to understand its current and potential visitors, customers and supporters, and responds to the needs it identifies, when delivering the organisation's purpose. It continually measures its quality and its success in delivering a first class visitor experience to the broadest possible audience, and seeks to adapt whenever necessary.

AWARENESS & NETWORKS: The organisation constantly looks ahead, including outside of itself to the heritage and tourism sectors. It is aware of trends and anticipates challenges. It makes itself well-known, relevant to and visible within its immediate community and has a range of other, wider networks.