



# Development Plan 2016-2020





Alford, Aberdeenshire, AB33 8AE

[www.gtm.org.uk](http://www.gtm.org.uk)

Tel: +44 (0) 19755 62292

Events: +44 (0) 19755 64517

Email: [info@gtm.org.uk](mailto:info@gtm.org.uk)



## GRAMPIAN TRANSPORT MUSEUM TRUST (GTMT) DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016 – 2020

### CONTENTS

1. Preface:
  - a) Background
  - b) Current Status
  - c) Scope of Development Plan
2. GTMT's Mission Statement
3. Functional Objectives
4. Plan Period Objectives
5. Summary:
  - a) Plan Aspirations
  - b) Benefits to Stakeholders
  - c) Review of the Development Plan: Monitoring Progress
6. Plan Period Objectives Tabular Summary

### **1. PREFACE**

#### **a) Background**

The Grampian Transport Museum (GTM) has grown from community volunteer roots following a public meeting in Aberdeen in 1978 and opening its first exhibition in temporary premises in 1981. In 1983 a new exhibition opened in premises built with local authority and ERDF funding and on land leased from the local authority. The original club or association was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in 1991. The museum has steadily expanded its site, buildings, and operation since 1983.

#### **b) Current Status**

The GTM is a museum of land travel and transport operating on a 15-acre site in the village of Alford, Aberdeenshire. It is largely self-financing apart from a revenue grant from the local authority that is presently about 6% of turnover but that will be discontinued in 2018. It is run by a Board of Trustees elected from a membership of around 500 (mostly family memberships) and a team of volunteers managed by a small team of paid staff.

The GTM opens seasonally (every day April to October inclusive) and presents new exhibitions every season (at least 30% seasonal changes per annum). The site is used extensively as an events venue by the GTM and hirers. Typically, around 25000 visitors are attracted each season to the museum plus a similar number to the events programme. The best recorded attendance was in 1992 with 62000 visitors.

The collection comprises historic vehicles (road mostly, some rail) of all types: horse drawn, cycles, steam, motor from all periods and extending to the present day (and future). Also collected are costumes, archives of regional importance, small items, photographs, and publications.

The GTM is a fully Accredited Museum (2008) (renewal in progress 2016) and is in membership of/works with Scottish Museum's Council/Museums Galleries Scotland (1983), Association of Independent Museums (1983), Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (founder member), Museum Documentation Association/Collections Trust (1983) and various other forums and marketing concerns. Contact with the Museums Association is maintained currently through the Curator who is a long-standing member (since 1974).

As an Accredited Museum the GTM regularly negotiates loans of significant objects from individuals, companies, and national and other museums. Accredited status also gives GTM access to all major funders for capital and some revenue costs. The museum is considered a top five visitor attraction in North East Scotland and was voted **Best Visitor Attraction in Aberdeen City and Shire 2014** at the inaugural Tourism Awards Ceremony held in Aberdeen. GTM works closely with the local office of VisitScotland and is a Visitor Information Partner, offering a tourist information service in the reception area. It is seen as complementary to the Castle, Distillery, Coastal Heritage etc. trails and promotions in the area.

### c) Scope of the Development Plan

#### i) Achieved from the previous planning period 2010-2015

#### **Collections & Curatorial (100 per cent completed as plan)**

Collections decant into new Collections Centre complete.  
New gallery space created in old store one.  
Reviewed Documentation Manual.  
Library and archive rationalized.  
Reviewed Collecting Policy.  
Commenced programme of conservation projects in Collections Centre.  
Added 10" insulation and new roof outer skin to museum building.

#### **Education Services (90 per cent completed as plan)**

Links and secondments for "Curriculum of Excellence".  
Reviewed education service outputs.  
Developed YEC.  
Developed training for schools in Collections Centre, but no progress with heritage skills.  
Developed educational content in exhibitions using QR codes.  
Did not increase schools' capacity using Collections Centre.  
Built Junior Driving school – a learning through play experience for 4-10-year olds.

## **Exhibitions & Events (85 per cent as plan)**

Topical exhibits developed: Great Train Robbery 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.  
Improved levels of research – books published.  
Built Rails to Alford exhibition into old store one.  
Did not pursue more costume figures.  
Better use of technology – video and QR codes.  
Developed cycling events.

## **Visitor Services (90 per cent as plan)**

New reception extension with portico and paving.  
Improved catering facility.  
Improved site standards.  
Improved DDA compliance with new toilet facility, but did not install access lift to mezzanine floor.  
Added new children's play area.  
Improved membership offer.

## **Management & Financial (80 percent complete as plan)**

Strengthened Trust Council in terms of make-up of skills and length of term in office reduced.  
Reviewed staffing structure and improved.  
Produced formal volunteer's management scheme and documentation.  
Improved membership scheme.  
Introduced electronic banking.  
Added income streams, car storage etc.  
Reviewed / improved H&S documentation.  
New marketing plan produced.

Where areas were not completed as planned they were either reconsidered or rolled over into the current plan period.

## **Summary of previous plan achievements**

The most notable steps forward were the building of the new reception extension, the building of the Junior Driving School facility as great entry level road safety initiative and the roof overlay; a huge project that radically improved energy efficiency and security. Most celebrated however, was the Great Train Robbery exhibition. This was the first time the event had been featured as an exhibition and the first time the vehicles used were reunited. It accounted for a 22 per cent of our visitors that season.

In 2014 GTM was voted the top visitor attraction in Aberdeen City and Shire. The new children's play area made a huge difference and freed off space for the planned reception extension of the current plan period (2016-20). Changes to the structure of the Trust Council of Management have proved to be entirely satisfactory.

### **ii) Changes to the operating environment**

In the current plan period several key issues have been or are being addressed in terms of external factors. The long-feared domination in the oil and gas industry that accounts for high levels of well-paid employment in Aberdeenshire began in 2014. The effects are still being felt, but are not as severe as feared.

Many of the affected in our community have embraced the “staycation” instead of overseas holidays and GTM has benefitted from that. Also as hotel rates fall due to reduced business tourism has improved in the area. The support given under the “tourism” banner is also improving. Visit Aberdeenshire is a new agency developed from the old Visit Aberdeen and should help GTM to reach its audiences.

### iii) **Consultation and rationale for the development plan**

The plan focuses only on developments thought to be achievable during the plan period. It is not a comprehensive wish list in that it does not address **all** of the perceived future needs of the GTM. It sets out to identify, albeit briefly, the plan objectives, timings, funding and staffing implications. The GTMT has introduced processes to performance manage the delivery of GTMT sanctioned and funded project activities and most, if not all, plan period objectives are achieved in each planning period.

Members, staff, and Trustees have been consulted and given the opportunity to steer the direction and content of this plan. Visitor surveys also give a clear sense of direction and inform both the Development Plan and Marketing Strategy.

## 2. **THE GRAMPIAN TRANSPORT MUSEUM’S STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

‘The purpose of the Grampian Transport Museum is to promote an awareness of, interest in, and better understanding of road and rail transport and their effect on society.’

## 3. **FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVES**

Our functional objectives may be broadly classified under five headings:

### a) **Collections and Curatorial**

- To develop, conserve, restore and document a collection of items that relate to land travel and transport with emphasis on North East Scotland.

### b) **Educational Services**

- To assist researchers / students and act as a focus for interest groups;
- To provide resource services to schools and other educational bodies.
- To inform and educate our visitors the general public through the exhibits and their interpretation.

### c) **Exhibitions and Events**

- To present and promote seasonally changing exhibitions of interest to the widest possible audience;
- To promote a programme of outdoor events that assist in fulfilling the purpose of the museum.

The current Marketing Strategy document includes the ‘vision statement’: ***‘To make Grampian Transport Museum’s collections, exhibitions and activities attractive and relevant to its target audiences’.***

#### d) **Visitor Services**

- Our Service Promise is that: *'All visitors to the museum are ensured a warm welcome and that time spent with us is informative, interesting and above all enjoyable'*;
- To develop visitor services (e.g. reception, comfort, refreshments, retail, activities, exhibitions, entertainment) in line with expectations of visiting a thriving visitor attraction;
- To develop GTM as a 'Top 5' visitor facility in Aberdeen City and Shire.

#### e) **Management and Financial**

- To develop funding sources and to become financially independent of Local Authority revenue support;
- To review and adjust the Trust Council and staffing structure to fully address the management and administrative needs of the museum and to realise its market potential.

### 4. **PLAN PERIOD (2016 – 2020) OBJECTIVES**

These are the published objectives for the museum during the plan period 2016 - 2020 arranged under the five Functional Objective headings.

#### a) **Collections and Curatorial**

- Complete decant of all stored collections to the Collections Centre (large object store):
  - Review Documentation Manual and ensure relocated collections are fully documented;
  - Review progress with new (2012) Conservation Records System and make system central to the 'way we work'. Fully integrate the new (2014) Asbestos Policy into conservation procedures;
- Rationalise archives and storage:
  - Clear library/archive of objects (paper collections only) and continue to integrate into Adlib museum system;
  - Build additional decking and shelving for storage of light weight, bulky objects, cycles etc. in Collections Centre;
- Review and update Collecting Policy;
- Rationalise the use of the Collections Centre to prevent contamination caused by airborne particles and oil spillage;
- Improve infrastructure:
  - Environmental control and monitoring in **both** buildings by purchasing additional data loggers to replace Cassella TH recorders;
  - Following a move to LED lighting (2014) a monitoring programme is required to check UV and lux levels;

#### b) **Educational Services**

- Arrange links / secondments with Aberdeenshire Council Education Service to participate fully in 'Curriculum for Excellence';
- Review approach to providing educational resource material and schools bookings / visits format; develop educational content and levels of interpretation in exhibitions;
- Develop projects and membership of the museum's Young Engineers Club;
- Increase capacity to host school visits using the Collections Centre;

- v) Consider adult education further in terms of talks/presentations and provide more interpretation for mature/scholarly visitors.

vi)

**c) Exhibitions and Events**

- i) Develop exhibitions that are topical, popular, and newsworthy with strong educational content and which relate to visitors of all ages and backgrounds and in particular target audiences (as defined in the Marketing Strategy). Improve levels of research and range of objects displayed;
- ii) Increase understanding and use of audiovisual technology to present subjects;
- iii) Add to DVD and book titles published;
- iv) Develop events programme to include / attract younger generations: cycling, street / custom cars, Formula 24 electric car racing, equestrian, radio controlled events;
- v) Improve or replace QR codes to present video etc.;
- vi) Develop total immersion experiences, simulation, dramatic display structures, theatre etc. that are capable of enhancing the perception of the scope on offer to the visitor.

**d) Visitor Services**

- i) Improve the site in terms of safety, plantings, access, furniture, and outside structures/buildings maintenance;
- ii) Build new backyard to agreed specification and remove all other improvised outside storage areas, landscaping freed off areas;
- iii) Raise standards of interpretation for disadvantaged visitors and add a lift to the gallery to ensure total Disability Discrimination Act compliance. Consider elevated walkway facilitated by new lift;
- iv) Re-claim and landscape areas around main building for use by visitors and add to covered outside exhibits;
- v) Build terrace at Tea Room;
- vi) Build new Curatorial/Manager's Office.

**e) Management and Financial**

- i) Strengthen Trust Council by proactive recruitment of new Trustees who are active in finance, legal, health and safety, engineering, museums sector, marketing, customer service etc.
- ii) Increase the diversity of Trust Council members.
- iii) Review Trust reporting procedures: committee papers, use of Development Plan as agenda item, reports from sub committees, etc.; introduce review procedure for the Development Plan that becomes the 'way we work';
- iv) Review the existing staffing structure, pay and conditions in order to effectively develop and improve quality of staff; investigate employment initiatives / funding and recruit as necessary; recruit Curatorial Assistant (6 months contract) to assist with production of new policies and procedures to embrace recent changes in museum sector to exceed standards defined by Accreditation;
- v) Review new health and safety legislation as it affects the GTM and ensure compliance and refine procedures (dealing with asbestos for example). Clear new procedures to become the 'way we work';
- vi) Develop volunteers' management scheme to better harness enthusiasm of volunteers from membership or community generally by forming teams to be directly managed by paid staff;
- vii) Introduce new / improved income streams: corporate events/hires.
- viii) Apply for capital and revenue grant funding and generally integrate the GTM more into the museum's sector;

- ix)
- x) Produce and review annual marketing plan / strategy using improved intelligence, visitor surveys' feedback and resource and implement with revision throughout the plan period;
- xi) Produce new website that is tablet / phone friendly;
- xii) Introduce a more uniform brand image following the building of the new reception facility: use of stencil lettering as included in feature beam on museum front etc.;
- xiii) Refocus on charitable purpose and customer focus.

## 5. SUMMARY

### a) Plan Aspirations

The Development Sub Committee (DSC) and Board of Trustees have agreed the objectives as priority measures required to help the GTM meet and exceed visitors' expectations. A particular focus area in the previous plan was to engage with younger visitors and young families by providing facilities, events, activities, and exhibitions that they readily relate to. This was achieved and the balance now will be addressed by ensuring that more mature/scholarly visitors find exhibitions of interest to them.

Areas of relative weakness are to be addressed: visitor comfort (e.g. heating, reception area, seating, toilet facilities, disabled access), the site layout will be improved to standards expected of a thriving and popular visitor attraction.

Collection care remains paramount and the plan takes steps to make the most of the new storage, workshop, and conference facilities in the Collections Centre and in parallel freeing off exhibition areas in the museum building.

**The 'vision'** for the period (to be the focus for the first two plan period years) is to dramatically raise standards in all areas of the museum. This will be known as the '**Total Quality Agenda**' and will concentrate on **customer care**, to ensure word of mouth/referrals increase, and **collection care**, to ensure that GTM clearly fulfils its role as an Accredited museum.

### b) Benefits to Stakeholders

During the previous plan period (2014-2019) the GTM was recognised as a top five Visitor Attraction in Aberdeen City and Shire and was voted the top attraction in 2014. In 2016 the museum reopened with a much improved reception facility and radically improved customer arrival impression/experience.

For the period of this plan (2016-2020) the objective is to radically raise standards achieved in both **customer care** and **collection care**. In particular **all** users should enjoy an experience that clearly exceeds their expectations.

The positioning of the GTM as a top five attraction should increase visitor numbers especially when coupled to increased levels of referral achieved through improved customer care. Increased numbers will positively impact on the local economy and the ability of the museum to continue to steadily improve and meet plan period objectives.

**c) Review of the Development Plan: Monitoring Progress**

The Development Sub Committee will report progress to full Trust Council meetings against the plan summary. The plan will be reviewed annually and timings updated as required.

**Approved by Development Committee:**

**Signed:** ..... **Print:** .....

**Date:** .....