

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
TRUSTEE REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

CHARITY NUMBER 1192018

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

I N D E X

Year ended 31 March 2026

General information

Trustees' annual report

Statement of financial activities

Balance sheet

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Year ended 31 March 2026

Trustees

Sophie Penelope Weaver (Chair)

Andrew Lynn

David Hedges

Denise Fiennes

Fern Lovett

Francis Hargrave

Glynis Barritt

Ilaria Boncori

Cllr Lee Holden

Mark Cheeseman

Nicholas Wickenden

Philip Berners

Stephanie Rickard

Charity Registration Number

1192018

Address

Colchester Museums Development Foundation

Rowan House

33 Sheepen Road

Colchester

Essex

CO3 3WG

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

Year ended 31 March 2026

Colchester Museums Development Foundation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and the organisation is governed by its Constitution.

Objectives

Colchester Museums Development Foundation exists to support Colchester Museums to inspire and enrich our local community, through the preservation, exploration, and sharing of the town's heritage in its widest sense. The Foundation serves four key objectives, to:

- Increase Colchester Museums' capacity to offer accessible events and programmes through targeted investment.
- Provide new opportunities for engaging with Colchester Museums' collections and research.
- Support and inform new initiatives across Colchester Museums aimed at involving and reflecting the diverse members of our community.
- Expand Colchester Museums' reach and impact through strategic partnerships with community groups and businesses.

Performance and Activity

The Foundation raised over £21,000 in support of Colchester Museums through a combination of small donations, grants, corporate donations, in-kind support, a Guardian Membership scheme, and an Adopt an Object campaign. This is a 39% increase in income from the previous year.

The Foundation continued to maintain steady income from membership, small donations and in-kind support. CMDf's annual Adopt an Object campaign saw the most object adoptions in its history, with 58 adoptions raising over £1,000 for the charity in the lead up to Christmas.

The Foundation received contributions from the V&A Purchase Fund for the acquisition of a Medieval gold pendant from Great Tey, Essex; and the Leche Trust for the conservation of a Roman coffin in partnership with Colchester Archaeological Trust. Greyfriars Hotel, a business local to the museums, committed £100,000 to CMDf in multi-year funding. Over the next two years, this will allow CMDf to support a new Collections and Learning role as part of the redevelopment of Colchester's Natural History Museum; as well as an annual paid placements at the Castle for students leaving Market Field SEND College in Tendring. The latter programme builds on an existing partnership with Market Field's employability team, that sees students regularly taking part in work experience at the museums. Both programmes launched in early 2026, hence the budget only reflecting £4,000 spend so far, while the remaining grant balance is shown as restricted funding in the Balance Sheet.

This year, the trustees made the decision to spend down some of the Foundation's accrued unrestricted funding on fundraising, resulting in a slight deficit overall. This gave the Foundation more fundraising support to refresh the Adopt an Object campaign, create proposals to secure multi-year funding, more effectively steward grants, and undergo prospect research for the 2026/27 financial year. This investment is anticipated to result in both increased income and impact in the future.

Organisational Structure and Governance

Colchester Museums Development Foundation's fundraising and activities are overseen by a board of trustees, with administrative and operational support from Colchester Museums' Development Officer, Museum Manager, and Museum Service Director.

There must be at least five charity trustees and no more than 13. The elected Member of Colchester Borough Council who is primarily responsible for Cultural Services is automatically ("ex-officio") a charity trustee, for as long as he or she holds that office. The Colchester + Ipswich Museums Manager is also automatically a charity trustee, for as long as he or she holds that office.

The Foundation currently has 13 active trustees (listed on page 3) and is supported part time by a Fundraising Officer employed by Colchester + Ipswich Museums Service. The trustees met with a quorum four times in 2025/26. At the November 2025 meeting, trustees were consulted on the redevelopment of Colchester's Natural History Museum. Useful feedback was collected which will feed into the future of the museum.

Distributing Funds

Any CMDF trustee or employee of Colchester Museums Service may submit a proposal to distribute funds, proposals from community groups for projects with local impact will also be considered at the discretion of the trustees. Proposals are submitted to trustees along with meeting agendas in advance of trustee meetings and discussed at the next possible meeting. Providing a quorum is present, a vote is taken and noted in the minutes. Trustees who have submitted a proposal may not vote on their own project, or those who have a declared conflict of interest.

Reserves Policy

The trustees considered the overall risks faced by the Foundation including the extent to which each income source is at risk and the extent to which costs are fixed and unavoidable in the short term. The Trustees concluded that they would aim that unrestricted and undesignated (free) reserves, not backed by fixed assets, should cover six months of projected charitable costs. Because CMDF has no staffing or overhead costs beyond bank and transactional fees, this number has been set at £1,000. Surplus unrestricted funds are allocated to Colchester Museums projects that align with CMDF's charitable objectives by the board of trustees, as above.

This report was approved by the trustees on 21/5/2026 and signed on their behalf by:-

DR FRANCIS HARGRAVE

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'F' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Trustee

21/5/2026

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Year ended 31 March 2026

INCOME		Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
Individual Giving				
	Cash donations in venue	£0.00	£2,114.93	£2,114.93
	Card donations in venue	£0.00	£705.00	£705.00
	Other small gifts	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme	£0.00	£1,132.30	£1,132.30
TOTAL		£0.00	£3,952.23	£3,952.23
Corporate Giving				
	Greyfriars Hotel	£4,000.00	£0.00	£4,000.00
	Waitrose Colchester	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00
	East of England Co-op	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00
	Google Ad Grants	£4,802.51	£0.00	£4,802.51
TOTAL		£8,862.51	£0.00	£8,862.51
Trusts and Foundations				
	V&A Purchase Fund	£3,000.00	£0.00	£3,000.00
	Leche Trust	£2,500.00	£0.00	£2,500.00
TOTAL		£5,500.00	£0.00	£5,500.00
Membership				
	Guardian Members	£0.00	£1,785.00	£1,785.00
	Adopt an Object Members	£0.00	£1,110.00	£1,110.00
	Gift Aid	£0.00	£120.00	£120.00
TOTAL		£0.00	£3,015.00	£3,015.00
Interest	Interest accrued	£0.00	£234.25	£234.25
TOTAL		£0.00	£234.25	£234.25
TOTAL INCOME		£14,362.51	£7,201.48	£21,563.99

EXPENDITURE

Admin

Project Spend

In Kind

In Kind

TOTAL EXPENDITURE**SURPLUS/DEFICIT YEAR TO DATE**

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31 March 2026

Cash at bank total	£124,219.13
Liabilities	£0.00
Net assets (restricted)	£96,000.00
Net assets (unrestricted)	£28,219.13
Total net assets	£124,219.13

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 21/5/2026 and signed on their behalf by:-

DR FRANCIS HARGRAVE



Trustee

21/5/2026