



Witness | Guardian | Expert | Leader

Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024

1. Introduction

The Royal Armouries' Corporate Plan 2019-24 sets out the purpose of the museum, our vision for its future, and at a high level, the work we will be doing and the direction to be taken over the next five years. It has been developed by the Executive Board, in consultation with staff and others, and was agreed by the Board of Trustees on the 28th March 2019.

2. Our subject

Arms and armour are among the products of human endeavour which have had the greatest impact on the history of the world: thanks to humanity's relentless desire for advantage in attack and defence, they have been pivotal in forming and re-forming its cultural and geopolitical shape. They continue to do so, the consequences of their use are all around us and they will inevitably shape the future. At the same time, their development has accelerated advances in technology, trade and industry, and attracted the contribution of great scientists, craftsmen and artists. As a result, whilst arms and armour are artefacts of intrinsic interest and appeal, the broader subject of their impact provides a compelling route to understanding the history and cultures of Britain and the world, and to inform, enthrall, and entertain those who encounter it.

3. Our purpose

In this period the Royal Armouries will continue to fulfil the purpose of the organisation, which is:

To use and develop our expertise to preserve, study, present and interpret the national collection of arms and armour, ensuring its continued relevance and positive contribution to public life in perpetuity.

4. Our vision

The vision of the Royal Armouries is that:

As history's expert witness, we shall inspire people to discover and understand how many of the most compelling narratives of human endeavour and experience have been, and continue to be, shaped by arms and armour.

5. The Master's Plan

During this Corporate Plan period the Royal Armouries will develop and implement significant phases of a masterplan to secure its future and realise its vision. This is called The 'Master's Plan'. As agreed by Trustees in 2018, its intention is to:

Transform the institution into a sustainable and forward-thinking entity, leading the field in the study and presentation of arms and armour that facilitates and encourages exploration, fascination and pleasure within a convivial environment.

This is compatible with the Corporate Plan, but carrying it out will depend on DCMS approvals, feasibility and funding. The Corporate Plan, meanwhile, sets out a work plan for the period that is achievable within our resources in so far as they can be predicted.

6. Corporate Plan, The Master's Plan and Annual Operating Plan

The work planned for the Royal Armouries in 2019-24 has been ordered under three high-level headings or **Aims**. These will be achieved through meeting a series of **Objectives** under each Aim. Both Aims and Objectives will remain largely static during the Plan Period, but an **Annual Operating Plan (AOP)**, identifying **SMART Tasks** under each Objective will set out the programme for each twelve month period. The content of the AOP will derive jointly from the Corporate Plan, and increasingly, as it progresses, respond to the requirements of The Master's Plan.

The completion of most Objectives and Tasks will be led by one of the museum's six Directors, but will depend entirely on the contribution of others. Binding commitments to provide this support will be set out in each AOP.

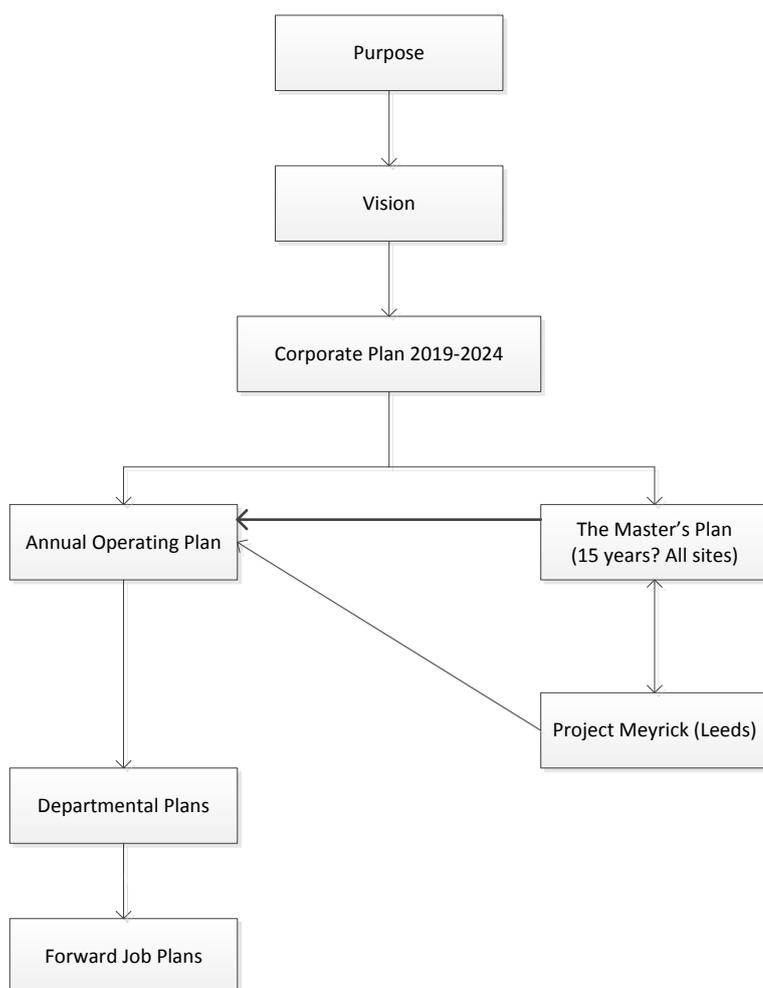


Diagram showing the relationship between the Royal Armouries' Purpose, Vision, Corporate Plan and The Master's Plan

7. Corporate plan: aims and objectives

Aim 1. The Royal Armouries' public offer

We will make significant and measurable improvements to the presentation and interpretation of the collection and to the visitor experience at our sites and digitally, whilst expanding our education and participation programmes, conforming to the Royal Armouries' brand.

Objective 1.1: Devise, deliver and promote an integrated and audience focused programme of live and display interpretation at all sites;

Objective 1.2: Implement a research-informed audience development plan to increase visitor numbers at Leeds and Fort Nelson, improve access and diversity and build on Royal Armouries' national and international profile;

Objective 1.3: Expand the range and quality of the education programme at Leeds and Fort Nelson to provide learning opportunities for visitors of all ages;

Objective 1.4: Develop and implement best practice in public engagement across the three sites, conforming to the Equality Act 2010;

Objective 1.5: Support progress towards the creation of a 'convivial museum' through continuous improvement of the visitor experience;

Objective 1.6: Improve practice and approaches across Operations and Visitor Services functions, to add value to the visitor experience;

Objective 1.7: Devise and deliver a five-year temporary exhibition and associated programme for Leeds and as appropriate for Fort Nelson to increase visitor levels, audience participation and build reputation;

Objective 1.8: Through the implementation of the digital engagement strategy create opportunities for and enhance approaches to audience engagement with the subject of arms and armour;

Objective 1.9: Continue to extend the publishing programme to engage national and international audiences with Royal Armouries' expertise;

Objective 1.10: Participate in and create opportunities for place-making in Yorkshire and Hampshire to build partnerships and enhance Royal Armouries' brand positioning regionally, nationally and internationally;

Objective 1.11: Devise and deliver a marketing and communications plan that builds national and international profile and supports brand positioning;

Objective 1.12: Devise an interpretation strategy for the Royal Armouries which informs the redisplay of the collections at all three sites and showcases our innovative approach to the interpretation and presentation of arms and armour.

Aim 2. The study, management and conservation of arms and armour

The Royal Armouries will become the pre-eminent international authority on arms and armour, its historical and cultural significance, management, conservation, presentation and interpretation.

Objective 2.1: Carry out a condition assessment of the collection and implement a preventative and remedial conservation programme;

Objective 2.2: Make appropriate investment in storage, conservation, library, archive and research facilities at all sites, taking in to account the development and outcomes of The Master's Plan;

Objective 2.3: Publish and implement the Royal Armouries' Research Strategy, identifying the main themes of investigation in the plan period and how it will support the development of the public offer;

Objective 2.4: Promote the development of an international Research Framework for arms and armour research;

Objective 2.5: Seek Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status and use to maximum advantage;

Objective 2.6: Enhance the Royal Armouries' collection through acquisitions and loans in line with the Collections Development Policy and responding to the needs of the Royal Armouries' Interpretation Strategy;

Objective 2.7: Develop international arms and armour and collections management related training, consultancy and knowledge exchange programme;

Objective 2.8: Identify an agreed minimum standard for Royal Armouries' catalogue entries and develop and implement an accelerated programme of updating entries by 2020;

Objective 2.9: Develop a loans strategy and programme to increase their effectiveness in fulfilling the purpose of the Royal Armouries and realising its vision;

Objective 2.10: Develop the Royal Armouries' archive and library services for the benefit of staff and the public;

Objective 2.11: Develop a programme for the dissemination of the Royal Armouries' research output.

Aim 3: Organisational sustainability

The Royal Armouries will, so far as possible and consistent with our brand, become sustainable financially, achieving organisational sustainability through the transformation of our processes, culture, long term planning, and environmental policies.

Objective 3.1: Develop a long term masterplan for the Royal Armouries which identifies, plans and rationalises the capital development required to fulfil the museum's ambitions, including the redevelopment of the museum in Leeds (Project Meyrick), and of equivalent projects at Fort Nelson and the Tower of London;

Objective 3.2. Develop, pursue and continually improve the Royal Armouries' overall Commercial Strategy and the profitability of RATE;

Objective 3.3. Work with Levy Restaurants UK to maximise growth, turnover and quality alignment with the catering, events and conference business, Leeds;

Objective 3.4. Identify ways in which the Royal Armouries may derive revenue or capital from repurposing or developing parts of the Leeds estate, in partnership with others as appropriate;

Objective 3.5: Improve processes and systems for financial planning to support financial sustainability;

Objective 3.6: Implement the Royal Armouries' ICT strategy to improve efficiency, productivity, security, job satisfaction and future-proofing;

Objective 3.7: Increase income generated from fundraising to support the Royal Armouries' Aims and Objectives based on sustainable long term relationships;

Objective 3.8: Maintain and build on relations with DCMS, and develop those with other government departments and cultural organisations, with a view to sustaining Grant-in-Aid levels and gaining practical and financial support for The Master's Plan;

Objective 3.9: Implement the 'One Armouries' programme, transforming organisational morale, cohesion and productivity, in line with and supported by the Royal Armouries' brand;

Objective 3.10: Maintain and continually improve our plans for incident management, business continuity and the safety of collections and archives;

Objective 3.11: Create and sustain succession plans relating to specialist and business-critical knowledge and activity, including through talent management;

Objective 3.12: Develop and implement an affordable pay and reward strategy, adapted to support the differing activities of the museum, and which attracts, motivates and retains high calibre staff;

Objective 3.13: Ensure continually updated compliance in response to changes to the law, regulation and in best practice;

Objective 3.14: Develop and adopt an environmental strategy and action plan to reduce the carbon footprint and adverse environmental impact of the Royal Armouries' activities;

Objective 3.15: Maintain an estates and facilities investment plan responding to current operational needs and capital invested, but that takes into account the planned and probable requirements of The Master's Plan;

Objective 3.16: To have defined and set the IP content needs for RA in 2024 across the operations, collections and public engagement functions, and to devise, budget and deliver the content creation, addition of searchable data and centralisation of rights information and legal compliance;

Objective 3.17: Continuously review and cross check staffing capacity against planned activity.