



Investing in culture and our
communities



Bringing Heritage to Life

Background

Since 1979, Amberley Museum, an accredited museum and registered charity, has managed a **36 acre site** nestled within the South Downs National Park Authority on the borders of West Sussex and Horsham. This site tells the story of the historically and archaeologically significant chalk pits which were once the source of a flourishing industry.

Home to diverse flora and fauna as well as trains, radios and buses, **Amberley is a living and working museum** which offers an eclectic mix of collections for visitors to **discover, learn and have fun** with.

It is **the only centre of its kind in the South East**, preserving and documenting rural industries such as brickmaking, lime burning, bag mending and blacksmithing.

Amberley Museum is also **home to working craftspeople**, including our potter and blacksmith, bringing the history and heritage of the site to life.



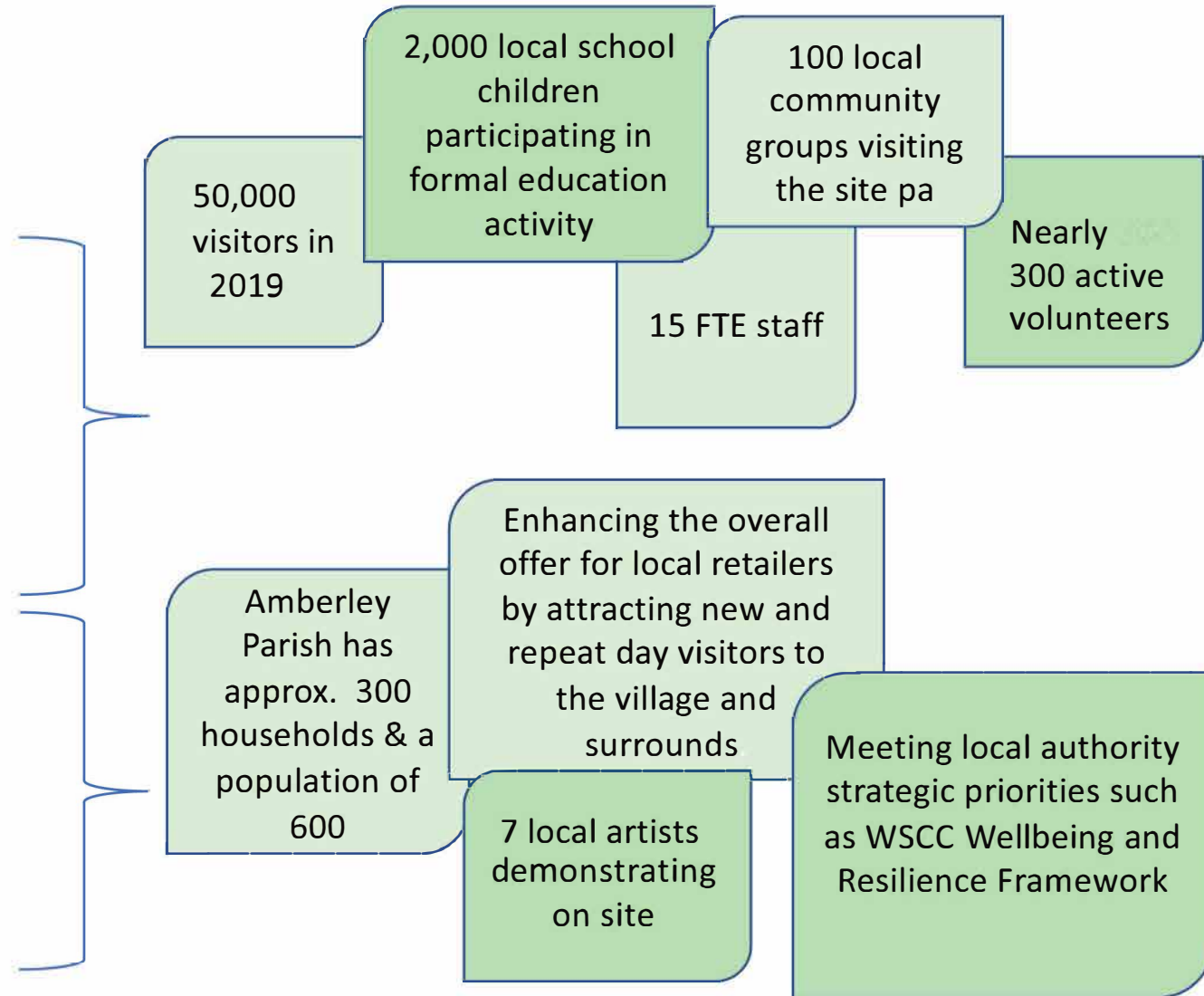
Stakeholders

Primary stakeholders

- Visitors, including our members
- Volunteers
- Staff
- Local schools, colleges, universities
- Local community groups

Secondary stakeholders

- Non-visiting local residents
- Local authorities
- Local artists and crafts people
- Local retailers



Heritage

Our collections

Artefacts (including vehicles and working machinery): 22,350

Archives and library: 23,795 items

Total number of collections: **46,145 items**

Chalk quarrying, lime burning, cement and concrete – incl. original buildings, standard gauge railway track and lime kilns on site (many of which are now Scheduled Ancient Monuments), artefacts and archives.

A comprehensive collection of industrial narrow gauge railway equipment, incl. working locomotives, carriages and wagons.

One of the most significant collections of electrical technology in the UK – made up of the Milne Electrical Collection (covering the South East Area), the Radio and television collections and the Connected Earth telecommunications collections

A unique collection of vintage buses showing the development of the motor bus in the South East of England, supported by a major collection of archives from Southdown Motor Services Limited.

A working print shop and collection showing the development of printing technology. The majority of the collection is in working order.

Road making and road vehicle collection – chronicling the development, construction and maintenance of roads. Includes commercial and industrial road vehicles.



Heritage

Historic Buildings and Structures

Chalk Pits - The Museum is set in what was once a large and thriving chalk pits and lime working site. Some of the original structures on site are rare examples of industrial buildings. Most are now protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. These include: the bag mender's shed, the blacksmiths, a loco shed (once containing a loco that was used to power a grinding mill to crush the lime into powder) and four sets of lime kilns. One set, designed by a Belgian called De Witt in 1905, is thought to be the only surviving example of its type.

Other historic industrial buildings moved to site, often to save them from destruction, from other locations in the South East. These include an 1876 Signal Box, (from Billingshurst); a Victorian railway ticket Office (Hove); an 1842 tanning shed (Horsham); a 1930s transport café (Arundel), a late 19th Century brick drying shed (Petersfield), an early 19th century gin mill (Arundel) and a Victorian wheelwrights shop (Horsham).

Replica buildings These include a 1930s Village Garage and Cycle Shop, a 1950s style fire station, and a 1920s Southdown Bus Garage. These are used to house and exhibit the collections of historic buses, bicycles and fire engines.

Discover, Learn and Have Fun

We offer a wide range of educational activities and workshops for many different groups in the local community, including:

- preschool groups
- primary and secondary schools
- further education students
- home-schooled children
- families, adults and children with special needs
- senior citizens, including those with dementia

We help over 2,000 local school children every year access a variety of learning opportunities.

Creativity, culture and the arts are being systematically removed from the education system, with dramatic

falls in the number of pupils taking GCSEs in design, drama and other craft-related subjects, according to the Warwick Commission report. ¹ Research and evidence shows that **#culturematters**:

- schools that integrate art across the curriculum in the US achieve consistently higher reading and mathematics scores compared to similar schools that do not
- students from low-income families who take part in art activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree than children from low-income families who do not ²

¹ <https://warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/finalreport/>

² <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/why-culture-matters/case-art-and-culture#section-2>

Discover, Learn and Have Fun

"I just wanted to say again, thank you so much for having us at Amberley Museum. We all had such a good time and the children couldn't stop talking about it. We've got loads of work out of them relating to the trip. Thank you so much."

Ms Pinder, Loxwood School, October 2018.



Health and Wellbeing

Participation in culture is strongly associated with good health and high life satisfaction. Alongside this positive impact on general wellbeing, there is growing evidence on the benefit that art and culture can have on specific conditions.

As pressure increases on the NHS, healthcare providers are increasingly making use of art-based projects. Reduced demand for GP and mental health services as a result could already be **saving the NHS £500 million a year.** ³

Amberley Museum plays a significant part in the health and wellbeing of our local residents, in particular our 300 strong volunteer force. This army of committed individuals is made up of 90% men aged 60+. This group is made up of people with

caring responsibilities, long-term health conditions and those experiencing social isolation.

Amberley Museum provides a **wellbeing offer** that aligns to national Public Health priorities such as transforming a generation's risk of dementia. ⁴ We also respond to **local priorities and needs** such as an ageing population and working with schools from neighbouring **areas of high deprivation**, such as Arun.

³ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/why-culture-matters/case-art-and-culture#section-3>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/about#priorities>

Health and Wellbeing

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are the life-blood of the museum and we couldn't run without them.

Volunteering can be great for wellbeing, but fails to appeal to men and younger people (Mandy James, policy and engagement manager, Volunteering Matters April 2018). 5

Amberley Museum has a captive and loyal audience of male volunteers. Our volunteers usually join us or are already with us when they reach a significant transition in their lives such as retirement, loss of a life partner and/or increasing ill health. We collect baseline and tracking data, such as skills assessment surveys regarding our volunteers and also anecdotal evidence via our HLF funded Volunteer Co-ordinator.

This data confirms that volunteering at Amberley Museum is as much about developing social networks and reducing loneliness as it is about learning new and developing existing skills.

We have some 300 active volunteers. Based on the recommended day rate for skilled volunteers of £150 by Heritage Lottery Fund, we estimate that in 2019 our 30 most active volunteers gave an estimated 8 hours of their time a week which attracts an in-kind contribution of £1,638,000 per year.



Local Economy

Amberley Museum is located in a rural area within the South Downs National Park Authority. It currently provides employment for 15 FTE, employs local trades people such as tree surgeons and works with local retailers and food and drink producers such as Auntie Val's Artisan Preserves in Storrington.

It is also home to working craftspeople and businesses such as:

- Menear Ceramics
- Chalk Pit Forge, our resident blacksmith
- Woodturners
- Stained-glass makers
- Walking stick and broom makers
- Hurdle makers
- Stone masons

