

The Box

The story so far



'A real triumph for cultural place-making' (ACE)

The Box opened to critical and popular acclaim in September 2020, following a £47m capital project proudly led by Plymouth City council. It has already welcomed more than 500,000 visits, in a city with low levels of cultural engagement.

It brings together four separate organisations under one roof – the former Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, Southwest Film and TV Archive, Southwest Image Bank and Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.

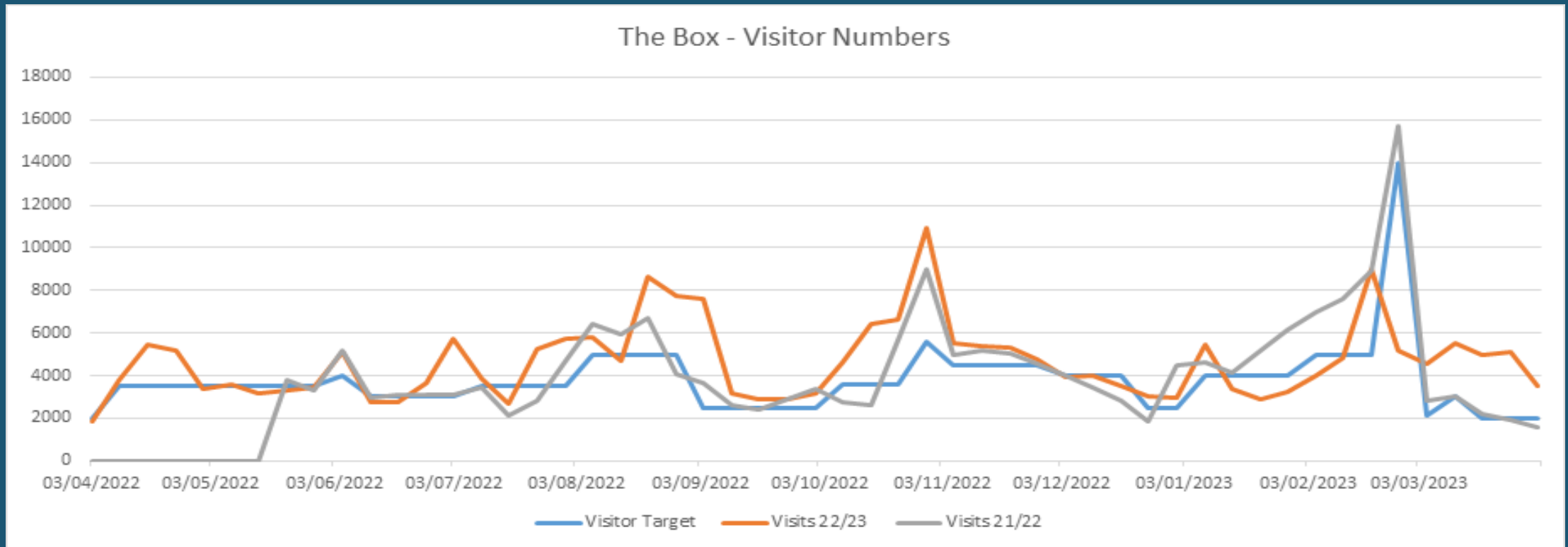
The Box is a hybrid organisation – part museum, gallery and archive, a social space for art, people and objects. It is a centre for knowledge and cultural participation, with artistic excellence at its heart.

Our new vision – reimagining the future through the past – and our values – connected, progressive, relevant and curious – drive all aspects of our work and in particular our commitment to tackling climate emergency and becoming an anti-racist organisation through a programme of decolonisation.



Visits to date (4/6/23): 522,313

- We attract a broad audience, with around 50% drawn from Plymouth
- Attendances:
 - 20/21 - 33,153 (9 weeks)
 - 21/22 - 203,010
 - 22/23 - 245,987 (20% above target)



Some programme highlights

Mayflower 400: Legend and Legacy (09/20 – 12/21)

Significant commemorative exhibition in collaboration with Wampanoag tribe of North America. British Guild of Travel Writers *Best UK and Ireland Tourism Project 2020*

Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters (10/21 – 2/22)

European premiere of major international touring show from National Museum of Australia, taking visitors on an epic journey across three states, three deserts and 500,000 square kilometres.



Some programme highlights

Because the night belongs to us (6/22-9/22)

Large scale retrospective exhibition examining Plymouth's nightlife and culture through the voices of those who experienced it.



British Art Show (10/22-1/23)

Landmark touring exhibition celebrating the vitality of recent art made in Britain, welcoming more than 80,000 visits across the city.



Some programme highlights

Sue Williamson: Between Memory and Forgetting

(/22-9/22)

An extended overview of this British-born South African artist and activist's work, including a major new sculptural commission.



The Armada Portrait (From 2/23)

Iconic portrait of Queen Elizabeth 1, on loan from Woburn Abbey, presented in context of colonial impact of Tudor period.



Coming soon

Reframing Reynolds: A Celebration (6-10/23)

Major exhibition celebrating 300th anniversary of Sir Joshua Reynolds birth in Plympton, Plymouth.

Rana Begum: Dappled Light (6-9/23)

New and existing works, responding to Reynolds' drawings and paintings.

Solomon Hart: Conservation in Action (9/23)

Significant work by Solomon Hart RA, to be unrolled and conserved in full view of the visitors.

Dutch Flowers (10/23-1/24)

On loan from the National Gallery in their 200th anniversary year.

John Akomfrah: Arcadia (11/23-6/24)

A major new film commission from the artist representing the UK at the next Venice Biennale.

Yinka Shonibare: End of Empire (Autumn 23)

Sculpture, continuing to support our work on decolonisation

Learning and education

- Over 300 formal learning sessions and 14k participants (including self-guided visits) since opening
- Ongoing formal learning projects include
 - **DesignLab Nation – Partnership with The V&A** Since 2021, The Box has been taking part in the Victoria and Albert Museum’s (V&A) National Schools Programme, DesignLab Nation, which aims to inspire the next generation of designers, makers and innovators.
 - **ARTiculation – partnership with The National Gallery** A nationally acclaimed annual event designed to promote the appreciation and discussion of art.
- Over 30k participants to our free creative sessions during weekends and holidays since opening
- More than 1.5k pre-school children have enjoyed our Iwonder sessions
- Around 5k children a year engage with our Explore More tables



Archive, collections and volunteers

- **Over 3.5k** collection enquiries
- **Nearly 9k** objects/archives retrieved for research
- **1800** onsite researchers
- **Over 800** collections volunteer hours
- **33** objects acquired and accessioned
- More than **50,000** total volunteer hours, with regular cohort of **160**



Sister venues: Smeaton's Tower and Elizabethan House



PLYMOUTH
heritage
— P A S S —
VISIT THREE HISTORIC VENUES
FOR ONE PRICE!
ELIZABETHAN HOUSE · SMEATON'S TOWER · THE MAYFLOWER MUSEUM

A promotional image for the Plymouth Heritage Pass. It features a red and white striped lighthouse (Smeaton's Tower) and a historical building (Elizabethan House) with children playing in the foreground. The scene is set against a blue sky with seagulls and a large wooden sailing ship in the background.

Historic England | The Pilgrim Trust | PLYMOUTH | HERITAGE FUND | THE BRITISH COAST | The Box