

Toolkit: Designing Exhibitions that Promote Engagement and Wellbeing

Salford Museum & Art Gallery partnered with Salford City Council's Public Health team to explore how **museums can promote community wellbeing** and preventative care. **Working closely with local groups**, we co-designed an exhibition to gather insights into how museum spaces can engage visitors in the five steps to wellbeing. **The following toolkit will guide the design of our future exhibitions wherever possible.**



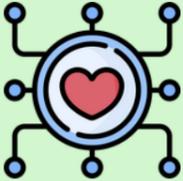
Build in creative and mindful activities

- Include a slow looking activity to encourage reflection and calmness.
- Provide simple, low-pressure creative prompts, such as drawing.
- Ensure there are activities suitable for different age groups.



Use social, flexible seating

- Provide a mix of seating with backrests and armrests, such as beanbags, sofas and movable stools.
- Position seating near key artworks and activities.
- Ensure seating supports both solitude and social interaction.



Design for emotional connection

- Use colour, lighting and layout to create distinct emotional zones.
- Provide interpretive text that invites reflection.
- Encourage visitors to move slowly and notice mood changes.



Create opportunities for visitors to contribute

- Use open feedback walls, ideas trees, post boxes or creative leave-behind activities.
- Ask simple, meaningful questions that connect personal experience to the exhibition.
- Display visitor contributions publicly to promote conversation.



Embed community voices from the start

- Co-produce exhibition or activities with local groups or wellbeing partners.
- Include the 'user voice', rather than the 'museum/curator voice'.
- Use insights from lived experience to design more welcoming spaces.

