

# Museum culture is in danger of becoming a dying breed



Resonate Art House's Angela Beardsley and Clark Dawson

MUSEUM culture is in danger of becoming a dying breed of activity.

According to a survey by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the number of people visiting galleries and museums has dropped for the first time in a decade.

Statistics released showed that in 2015/16 there were 47.6 million visits to the 15 sponsored museums audited. This showed a 6.2 per cent drop in visitors from 2014/15.

In 2015/16 there were a total of 7.9 million child visits. This showed a significant drop of 14.4 per cent when

**By Calum Loudon**  
**Work Experience**  
editorial@alloaadvertiser.co.uk

compared to 2014/15.

Educational trips has also shown change, with the sponsored museums revealing that the number of visits from schools with children under 18 was 2.5 million, revealing a drop of 11.5 per cent from 2014/15.

Alistair Brown, spokesperson for the Museums Association, said: "These figures are clearly disappointing."

"As schools come under greater pressure, they are finding it harder to devote time to out-of-class activities such as museum visits. Children are increasingly missing out on valuable experiences that bring history, science and culture to life and expose them to new ideas."

Angela Beardsley, owner of Resonate Arts House in Alloa, told the *Advertiser* that she believes the declining rates may be down to a lack of interest in the actual exhibits.

She said: "People like seeing something that's unique. A lot of community art; people enjoy seeing something

they can connect to. Local places, local images, they can connect with them."

"I never connected in art school. To be honest I found it boring."

"One day I was on a trip with the art school and I found an exhibit of a big painting. Within the painting the man had hidden messages of insults throughout, hidden within the painting. I found it hilarious."

"This made me realise that there was better art out there than what you can get taught."

Angela hopes to launch a creative programme for primary school kids at her studio in Alloa.

She added: "Art Den is for primary school kids to unlock their creativity. Creativity takes courage, and this certainly helps with their development."

"Unlocking a child's creativity can also help problems faced within schools at such a young age, such as bullying."

"We've had adults coming in here saying if it wasn't for art as a child, they would have struggled."

*We took to the streets to ask: "When was the last time you visited an art gallery or museum? If not recently, or not at all, why not?"*



**Les**

"It was two years ago in Shetland.  
"Not interesting enough, especially for kids."



**Lawrence**

"I was in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in June.  
"If you live in Alloa it's quite far away from everything."



**Jill**

"I can't remember the last time I went.  
"I would think the younger ones are going more because it's free.  
"I can't remember people doing that before. They've got a lot more variety."



**John**

"The last time I visited one was about 30 years ago.  
"I don't know why I haven't been back."



**Brian**

"I visited an art gallery last year.  
"There's certainly not much around here anyway."



**Karen**

"It must have been at least two years ago.  
"Everything is too readily available these days."