

CASE STUDY



BEAMISH MUSEUM



- **Decreased staff turnover by 5%.**
- **Visitor surveys shows courtesy of front of house staff has increased by 18.4% in 2008. Courtesy of costumed staff has risen by 25% in 2008.**
- **Staff morale and motivation have noticeably improved.**

BACKGROUND

Size:	250 employees
Sector:	Tourism and leisure
Location:	North East of England
Recognised:	Investors in People

THE ORGANISATION

Beamish Museum was established in 1970 and has developed into one of the foremost Museum's of its type, with a designated collection and worldwide reputation.

Beamish Museum tells the stories of the industrial and rural social history of the people of the North East in the early 19th and early 20th centuries.

As a lead regional partner in the Renaissance in the regions program established through MLA (Museums Libraries and Archives), Beamish Museum is in a position along with its partners Tyne & Wear Museums, Bowes Museum and Hartlepool Museums, to lead in best practice and be mentors to other Hub and non-Hub Museums.

“Working with the Investors in People framework and attaining the standard will help significantly in developing Beamish further. We have already seen changes in the approaches to people management and leadership within the Museum, as well as improved and heightened communication. We aim to continue to develop the Museum through investing further in our staff and volunteers using the Investors in People Standard as a framework for initiating and driving change”.

Richard Evans, Director

THE CHALLENGE

Beamish Museum had a very clear idea of how they wanted to use the Investors in People framework within the organisation and what they were hoping to achieve. By utilising the best practice within the Investors in People framework, Beamish Museum hoped to achieve the following objectives:

1. To work consistently with people development practices across the organisation and to develop the organisation by managing change more effectively.
2. To improve communication and consistency across the organisation through employee representation groups.
3. Demonstrate to external bodies, future employees and volunteers that Beamish Museum consider people to be their greatest asset and will invest time and resources into developing them. And, taking this a step further to be in a position to mentor partner organisations on best practice.

THE STRATEGY

To aid the achievement of the above objectives, Beamish Museum formed a working group of staff representatives made up of every function across the organisation. The team were formed to champion Investors in People across Beamish Museum: to develop a culture of support and improvement, to focus upon achievement and provide momentum to ensure this was embedded within the culture of the organisation for on-going success.

The team worked with consultants to highlight gaps and inconsistencies in the organisations' people management and leadership practices and provide solutions to improve them.

Beamish Museum then linked their development and management practices to their business plan to enable them to evaluate the impact the new processes would have on achieving their desired outcomes – and evaluate the return of their investment in people development.

THE RESULTS SO FAR

By working with the Investors in People framework Beamish Museum has adopted a more consistent and focused approach to staff development that is in line with the objectives and needs of the organisation.

“Beamish Museum is currently revisiting its business plan, developing new and reviewed approaches to its overall aims and objectives. The Museums' new director is currently working towards a development plan, which is dynamic and meets the organisations business needs, placing people and collections at the forefront of what we do well”. Rhiannon Hiles, Keeper of Interpretation.

The team communicated the organisations commitment to Investors in People and what it means to them and their people to be working with the framework. This helps staff and volunteers to understand the objectives of the organisation as a whole and how they can develop themselves to meet their teams and the organisations aims.

Since Beamish Museum started working with the Investors in People framework, there has been a positive effect on staff and volunteer understanding of their roles within the organisation, and their involvement in driving change and development. Staff attendance has increased along with greater participation from all staff in work and social occasions highlighting the increase in staff motivation and morale. This improvement can also be seen by the results of a recent visitor survey, which shows that since working with the Investors in People framework the courtesy of costumed staff has increased from 45.6% in 2007 to 70.6% in 2008 and non costumed staff from 41.2% to 59.6% in the same period.

An increase in cross-departmental working has led to more effective communication including feedback to make improvements. The views and opinions of staff are being listened to which has encourage the 'can do' attitude now prevalent across the organisation. The improvement in communication across the organisation has left both permanent staff and volunteers feeling more valued and better informed about the changes which are taking place and how they fit into the organisations future plans.

Beamish Museum plans to keep using Investors in People as a framework in which to benchmark performance against, set targets to develop and promote ongoing development.