

Living Memorial Museum

Proposal: The creation of a Living Memorial Museum which presents a diverse range of both the experiences and perspectives of the everyday experience of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland and the steps to peace. This museum will provide an opportunity to gain new knowledge and perspectives; and act as a signpost to other museums, memorials, tours and collections.

Guiding principles & values

- The Museum is primarily focussed on education and enabling learning from the past.
- Includes different perspectives and versions of the conflict and peace.
- Makes a contribution to building a better future and informing future generations.
- Records efforts at peace and peace work, as well as the conflict.
- Emphasis on the personal experience of people rather than historical facts.
- Complementary to other museums, memorials, tours and collections across society.

Benefits & Challenges

Benefits

- There is a steadily growing interest in how we present the past, especially to the next generation and visitors.
- Can draw on and can be informed by local and international experience.
- Can be a place to hear other views and perspectives.
- Can share the learning domestically, regionally and globally.
- Can learn from the wealth of international patterns and working examples.

Challenges

- Not everyone is happy to have different views and perspectives brought together in the same place.
- How to be honest about the past while being sensitive to the visitors' needs and different perspectives.
- How to avoid pitfalls of 'dark tourism'.

Rationale

A Living Memorial Museum offers a user friendly yet engaging step into the issues, and provides options to look further into the reality of protracted violent conflict and the challenges of peace. The Healing Through Remembering Everyday Objects Exhibition has shown that sensitive display of material can engage a variety of audiences and create space for reflection on the past, and learning for the future.

What is needed?

- Development of educational element – promoting fuller understanding of the lived experience of the conflict, and acknowledgement of the range of different views/experiences.
- Support for the idea that a diverse range of the experiences and perspectives of the conflict can be displayed successfully.
- Engagement with a range of interested groups, individuals and experts already involved in collecting, curating, educating and informing audiences about issues relating to the conflict.
- Identifying and obtaining appropriate space that can house materials, act as an educational resource and be complementary to other museums, memorials, tours and collections.
- Establishing governance system and personnel.
- The development of appropriate structures, policies, staff and operations.

This is one of a set of HTR proposals on dealing with the past relating to the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. HTR believes these proposals would be best implemented as a comprehensive response to ensure that a range of complex but interrelated needs are met.



A project supported by the PEACE III Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by Pobal.

