

# Statistical report: Museum Accreditation



March 2024 meeting update

This report provides further detail on panel meetings at nation, governance, and accreditation status between 2023 and 2024. Older reports can be accessed on Arts Council England website. These series of reports are published as an Official Statistic by Arts Council England. This report summarises data about the Museums Accreditation Scheme (the scheme) between March 2023 and March 2024.

## About the Museum Accreditation Scheme

The Museum Accreditation Scheme is the UK industry standard for museums and galleries. It tells everyone involved with a museum that they're doing the right things to help people to engage with collections and protect them for the future. The Museum Accreditation Scheme does this by making sure museums manage their collections properly, engage with visitors, and are governed appropriately. The scheme works for museums of all sizes: from the smallest volunteer-run museums to national museums.

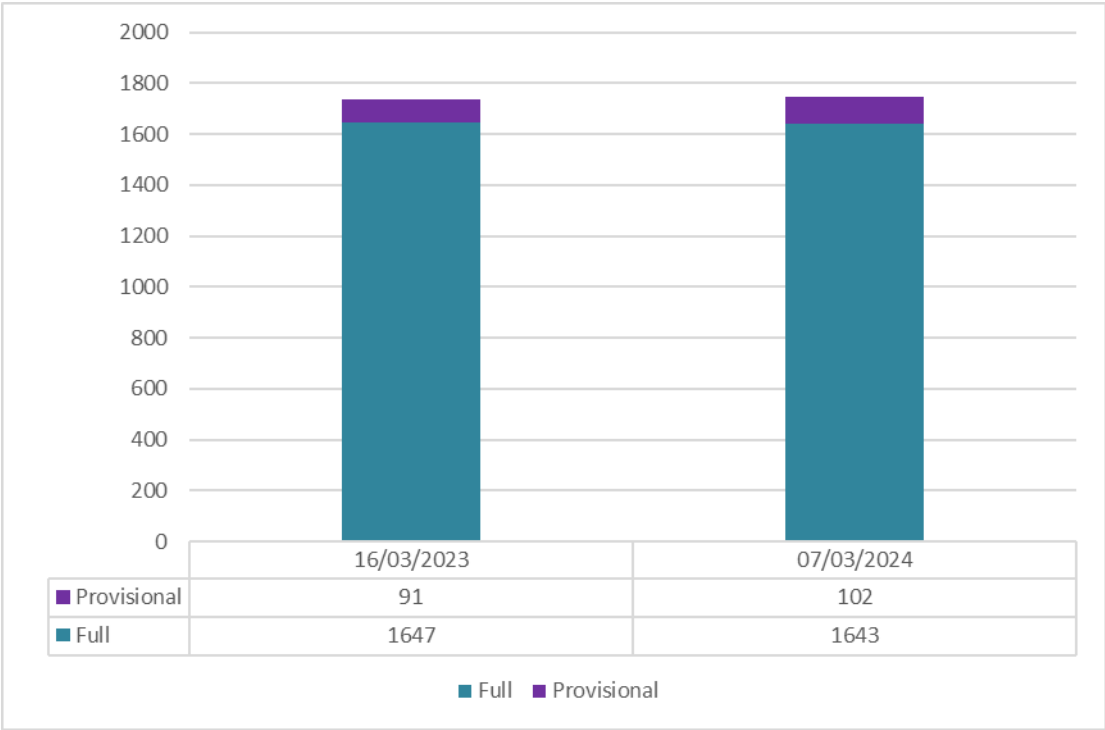
Management of the Accreditation Scheme for museums and galleries in the UK was transferred to Arts Council England on 1 October 2011. It was previously administered by the Museums Libraries and Archives Council. Arts Council England works in partnership with Museums Galleries Scotland, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Museums Council to deliver the scheme. A revised Accreditation Standard was published on 3 October 2011, developed through consultation with stakeholders and the museum community. A further review of the Accreditation Standard took place during 2017 and 2018, with the latest Standard being published on 1 March 2018. You can find out more about the new standard here: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/accreditation-scheme/support-and-advice#section-3>



# An overview of the Scheme

## Museums in the Scheme

**Figure 1: Over the last year there has been an increase in the number of museums that hold Full Accreditation, alongside an overall increase in numbers of museums in the Scheme.**



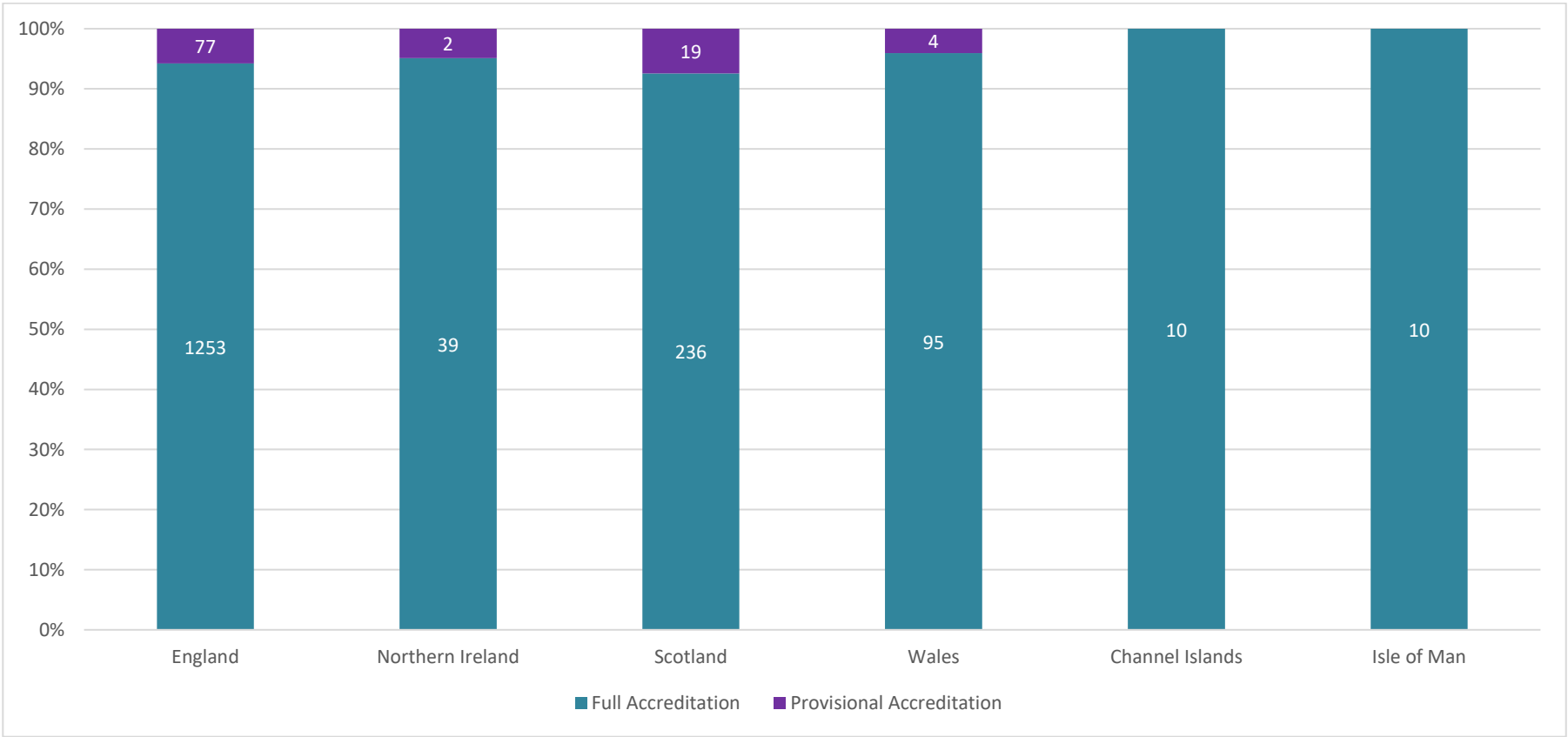
Between March 2023 and March 2024, there was a decrease of 4 in the number of museums holding Full Accreditation.

94% of the 1745 museums within the Scheme have demonstrated that they meet the full requirements of the scheme and have been approved by the assessing panel.

When looking at all museums in the Scheme, including those within provisional Accreditation, the number of museums in the scheme has increased from 1738 to 1745.

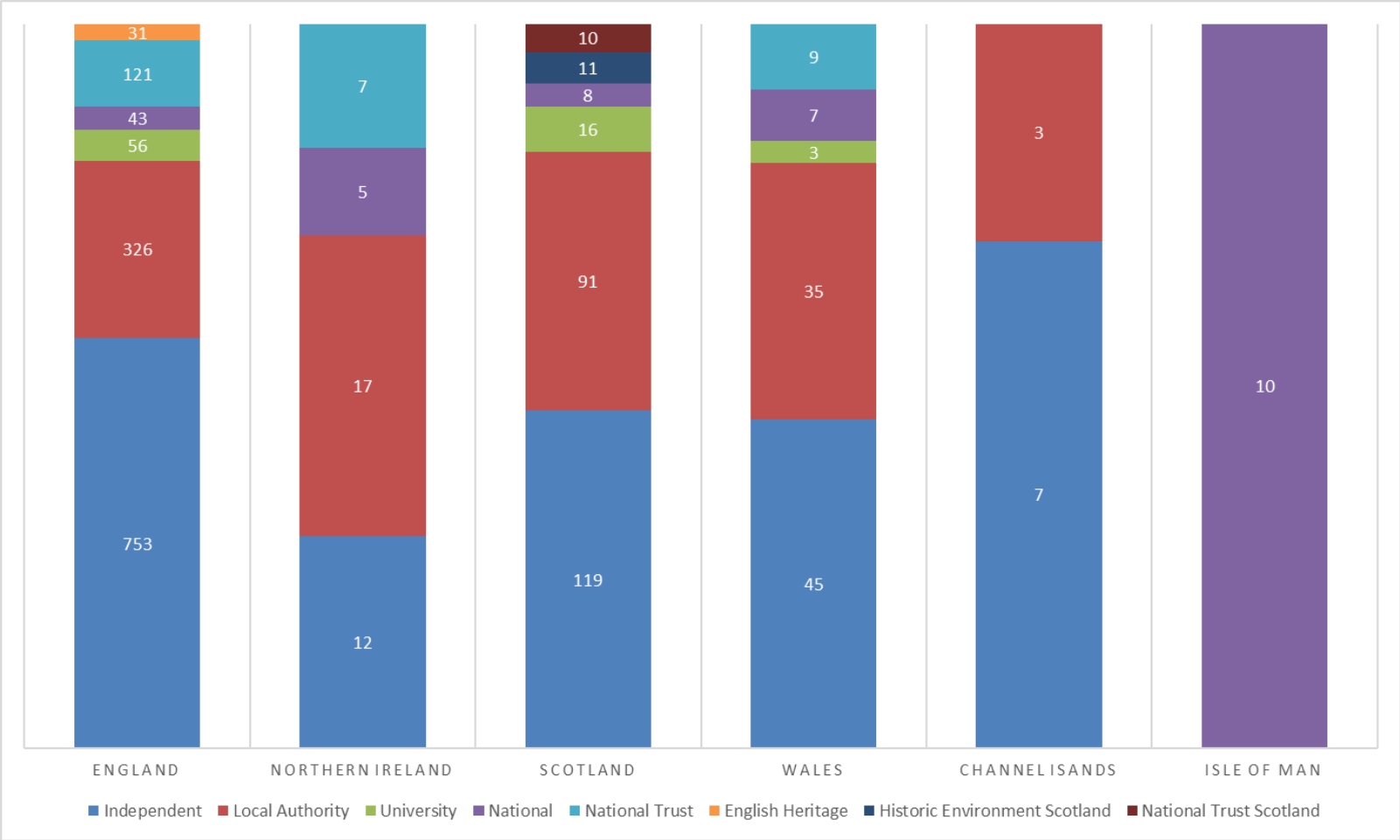
**Accreditation by Nation**

**Figure 2: In March 2024 there were more museums with Full Accreditation than Provisional Accreditation in all UK nations.**



**Museum Governance**

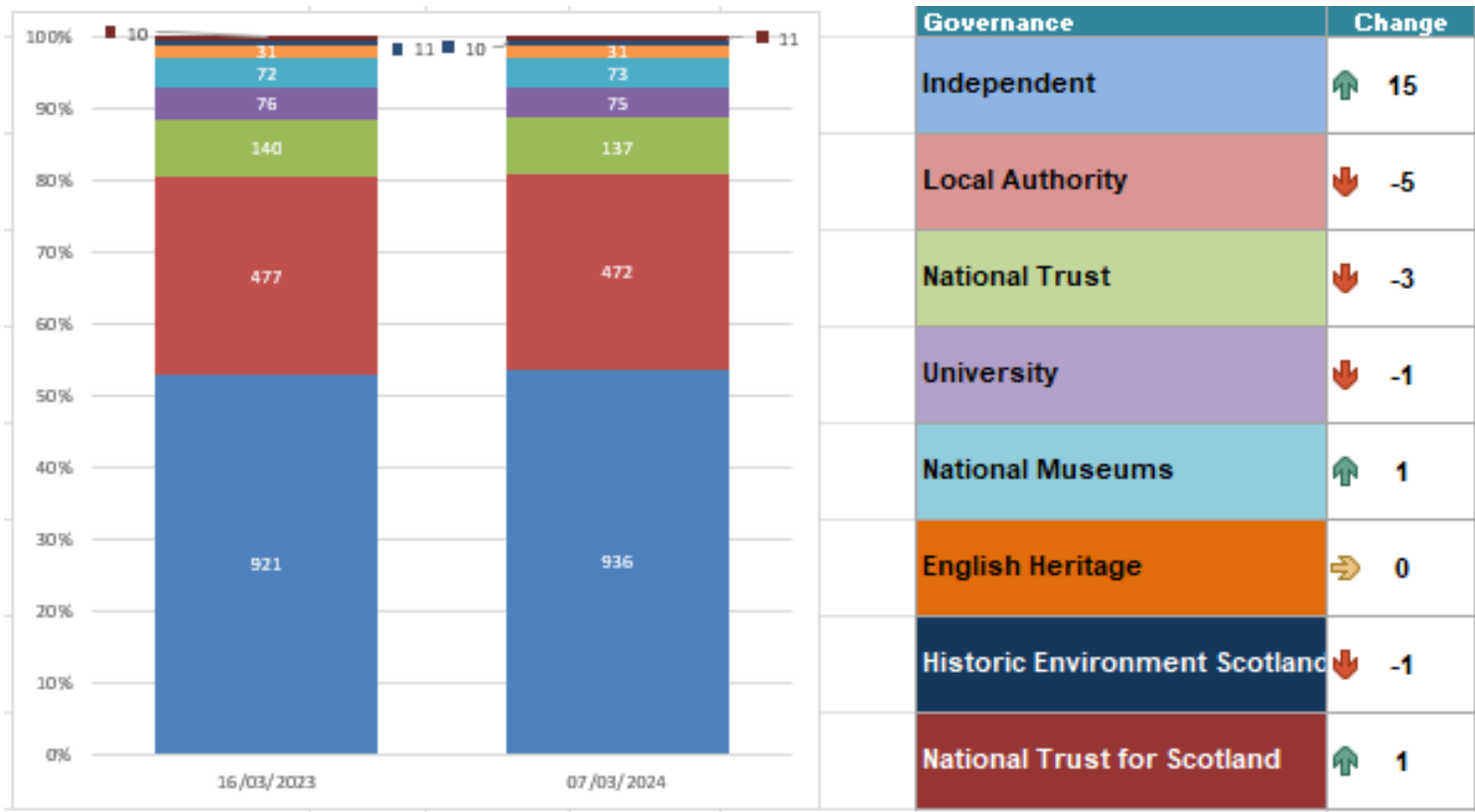
**Figure 3: Museum governance type, by Nation (March 2024)**



Independent museums make up the largest share of Accredited museums in most UK nations, and they make up more than half (53.6%) of the total UK museums in the Scheme.

In England, Scotland, Wales and the Channel Islands, Independent museums make up the majority. In Northern Ireland, there are more Local Authority museums than Independent ones.

Figure 4: How numbers of governance types of museums in the Scheme has changed over the last 12 months

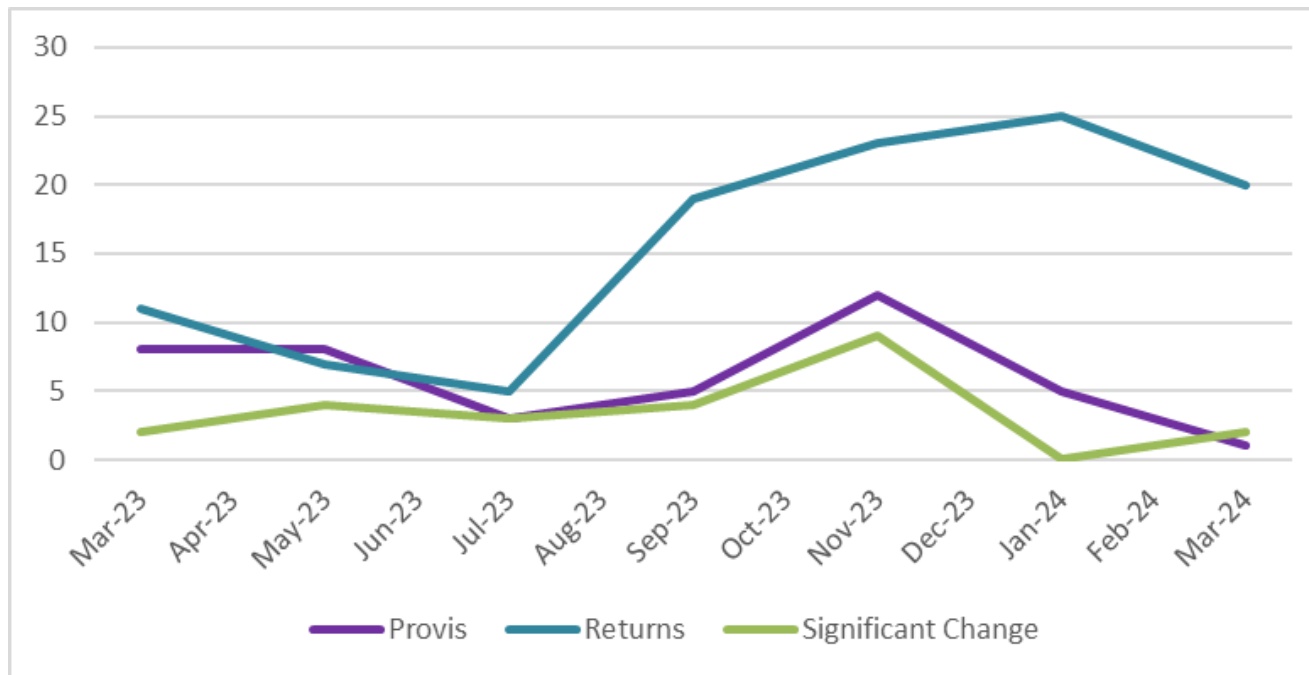


The number of independent museums increased by 15, from 921 to 936 between March 2023 and March 2024, where the number of Local Authority museums decreased by five, from 477 to 472.

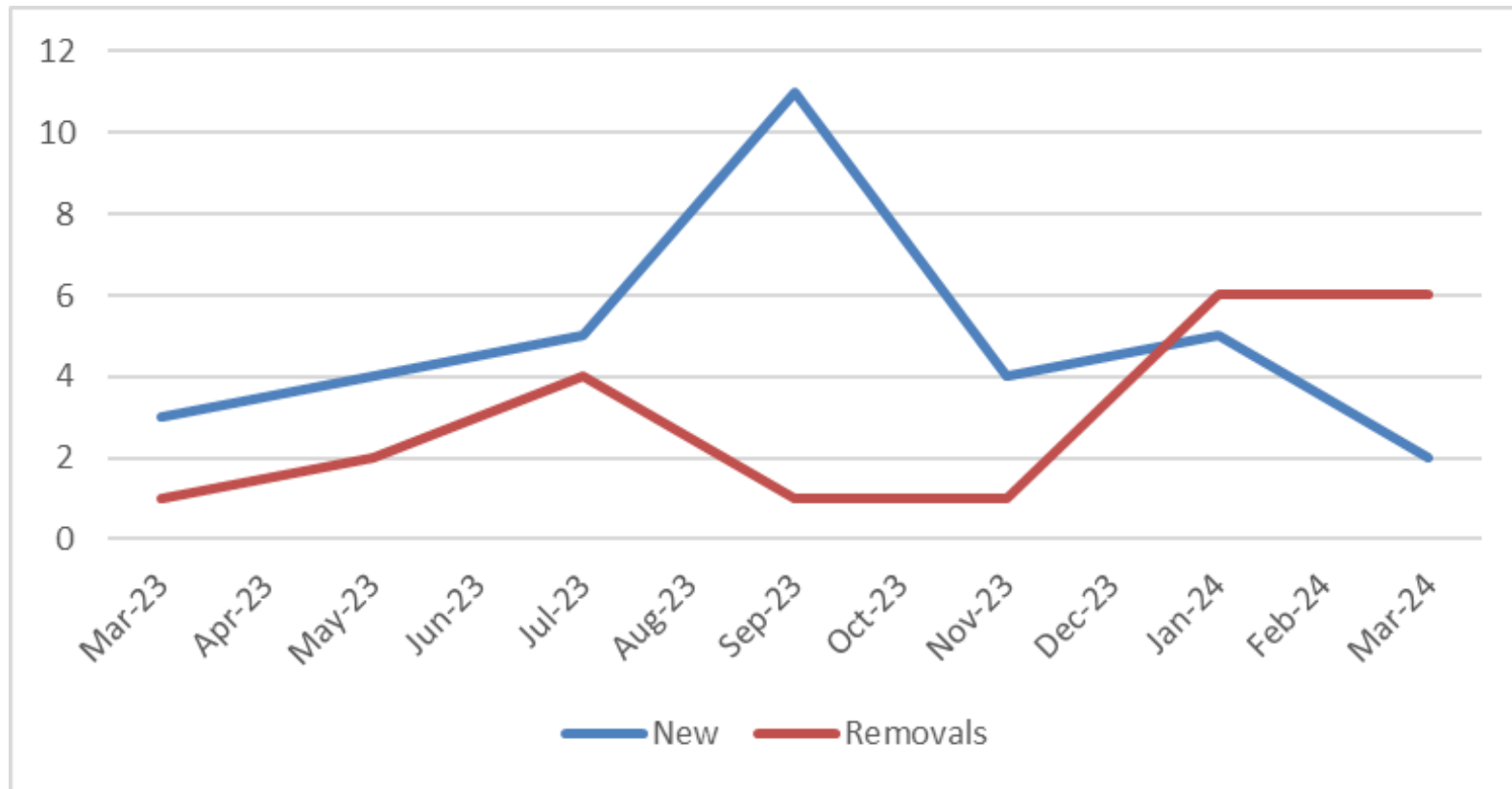
## **Return applications and reviews**

Between March 2023 and March 2024 (inclusive), 176 cases were presented to the panels of the Accreditation committee. These cases consisted of return applications, provisional reviews, significant change reviews, new applications and removals. More information regarding cases at panels and panel outcomes, including reasons for removal, can be found on pages 12 – 16. There were 13 standard meetings during this period.

**Figure 5: Provisional reviews and return applications**



**Figure 6: New applications and removals from the scheme**



See appendix 2 for details of reasons for removal.

## Appendix 1: Museums in the Scheme

Explanation of Scheme categories:

- **Museums with Full Accreditation** have demonstrated that they meet the Accreditation Standard and are actively addressing any areas for improvement identified during their initial assessment or regular monitoring review and requested by an Accreditation panel.
- **Museums with Provisional Accreditation** have demonstrated that they meet the majority of the Accreditation Standard and are actively resolving those required actions requested by an Accreditation panel to ensure they meet those sections of the Standard not yet met. On completion of these required actions, the museum would normally return to an Accreditation panel with a recommendation for full status.
- **Remove and exclude due to deliberate non-compliance (Exclude).** This decision applies when a museum or its governing body have made an irreversible decision or action which goes against the shared ethical basis of the scheme by contravening the standard. Excluded museums will not become eligible for Accreditation for a minimum of five years from effective decision date of the panel. Excluded museums may apply for consideration of eligibility to the relevant assessing organisations five years after their removal for non-compliance.

### Number of museums and galleries in the Accreditation Scheme (March 2023 - March 2024):

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Full Accreditation	1647	94.8%	1649	94.9%	1650	94.9%	1657	94.8%	1651	94.3%	1651	94.4%	1643	94.2%
Provisional Accreditation	91	5.2%	89	5.1%	88	5.1%	91	5.2%	99	5.7%	98	5.6%	102	5.8%
Total	1738	100%	1738	100%	1738	100%	1748	100%	1750	100%	1749	100%	1745	100%
Excluded														

## Accreditation by Nation

### Number of museums in the Accreditation Scheme by location (March 2023 - March 2024):

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
England	1323	76.1%	1323	76.1%	1322	76.1%	1330	76.1%	1332	76.1%	1333	76.2%	1330	76.2%
Northern Ireland	42	2.4%	41	2.4%	41	2.4%	41	2.3%	41	2.3%	40	2.3%	41	2.3%
Scotland	254	14.6%	255	14.7%	256	14.7%	257	14.7%	257	14.7%	257	14.7%	255	14.6%
Wales	99	5.7%	99	5.7%	99	5.7%	100	5.7%	100	5.7%	99	5.7%	99	5.7%
Isle of Man	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%
Channel Islands	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%	10	0.6%
<b>Total Scheme</b>	<b>1738</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1738</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1738</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1748</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1749</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Number of museums in the Accreditation Scheme by English region (March 2023 - March 2024):**

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24	
	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*
East of England	166	12.5%	166	12.5%	165	12.5%	168	12.6%	168	12.6%	169	12.7%	169	12.7%
East Midlands	112	8.5%	112	8.5%	112	8.5%	112	8.4%	112	8.4%	111	8.3%	111	8.3%
London	131	9.9%	132	10.0%	132	10.0%	132	9.9%	132	9.9%	133	10.0%	133	10.0%
North East	62	4.7%	62	4.7%	62	4.7%	63	4.7%	64	4.8%	64	4.8%	64	4.8%
North West	136	10.3%	136	10.3%	135	10.2%	135	10.2%	134	10.1%	134	10.1%	134	10.1%
South East	239	18.1%	238	18.0%	239	18.1%	240	18.0%	240	18.0%	240	18.0%	238	17.9%
South West	209	15.8%	209	15.8%	210	15.9%	211	15.9%	212	15.9%	213	16.0%	211	15.9%
West Midlands	130	9.8%	130	9.8%	129	9.8%	130	9.8%	130	9.8%	131	9.8%	132	9.9%
Yorkshire	138	10.4%	138	10.4%	138	10.4%	139	10.5%	140	10.5%	138	10.4%	138	10.4%
Total England	1323	100%	1323	100%	1322	100%	1330	100%	1332	100%	1333	100%	1330	100%

\* Percentage of total Accredited museums in England

**Number of museums in the Accreditation Scheme by status and location (March 2024):**

	England		Northern Ireland		Scotland		Wales		Channel Islands		Isle of Man		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Full Accreditation</b>	1253	94%	39	95%	236	93%	95	96%	10	100%	10	100%	1643	<b>94%</b>
<b>Provisional Accreditation</b>	77	6%	2	5%	19	7%	4	4%	0	0%	0	0%	102	<b>6%</b>
<b>Total Scheme</b>	<b>1330</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Museum Governance

### Number of museums in the Accreditation Scheme by governance type and location (March 2024)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Channel Islands	Isle of Man	Total	
Local Authority	326	17	91	35	3		476	27.2%
Independent	753	12	119	45	7		936	53.5%
National Trust	121	7		9			138	7.9%
National Trust Scotland			10				10	0.6%
University	56		16	3			76	4.3%
National Museum	43	5	8	7		10	72	4.1%
English Heritage	31						31	1.8%
Historic Environment Scotland			11				11	0.6%
Total Scheme	1330	41	255	99	10	10	1750	100%

## **Appendix 2: Return applications, reviews, and removals over the last year**

Once a museum has submitted an application or return, an initial assessment is undertaken by an assessor, based on the published Standard and the associated guidance documents. An assessor may also visit the museum as part of the assessment.

Completed assessments are submitted for a quality assurance review (moderation) and scheduled for panel consideration. The Accreditation panel (formed of members of the Accreditation Committee) then decides the award outcome and the award is confirmed (as appropriate).

Four award outcomes are possible for returning applicants:

- Full Accreditation
- Provisional Accreditation
- Remove
- Remove & exclude due to deliberate non-compliance

New applicants can only receive Full Accreditation at a panel meeting, or their application will not be taken forward.

If the panel conclude they are not able to reach a decision with available information, they may also choose to defer a decision to a later meeting.

## Number of museums and galleries in the Accreditation Scheme (March 2023 - March 2024):

Assessment types considered per meeting.

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Provisional reviews	8	32%	8	32%	3	15%	5	13%	12	24%	5	13%	1	3%	42	18%
Returns	11	44%	7	28%	5	25%	19	48%	23	47%	25	63%	20	65%	110	48%
New applications	3	12%	4	16%	5	25%	11	28%	4	8%	5	13%	2	6%	34	15%
Removals	1	4%	2	8%	4	20%	1	3%	1	2%	5	13%	6	19%	20	9%
Compliance review	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Significant Change Review	2	8%	4	16%	3	15%	4	10%	9	18%	0	0%	2	6%	24	10%
Total	25	100%	25	100%	20	100%	40	100%	49	100%	40	100%	31	100%	230	100%

### Return outcomes at each panel (March 2023 - March 2024):

Outcomes of return assessments.

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Full	11	100%	5	71%	4	80%	17	89%	17	74%	19	76%	15	75%	88	80%
Provisional	0	0%	2	29%	1	20%	2	11%	6	26%	5	20%	5	25%	21	19%
Defer	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	11	100%	7	100%	5	100%	19	100%	23	100%	25	100%	20	100%	110	100%

### Provisional review outcomes at each panel (May 2024 - March 2024):

Outcomes of Provisional Review assessments.

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Full	7	88%	5	63%	2	67%	3	60%	7	58%	3	60%	1	100%	28	67%
Provisional extension	1	9%	3	38%	1	33%	2	40%	4	33%	1	20%	0	0%	12	29%
Remove	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	1	20%	0	0%	2	5%
Defer	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	8	97%	8	100%	3	100%	5	100%	12	100%	5	100%	1	100%	42	100%

**Significant Change review outcomes at each panel (May 2024 - March 2024):**

Outcomes of Significant change reviews assessments.

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Full	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0		0	0%	0	0%
Provisional extension	2	18%	3	75%	2	67%	4	100%	9	100%	0		2	100%	22	92%
Remove	0	0%	1	25%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0		0	0%	2	8%
Defer	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0		0	0%	0	0%
Total	2	18%	4	100%	3	100%	4	100%	9	100%	0		2	100%	24	100%

## Removals

The status of museums is regularly reviewed and where appropriate they are removed from the scheme. Typical reasons for removal are:

- **closure:** the collection has been transferred elsewhere
- **change of function:** ineligible for participation, no longer a museum
- **serious disaster:** for example, a catastrophic fire – no longer in a position to continue as a museum
- **merger:** combined with another organisation delivering similar objectives that is already participating with the scheme
- **capacity:** some museums are not able to meet the Standard
- **withdrawal:** some museums choose to voluntarily withdraw and so are removed from the Scheme in line with their own instructions

Where a museum is removed, Relationship Managers, Accreditation (ACE) will inform museum development and advisors of the reason, so appropriate support, and guidance can be provided. UK Accreditation assessing organisations (MGS, the Welsh Government and NIMC) hold direct responsibility for advice and development support in their nations. Removal from the scheme is not comparable to being excluded.

### Reasons for removal at Accreditation panels (March 2023 - March 2024)

	Mar-23		May-23		Jul-23		Sep-23		Nov-23		Jan-24		Mar-24		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Closure	1	100%	1	33%	2	40%	1	100%	2	100%	2	40%	4	67%	13	57%
Change of function	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Serious disaster	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Merger	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	17%	1	4%
Capacity	0	0%	0	0%	2	40%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	9%
Withdrawal	0	0%	2	67%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%	3	60%	1	17%	7	30%
Total	1	100%	3	100%	5	100%	1	100%	2	100%	5	100%	6	100%	23	100%