

**CHATTEL SLAVERY SURVEY  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**EMPIRE, SLAVERY  
AND SCOTLAND'S MUSEUMS**

Undertaken with Museums Galleries Scotland  
as part of an MSc Museum Studies Applied Dissertation  
at the University of Glasgow

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several common themes emerged after analysis of this survey using Grounded Theory Coding. As described below (4.4), this allows the qualitative data (i.e. the answers in the text boxes) to be separated and re-organised according to themes first using 'open coding' and then what is called 'axial coding' to group the segments of data into categories and identify links between the segments that were not immediately obvious. Then 'selective coding' connects different categories together, normally around one core theme, although in this survey multiple key themes emerged from the analysis:

- Many organisations pointed to a lack of resources to tackle the whole issue of the legacy of chattel slavery in Scotland's museums. A shortage of staff was the most cited example and was mentioned multiple times by most respondents. Many of Scotland's museums are small, local organisations run with a minimum of staff or staffed entirely by volunteers; in very few cases do the staff have the expertise or the confidence to tackle what has become a major global issue. Staff in many museums also do not have access to appropriate resources for research.

- Many of Scotland's museums have not, in the past, given space or priority to the legacies of chattel slavery or the impact of the economics of chattel slavery on Scottish society. Many respondents thus stated that other issues and research tended to be prioritised in the work of their museum. Many respondents were concerned that the links between their collections and chattel slavery might appear to be tenuous or forced in the eyes of the public. Support is needed to train and support the staff and volunteers at many museums to help them identify links and prioritise this work.

- Many respondents declared an interest in responding to the public's interest in the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and to be involved in exploring the legacies of chattel slavery insofar as this is reflected and revealed in museum collections. The BLM movement has clearly been the catalyst for an increase in activity, research, and reinterpretation in many museums— not solely around chattel slavery, but also focussing on anti-racism, race and inclusion, and wider decolonial practice.

- The survey revealed a degree of hesitation about how museum staff and volunteers should go about this reinterpretation. This arises partly from a lack of confidence about how the issue should be tackled in an appropriately sensitive manner and partly from the lack of resources to do this properly and systematically. This survey reveals that there is a widespread - although not universal - realisation that much more needs to be done to research provenance and reinterpret collections and there are many within the sector who know they are not doing enough and who want to do more.

- A number of respondents provided answers which had more to do with serfdom and the Clearances, or with modern-day refugees, than with chattel slavery. While these responses did not address the subject matter of this survey, they indicate a deep concern with the abuse of other human beings and a frustration that they were not able to answer the questions as asked. This perhaps suggests willingness to address the legacies of chattel slavery if the respondents were given the guidance and support to do this. More guidance about the more complicated indirect links, as well as the direct links, to chattel slavery might also be of assistance to some museum staff and volunteers as they try to reassess and reinterpret their collections.

- Many respondents pointed to a lack of funding to tackle many of the issues raised by this survey. And clearly increased funding could be used to employ more staff, undertake more research, engage in short-term projects, events, and exhibitions, and improve documentation and record-keeping.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

This report summaries the findings of a survey produced by Rachel Forrest undertaken as part of an MSc Museum Studies 'Applied Dissertation' at the University of Glasgow and was part of Museums Galleries Scotland's *Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums* project. The survey was sent to the museums and galleries in Scotland, and focuses on what these organisations are doing, have done, or plan to do in relation to their links to chattel slavery.

This report will anonymously summarise the analysis of the survey responses. In section 5.1 the survey is broken down by question. In section 5.2 the survey is analysed to show the main themes observed. In section 5.3 the survey responses are grouped into four separate groupings depending on the amount of work they are currently doing, or planning to do soon, around the issue of chattel slavery, to show patterns arising from these groupings. Any indications of activity that may identify individuals or organisations has been removed for the publication of this report.

### **3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The research objectives of this survey/placement, which will be detailed in this report were to:

- A. Produce a survey to examine what Scottish museums and galleries are currently doing or planning to do around links to chattel slavery in the following areas: collections, founding and funding, reinterpretation, exhibitions and events, and outreach.
- B. Analyse survey data using Grounded Theory Coding.
- C. Collate data to gain an overview of work currently underway or being planned.
- D. Make recommendations of ways in which museums and galleries might identify, clarify, and interpret their links to chattel slavery.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 SURVEY DESIGN**

The areas of focus in this survey were discussed and refined in weekly meetings with MGS supervisors. To avoid the confusion and misinterpretation that might have resulted from too wide an area of research, the subject matter was narrowed from the broader topic of empire, racism, race, and inclusion to the more precise issue of organisations' links to chattel slavery. The term 'chattel slavery' was selected to keep the focus on chattel slavery, as opposed to the many other forms of imperial abuse of conquered peoples.

The survey concentrates on seven areas (as in 3A above) designed to elicit information about how museums and galleries are addressing the origins and nature of their collections, the founding and funding of their organisations and the work they are doing or intend to do to address any links their collections have to chattel slavery. To ensure that the answers surveyed are not simply historical but relate to recent work and work which is genuinely intended, the questions relate only to work undertaken in the last 3 years or planned for the next 2 years.

Before the final survey was distributed it was approved by placement supervisors, Sheila Asante and Devon McHugh, and by ESSM Steering Group members.

### **4.2 DEFINITIONS INCLUDED IN SURVEY FOR CLARIFICATION**

On page one of the survey respondents were given an explanation of its purpose and what it would be used for. In two sections, to ensure respondents had a clear understanding of what they were being asked to consider and respond to, short explanations were given, which can be seen below.

Explanation at the beginning of section two, on museum collections:

*This section seeks to identify objects in collections that could be said to be directly or indirectly linked to chattel slavery. For the purposes of this survey an object that is directly linked could mean one that represents the profit or benefit anyone is likely to have received through their personal involvement or business dealings with chattel slavery, or objects that may have facilitated or benefitted from the capture or captivity of an enslaved person, or that could have been employed by any person engaged in the enslavement of another human being.*

*An indirect link would include any item representing wealth (including inherited wealth), reputation or status gained through a person or family's involvement in any sector of the economy in which slave labour was used, or any object or artwork associated with, or donated by, persons or activity now known to have benefitted from slavery. Objects associated with abolitionists or persons known to have been actively opposed to chattel slavery and the slave trade should also be included.*

Explanation at the beginning of section four, on reinterpretation:

*For the purposes of this section 'priority communities' refers to persons from communities that have been negatively impacted by the structural forms of discrimination and racism linked to the historic legacies of slavery and colonialism.*

### 4.3 SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

To obtain as accurate a snapshot as possible of current museum practice around chattel slavery, it was important for the survey to reach and be completed by as many organisations as possible, not simply large, urban organisations in the Central Belt but also smaller, rural, and volunteer run enterprises. Museums Galleries Scotland sent the survey to all 1996 email addresses, which could be organisations or individuals, included in MGS's mailing list (to which I was unable to have access due to GDPR regulations). This list includes 257 publicly accredited organisations and 172 others, with which MGS has a relationship and/or contact details. In addition to this list, I compiled a list of 254 unaccredited museums and galleries, mainly contemporary galleries, to which I also emailed the survey. Therefore 2250 emails were sent with an explanation of, and link to, the survey. Of these at least 670 emails were opened, and 147 opened the survey. 58 completed surveys were received.

The survey was distributed on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and closed on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

### 4.4 SURVEY ANALYSIS

Quantitative data from the survey was collected through single answer and multi-answer questions, and the results are shown below in bar graphs and cross tabulation tables.

Qualitative data was collected in expandable text boxes. This qualitative data (i.e., the answers in the text boxes) was then analysed through Grounded Theory Coding, according to the approach of Strauss and Corbin (1990)<sup>1</sup> using NVivo software. This allows text to be easily separated and re-organised according to theme. The first stage, open coding, divides the data (the text) into segments and applies a 'code' to attach that piece of text to one or even several themes. In the second stage, axial coding, the segments of data are grouped into categories, sometimes broad, to identify previously unseen links in the data, and to allow the emergence of clear themes. Lastly, selective coding is used to connect different categories together, usually around one core theme. However, in this case multiple key themes emerged from this analysis.

### 4.5 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

It is important to recognise the limitations of the data collected and analysed in this research. Although a survey is useful for gathering large quantities of data in a short period of time it lacks the capacity to explore participants' responses, which could be done through interviews. There is also, no matter how clear the language used, the possibility of participants misinterpreting the questions. The timescale, covering activities in the last three years and planned for the next two, was selected to gather the most current and relevant activities, and give participants a window of time that was manageable.

Answers are further dependent on who in the organisation decided to fill out the survey, their role in the organisation and their understanding of chattel slavery. For example, two completed surveys were received from one small independent museum but completed by different people. One survey stated a large amount of reinterpretation of their permanent collection was being carried out to research and acknowledge indirect links to chattel slavery. While the other response from the same

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<sup>1</sup> Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet Corbin. 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

organisation stated that they held no objects with links to chattel slavery and that no work was being, or had been, carried out around this topic (referred to in more detail in section 5.3).

In addition, organisations are frequently asked to participate in sector surveys and some people may be frustrated at having to take more time away from their work to fill out a survey especially if their perception is that such surveys never seem to make any difference to the work they are doing. The Covid-19 pandemic, with many staff still working from home, may also have impacted on participation as many museums are still closed and staff may have other, more essential priorities.



## 5. FINDINGS

### 5.1 SURVEY BREAKDOWN

In this section of the report the survey results will be broken down by question. For each quantitative question a bar chart will show responses, in some cases cross tabulation will also be shown to compare the answers of two questions. For each qualitative question (where respondents could write a free text response) Grounded Theory Coding has been used analyse responses and to give a summary of the responses.

Questions marked with an asterisk are mandatory. Questions without an asterisk are optional or logic filtered depending on answers to previous questions, hence the response rate for these will vary.

#### Section One: General Information

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1. Name of Organisation \*

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In total 58 separate responses were received from 52 organisations. Multiple responses were received from four organisations: three organisations responded twice, and one organisation responded four times.

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2. 27 respondents stated that their organisation has multiple sites. A total of 447 sites were listed.

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3. How would you categorise your organisation? \*

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Organisation Type	Number of respondents
Independent	35
Local authority	9
University	4
National-styled	2
National remit	2
Art Gallery	1
Contemporary Art Gallery	1
Other	4

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3a. If you selected Other, please

specify:

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Four respondents provided further information.

Four respondents selected 'Other' and specified that their organisations are categorised as:

- Charitable Trust administering a Local Authority Collection
- World Heritage Site
- Regimental Museum
- Arm's Length External Organisation (ALEO) – managing collection on behalf of a Local Authority

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4. Do you have a permanent collection? \*

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Yes	<div></div>	58 (100%)
No	<div></div>	0

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4a. Roughly how many objects are in your organisation's total collection? \*

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Less than 1000	<div></div>	9 (15.5%)
Between 1000 and 5000	<div></div>	11 (19%)
Between 5000 and 10,000	<div></div>	6 (10.3%)
Between 10,000 and 50,000	<div></div>	14 (24.1%)
Between 50,000 and 100,000	<div></div>	4 (6.9%)
Between 100,000 and 500,000	<div></div>	13 (22.4%)
More than 500,000	<div></div>	1 (1.7%)

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4ai. If you would like to give a more specific amount of objects in your organisations collection and/or if your organisation has multiple sites, and you are able to break down this total into the different sites, please include this information in the text box.

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This question was included as an optional question in case respondents wanted to give specific numbers for either one or more sites.

Twenty respondents provided further information.

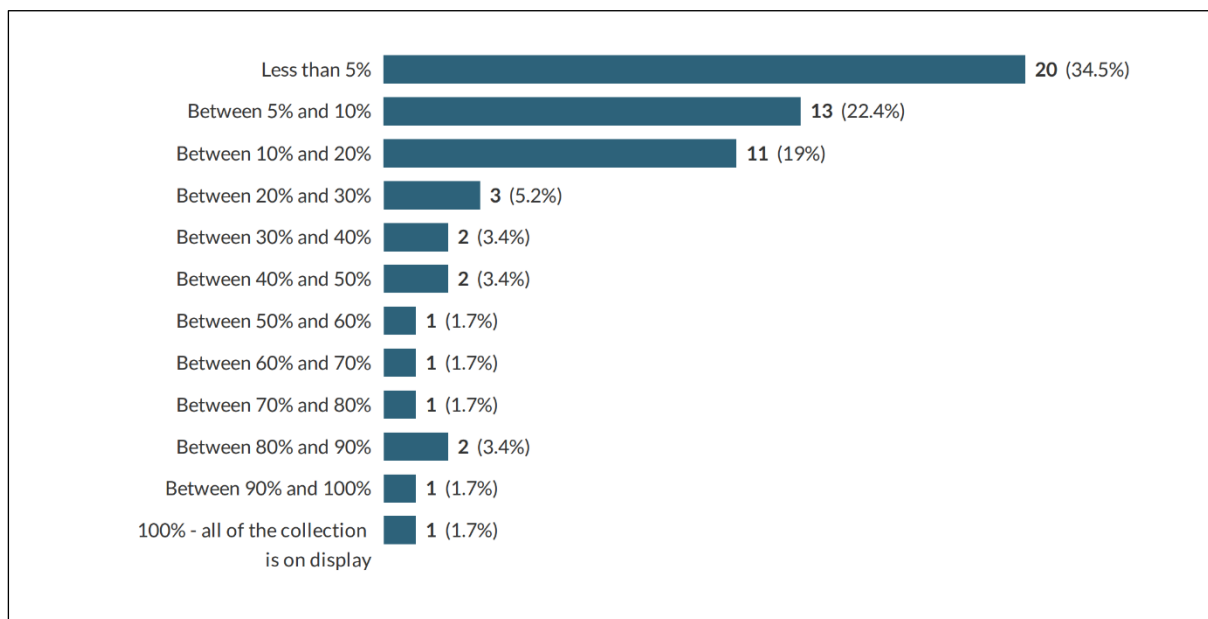
Most gave a more accurate figure of objects in their collection and some broke down the number of objects held at different sites that their organisation manages.

Some respondents also chose to list the types of objects their collections hold. From this it was possible to see that museums with the largest collections tend to have more varied collections, whereas museums with smaller collections focus on a particular subject area.

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4b. Roughly what percentage of the collection is on display? \*

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Here it is possible to see that most organisations have less than 20% of their collection on display.

## Cross tabulation: Questions 4a and 4b

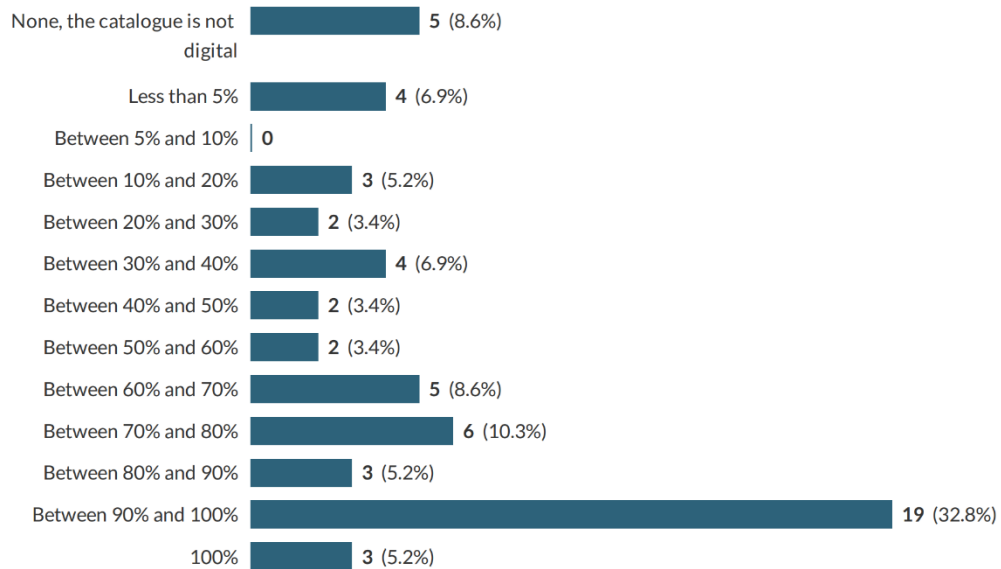
Roughly what percentage of the collection is on display?	Roughly how many objects are in your organisation's total collection?							No answer	Totals
	Less than 1000	Between 1000 and 5000	Between 5000 and 10,000	Between 10,000 and 50,000	Between 50,000 and 100,000	Between 100,000 and 500,000	More than 500,000		
Less than 5%	3	2	1	4	2	7	1	0	20
Between 5% and 10%	0	2	2	3	2	4	0	0	13
Between 10% and 20%	2	3	0	5	0	1	0	0	11
Between 20% and 30%	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Between 30% and 40%	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Between 40% and 50%	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Between 50% and 60%	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Between 60% and 70%	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Between 70% and 80%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Between 80% and 90%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Between 90% and 100%	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
100% - all of the collection is on display	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	9	11	6	14	4	13	1	0	58

By cross tabulating questions 4a. and 4b. it is possible to see that the size of the collection does not necessarily dictate how much will be on display. For example, it might have been assumed that an organisation with less than 5000 objects would have most of its collection on display and that an organisation with over 100,000 would not. But through cross tabulation it is possible to see that most organisations (with small and large collections) have less than 20% on display.

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4c. Roughly what percentage of the collection is catalogued on a digital Collections Management System (CMS)? \*

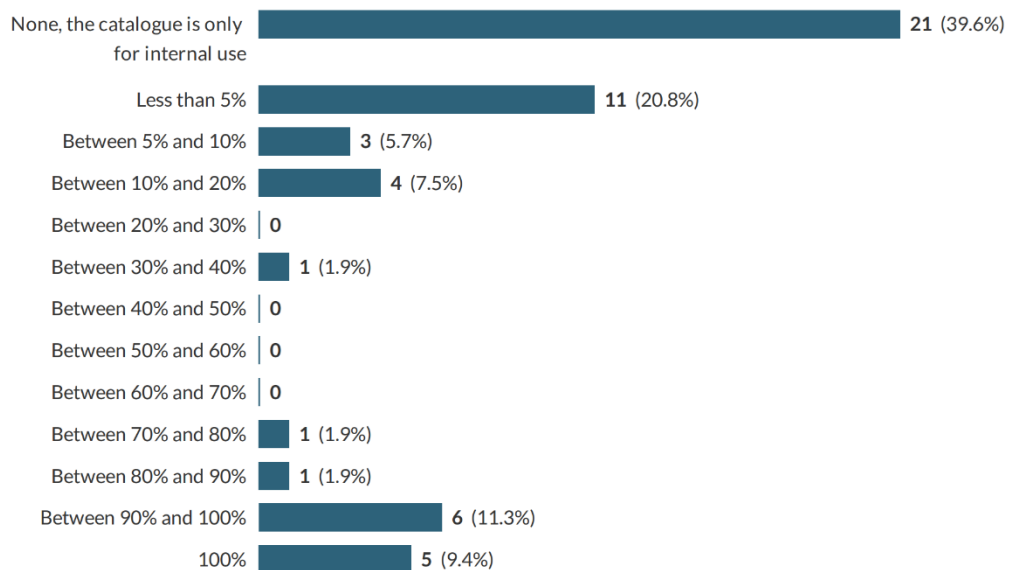
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4ci. What percentage of the digital catalogue is remotely accessible to the public?

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This looks at the availability of information. Question 4c. discovers that 31 respondents have 70% or more of the collection catalogued on a Collections Management System (CMS). But question 4ci.

discovers that only 13 respondents state that 70% or more of the catalogue is available to the public. Overwhelmingly, most respondents reported that under 20% of the digital catalogue is available to the public.

#### Cross tabulation: Questions 4c and 4ci

What percentage of the digital catalogue is remotely accessible to the public?	Roughly what percentage of the collection is catalogued on a digital Collections Management System (CMS)?													No answer	Totals
	None, the catalogue is not digital	Less than 5%	Between 5% and 10%	Between 10% and 20%	Between 20% and 30%	Between 30% and 40%	Between 40% and 50%	Between 50% and 60%	Between 60% and 70%	Between 70% and 80%	Between 80% and 90%	Between 90% and 100%	100%		
None, the catalogue is only for internal use	0	2	0	0	1	2	1	1	3	3	1	5	2	0	21
Less than 5%	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	4	0	0	11
Between 5% and 10%	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3
Between 10% and 20%	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	4
Between 20% and 30%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Between 30% and 40%	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Between 40% and 50%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Between 50% and 60%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Between 60% and 70%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Between 70% and 80%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Between 80% and 90%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Between 90% and 100%	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	6
100%	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	5
No answer	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Totals	5	4	0	3	2	4	2	2	5	6	3	19	3	0	58

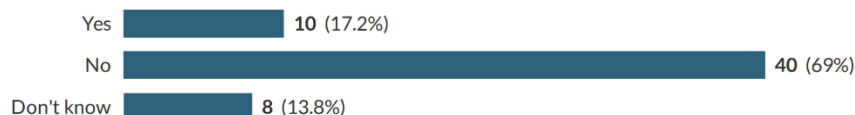
Through cross tabulating questions 4c. and 4ci. only one organisation has 100% of their collection on a CMS and that 100% of that is available to the public. The highest number of respondents (21) selected 'None, the catalogue is only for internal use'. Of these a significant number has a high proportion of their catalogue in a digital collections management system (CMS) which would not be difficult to make more widely available.

## Section Two: Collection

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5. As far as you know, do you have objects in your collection, either on display or stored, that are directly linked to chattel slavery? \*

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5a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

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19 respondents provided further information.

9 out of the 10 museums who selected 'yes' provided examples of objects directly linked to chattel slavery or did not name objects but stated which sites contain them or gave an approximation of the number of objects they have directly linked to chattel slavery. Examples of objects listed are as follow:

- ship manacles
- archives documenting local Literary & Antiquarian Society subscription/membership from plantation owners
- a sugar pan, made locally used in sugar trade
- manillas that are probably directly related to chattel slavery
- substantial archival documents which record institutional and regional involvement

The following are a selection of responses to question 5a:

*'I work with a collection which contains ideas of race supremacy and empire more than objects directly linked with slavery or wealth. The decorative arts collection at The Museum may have links.'*

*'Items relating to families who had connections with slavery e.g. [a] woodcarving which was owned by a local slave owner. The Museum archives hold documents detailing lists of slaves bought by local landowner in 1801.'*

*'We look after city monuments of individuals who were directly linked to chattel slavery.'*

*'We know of one specimen linked to an enslaved African in Jamaica. There [is] also a very small amount of unprovenanced skulls which could have a link to slavery.'*

*'Our local area in the 18th and 19th centuries was sustained by the West Indian sugar trade and we have objects in the collection which are directly linked. These include scientific mariner objects owned*

*and used by a local captain of slave ships, silver communion cups which were commissioned for a local church by someone who owned one of the largest sugar plantations in Jamaica.'*

*'A small number of objects displayed at the museum have direct links with slavery.'*

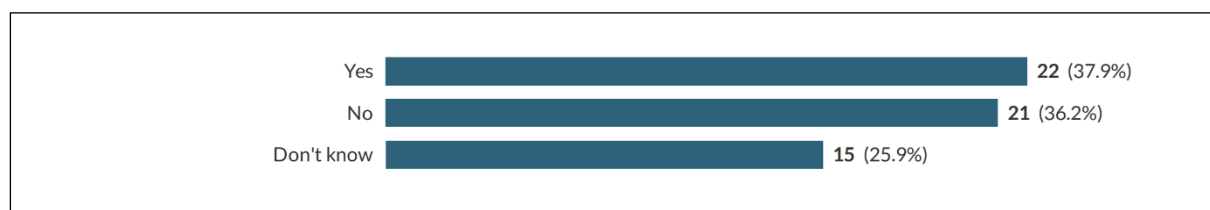
Although a detailed description of what constitutes direct or indirect links was given before these questions, there does seem to be some confusion from respondents.

Of the remaining 10 respondents who selected 'no' or 'don't know', reasons were given as to why their collections do not contain, or they do not believe that they contain, such objects, often due to their collection being site or area specific, or they stated that they are unaware of links due to lack of research, research not being started or it being currently ongoing.

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6. As far as you know, do you have objects in your collection, either on display or stored, that are indirectly linked to chattel slavery? \*

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6a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

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31 respondents provided further information.

The 22 respondents who selected 'yes' all provided examples of objects directly linked to chattel slavery or did not name objects but stated which sites contain them or gave an approximation of the number of objects they have directly linked to chattel slavery. Examples of objects listed are as follow:

- Artworks commissioned or owned by those whose wealth derived from chattel slavery
- Portraits of those whose wealth derived from chattel slavery
- Banners and regalia
- Items related to shipping and industry
- Georgian silver
- Snuff mull
- Plantation trumpet
- Musical instruments that were traded as part of the transatlantic slave trade
- A stained glass window
- Ceramic sugar cones



The following are a selection of responses to question 6a:

*‘Substantial collections from West Africa and North America etc., while archives also record how the proceeds of chattel slavery were spent in Scotland. There are also items which result from wealth deriving from slavery.’*

*‘Photographs and personal possessions of children who were descended from people who owned enslaved people or whose family members worked in colonial positions.’*

8 respondents who selected ‘don’t know’ explained that there is potential for objects with indirect links, but that research had not been carried out on their catalogue or that their catalogue did not provide sufficient detail to ascertain any links with chattel slavery.

One respondent who selected ‘no’ stated: *‘The Clearances, organised by Anglicised lairds inflicted a minor form of chattel enslavement on our indigenous white forebear populations.’*

Apart from the respondent who selected ‘no’, the additional information gathered in question 6a. shows that there is good understanding from organisations what constitutes an indirect link to chattel slavery.

Cross tabulation: Questions 5 and 6

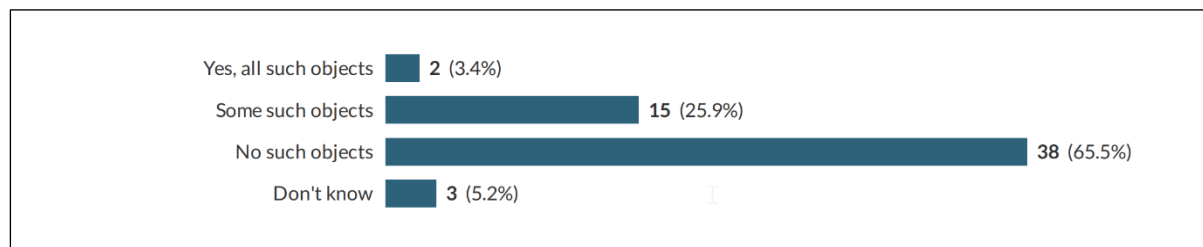
As far as you know, do you have objects in your collection, either on display or stored, that are directly linked to chattel slavery?	As far as you know, do you have objects in your collection, either on display or stored, that are indirectly linked to chattel slavery?			No answer	Totals
	Yes	No	Don't know		
Yes	7	1	2	0	10
No	12	20	8	0	40
Don't know	3	0	5	0	8
No answer	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	22	21	15	0	58

By cross tabulating questions 5 and 6 it is possible to see that 20 respondents selected that they have no objects directly or indirectly related to chattel slavery. Seven respondents selected that they have objects both directly and indirectly related to chattel slavery, while 5 do not know if they have either. 32 respondents selected that they have objects with either direct or indirect links.

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7. Do objects in your collection which have direct or indirect links to chattel slavery mention these links in interpretive text, labels or CMS information? \*

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Only two respondents state that all objects with direct or indirect links to chattel slavery mention these links in interpretive text, labels, or CMS information. This is a very low number compared with the 10 organisations that have objects with direct links and the 22 that have objects with indirect links.

It is possible that this is due to objects with direct or indirect links not being on display. However, it would still be possible to have this information on the collections management system (CMS).

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7a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

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24 respondents provided further information.

One of the respondents who selected 'yes, all such objects', a small independent museum, explained that including information on links to chattel slavery in all interpretation, labels and CMS information has been a deliberate decision to acknowledge links to their collection/museum, and that they are aware that this is a start in acknowledging legacies and that new interpretation panels and labels have been made.

Of the 38 respondents who selected 'no such objects', three stated that they either have no objects with links, are currently unaware of links or potential links and have not done this research.

Most organisations who selected 'some such objects' stated that research and reviews of collections are currently ongoing, with interpretation, labels and CMS information being updated as they discover more details.

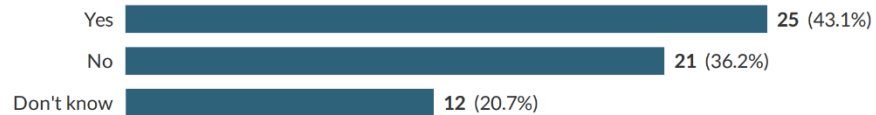
One respondent stated that the Black Lives Matter movement has caused their organisation to reflect on interpretation and undertake a review of their collections and their building.

One respondent stated that there had been 'reluctance' from some in their organisation to consider this topic, meaning that any information or interpretation for objects that do or could have links, do not indicate this. They did not state that the museum was working towards rectifying this at present.

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8. As far as you know, do you have objects in your collection, either on display or stored, that could be directly or indirectly linked to chattel slavery but require further research? \*

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8a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

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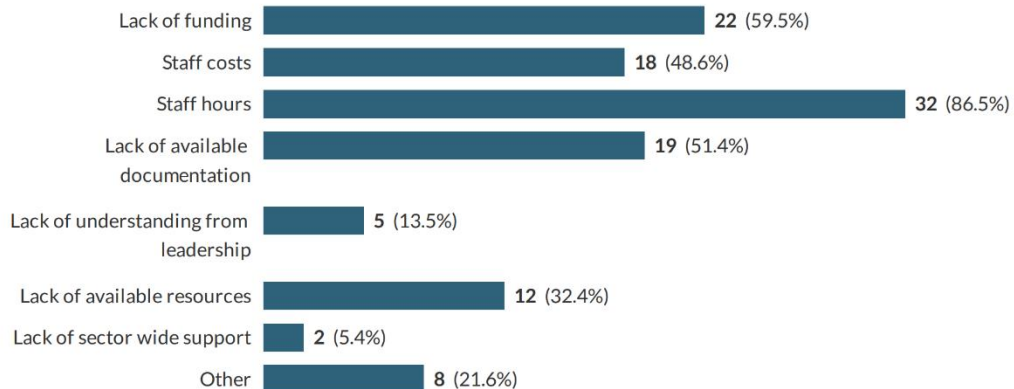
23 respondents provided further information.

Several respondents stated that chattel slavery, and objects connected to chattel slavery, is a new area of research for their organisation. Some of the 23 respondents mentioned objects that they think may have links, while the majority stated that research is ongoing, much being newly committed to, and that at this point they are unable say with certainty how much of their collections have links to chattel slavery.

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8b. Please indicate the reason(s) you have not yet been able to carry out the necessary research? Tick all options that apply. \*

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*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

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8bi. If you selected Other, please specify:

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8 respondents provided further information. Reasons listed as 'other' are as follows:

- Difficulty in supporting and supervising students and researchers due to facility layout
- The scale of the collection – very large
- Covid-19 restrictions and response reducing organisation capacity to carry out research
- This type of research not being thought about until recently
- Other areas of research being focused on
- No external requests to do this type of research
- Links would be tentative – level of storytelling does not go into that much detail

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8bii. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

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17 respondents provided further information.

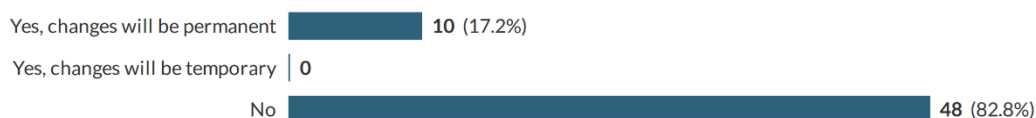
Here some respondents chose to go into further detail about their selection(s) in question 8. From analysing the responses, the main issue is that organisations are lacking staff, either staff with expertise or staff without the capacity to take on new research, or that the organisation's collection is very large in comparison to a small staff team meaning that in-depth research or re-design is largely impossible.

As well as a shortage of staff being an issue, respondents also note that work to do with chattel slavery has not been prioritised due to insufficient resources and a lack of staff with the expertise or confidence to tackle this issue.

---

9. Is your organisation making any changes to its collections policies in the light of your own or public concerns about your collections' links to chattel slavery? \*

---



## Cross tabulation: Questions 4b and 9

Roughly what percentage of the collection is on display?	Is your organisation making any changes to its collections policies in the light of your own or public concerns about your collections's links to chattel slavery?			No answer	Totals
	Yes, changes will be permanent	Yes, changes will be temporary	No		
Less than 5%	7	0	13	0	20
Between 5% and 10%	2	0	11	0	13
Between 10% and 20%	1	0	10	0	11
Between 20% and 30%	0	0	3	0	3
Between 30% and 40%	0	0	2	0	2
Between 40% and 50%	0	0	2	0	2
Between 50% and 60%	0	0	1	0	1
Between 60% and 70%	0	0	1	0	1
Between 70% and 80%	0	0	1	0	1
Between 80% and 90%	0	0	2	0	2
Between 90% and 100%	0	0	1	0	1
100% - all of the collection is on display	0	0	1	0	1
No answer	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	10	0	48	0	58

From this cross tabulation it is possible to see that all 10 who answered 'yes' are organisations with larger collections although all of them have 20% or less of their collection on display. Although this is a small number of respondents, it is to be expected that organisations with larger collections are more likely to have a significant proportion of objects with links to chattel slavery and it is encouraging to learn that they are making changes to their collections policies in the light of their own or public concerns.

---

9a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

28 respondents provided further information.

21 respondents who answered 'no' provided further information. A small number said that changing policies is not something they feel they need to consider and/or do not think their policies need to be updated, some referring to their lack of objects linked to chattel slavery as their reasoning.

The majority of those who answered 'no' stated that although they are not currently changing policies, they are aware that changes may need to be considered in the future or only changed if they acquire any or more objects with links to chattel slavery. Some currently lack an understanding of links to their collection, while some are currently reviewing policies that may need to be updated or undertaking collections reviews to ascertain if their collection has the links to warrant policy change.

2 of these respondents also stated that guidance, specifically from Museums Galleries Scotland, or other museums would be helpful before they decided whether their policies should be changed or not.

7 respondents who answered 'yes, changes will be permanent' provided further information. Several of these respondents stated that the motivation behind the changes they were making derived from their Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion commitments.

### Section Three: Founding and Funding

---

10. Has your organisation been able to carry out any projects or research to explore how your organisation was originally founded or funded? \*

---



---

10a. Were any links to chattel slavery discovered?

---



---

10ai. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

---

19 respondents provided further information.

Those who answered 'no' to question 10a. tended to provide reasons as to why their organisation's founding or funding has no links to chattel slavery e.g., the year it was founded being recent, where the initial funding came from or how their organisation began. Although these responses are valid, they may have misunderstood question 10, asking if they have carried out research into their founding or funding because it has now become clear that this is often a very complex issue requiring considerable research skills and resources.

For example, a museum has carried out this research and has found no founding or funding links, but their response still recognises that although no links have been found, there is still a likelihood that links may be found in the future given that we now know that tracing the legacy of chattel slavery also involves following the money from the eras of chattel slavery into the post abolition era.

*'I don't think that our founder had directly known links to chattel slavery projects. And his views on enslavement, abolition etc. are unknown. But as a very rich man in London in the mid-late C18th, I find it hard to believe that he didn't have investments, directly or indirectly, with organisations and people involved in chattel slavery.'*

3 respondents are currently undertaking this research. One museum does not yet have results. The other has found links and research is ongoing. The third museum has found links and has appointed a lecturer whose initial task is a two-year research project into the legacy of slavery at both the museum and local area.

Although not yet started, another museum has proposed to investigate possible indirect links to chattel slavery and direct links to the abolition movement.

Two respondents who answered 'yes' and have completed their research provided short statements of links that have been found:

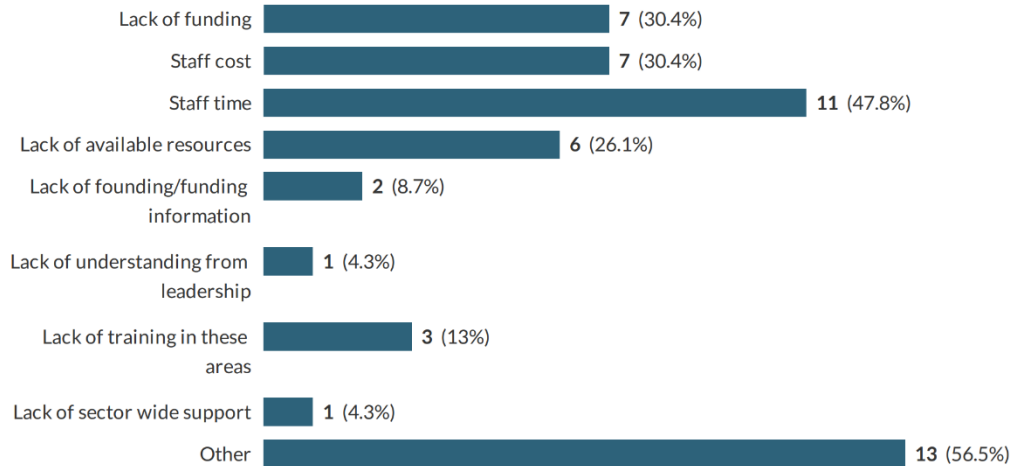
*'The museum has undertaken research into the funding of the building [by members of the local musical society]. Through the research it was discovered that some of the money used to build the hall was given by members of the Society who owned plantations in the Caribbean and would have benefitted financially from the practice of chattel slavery.'*

*'The museum has a complex history. Certain organisations were closely involved in the foundation of our collection. Individuals that served these organisations derived their wealth and status from their involvement in chattel slavery... Scotland's linen trade for example involving the processing of jute and weaving of coarse linen was directly and indirectly linked to chattel slavery.'*

---

10b. Please indicate the reason(s) why your organisation has not been able to explore this subject? Tick all options that apply.

---



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

---

10bi. If you selected Other, please specify

---

13 respondents provided further information.

All respondents stated that they believe that no research into founding or funding is necessary. No additional reasons were stated.

---

10bii. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

---

8 respondents provided further information.

All respondents to this question have answered 'no' to question 10: *Has your organisation been able to carry out any projects or research to explore how your organisation was originally founded or funded?* They were then unable to give textual answers to question 10ai.

One respondent, stated that this research is underway, as it is with those who answered 'yes' to question 10.

Two respondents stated that this research has not been a priority for their organisation. One has stated that poor record-keeping means that they have had to rely on word of mouth for some of



their objects' provenance. Staff time and lack of available resources contribute to them being unable to explore this area further.

One respondent stated that there could be links to chattel slavery in the founding and/or funding for the building their museum. Lack of funding, staff costs and staff time contribute to them being unable to explore this further.

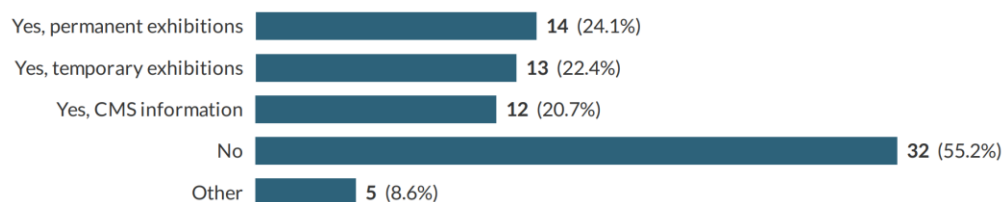
Another respondent (who was also interviewed) stated that there are potentially many links to chattel slavery, as well as imperial and colonial connections. A lack of funding and a very small staff (one paid member, plus volunteers) hold back this research.

## Section Four: Reinterpretation

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11. Has your organisation undertaken or planned any reinterpretation of permanent exhibitions, temporary exhibitions or CMS information in order to include previously unmentioned information on links to chattel slavery? Tick all options that apply. \*

---



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

---

11a. If you selected Other, please specify

---

5 respondents provided further information.

3 respondents stated that they are planning to reinterpret. One refers to their permanent exhibition, one to one of their gallery spaces focusing on colonial links rather than slavery and one respondent refers to three of their sites, buildings rather than collections, via online interpretation.

---

11b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

22 respondents provided further information.

Key respondents that seem to be doing the most include a museum who is undertaking a project that is looking outside of traditional museum authority to develop its approach, also an organisation with a national remit who are reviewing their entire collection with embedded EDI commitments in everything, and a charitable trust who are redeveloping their museum building and will explore the history and legacies on imperialism, including chattel slavery

Most respondents refer to some forms of reinterpretation or the inclusion of previously unmentioned information in smaller ways. For example, changing labels on permanent displays, updates to CMS database, re-writing interpretation to incorporate newly discovered research, improvements to language and terminology to improve inclusivity and/or not using discriminatory and inappropriate language.

Although not as directly related, one respondent has a temporary display of donated Black Lives Matter protest placards. This is the only reference to a relevant contemporary museum display noted in this whole survey.

---

12. Are there any types of object or collection reinterpretation concerning links to chattel slavery that your organisation would like to undertake, but has not yet been able to do? \*

---



---

12.a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

---

26 respondents provided further information.

Responses in this section are very positive and show that many organisations would like to undertake research into how objects, or the entire collection, could be linked to chattel slavery as well as to imperialism, colonialism, colonial violence, imperial-era industry, and race. Respondents seem to be partly or fully aware of where some links could be but lack the knowledge and resources to properly reinterpret objects or collections. Most note that far more historical research and object provenance is needed for them to be able to understand any links and fully interpret these links and incorporate the stories into their interpretation.

---

13. Has your organisation undertaken or planned any activities with priority communities in order to reinterpret exhibitions or co-curate objects or collections linked to chattel slavery? \*

---



---

13.a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

18 respondents provided further information.

Of those who answered 'yes', their responses are very varied. Examples provided include being active with Black History Month, working with an advisory panel of people from priority communities to work on projects on exhibition research, interpretation, and object care.

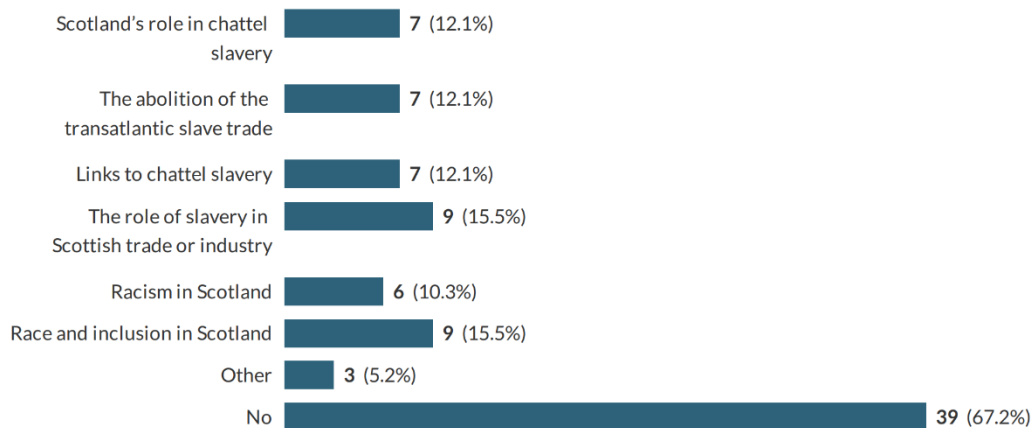
Of those who selected 'no' some provided these responses: that they were struggling to make meaningful connections; that they feel that work is needed to understand links in the collection before beginning this work; that this work is currently being considered as part of reviews; that work has not started as no links to chattel slavery discovered; that such work was possibly done in the past but is not currently being undertaken.

## Section Five: Exhibitions and Events

---

14. Please indicate if your organisation has undertaken or planned any exhibitions about or including any of the following: \*

---



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

---

14a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

3 respondents provided further information.

However, all were focusing on Scottish migration, global migration, migrants in Calais, serfdom but none made any reference to chattel slavery or its legacies in Scotland.

---

14b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

19 respondents provided further information.

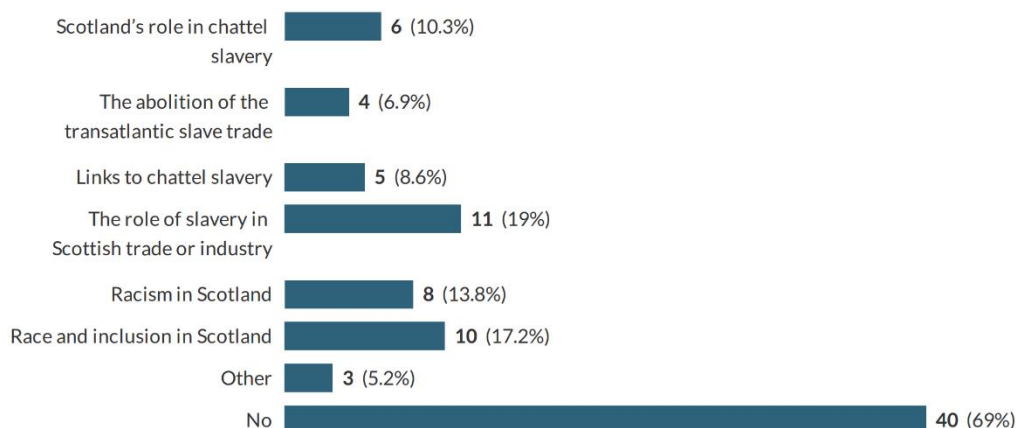
15 respondents gave examples of past, ongoing or future exhibitions that cover one or more of the answers they selected in question 14, although at least two of the examples given did not happen within the time frame specified for this survey.

2 of the respondents stated that they were unaware of any exhibitions around any of the options had ever taken place due to a lack of documentation within their organisation.

---

15. Please indicate if your organisation has undertaken or planned any events about or including any of the following: \*

---



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

---

15a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

3 respondents provided further information.

One stated 'don't know'.

Another respondent stated that one of their annual anniversary lectures is about the slave trade.

---

15b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

---

16 respondents provided further information.

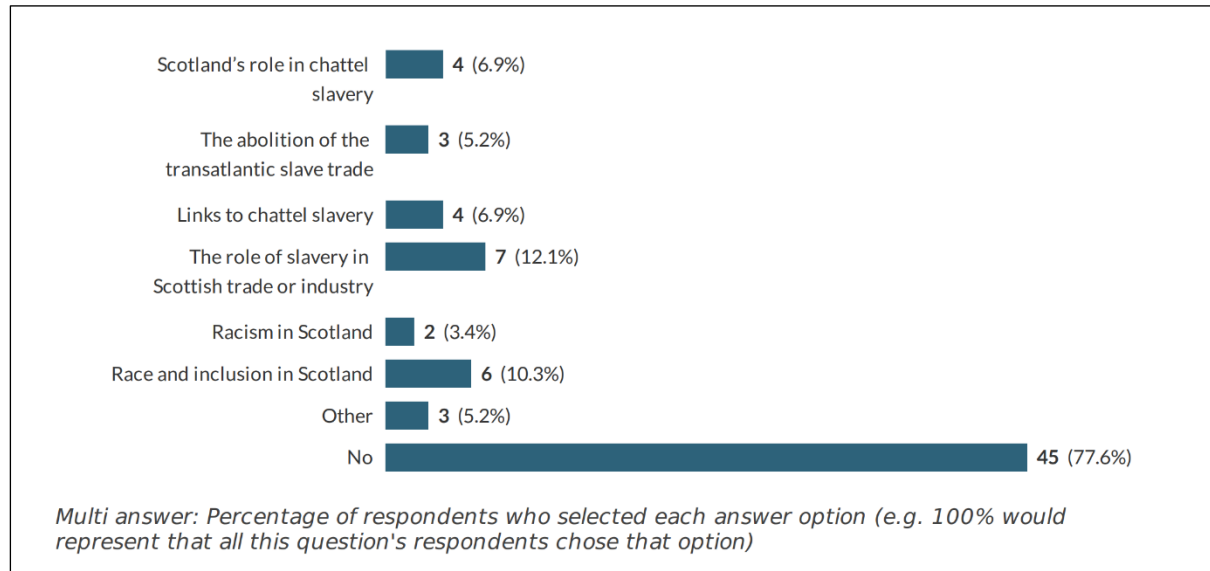
9 respondents stated that events of this kind have or will tie in with the exhibitions they mentioned in question 14. These include, school workshops, talks, online events, walking tours.

One respondent, which in previous answers mentioned trying to undertake oral histories of BAME workers, here mentions that this will inform a future exhibition of the unseen history of BAME workers in their museum.

---

16. Please indicate if your organisation has undertaken or planned any online only exhibitions or events about or including any of the following: \*

---



This question was specifically included to gauge if organisations were actively switching to online programming because of the Covid-19 pandemic, to continue engaging with audiences on topics related to chattel slavery and racism, which tend to have become more prominent during the pandemic.

In question 14, referring to exhibitions, 39 respondents answered 'no'. In question 15, referring to events, 40 respondents answered 'no'. In this question, when referring to online-only exhibitions and events, 45 respondents answered 'no'. This means that only 13 respondents stated that their organisations have, or plan to, engage online with these topics.

Although there may not appear to be a huge difference between the number of 'no' responses between questions 14, 15 and 16 – exhibitions, events and online – a far greater variety of topics were selected in reference to exhibitions and events (45 topics were selected in exhibitions, 44 by events) compared to online exhibitions and events (which only covered 26 topics). This is backed up by respondents' answers to question 16b, below, that online exhibitions and events are less diverse in topic, potentially less informative and less engaging.

There thus appears to be a risk of online exhibitions consisting only of documentation and being merely complimentary to live exhibitions and events, rather than providing a uniquely informative digital event. Given an uncertain future as far as live events are concerned it would appear appropriate to encourage museums and galleries to put more resources into providing more dynamic and engaging online exhibitions.

---

16a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

3 respondents provided further information.

One stated 'not sure.' One stated 'don't know'. And another re-stated their annual lectures, clarifying that it was online-only.

---

16b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

11 respondents provided further information.

4 respondents mentioned specific online only content that they were producing.

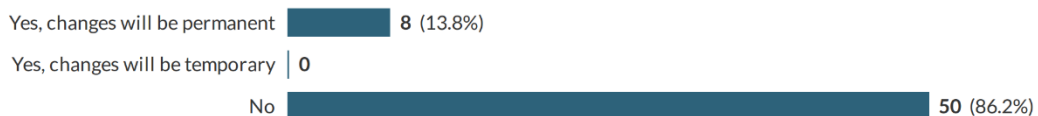
All other respondents refer to online elements of their exhibition and events, not online only content.

Those who stated that they were carrying out some form of online exhibition or event refer to previous answers on exhibition or events and do not elaborate on how the online event is different, similar, informative, or uniquely interesting.

---

17. Is your organisation making any changes to exhibition or event policies in the light of your own or public concerns about links to chattel slavery? \*

---



---

17a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

18 respondents provided further information.

Of those who selected 'no' various reasons were given: the idea was received defensively by some people in the organisation; they had not identified issues with current policy; they had not given this

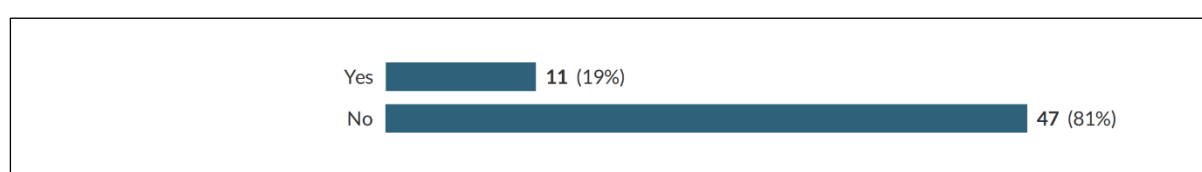
any consideration; they would consider this in the future if problems were highlighted by their working group or the public; they need to identify issues in their collection first, before making any decisions.

Of those who selected 'yes' all were in the process of reviewing or changing policies and none of these processes were yet complete. Equalities policies and language changes were mentioned but no specific examples of these changes were given.

---

18. Has your organisation undertaken or planned any activities with priority communities in order to co-curate, plan or organise exhibitions or events about links to chattel slavery? \*

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#### Cross tabulation: Questions 13 and 18

Has your organisation undertaken or planned any activities with priority communities in order to reinterpret exhibitions or co-curate objects or collections linked to chattel slavery?	Has your organisation undertaken or planned any activities with priority communities in order to co-curate, plan or organise exhibitions or events about links to chattel slavery?		No answer	Totals
	Yes	No		
Yes	6	2	0	8
No	5	45	0	50
No answer	0	0	0	0
Totals	11	47	0	58

Here questions 13 and 18 were cross tabulated to compare responses. These questions were very similar, with question 13 located last in the collections section and question 18 being in the exhibitions and event section. The main difference is that question 13 asks about reinterpretation while question 18 does not.

---

18a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

13 respondents provided further information.

Of the respondents who answered 'yes', all but one answered that they planned to develop their projects in the future but have not yet commenced.



One respondent who answered 'yes' stated that until now this work has only been small scale and they acknowledge that they would like to do more than this.

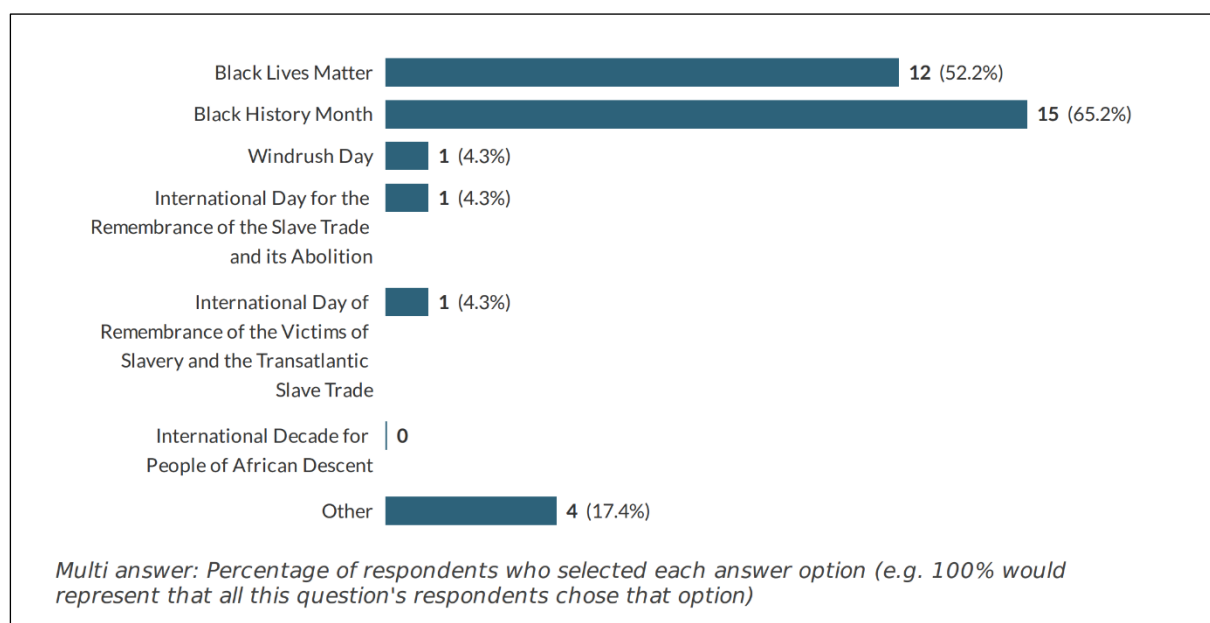
Interestingly, textual responses to this question, compared to questions 13 to 17, were far shorter and less detailed. Three respondents simply referred to previous answers.

## Section Six: Further Outreach

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19. Has your organisation taken part in any of the following activities or movements? \*

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In this question by far the most popular activities or movements engaged with are the Black Lives Matter movement and Black History Month. This, if other responses are taken into consideration, could be due to the growing interest in Black Lives Matter in the last two years. Interest in, and perhaps publicity for, the other events has been less widespread.

---

19a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

Four respondents, all of which were independent museums selected 'other'. Relevant responses were:

- Gypsy-Roma-Traveller Month
- Sharing social media posts about Black History Month and Black Lives Matter

---

19b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any

---

13 respondents provided further information.

Here most respondents elaborated on the involvement of their organisation. Two respondents stated that displays are part of their involvement, one a display about Black History Month and the other with Black Lives Matter protest material.

Other respondents who selected 'yes' stated that their involvement includes online content (unspecified), posting on social media and engaging with the social media content of others.

---

20. Has your organisation taken part in any outreach work to do with Scotland's links to chattel slavery, for example, work with local schools or communities? \*

---



---

20a. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

13 respondents provided further information.

One respondent who answered 'no' to this question stated that they lack the objects to use in presenting this topic, either because their collection contains very large, unmovable objects or because their smaller objects are less obviously linked to chattel slavery and would make little impact in schoolwork.

Key examples of those who selected 'yes', and that could be a good example to help others, include:

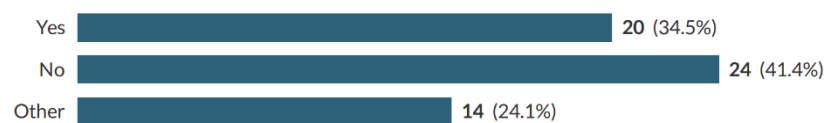
One respondent who stated that they are exploring ways to incorporate race and equality across their programme, which will link with elements in the Curriculum for Excellence.

Another respondent is developing a loan box and video for use in schools.

---

21. Do you feel that outreach activities to do with Scotland's links to chattel slavery are part of your organisation's role today? \*

---



Cross tabulation: Questions 4a and 21

Roughly how many objects are in your organisation's total collection?	Do you feel that outreach activities to do with Scotland's links to chattel slavery are part of your organisation's role today?			No answer	Totals
	Yes	No	Other		
Less than 1000	1	5	3	0	9
Between 1000 and 5000	2	7	2	0	11
Between 5000 and 10,000	2	3	1	0	6
Between 10,000 and 50,000	6	6	2	0	14
Between 50,000 and 100,000	1	0	3	0	4
Between 100,000 and 500,000	7	3	3	0	13
More than 500,000	1	0	0	0	1
No answer	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	20	24	14	0	58

By cross tabulating questions 4a and 21 it is possible to see that those with larger collections are more likely to think that outreach activities to do with Scotland's links to chattel slavery are part of their organisation's role.

Cross tabulation: Questions 11 and 21

Has your organisation undertaken or planned any reinterpretation of permanent exhibitions, temporary exhibitions or CMS information in order to include previously unmentioned information on links to chattel slavery? Tick all options that apply.	Do you feel that outreach activities to do with Scotland's links to chattel slavery are part of your organisation's role today?			No answer	Totals
	Yes	No	Other		
Yes, permanent exhibitions	10	1	3	0	14
Yes, temporary exhibitions	10	0	3	0	13
Yes, CMS information	10	0	2	0	12
No	2	23	7	0	32
Other	3	0	2	0	5
No answer	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	35	24	17	0	76

By cross tabulation questions 11 and 21 it is possible to see that organisations who feel that outreach activities to do with Scotland's links to chattel slavery are part of their organisation's role were more likely to have already undertaken, or planned to undertake, reinterpretation of their collections.

---

21a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

14 respondents provided further information.

None of the 14 are currently engaging with any outreach activities but all responses were positive to the prospect of doing so in the future. The main reason these organisations are not currently doing this work is that they have so far been unable to find links to chattel slavery within their collection.

---

21b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

15 respondents provided further information.

Similarly, to question 21a, this question gathered mainly a positive response. Again, one of the themes of answers to this question was that most organisations are open to undertaking this work but currently lack an awareness of the links to chattel slavery within their collection.

Setbacks mentioned by respondents include contention from trustees about this topic, lacking an outreach officer, being a very small organisation lacking capacity, lacking appropriate expertise, or lacking objects to use in outreach activities.

A possible resource mentioned by one respondent was for their organisation to be part of a wider group or forum.

## Section Seven: Final Questions

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22. What would you say have been the motivations behind any work your organisation has done concerning links to chattel slavery?

---

36 respondents provided further information.

9 respondents stated 'n/a' to this question.

The remaining 27 respondents gave a range of interesting and quite relevant motivations:

- The Black Lives Matter movement and associated protests (the most common motivation)
- The murder of George Floyd
- Implementing EDI policies in practice, not just in writing
- Raised awareness of ongoing links to chattel slavery
- Increasing awareness of overlooked or misrepresented histories linked to collections and institutions
- The desire to address inequality and injustice
- A commitment to respond to the desires and expectations of the community
- Morality and ethics
- Historical accuracy
- Transparency
- Wanting to know more about the history of the museum's location
- A desire to link museum or the museum's collection to wider histories
- A wish to challenge prejudices and antipathy in the local or wider community
- An interest in unexpected aspects to collection
- An awareness of current concerns of the audience
- A recognition of the legacy of chattel slavery in their particular location
- A belief that a museums role is to create and stimulate conversation
- A commitment to make the museum inclusive and representative of the people of Scotland

Below is a small selection of answers given to this question:

*'We need to make the world better. Wickedness needs to be confronted and resisted. We need to support the weak, marginalised and disempowered and help make their voices more fairly heard.'*

*'The need to acknowledge the past and to recognise that this history has a legacy in the present day, shaping structures of continuing racism, inequality and injustice...This acknowledgment is simply a start - it's essential to use this as the basis for working with [minority] communities and using this as the basis for reparative justice.'*

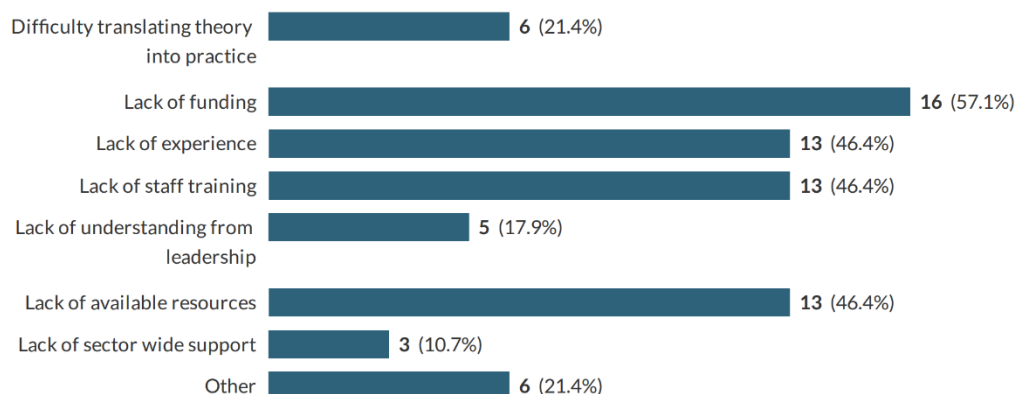
*'To begin the task of addressing profound historical injustices and their ongoing legacies. To more adequately understand and discuss shared histories and collections.'*

*'To address the privileges and misconceptions around Scotland's, and specifically the Highland's, role within the Chattel Slave Trade.'*

---

23. If your organisation has undertaken work to examine links to chattel slavery, what kind of obstacles and difficulties have you encountered? Tick all options that apply.

---



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

---

23a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

6 respondents provided further information.

Those who selected 'other' stated the following reasons:

- Nervousness within the leadership about content
- The Covid-19 pandemic: remote working, restricted opportunities to discuss with all staff, lack of direct access to the collection or the museum's internal resources, the pressures of reopening, the need to rearrange programmes, the need to fulfil prior commitments and time needed to deal with a backlog of enquiries
- A desire to develop consistent approach across departments and sites of the organisation
- Unsuccessful funding applications
- Lack of knowledge of the provenance of objects

---

23b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

14 respondents provided further information.

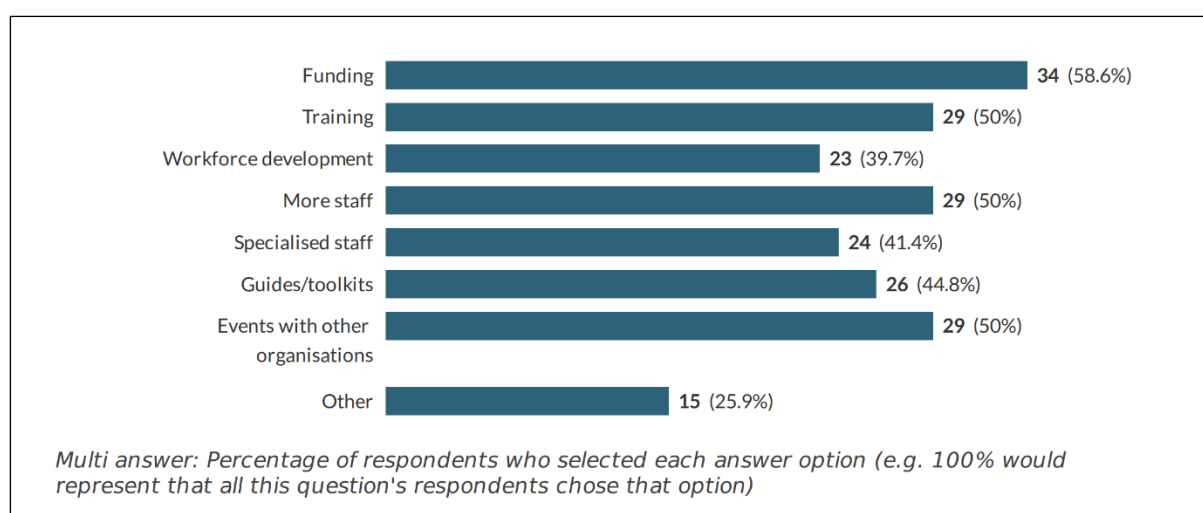
12 respondents went into more detail about the difficulties they face when approaching or undertaking this work. As can be seen from question 23, lack of funding, lack of resources and staff time are repeatedly impacting museums and hindering staff in carrying out this work, regardless of

staff size, museum size or collection size. Lack of confidence in this area of work is also mentioned in textual responses, as well as struggling to engage with BAME communities to co-curate or discuss topics. As in a previous question, partnering with other organisations is mentioned, which could help with resource sharing, building knowledge and confidence, and accessing audiences to undertake outreach and co-curation.

---

24. What would help your organisation engage further with the issue of links to chattel slavery? Tick all options that apply. \*

---




---

24a. If you selected Other, please specify:

---

15 respondents provided further information.

Of those who selected 'other' 3 respondents stated that their organisations could be helped by a better understanding of good practice, with help to improve to digital records, by access to in-depth research undertaken externally and by consistent frames of reference.

The 12 other respondents stated that chattel slavery is not relevant to their organisations. Example quoted are provided below:

*'Nothing...we do not see this as something of interest in our area.'*

*'A relevant theme and collections! Our museum is deeply rooted in a past history of exploitation, but our story is local to Scotland and is not part of colonialism'*

*'We don't need help.'*

*'We have no links or issues so don't need help to engage.'*

---

24b. Please use the text box to provide further information if you have any.

---

5 respondents provided further information.

3 of the respondents to this question elaborated on their selected answers to question 24, highlighting that museum priorities, resources, lack of connections to BAME communities, lack of time and size of collection impact the amount of research, outputs, and time they can give to these issues.

One respondent stated that *'It's been a significant help that issues surrounding the legacies of slavery and other forms of colonial violence have been given priority by the Scottish Government and then through MGS. This creates a governmental and curatorial policy context in which it's possible to then acknowledge these issues in museum collections and their interpretation. So, the hope is that this continues and leads to the availability of specific funding streams that will help us to carry out more work in this important field.'*

---

25. Do you think your organisation is doing enough to investigate and address historical and lasting links to chattel slavery in Scotland today?

---

42 respondents provided further information.

Most respondents acknowledged that although they are not doing enough to investigate and address both historical and lasting links to chattel slavery, they feel their organisation is doing as much as they can commit to, or have the capacity and resources to do, now. Some respondents spoke of a frustration they feel since they acknowledge an obligation to address and discuss chattel slavery, but they also feel that the nature of their collections makes it difficult to do this in any natural and comprehensive way.

---

26. Please use this space for anything else you would like to tell us about work your organisation is doing or would like to do around links to chattel slavery.

---

16 responses respondents provided further information.

This section was included to allow respondents to mention anything that they felt hadn't been addressed in the other survey questions, but little new information emerged that had not already been offered.



---

27. If you would be willing to be interviewed further and potentially be used as a case study, please include your name and contact details in the text box. Interviews will last approximately 30 minutes.

---

20 respondents provided further information.

19 of those stated that they would be willing to be interviewed, although some stated that they were unsure of what more information they could add.

4 people were interviewed and were chosen due to the diverse types of museums, the extent to which they are addressing the legacies of chattel slavery and the difficulties they are having.

## **5.2 EMERGING THEMES**

This section looks at the main themes that have emerged after analysing the survey using Grounded Theory Coding. As described above (4.4), this allows the qualitative data (i.e., the answers in the text boxes) to be separated and re-organised according to themes using what is called 'open coding' before the second stage, 'axial coding', groups the segments of data into categories and identifies links between the segments that were not immediately obvious. Then 'selective coding' connects different categories together, normally around one core theme, although in this survey multiple key themes emerged from this analysis.

### **Resources**

As might be expected, many organisations pointed to a shortage of resources to tackle the whole issue of the legacy of chattel slavery in Scotland's museums. A lack of staff was the most cited example and was mentioned multiple times by most respondents. Many of Scotland's museums are small, local organisations run with a minimum of staff or staffed entirely by volunteers and in very few cases do the staff have the expertise or the confidence to tackle what has become a major global issue. Staff in many museums also do not have access to the kind of resources available in larger, or university, organisations or in large urban areas. There is frequently a lack of documentation in the local organisation itself and where such documentation does exist there are often not the human resources to organise or research it properly. Some museums do not have their own online CMS and many others do not have their whole collection recorded on their CMS and do not have the resources to expand it. Lack of continuity among staff at many museums also means that new staff or volunteers are sometimes unaware of past events or exhibitions and do not have access to the knowledge or information that could help them respond to the issue of Scotland's links to chattel slavery.

### **Priorities**

Many of Scotland's museums are organised around collections or themes which have not, in the past, given much space or certainly any priority to the legacies of chattel slavery or the impact of the economics of chattel slavery on Scottish society. Many respondents thus stated that other issues and research tended to be prioritised in the work of their museum. While not entirely resistant to respond to the legacies of slavery many respondents were concerned that the links between their collections and chattel slavery might appear to be tenuous or forced in the eyes of the public. It became clear during this survey that assistance and encouragement is needed to train and support the staff and volunteers at many museums to help them identify links and prioritise this work.

### **Black Lives Matter**

Many respondents did declare a concern to respond to the public's interest in the Black Lives Matter movement and did wish to be involved in exploring the legacies of chattel slavery insofar as this is reflected and revealed in museum collections. The BLM movement has clearly been the catalyst for an increase in activity, research, and reinterpretation in many museums not solely around chattel slavery but also focussing on anti-racism, race, and inclusion and wider decolonial practice. Although it could be argued that these organisations are addressing this issue too late and with insufficient

priority, it is clear from this survey that this is not entirely true and many of the efforts being made, or which museum staff and volunteers wish to make, arise from a genuine desire to be open and truthful about the provenance of their collections and their organisation itself and a determination to embed a more honest reinterpretation of their collection in a permanent way.

### **Hesitation and uncertainty**

At the same time this survey also reveals a degree of hesitation about how museum staff and volunteers should go about this reinterpretation. This arises partly from a lack of confidence about how the issue should be tackled in an appropriately sensitive manner and partly from the lack of resources to do this properly and systematically. This survey reveals that there is a widespread - although not universal - realisation that much more needs to be done to research provenance and reinterpret collections and there are many within the sector who know they are not doing enough and who want to do more.

Several respondents provided answers which had more to do with serfdom and the Clearances, or with modern-day refugees, than with chattel slavery. While these responses did not address the subject matter of this survey, I think they do indicate a deep concern with the abuse of other human beings that reveals a frustration that they were not able to answer the questions as asked and a likely willingness to address the legacies of chattel slavery if the respondents were given the guidance and support to do this.

More guidance about the more complicated indirect links, as well as the direct links, to chattel slavery might also be of assistance to some museum staff and volunteers as they try to reassess and reinterpret their collections.

More guidance might also be given to organisations to help them understand MGS's definition of priority communities so that museums can engage with and listen to priority communities in their own areas.

### **Funding**

Inevitably many respondents pointed to a lack of funding to tackle many of the issues raised by this survey. And clearly increased funding could be used to employ more staff, undertake more research, engage in short-term projects, events and exhibitions, and improve documentation and record-keeping. However, there is probably a realisation throughout the museum sector that large amounts of extra funding are unlikely to be forthcoming at this time and respondents tended to emphasise the need for resources and guidance as much as funding.

### 5.3 GROUPINGS

In this section, the 58 survey responses were split into four separate groups, depending on their level of engagement with Scotland's links to chattel slavery. To determine the grouping all sections of the survey were considered including the level of interest in chattel slavery, the amount of research carried out or planned to be carried out, the inclusion of chattel slavery in interpretation, outputs, engagement with community groups and willingness to engage.

The groups are as follows:

**Red** – Very little or no engagement

**Blue** – Some engagement

**Yellow** – A good amount of engagement

**Green** – Most engagement (examples of good practice)

#### RED GROUP

The Red group contains survey respondents who answered 'no' or 'don't know' to either all questions, or a large majority of questions, and often answered 'n/a' to textual based questions.

This group contains 14 organisations.

12 out of 14 of the above organisations are independent museums, one is a local authority museum, and one is a regimental museum.

All museums in this group hold fewer than 200,000 objects in their collections, meaning that although this group does not have the largest collections of those surveyed, they are not exclusively small museums which we might have expected them to be. 4 out of 14 hold fewer than 1000 objects, 4 out of 14 holds between 1000 and 5000 objects, 2 out of 14 holds between 5000 and 10,000 objects, 3 out of 14 holds between 10,000 and 50,000 objects and one holds roughly 200,000 objects, which was specified in a textual response.

4 out of 14 do not have a digital catalogue, therefore the catalogue is solely in paper form for internal use only, meaning that none of the catalogue is remotely accessible to the public. Only 5 respondents stated that they do not have a digital catalogue, making this the majority of those in this group.

7 out of 14 do have a CMS but the CMS is for internal use only, not the external public.

Out of 14, only one respondent would be classed as being in an urban area.

In response to question 25, asking if they think they are doing enough, 3 out of 14 respondents answered 'yes', 1 out of 14 answered 'no' and 9 out of 14 left the text box blank.

This group showed very little to no interest in engaging with Scotland's links to chattel slavery, in any form. Textual answers were generally very short and respondents from this group tended to think that Scotland's links to chattel slavery was not a concern or topic of interest to their organisation, and therefore require no further assistance to engage with the topic.

Below is a selection of quotes from this group:

*'Chattel slavery is not within our remit or a concern for our specific collections.'*

*'We currently feel that we have higher priorities!'*

*'Our collection is all too new to have any associations.'* (Oldest item less than 150 years old)

When asked what would help the organisations to engage with chattel slavery, respondents answered:

*'Discovery of any evidence of links between our local area and chattel slavery.'*

*'Knowledge of any links relating to our collection.'*

*'Nothing as we do not see this as something of interest in our area.'*

*'We have no links or issues so don't need help to engage.'*

*'We don't need help'.*

## **BLUE GROUP**

This group contains survey respondents who recognised that their organisations should be more involved in engaging with chattel slavery and/or are mostly interested in doing so but might be apprehensive and unsure how to develop this work. Respondents from this group report having a lack of objects directly or indirectly linked to chattel slavery, mainly because they have been unable to carry out research into their collection. This group requires the most support.

This group contains 16 organisations, from 17 respondents.

14 out of 17 of the above organisations are independent museums, one is a contemporary art gallery, one is a local authority museum and one is a nationally-styled museum.

The size of collections in this group is more wide ranging than those organisations in the Red group. 4 out of 17 organisations hold fewer than 1000 objects, 4 out of 17 holds between 1000 and 5000 objects, 3 out of 17 holds between 5000 and 10,000 objects, 2 out of 17 holds between 10,000 and 50,000 objects, 2 out of 17 hold between 50,000 and 100,000 and 2 out of 17 hold between 100,000 and 500,000 objects.

1 out of 17 do not have a digital catalogue, therefore the catalogue is solely in paper form for internal use only, making none of the catalogue is remotely accessible to the public. In all survey responses, only 5 respondents stated that they do not have a digital catalogue, other 4 being part of the red group.

7 out of 17 do have a CMS but the CMS is for internal use only, not the external public, while 5 out of 17 have less than 5% of their digital catalogue remotely accessible to the public.

Out of 17, four respondents would be classed as being in an urban area.

## **YELLOW GROUP**

This group contains survey respondents who are actively engaging with links to chattel slavery, more so than in the Blue group. Respondents from this group generally report having objects that are both

directly and indirectly linked to chattel slavery in their collections, with some such objects having full interpretation to show these links. Some of the organisations in this group are undertaking collection and policy reviews to research more of their collections, engage further with links to chattel slavery and to be inclusive organisations.

This group contains 16 organisations, from 18 respondents:

7 out of 18 of the above organisations are independent museums, 6 out of 18 are local authority museums, 2 out of 18 are university museums, 1 out of 18 is a nationally-styled museum, 1 out of 18 is a world heritage site and 1 out of 18 is an ALEO. Compared to the Red and Blue groups, organisations from the Yellow group are far more diverse.

The collection size of this groups tends to be higher than the Red and Blue groups. 4 out of 18 organisations hold between 1000 and 5000 objects, 7 out of 18 organisations hold between 10,000 and 50,000 objects, 1 out of 18 organisations hold between 50,000 and 100,000 objects and 6 out of 18 organisations hold between 100,000 and 500,000 objects.

5 out of 18 respondents do have a CMS but the CMS is for internal use only, not the external public. 3 of these 5 respondents are from the same organisation. 5 out of 18 organisations have less than 5% of their digital catalogue remotely accessible to the public. 5 out of 18 have over 90% of their digital catalogue remotely accessible to the public. This makes the range of remotely accessible CMS information in this group the most varied.

Out of 18, 13 respondents would be classed as being in an urban area.

## **GREEN GROUP**

This group contains survey respondents who have engaged the most with chattel slavery, out of all 58 responses. Respondents in this group are actively researching their collections to fully understand how their collections are directly and indirectly linked to chattel slavery. Compared to the other groups, they are also undertaking larger amount of reinterpretation and outreach work.

This group contains 8 organisations, from 9 respondents.

Although the smallest of the four groups, this group has the most varied types of organisations. 2 out of 9 of the above respondents are university museums, 2 out of 9 are independent museums, 1 out of 9 is a local authority museum, 1 out of 9 is an organisation with National Reach and 1 out of 9 is a charitable trust administering a local authority collection. The remaining two respondents categorise their organisation as an art gallery and national museum, although they are both from the same organisation.

The 2 responses from the same organisation also differ in response to their collection size, with one response stating that they hold between 50,000 and 100,000 objects and the other stating that they hold between 100,000 and 500,000 objects. Of the others, 1 out of 9 hold less than 1000 objects, 2 out of 9 holds between 10,000 and 50,000 objects, 3 out of 9 holds between 100,000 and 500,000 objects and 1 holds more than 500,000 objects, the highest of all 58 responses.

Just like the other groups, the amount of the CMS that is remotely available to the public varies widely. 2 out of 9 respondents do have a CMS but the CMS is for internal use only. 2 out of 9 organisations have less than 5% of their digital catalogue remotely accessible to the public. 1 out of 9

organisations have between 80% and 90% remotely accessible to the public, 1 out of 9 has 90% to 100% remotely accessible to the public and the remaining 3 has 100% of the CMS information available.

Out of 9, eight respondents would be classed as being in an urban area.

## **URBAN PERCENTAGES**

From grouping respondents into four groups, it is possible to see a correlation between the level of engagement with chattel slavery and geographic location. As the figures below show, organisations in urban locations have a higher likelihood of engaging more with chattel slavery than organisations in rural locations.

Red group = 1 out of 14 organisations is in urban area **(7.14%)**

Blue group = 4 out of 17 organisations in urban area **(23.53%)**

Yellow group = 13 out of 18 organisations in urban area **(72.22%)**

Green group = 8 out of 9 organisations in urban area **(88.89%)**

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A curated online resource library which would be available, free of charge, to all museums and galleries in Scotland like the access provided by universities to their students.
2. Funding for a limited number of short-term pilot research projects to assist selected museums to address the legacies of chattel slavery in their collections. These projects and their processes should be fully documented, with the documentation available to all museums and galleries in Scotland, in order to encourage, guide and advise the kind of research that other organisations could be undertaking.
3. Encourage museums to become more involved in the training and supervision of students of Museum Studies through Applied Dissertation programmes.
4. Museums Galleries Scotland could produce a more comprehensive guide to assist museums in the research and reinterpretation necessary to address the legacies of chattel slavery in Scotland. This survey has revealed that many smaller museums do not really know where to begin when it comes to tackling this issue and a centrally produced guide would do much to give staff and volunteers the confidence and direction needed to engage in this research.
5. More could be done to publicise and share good practice in researching and communicating the legacies of chattel slavery among all museums and galleries in Scotland. It has become clear through this survey that there is a great deal of good work being done throughout Scotland in this area, even by some of our smaller and more rural museums.
6. Smaller museums could be encouraged to partner with other museums facing similar issues or doing similar work. This might be especially beneficial for rural museums where staff or volunteers might feel isolated and in need of encouragement and support. Even short-term partnership programmes with other museums might lead to joint events or exhibitions which could make more of an impact and attract larger numbers of visitors. Smaller museums might also benefit from partnership with larger organisations.
7. This survey has also highlighted the fact that online exhibitions or events have tended to be less diverse than in-person events or exhibitions. At a time when public interest in chattel slavery and the historical root of racism is high, and when the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on visitor numbers is uncertain, museums and galleries are missing an opportunity to engage with potential audiences and may exclude many of the interested public if their online exhibitions and events are not sufficiently dynamic, gripping, detailed and relevant.

**Note:** *In all these recommendations it might be expedient to focus on those organisations that have been grouped into the Yellow and Blue groups. Those in the Red group are currently doing very little and could be approached later. Those in the Green group are doing well and while they do need help, they are managing to address the issue in good, creative ways. However, those in the Yellow and Blue groups have a lot of potential but they will not realise this potential without help.*