**NATIONAL FOOTBALL MUSEUM BUCKS THE TREND**

**AS UK MUSEUMS REPORT FALL IN VISITORS**

In the wake of reports of a nationwide decline in [museum visitors](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-38853770), the National Football Museum has bucked the trend, welcoming more visitors than ever before through its turnstiles.

Whilst a report by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport found that UK museums had been hit by a 1.4 million decline in visitors, the Manchester based museum is celebrating a steady rise over the last 12 months.

And there are no signs of falling numbers in 2017, with a current 12.5% increase in visitors year-on-year for the period.

Kevin Haygarth, Interim Director at National Football Museum, said: “We’ve had a fantastic year at the museum, reflected in an ever-growing amount of visitors passing through our doors.

“The last 12 months have seen the successful launch of the 1966 World Cup Exhibition, the Walk of Fame and the growth of the popular Football Writing Festival.

‘Memories of 66’, which uses football and specifically England’s 66 win to

help bring older generations together. These factors, alongside our regular school holiday activities mean we’ve managed to attract a wide array of age groups to the museum.”

“The fantastic team of volunteers and staff have also attracted plenty of positive feedback and many of our visitors tell us this is why they visit the museum time and time again.”

With the museum recently awarded funding to house the world’s largest collection of women’s memorabilia, an upcoming Pelé exhibition and the annual additions to the Hall of Fame, visitor numbers are expected to continue to grow throughout the year.

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**Notes to Editor:**

**NATIONAL FOOTBALL MUSEUM**

The National Football Museum was established and its collection acquired thanks to £9.3m investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The National Football Museum is a registered charity overseen by a board of trustees, and also counts notable names amongst its honorary positions, including Museum President Sir Bobby Charlton, Museum Vice Presidents Sir Alex Ferguson, Sir Trevor Brooking and Sir Geoff Hurst, plus Museum Special Ambassador Mark Lawrenson.

The museum also provides a permanent home for its nationally-recognised Hall of Fame, with new legends being inducted in a prestigious awards ceremony every year.

Entrance is free. To enhance the Museum experience, there are some additional exclusive paid-for interactive exhibits ‘Football Plus+’ to help ensure that visitors enjoy one of the best days out in the city.

Opening Times:

Monday-Saturday 10am – 5pm

Sunday 11am – 5pm

Open Every Day excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day

The venue is fully accessible for wheelchair access

[www.nationalfootballmuseum.com](http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com)

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