



TRUST MUSEUMS
BERMUDA NATIONAL TRUST
MUSEUMS PLAN
2024-2030


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Preface

Acronyms

- African Diaspora Heritage Trail: ADHT
- [Bermuda National Trust](#): BNT
- BNT Heritage Committee
- BNT Archaeology Research Committee: ARC
- BNT Museums & Collections Committee: MCC
- [Bermuda Tourism Authority](#): BTA
- [Bermuda World Heritage Site](#): BWHS
- [Citizens Uprooting Racism in Bermuda](#): CURB
- Conservation Management Plan: CMP
- [International National Trusts Organisation](#): INTO
- [Outstanding Universal Value](#): OUV
- [Re-imagining International Sites of Enslavement](#): RISE

Symbols

- Wheelchair accessible: 
- Current ⇒ Proposed

Scope

BNT's museums are **Verdmont Museum**, off Collector's Hill in central Smith's Parish, and **Globe Museum** and **Tucker House Museum**, both in the World Heritage Site of the '*Historic Town of St. George & Related Fortifications*'.

All Trust Museums are:

- **Grade 1 Listed Buildings**, the highest grade on the [Listed Buildings Register](#).
- Within **areas of special protection**: Globe and Tucker House are within the St. George's Preservation Area and Bermuda World Heritage Site (BWHS) boundary and Verdmont is a designated Historic Protection Area. All are archaeological sites.
- **Sites of enslavement, Black resilience, and African culture** and are central to BNT's commitment to [Re-imagining Sites of Enslavement](#) (RISE). Tucker House and Verdmont are designated sites in Bermuda's [African Diaspora Heritage Trail](#) (ADHT) which is officially linked to the UNESCO Slave Route. ADHT may add Globe in future.
- Used year-round for **heritage education**, including BNT school education programmes, BNT holiday camps and other partner uses and collaborations.

Aim

The aim of this plan is **to provide an inspiring vision and clear road map for Trust Museums that advances Bermuda National Trust's heritage mission with the community and ensures they have a financially sustainable future.**

MUSEUMS VISION

Vision Statement

BNT's strategic plan aims to **develop BNT's museums into dynamic spaces that attract a wider audience and support themselves financially.**

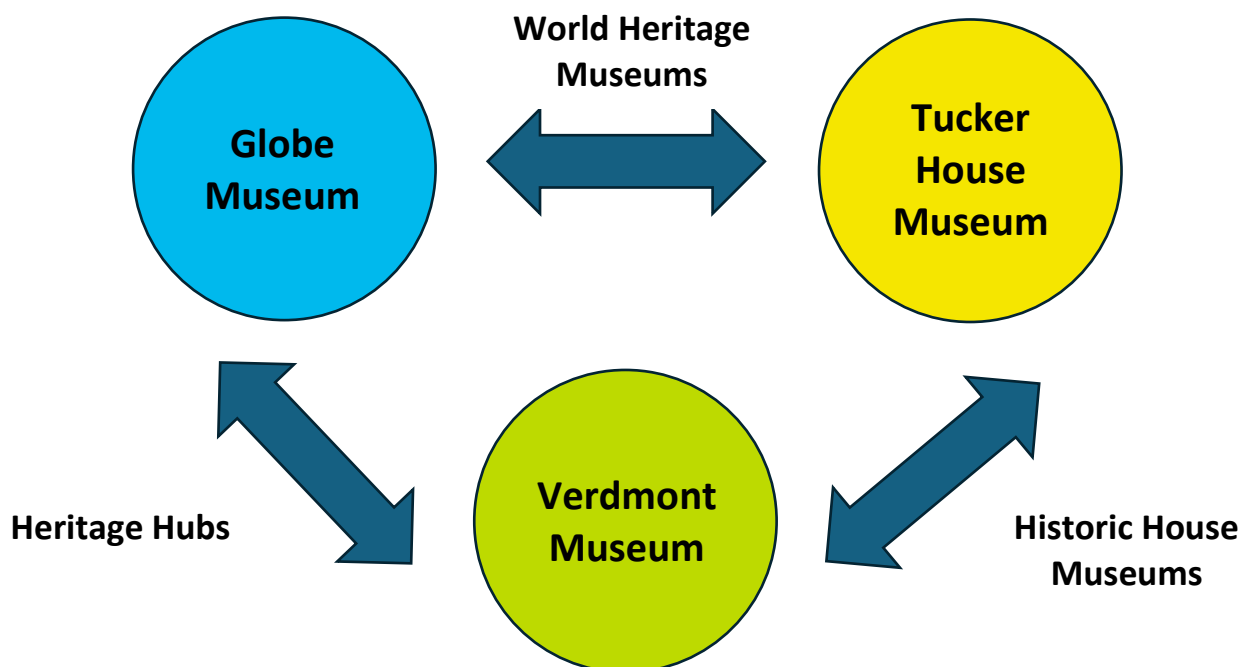
Our vision is for **Trust Museums visitors to have meaningful and memorable heritage experiences.**

This vision places our attention on:

- **Museum visitors:** By being visitor-centred we can better meet visitors' expectations and understand their uses of heritage and museums.
- **Meaning and memory:** By offering museum experiences that are relevant, healing and interactive we can draw visitors in and bring them back for repeat visits.
- **Heritage experiences:** By focusing on personal and shared heritage experiences, we may best use the museums and collections as catalysts for heritage as a process.

Our vision for BNT's museums also aligns their sites, strengths and concepts as:

- **World Heritage museums**
- **Historic house museums**
- **Heritage hubs**



Globe Museum Vision:

An interactive Bermuda World Heritage Centre for local and international visitors of all ages

Rationale

- The UNESCO World Heritage Site is Bermuda's highest heritage designation, and the most impactful use of the museum will be one that benefits the BWHS.
- BNT is a key partner in the BWHS and plays a vital role in its heritage research, management (of BNT sites), and advocacy.
- St. George's is a continuously inhabited World Heritage Site where heritage is constantly used, made and shared by the community and its visitors.

Experience

The Globe Museum's location in the heart of St. George's on King's Square, directly opposite St Peter's Church makes it the ideal location for a new World Heritage Centre. There would be interactive, family-friendly exhibits throughout four floors that tell the story of Bermuda's first town and its forts. It would also showcase and invite involvement in the constant work Bermuda National Trust and fellow Bermuda World Heritage partners do to protect and promote the UNESCO site.

Site outline

Attic

- BWHS built heritage traditions, protections and conservation methods
- Globe's architecture in its double-span roof

Second Floor

- The living heritage and heritage management of the World Heritage town and forts
- Participatory exhibits on the town, military and maritime 'attributes' of the OUV
- Accessible real and digital archaeological, artefact and decorative arts collections

Ground Floor

- Entry/exits with Visitor Service Centre (either official BTA VSC or unofficial BNT)
- BWHS and Globe welcome/intros
- Shop near museum entry/exit
- Globe garden and restroom

Cellar

- Working archaeology lab and archaeology exhibits
- Globe enslavement, archaeology, and other cellar heritage

Business Plan

- Ideally open 7 days a week.
- Admission fee charged for World Heritage experience (attic, second floor and cellar levels, with added value on ground floor with introduction, garden and shop).
- Possible additional income sources:

- Rental of ground floor to BTA as official Visitor Centre.
- Support from BTA/Government/UK State Party as World Heritage Centre.
- Opening up rooms on second floor, if possible, to create one large exhibition/reception space that could also be rented (e.g. for St Peter's weddings). Garden rentals overlooking St. Peter's. Addition of toilets and mini-kitchen to support event rentals (or rental as office space if the World Heritage Centre concept does not prove viable).

Tucker House Museum Vision:

Tucker Rainey Museum – an unmissable and unforgettable experience focused on the people and stories of the house and St. George's

Rationale

- It is a core attraction in the World Heritage Site.
- Its people and stories are relevant to the lives of visitors and can be told in the context of its built heritage, collections, archaeology and descendant connections.
- It cannot be easily converted for rental, particularly because it has collections and archaeology associated with the site that should remain on public display.

Experience

Visitors to Tucker Rainey Museum will travel back to pivotal periods for St. George's, Bermuda and the world. A visit starts upstairs in the elegant living quarters of the Tucker family who lived in this merchant house in the 1750s. Visitors move through finely furnished rooms filled with antique furniture, portraits, silver, porcelain, and jewelry. In stark contrast, while winding their way through the kitchen, gardens, and cellars that once opened onto the Bermuda sloop-filled docks of Water Street, visitors can imagine the lives of the families enslaved here. The story moves from maritime and domestic enslavement of Bermudians of African descent until Emancipation in 1834 onto the remarkable 1860s story of Joseph Hayne Rainey and his family. In the renovated cellars, the relocated Rogues & Runners exhibit will tell the story of Bermuda's and St. Georgians' complex involvement in the US Civil War. Exhibits highlighting the archaeology, political history, and museum use of the historic house will bring the past to life up to the present day.

Site outline

Upper Floor—Museum

- Bermuda's early Government/St. George's as first capital
- Bermuda's role in US War of Independence 1775-1783/Gunpowder Plot
- Dining and drawing rooms, and primary and children's bedrooms
- Library & stair nook/digital space for visitors and descendants

Mid-level Floor—Museum

- Kitchen and gardens of 1750s—women's and children's domestic enslavement, kitchen traditions, gardens extend culinary and medicinal heritage
- Barber shop and seamstress shop of 1860s —Rainey's Black achievement story, family and refugee story, introduction to US Civil War

Cellar – Museum, Ticket Office & Gift Shop, Staff Office

- Cellar of 1750s—Bermuda’s maritime economy and male maritime enslavement
- Cellar of 1860s—Rogues & Runners Civil War exhibit
- Archaeology exhibits, family friendly exhibits and children’s nooks
- Heritage of Tucker House as BNT’s first museum, including various diplomatic visits
- Trustworthy Gift Shop at exit with entry/exit level access to the museum
- Museums Manager’s office

Business Plan

- Open 5 days (or more) per week e.g. Wednesday-Sunday 10am-4pm. Two staff required at all times, at least one upstairs and one downstairs (one paid, one volunteer).
- Admission price charge. Focus on self-guided tours and guided tours by operators.
- Venue-rental of museum and gardens in partnership with local caterers/restaurants.

Verdmont Museum Vision:

An exceptional historic house and garden and moving memorial to the enslaved

Rationale

- A natural and cultural heritage attraction offering a ‘historic house and garden’ experience and a self-contained, family-friendly cultural tourism destination.
- The story of the house and its people encompasses a broad swathe of Bermuda heritage and culture, including honouring the lives of enslaved people.
- Potential for a dynamic year-round programme of exhibitions, events and education.

Experience

Verdmont holds 300-years of Bermuda heritage in its beautiful Grade 1 listed buildings and two acres of grounds. Its stories of piracy and adventure, domesticity and family life span privilege and enslavement, wealth and poverty, romance and loss. Authentic interiors, exceptional collections and moving memorials give glimpses into the forcibly interconnected lives of enslaving and enslaved Bermudians at this African Diaspora Heritage Trail site. Archaeology, furniture, portraits and other found or returned objects mix with Bermuda’s most outstanding cedar furniture, porcelain, and other decorative arts alongside stirring Bermudian conceptual art. Visitors may explore the orchard, cedar grove and other living museum areas and hit the eco-adventure playground. Pick up locally-made crafts and museum merchandise in the Trustworthy shop. With self-guided digital tours, live interpreter-led tours, and a changing programme of exhibits and events, there will always be something special at Verdmont.

Site outline

Cellar

- Built heritage skills and enslavement

Ground Floor

- Entry Hall & Study: Introduction to Vermont (possibly relocate attic exhibit)
- Main Hall & Parlour: changing exhibits and event space
- Dining room: reception, Trustworthy shop

Second Floor

- Furniture, costume, textile, toys, and other special collections
- Exhibits integrating education

Attic

- Roof and cupola built heritage
- 'A House & Its People' exhibit

Cottage Upper

- ADHT, enslaved lives (old kitchen)
- Kitchen for cafe/events with terrace overlooking kitchen garden
- Accessible restroom with baby changing
- Office/storeroom

Cottage Lower

- Education classroom (or in additional building using wall foundation)/museum and property workshops, storage areas
- Restroom

Gardens

- Privy, archaeology, replica animal pens
- Living museum trails
- Eco-adventure playground
- Enslavement memorial sculpture and artwork

Business Plan

- Open 5 days (or more) per week e.g., Wednesday-Sunday 10am-4pm
- Admission price charged
- Focus on pre-booked guided group tours by BNT ambassadors or third-party tour operators (where BNT gets a per-person group admission fee).
- Two staff required at all times to cover and support one another, one paid and one volunteer.

Museums Action Plan

Concentrate focus initially on Tucker Rainey Museum (2024-2026)

- To prioritise one museum in the BWHS, as a key and marketed Bermuda cultural tourism experience on which many cultural and tourism stakeholders depend.
- As the most in demand BNT museum with the least amount of change needed. More time is needed to convert Globe Museum into an interactive World Heritage Centre, especially to align with the BWHS management plan and to get partner buy-in.
- Close museum from Q2 2024-Q2 2026 to completely overhaul; or potentially reopen in phases, so less time goes by without an upgraded BNT museum in the BWHS.

Find an alternative and temporary revenue-generating use for Globe Museum (2026-2028)

- Once initial conservation works on the upper floors of Globe are completed, it may be rented on a short-term basis (suggest an annual lease that can be renewed as needed depending on our progress with capital fundraising and museum curation).
- Consider keeping downstairs open as BNT museum space and shop, linking to archaeological lab in cellar.
- Explore alternative rental options that combine rental and museum (BTA Visitor Service Centre, St. George's partner collaboration, combined shop).

Tucker Rainey Museum

Phase 1 PRELIMINARY: 2024

Building conservation assessments

- Obtain and mechanical (electrical and plumbing) engineers' reports, using these reports to inform the scope and phasing of work.
- Identify appropriate conservation and restoration methods for the Grade 1 listed building in the World Heritage Site and St. George's Preservation Area.
- Consult historic conservators, the Traditional Building and Listed Building Guides. Invite the St. George's Preservation Authority for a site visit and pre-consultation.
- Conduct archaeological desktop assessment to identify previously excavated areas and potential exhibit spaces within floors (and non-excavated areas to protect).

Prepare and issue RFPs

- Draft RFP based on engineer's reports, archaeological assessment, and conservation and restoration methods.
- Include interior design in RFP for museum flow and exhibit and lighting design, events uses and amenities and/or send separate RFP to exhibit/graphic designers.
- Send RFP to architects and designers.

Building and collections preparation

- Relocate BNT slate supply from museum cellar to Grieg Hall workshop.

- Possibly remove and relocate uneven York paving stones (not original), for archaeological access and replacement with more level access throughout cellar.
- Determine and relocate any collections or exhibits to leave Tucker House.
- Conduct condition assessment of remaining collections. Relocate collections needing off-site conservation to conservator's workshop or interim storage location.
- Consolidate collections and exhibits still on site to clear space for phased works.

Preliminary curation

- Inventory all collections, checking all are accessioned on object and in database.
- Organise all Tucker House hard and digital references and files.
- Complete initial draft museum outline to define the 'Tucker-Rainey story' and to inform partners (architects, designers, co-curators).
- Complete itemised draft museum budget for fundraising campaign.
- Put interpretive plan online for key stakeholder and public access and input.
- Budget and fundraise to support a Black Bermudian co-curator. Identify potential co-curators for enslavement and Rainey exhibits.
- Develop plan for involving interns and/or student volunteers especially over summer 2026, perhaps targeting Bermuda College students or recent high school graduates.

Preliminary fundraising

- Create a Tucker Rainey Museum campaign and donor package (including Tucker and Rainey descendants appeal).
- Outreach to new US Consul General for diplomatic and/or financial support.
- Outreach to fellow sites and museums (esp. re Tuckers and Rainey's in USA).
- Make local and international grant applications (2024 Dept. Culture Heritage Grant, 2024 Corporation of St. George UNESCO fund).

Phase 2 ACTIVE: 2025

Building conservation works and upgrades

As finances permit:

- conserve and finish roof and ceilings, walls and millwork, windows and frames, floors and beams, cellar exposed stone walls, beams and features, and other structural and decorative elements.
Upgrade electrics, including emergency exits/lighting, AC/dehumidification systems.
- Add wifi throughout museum, with enough bandwidth for visitor interactive access.
- Upgrade plumbing, including sewage rerouting, garden irrigation systems.
- Install level floors, accessibility ramps and handrails as possible.
- Complete gardens landscaping and planting.

Active curation

- Conserve collections using subcontracted specialist conservators.
- Curate accessible and engaging content and layers (panels, labels, digital).
- Curate furniture, artefact and archaeological collections for display.
- Design and order exhibit cases, collections supports, and other exhibit fixtures.
- Design content for interactive content and technologies throughout museum.
- All final content to graphic designer by Q4 for design and output.

Active fundraising

- Launch Tucker Rainey Museum campaign in 2025, 250 years from when Tucker Family first moved into the house, and 155 years since Joseph Rainey became the first Black person in the US House of Representatives.
- Host donor events at Tucker-Rainey Museum and Globe Museum in St. George's.
- Use 2025 Christmas Walkabout as special museum preview, esp. for members.
- Consider focusing 2025 or 2026 BNT Gala on Tucker-Rainey Museum campaign.

Phase 3 FINAL: Q1 2026

Final curation

- Install exhibit cases, panels, labels and other exhibit fixtures.
- Install collections in cases and exhibits.
- Relocate Rogues & Runners exhibit from Globe to refurbished cellar.
- Install final decorative elements (drapes, upholstery).

Set up Trustworthy Shop (relocate from Globe)

Building conservation maintenance

- Consider termite tenting after all collections and exhibits installed, to minimise infestation risk.
- Protocols for ongoing conservation maintenance in place for BNT Property Team and Museums Manager.

Prepare and launch marketing campaign for new museum

- Prepare materials for hotels/guest houses etc.
- Media campaign (TV, radio spots, print and social media)
- Pre-opening tours for BTA, taxi operators, concierges etc.

Museum reopening (Q2 2026)

- Install brass replacement ADHT sign in collaboration with ADHT, with ceremony.
- Rename Tucker House to Tucker-Rainey Museum (possibly in collaboration with US Consul General, with ceremony involving US Rainey sites and organisations).
- Invite key donors and partners to special museum reopening events.
- Hold inaugural Hair-itage event in collaboration with St. George's barbers (on a paid basis) offering east end students and young men free haircuts in Rainey's Barbershop, as part of public events surrounding the museum reopening. Aim to make a regular BNT museum open house and BNT engagement event.

Museum evaluation

- Evaluate Tucker-Rainey Museum as a proof of concept and viable business model, informing Vermont historic house concept and before BNT embarking on Globe Museum as a second BNT museum in St. George's.

- Collect admission figures, conduct ongoing visitor surveys, and analyse and relate to BTA and other cultural tourism figures for consistent and tracked metrics.

Verdmont Museum

Phase 1 INTERIM: 2024

Building conservation

- Replace balcony, southern door frame and surrounding floor.
- Identify possible climate-controlled rooms to incorporate AC units into plans

Landscape redesign

- Finalise and seek internal approval for landscape architect CKLA's proposed redesign (wall conservation, cottage reclamation, landscape design, fire egress, visitor parking, level access).
- Consult event planners to get their insights on event rentals needs (tents, catering, photography, technical equipment).
- Conduct archaeological assessments using appropriate methods (desktop assessment, ground penetrating radar, targeted testing).
- Submit internally agreed plans to Planning.

Improve daily operations

- Install POS and credit card machine for admissions and shop.
- Expand Trustworthy display and merch to enhance experience and increase revenue.
- Expand staff workspaces, for Museums Manager and other staff and volunteers.
- Install museum welcome panels in front hall (replacing and relocating Fenton House panels), including museum summary, admissions board, events rental information.
- Upgrade the Verdmont brochure, collaborating with John Cox (original author) on a revised summary and with a property map, to also be made accessible digitally for visitors via QR codes inside and outside, so visitors can access if museum is closed.

Enhance museums marketing

- Museums Manager to enhance museums marketing with a consistent focus.
- Keep museums listings and hours updated (bnt.bm, BTACConnect, St. George's Stakeholders, local events calendars).
- Strengthen tourism relationships and communications (hotel and guest house concierges, taxi and minibus operators, Airbnb network).
- Increase BNT social media posts on museums and collections, including 'Trust Treasures' and on site 'Stories'.

Create collections room

- Create a room for BNT collections management upstairs, likely in southeast room (Mrs. Green's bed chamber with twin beds) as large and accessible space.
- Relocate unneeded furniture and other collections from that room to elsewhere in Verdmont or other BNT sites, or deaccession and possibly sell per Collections Policy.

- Relocate collections from Pond House store to the collections room so they can be conserved and curated for museums display, partner loans or enhanced housing.
- Incorporate collections room (whether in use or not) into the museum experience, giving visitors a 'behind the scenes' look at museum and collections practice.

Establish pre-arranged tours

- Build visitor volume through formalised tours, both by BNT and other tour guides.
- Re-establish BNT tour guide training, using and revising existing resources.
- Set up and test online pre-paid tours for visitor sign up on bnt.bm
- Collaborate with third part tour operators, to encourage their use of museums and bring high volume groups, with Vermont per head admissions and shop sales.

Phase 2 PRELIMINARY: 2025

Active building conservation

- Exterior conservation of all windows and mechanical repairs so can be opened. Replace any that are rotten with like-for-like replacements.

Landscape works

- Work with Friends of Vermont to remove invasives, unwanted hedges and vegetation in line with approved landscape plan, in preparation for major contractor works in 2026.

Preliminary curation

- Inventory all collections, checking all are accessioned on object and in collections database.
- Complete initial draft museum outline to define the 'Vermont story' and to inform partners (architects, designers, co-curators).
- Complete itemised draft museum budget for fundraising campaign.
- Put interpretive plan online for key stakeholder and public access and input.
- Identify community co-curation and BNT intern projects.
- Curate accessible and engaging content and layers (panels, labels, digital).
- Integrate family/child-friendly content and outputs (child-height) throughout the museum experience (spanning house, cottage and gardens). Curate Vermont education boxes including sensory collections that can be used on or off site by the Heritage Education Coordinator and school groups.

Preliminary fundraising

- Create and launch Vermont Museum campaign.
- Hold Vermont Open House, securing event sponsor, and involving Smith's community.

Phase 3 ACTIVE: 2026

Building conservation and landscape design works

- Reclaim cottage from rental.
- Conserve and restore cottage.
- Install level access, parking area, and other landscape design features.

Active curation

- Conserve collections using subcontracted specialist conservators.
- Curate accessible and engaging content and layers (panels, labels, digital).
- Curate furniture, artefact and archaeological collections for display.
- Design and order exhibit cases, collections supports, and other exhibit fixtures.
- Design content for interactive content and technologies throughout museum.

RISE/ADHT Curation

- Integrate story of enslavement, honouring enslaved people who lived on the property and across Bermuda.
- Commission artwork that fills gaps in representation and collections (using enslaved register names, contemporary portraits).
- Create an overall memorial to enslavement throughout the museum and across the grounds, perhaps via sculpture, poetry and other arts competitions that support Bermudian and Black Bermudian artists in particular.
- Curate the cafe so the space and menu relates to the original kitchen and enslaved quarters, referencing traditional African and Bermudian culinary and medicinal heritage, and linking to the kitchen garden featuring heirloom and still-used species.
- Install brass replacement ADHT sign in collaboration with ADHT, with ceremony.

Phase 4 FINAL: 2027

Develop changing exhibitions programme

- Develop themes that can be rotated over time, to ensure a changing experience (decorative arts, descendants, Bermudian craftsmen, medicinal plants etc.)
- Longer-term, collaborate with cultural partners to reinterpret our collections (i.e. via outgoing loans) and as a venue for extended display of temporary or travelling exhibitions (as incoming loans or other reuse of partner curation) and invite external curators for changing exhibits giving them good control.

Final curation

- Final content to graphic designer for design and output (panels, labels, digital).
- Install exhibit cases, panels, labels and other exhibit fixtures.
- Install collections in cases and exhibits, including plinths and supports.

Globe Museum

Phase 1 INTERIM: 2024

Preliminary building conservation

- Commission structural and mechanical engineer reports for entire building.

- Prepare and issue RFP for cellar (archaeology lab) works replacing electrics and plumbing, conserving walls, ceiling, floors and special features incl. mantels).
- Determine appropriate conservation methods and materials for building conservation and restoration.
- Install replacement cellar windows once Planning approval is obtained.

Upgrade existing exhibits

- Add portrait of Sir Thomas Gates to early settlement exhibit.
- Formalise loan from Dept. Natural Resources and Environment and improve display of Marie Celestia Civil War shipwreck artefacts (silicone treated so no climate control required).
- Possibly cross-promote other St George's museums with mini-displays if reciprocity can be arranged.

Phase 2 INTERIM: 2025

Interim building conservation and use

- Complete cellar (archaeology lab) building works.
- Conserve and renovate the upper floors for interim rental, replace/repair rotten windows, install AC and refinish floors (at minimum).
- Advertise rental of upper floor once renovation work is completed.

Phase 3 PRELIMINARY: 2026

Seek full partner buy-in

- Seek buy-in from St. George's stakeholders on the World Heritage Centre concept.
- Conceptualise this new World Heritage Centre to be at the cutting-edge of museum practice and World Heritage Sites, especially in terms of local community involvement and being focused on heritage (and World Heritage) as a process.
- Design Globe Museum as a space for not only experiencing Bermuda World Heritage but for 'heritage making', by joining in research, conservation and curatorial projects, or by contributing local or non-local knowledge.

Preliminary curation

- Complete initial draft museum outline to define the 'World Heritage story' and to inform partners (architects, designers, co-curators).
- Complete itemised draft museum budget for fundraising campaign.
- Put interpretive plan online for key stakeholder and public access and input.
- Identify community co-curation and BNT intern projects.
- Identify and inventory BNT and partner collections for short- or long-term display.
- Curate accessible and engaging content and layers (panels, labels, digital).

Preliminary fundraising

- Create a World Heritage-oriented campaign for Globe Museum.
- Link to World Heritage Site Management Plan and fundraising priorities.

Phase 4 ACTIVE: 2027 & 2028

Active curation

- Curate the story of St George's and the UNESCO status, including the Globe story, across all four floors and the surrounding site and garden.
- Curate physical and digital interactive experiences that spark curiosity, engage families and children, and can be easily maintained.
- Curate changing (but modular) exhibits that reflect the management plan and processes of the World Heritage Site, taking visitors 'behind the scenes' to BNT and other partner research, management and advocacy and community involvement.
- Integrate the storage and display of object collections into the space, including archival, archaeological and other BWHS-related collections (cases, drawers).
- Integrate digital technologies into the museum space (touchscreen map for visitor orientation/wayfinding and diving into ever-expanding BWHS content).
- Final content to graphic designer for design and output (panels, labels, digital).

Phase 5 FINAL: 2029

Final curation

- Install exhibit cases, panels, labels and other exhibit fixtures.
- Install collections in cases and exhibits, including plinths and supports.

Museum reopening

- Prepare to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Bermuda World Heritage status in 2030 at Globe with special events and exhibitions.
- This anniversary aligns with [UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals](#) which Trust Museums can be a part of advancing for 2030 and beyond.

SCHEDULE AND CURATION PHASES

	TUCKER-RAINEY MUSEUM	VERDMONT MUSEUM	GLOBE MUSEUM
Phase 1: 2024	CLOSED Preliminary	OPEN Interim	OPEN Interim
Phase 2: 2025	CLOSED Active	OPEN Preliminary	OPEN Interim
Phase 3: 2026	OPEN Final	OPEN Active	RENTAL Preliminary
Phase 4: 2027	OPEN Complete	OPEN Final	RENTAL Active
Phase 5: 2028	OPEN Complete	OPEN Complete	RENTAL Active
Phase 6: 2029	OPEN Complete	OPEN Complete	OPEN Final
Phase 7: 2030	OPEN Complete	OPEN Complete	OPEN Complete

APPENDIX: Background

Planning Process

- Revisiting past Trust Museums plans and aligning with relevant BNT and local plans.
- Using observations amassed over the past 2.5 years during daily museum practice.
- Aspiring for museums best practice and cutting-edge approaches in museology.

This plan is informed by key stakeholder input during focus group sessions with:

- All BNT staff
- Re-imagining Sites of Enslavement (RISE) advisers
- BNT Museums & Collections Committee (MCC) and other key volunteers
- BNT Archaeology Research Committee (ARC) and other key volunteers
- Digital Heritage advisers

This draft plan will be shared with and benefit from additional input from:

- BNT Heritage Committee and Council
- The above focus groups, who may check their input has been reflected

Broader public input on the plan will take place through:

- *Trust Museums* event on 18 April World Heritage Day with St. George's Stakeholders
- *Trust Museums* event on 18 May International Museums Day for the public
- Sharing the plan on BNT's website and inviting input

As we learn, as challenges and opportunities arise, as technologies and methods change, we may need to go in different directions.

Other possible museum sites

Other BNT properties have been considered for this plan. Yet, our existing museums hold exceptional heritage value that maintains our focus on them and willingness to reinvest capacity and funding in them. BNT's headquarters at Waterville in Paget is primarily used as offices and cannot be marketed as a full museum experience.

Collections

BNT's museums and collections are inextricably linked. One of the critical roles of BNT's museums is to house and display an outstanding collection of artefacts made, owned and used by Bermudians. This plan must align with BNT's Collections Policy and related BNT policies, including the Fire Prevention Policy and Events Rentals Policy. BNT's Archaeology Research Committee (ARC) and Museums & Collections Committee (MCC) advise BNT on archaeological collections and on all other collections, respectively, as parts of their wider advisory roles.

Trust Museums Matrix

BNT Museum	GLOBE MUSEUM	TUCKER HOUSE MUSEUM	VERDMONT MUSEUM
Address/Parish	32 York Street, St. George's	5 Water Street, St. George's	6 Verdmont Lane, Smith's
BWHS site	Yes	Yes	No
ADHT site	No	Yes	Yes
Enslavement site	Yes	Yes	Yes
Archaeological site	Yes	Yes	Yes
Heritage education	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retail	Yes: Trustworthy shop	Yes: Mini-merch ⇒ Trustworthy shop	Yes: Mini-merch ⇒ Trustworthy shop
Events Rentals	Rarely ⇒ Yes	No ⇒ Yes	Yes
Date built	c.1700	c.1750	c.1700
Museum periods spanned	1600s-1860s ⇒ 1600s-Present	1750s & 1860s ⇒ same but expanded 1860s	1750s focus-present ⇒ same
Sister museums/sites	Bermudian Heritage Museum, Fort St. Catherine, St. Peter's Church, Mitchell House, State House, Town Hall	ADHT sites, Rainey exhibits in Washington DC and other US, St. George Tucker exhibits in Williamsburg, VA	Potentially Jeffrey's Cave at Spittal Pond and Hinson Hall (private), both also in Smith's, and Fenton House and Garden , UK National Trust
Accessibility	2 ⇒ 4 floors 1 ⇒ 2 floors 1 garden	1.5 ⇒ 2 floors 0 floors ⇒ 1 floor 2 gardens	3 ⇒ 4 floors 1 floor 1 garden
Admission	Adults \$5 ⇒ \$15 Youth 7+ \$5 Members free (Globe +Tucker House joint ticket ⇒ \$25 adults/\$7.50 youth)	Adults \$5 ⇒ \$15 Youth 7+ \$5 Members free (Globe +Tucker House joint ticket ⇒ \$25 adults/\$7.50 youth)	Adults \$10 ⇒ \$25 Youth 7+ \$5 Members free (Verdmont to stay independent, no joint ticket)

Trust Museums SWOT

Strengths

- Historic sites with Grade 1 built heritage and known and potential archaeology.
- Extensive and outstanding archival and object collections, and intangible heritage.
- African Diaspora Heritage Trail sites/sites of enslavement, resilience, achievement.
- BNT and partner education, event, tour and other community uses of museums.

Weaknesses

- Rarely open, with inconsistent and unreliable hours and staffing (reliance on volunteers).
- Historic building conservation, restoration, and renovations are needed at all museums.
- Focus on architecture, objects and other tangible heritage over intangible.
- Interpretation has focused on white privilege with inadequate attention paid to the lives and contributions of enslaved people, as well as the abuses of enslavers.
- Static spaces and exhibits inside relatively small museum spaces and buildings.
- Low numbers of museum volunteers and low levels of support and training.
- Limited amenities (toilets, kitchen space, AC, shop, cafe, parking etc.) and accessibility (level access, ramps, handrails).

Opportunities

- Support the community's healing by telling a more diverse and human story.
- Build trusted partnerships and emulate other BNT and partner successes.
- Leverage heritage, tourism and cultural tourism value with better marketing.
- Expand the staff and volunteer capacity of the cultural heritage and museums team.
- Make access easy with visit planning tools and expanded hours.
- Offer more participatory and interactive in-person and digital museum experiences.

Threats

- Further declining tourism, competition in cultural sector and for visitor attention.
- Irrelevance of heritage and museums and negative public perceptions.
- Multiple museums to manage with increasing maintenance and operational costs.
- Insufficient budget, staff capacity and other resources to manage the museums well.
- Failing to meet heritage, museum and collections best practice standards.
- Other BNT and heritage priorities demand attention over the museums.

Specific SWOT for each museum:

	GLOBE MUSEUM	TUCKER HOUSE MUSEUM	VERDMONT MUSEUM
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWHS/St. George’s King’s Square location, directly opposite St Peter’s Church – passerby admissions • Rogues & Runners exhibit • Trustworthy shop • Large cellar space for archaeology lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWHS/SGs location – passerby admissions • Outstanding collections • ADHT/RISE site/Rainey connection • Archaeology exhibit • Rented commercial unit (can be converted into shop) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central location • Large grounds/garden • ADHT/RISE site • Outstanding collections • Attic exhibit • Excellent space for event rentals • Can expand into cottage
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation needs (attic stability; rewiring, replumbing, AC, floor refinishing) • Inaccessibility with 4 floors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation needs (ceiling replacement; rewiring, AC) • Inaccessibility with 2 floors • No shop presently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation needs (balcony replacement, garden retaining walls, exterior of windows, floors) • Isolated location • Paranormal/spooky heritage public fears • No shop, no kitchen and only one toilet • Limited parking
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage/education hub • BWHS status/OUV/ tell the St George’s story • Cross-promote BWHS partners and projects • Promote BNT BWHS and island wide heritage management/advocacy • Collections access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance experience and exhibits (Rainey/kitchen, gardens, add Rogues & Runners) • Events/Rentals, esp. private dinners • Install shop in present commercial rental unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage/education hub • Reclaim and interpret cottage as the enslaved quarters and kitchen • Café/Culinary and medicinal heritage • More/diverse events/rentals • Paranormal/spooky heritage
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNESCO status risk/lack of mgmt plan /partner silos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNESCO status risk/lack of mgmt plan/partner silos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition of other central cultural tourism attractions

Critical issues to address

Finding focus

To develop BNT's museums into dynamic spaces that attract a wider audience and support themselves financially, we must adequately focus on each museum. It has been argued that BNT could have one outstanding museum rather than three struggling ones. The hope is that with careful planning and phased fundraising we can retain all three museums each with a distinct focus and purpose. Giving attention to one museum at a time will allow us to give them the focus needed to succeed.

We must have vision and think big but must start small and avoid big projects that carry higher risk of failure. We should try things, learn and tweak them, so we can prove concepts and avoid losing larger investments. If we pilot approaches in one museum, it can provide lessons that we can then apply to the next.

Physical conditions

All three Grade 1 listed buildings require condition assessments, especially the two St George's museums.

BNT's museums have very little or no climate control. This is a factor in being able to display many BNT collections and for borrowing collections. We are consequently replacing original collections with reproductions and/or removing vulnerable pieces from display. BNT team and visitor comfort is also a concern, particularly in the heat and humidity of high summer. Each museum will need a plan for the addition of AC in at least some parts of the buildings.

Liability & inaccessibility

While BNT has public liability insurance (which also covers staff and volunteers), we must ensure risks have been assessed and mitigated at the museums.

Accessibility is also lacking at BNT's museums. BNT should consult Ageing and Disability Services (ADS) or a consultant to assess the museums for accessibility. Trust Museums should also provide (or provide directions to) key visitor amenities (restrooms with baby changing, seating inside and outside, and potable water).

Static thinking and spaces

There is a clear need to shift BNT's museums from being static spaces that do not engage visitors well nor encourage their repeat visitation. Our tendency to focus on sites and objects, rather than people and stories, can also create visitor and community dissonance from our museums.

The small size of BNT's museums has been noted as a weakness. Yet, we have not been using the entire space available at any of the museums. All the cellars are underused. Ending tenancies in Verdmont's cottage and/or the eastern rooms below Tucker House will result in a loss of reliable income but by fully utilising the museum spaces, enhanced experiences can be offered to visitors including revenue-earning museum shops and cafes.

Irrelevant and/or painful places

Locals and non-locals are both cultural tourism audiences, yet we have tended to focus on non-local visitors. We should focus on local meaning that will appeal to local and non-locals alike, whereas a non-local focus may alienate local audiences.

BNT's museums are historic houses steeped in colonialism, enslavement and their lasting legacies of racism and inequity. Recent overseas efforts to critically reflect on and decolonise properties and collections have been met with fierce backlash. All Trust Museums are sites of enslavement and some locals and non-locals have expressed they do not feel welcome or comfortable at our museums, partly because they are sites of historical trauma, but also because of the ways that BNT speaks to, marginalises, or silences that heritage. We must continue committed and consistent action on this critical issue by thoughtfully [Re-imagining International Sites of Enslavement](#) (RISE) under our care taking other antiracist action.

Digital doldrums

We are not making the most of digital technology at our museums which means a loss of visitors and opportunities to engage people with heritage, especially young people. However, we must appropriately use digital tools given our museums are heritage sites and sites of historical trauma. We should weigh concerns about devices being used in museum spaces in terms of changing or impinging on the quality of the museum experience for visitors.

References

- Bermuda National Trust
 - [Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#)
 - 'A History of a House' series by Diana Chudleigh: Globe Museum 2024, Tucker House 2015, Verdmont 2011, Waterville 2020
 - Educational booklets for Globe, Tucker House, and Verdmont Museums
 - [Traditional Building Guide](#)
 - Verdmont Conservation Management Plan (CMP) 2024 by CK LA
- Bermuda Tourism Authority
 - [Bermuda National Tourism Plan 2019-2026](#)
 - [Arts & Culture Strategic Action Plan](#) 2018 by Lord Cultural Resources
- Government of Bermuda
 - [National Cultural Heritage Policy for Bermuda](#) 2021 by Department of Culture
 - World Heritage Site Management Plan (review of 2014 plan not yet released)
- UK National Trust
 - [Interim Report on the Connections between Colonialism and Properties now in the Care of the National Trust, Including Links with Historic Slavery](#) 2020