

1. Why is industrial action taking place?

We highly value the work of our museum team, including our dedicated museum guides and are deeply saddened at the decision to commence industrial action. We are proud to be a Living Wage employer, committed to fair and ethical pay for all our staff.

Despite challenging economic times our staff have been offered a 5% pay rise this year. This is higher than inflation and is significantly higher than the pay award agreed by Unison for the public sector at 3.2%. Looking at last year's pay rise as well, this makes a cumulative increase of 14% over two years.

As a Charity our Trustees feel this current offer is fair and the counter claim put forward by Unison during pay negotiations, which equates to over 8%, for many, as simply unaffordable. It would jeopardise people's jobs across the organisation and threaten the long-term sustainability of the museum.

2. Who is taking part in the industrial action?

This offer of 5% has been rejected by Unison, and 28 members out of the 39 who have voted, have done so in favour of industrial action. We know that this is not the majority of our workforce of over 100 people and those taking industrial action are largely made up of the museum guides who deliver our underground tours.

3. When is the industrial taking place?

Wednesday 20 August to Sunday 14 September.

4. Will the museum still be open during the industrial action and can I visit?

Whilst we cannot offer underground tours during proposed strike action the rest of our museum be open, with lots for families and visitors to experience, with a full programme of daily activities, performances, music, and entertainment. The museum will continue to be open Wednesday – Sunday.

5. What if I have an Underground tour booked during industrial action?

All prebooked tours will be reviewed on a week by week basis. Should tours be cancelled because of industrial action notice will be given and a full refund provided.

6. What if I have an activity booked?

All other activities will be taking place and will not be affected by the industrial action.

7. How will this affect my visit to the museum

Underground tours will not be taking place during this time but there's still lots to do at the museum including, above ground tours, outstanding exhibitions inside and out, our Beach Time at the coal mine summer spectacular, crafts, family activities, Caphouse Creators, STEAM Club, horse keeper talks, performances, music, entertainment and cafe.

You may see a small number of museum guides peacefully picketing outside. We want to reassure you that the museum remains open to visitors, and you are warmly welcomed. Please don't feel intimidated, your visit is important to us, and we're here to ensure you have a positive experience.

8. I have an Underground Tour booked who do I contact?

Please contact reception on 01924 848 806 with any queries about your Underground Tour booking.

9. I have a school visit booked who do a contact?

If you have any queries about your school booking please email bookings@ncm.org.uk

10. Who should I contact with any media enquiries?

For any media enquiries, please marketing.manager@ncm.org.uk