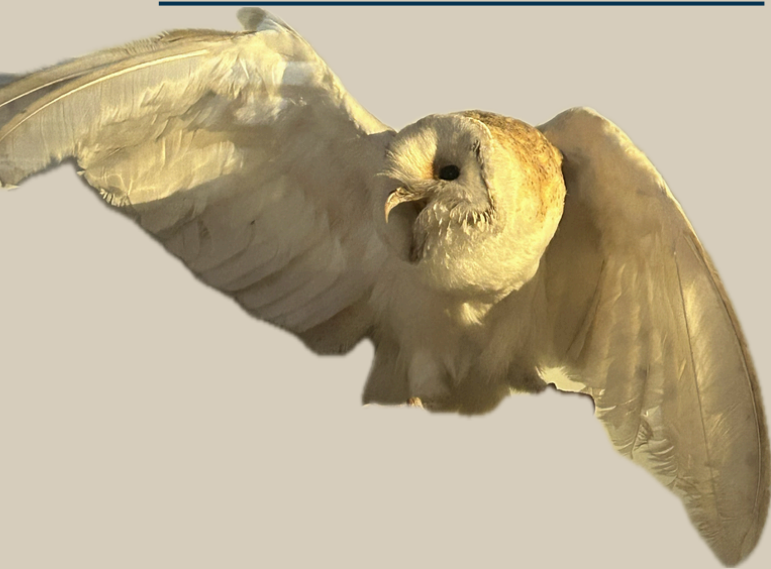


# 2025

## British Science Week at the Great North Museum: Hancock

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A report on the on-site activities for mainstream & SEND schools, plus home educators.

10–14 March 2025

By Jo McSwaine

# What we offered

## 3 Mainstream schools days

- Special workshops led by Newcastle University researchers and expert naturalists (NHSN)
  - Owl pellet dissection
  - Geology
  - Microscopy
  - Neuroscience
- Special themed trail
- Planetarium and options from our general offer.

## 1 SEND schools/groups day

- Bespoke, personalised object handling. School's choice of:
  - objects/theme.
  - length of session.
- Breakout space for each group (no sharing).
- Relaxed planetarium
- Relaxed & quieter galleries.
- Options from our general offer.
- Offered but not taken up on this occasion: adapted workshops, planetarium as a sensory space.

## 1 Home educators half-day

- Activities themed around evolution.
- Workshops on natural selection
- Talks, tours and drop-in activities in the galleries, delivered by learning staff and ERIC team.
- Breakout space.
- Special planetarium show – not on the general schedule – cells.
- Special themed trail.



## Theme: change and adapt

This year's theme was included by:

- Focusing the home educators event on evolution.
- Creating **2 brand-new trails** for Fossil Stories and Natural Northumbria galleries on the theme.
- Working with Justine Boussard on **Generation Hope** – about human impacts over time and how we can adapt to have a lighter footprint on the planet.



"We loved the whole trip! Thank you so much for being so accommodating throughout."

Mainstream school

## Reach

**555**

School pupils

**90**

Teachers &  
TAs

**44**

home  
educators

**18**

Facilitators\*

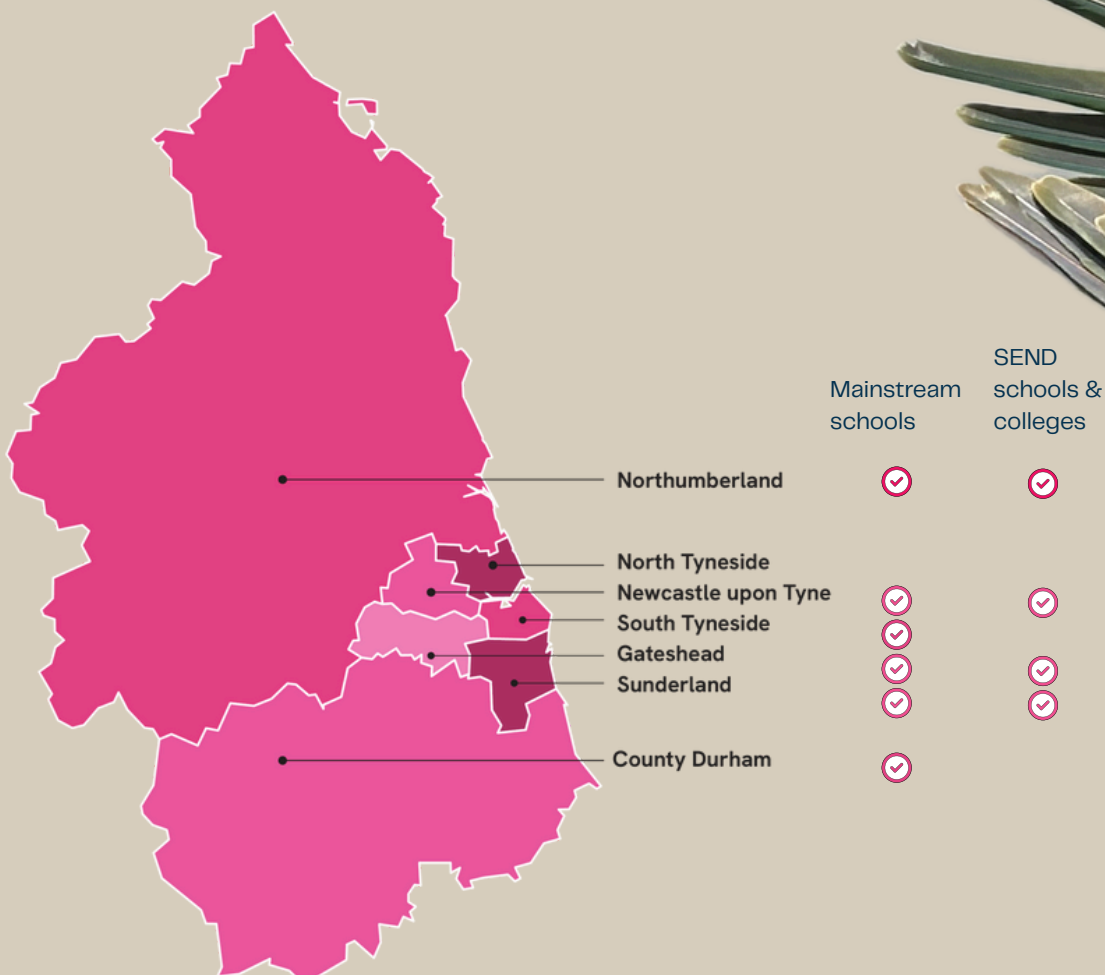
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"Before we went, we hadn't covered the topic of evolution, and now they have a great overview of it for both humans and animals."

Home educator

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## Geographical reach





# How it went

## 3 Mainstream schools days

- Popular, particularly with primaries.
- Ran smoothly with good feedback, particularly on owl pellet workshop.
- Trail and Generation Hope successful with secondary.

## 1 SEND schools/groups day

- Very popular, more demand than capacity.
- Most positive net promoter score and feedback.
- Bespoke options, relaxed galleries and breakout spaces praised.

## 1 Home educators half-day

- Popular – booked beyond initially planned capacity so extended.
- Lots of positive comments.
- Requests for more staff to support them and more for younger children.

## Quotes and comments

**“My team and I REALLY enjoyed the atmosphere. Bringing the class out normally provides a certain amount of tension but I immediately felt in a welcoming space....Thank you.”**

SEND School

**The organisation of the day [...] was superb. So many schools in and everything ran like clockwork!**

Mainstream School

**“We had such an amazing day, thank you so much. The kids learned so much and I really appreciate how hands-on you made it. We attended the evolution game workshop and they were so engaged by the taxidermy birds and seeing their beaks.”**

Home educator

**“The owls workshop was great and the pupils really learned something new [...]– fascinating activity.”**

Mainstream School

## What did you learn?

diet and digestion of owls

Museum 'skills' reading the signs to different rooms, using numbers and letters to ascertain names of models and artefacts.

why fish grew legs talk was brilliant, we learned so much from the teacher

to ask questions of the staff that helped her logical reasoning rather than just accepting what she was told. She is normally very shy.

observation skills in [...] Geology





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## Thank you

### **Environmental records and information centre North East**

Paul Stevens

### **Great North Museum: Hancock**

Dan Gordon, Dr Kate Holden, Rebecca Knight, Alice MacPhail

### **Natural History Museum**

Mo Langmuir, National Programmes Team

### **Natural History Society of Northumbria**

Hollie, Emily, Philip Jordan

### **Newcastle University**

Cell Detectives & Dr George Mercés, Dr Cees van der Land, Dr Vicky Fawcett

**plus** Justine Boussard (the Amateur Ancestor)

