

# THE GURKHA MUSEUM TRUST

INVITATION TO HELP SECURE THE FUTURE OF GURKHA HERITAGE



# Executive summary

## ***Hami Jasto Kohi Chhaina\****

The motto of the Gurkha soldier proudly proclaims *'there is no-one quite like us'*.\*

A sentiment that has been proven repeatedly by our bravest, most loyal allies in the heat of battle. Beyond the battlefield, this motto serves as a powerful call to action for those who are grateful to the Gurkhas and support the preservation of their unique culture.

The Gurkha Museum has international reach and support. It serves as the nation's custodians of the Brigade of Gurkhas' extensive legacy that dates back more than two centuries. With a force of more than 5,000 troops, Gurkhas remain a crucial component of the British Army in the present day.

Due to the generous contributions of multiple organisations and individuals, Winchester

became the permanent home of the Museum over thirty years ago. Despite not requiring extensive, additional funding since then, the Museum continues to showcase the rich history of the Gurkhas across two floors of unique artefacts.

As a registered UK charity and the definitive charity for Gurkha heritage, The Gurkha Museum is embarking on a £5.2 million modernisation project. Supported by the UK National Lottery Heritage Fund and contributions from soldiers of all ranks, this capital appeal will elevate the Museum into a world-class historical and cultural reference centre.

We invite you to help secure the future of Gurkha heritage by contacting Dr Daren Bowyer, the Director at [Director@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk](mailto:Director@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk)

Visit our *Project Kaida* webpage to learn more.



Victoria Cross recipients on a visit to The Gurkha Museum in October 1990. Left to right- Lance Corporal Rambahadur Limbu VC, Havildar Gaje Ghale VC, Naik Agansing Rai VC, Rifleman Ganju Lama VC MM, Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung VC

# The significance of *kaida*

"The redevelopment of The Gurkha Museum is known as *Project Kaida* by members of the Brigade of Gurkhas. The word *kaida* originates from the Sanskrit *kaya* translating as pose and *da* meaning offering, appearance, showing your personality to impress. This word has evolved to *kaida*. We now use this word in the Brigade of Gurkhas to describe to each other what 'Gurkhas do and how we do it'.

When in uniform, *kaida* is the pride Gurkhas have in our forefathers' legacy, the customs and ethos on and off the battlefield that we take forward. *Kaida* includes the love and trust of my fellow brothers-in-arms and the larger Brigade family.

It was the same *kaida* that helped me to summit Mount Everest – relying on the strength of being

a Gurkha, knowing my brothers on the mountain were there to support me to change history.

The Gurkha Museum Trust has the remit to record what it means to be a Gurkha and celebrate our past, current and future successes. It is our responsibility to support them to record and present our heritage, our *kaida*."

## Hari Budha Magar MBE, Gurkha veteran

In 2010 Hari was severely wounded in an explosion whilst serving in Afghanistan. In 2023 Hari became the first double above-knee amputee to summit Mount Everest. In 2024 Hari was awarded an MBE for his services to disability awareness.





**UPPER LEFT** - Hat felt Gurkha. The iconic wide rimmed hat still issued to Gurkhas today. **MIDDLE LEFT** - Bugler of the Royal Gurkha Rifles submitted by Cpl Raju Tamang for the 2023 Brigade photography competition. **LOWER LEFT** - The khukuri and sheath of L/Cpl Tuljung Gurung MC from his Military Cross actions in Afghanistan. **UPPER RIGHT** - Two riflemen of 10th Gurkha Rifles in the jungle. **MIDDLE RIGHT** - Ambush in Sangin (Afghanistan). The Gurkha Museum is home to a vast collection of military artwork currently on display in the Museum. **LOWER RIGHT** - The Victoria Cross is awarded for valour in the presence of the enemy. In total 26 Victoria Crosses have been awarded to soldiers and officers within Gurkha regiments.





# The five aims of *Project Kaida*

The purpose of The Gurkha Museum's redevelopment appeal is enshrined in five ambitious objectives:

## **Renovate the permanent public galleries**

With the outcome of making The Gurkha Museum a must-visit attraction, we will focus on ensuring more of our collection is accessible to the public.

This will involve stripping-out the tired thirty-year-old displays, to completely re-design and refit the galleries to represent the authentic Gurkha story through a new dynamic and intuitive layout. Included in this, the installation of a lift will provide the much-needed accessibility to the first-floor gallery.

## **Transformation of the library**

Developing an international research, lecture, and education centre with the capability to host virtual conferences and academic symposiums. We will remodel the existing space into flexible and distinct areas which will juxtapose original reference material with state-of-the-art technology.

## **Digitisation of the Museum's archives**

We will digitise and catalogue our 30,000 archives to secure their irreplaceable stories and insights. Gurkha heritage will be accessible to all, regardless of geographic location.

## **Outreach and education programme**

Over the span of three years, a fully funded activities programme will spread the word of Gurkha heritage across sectors, inspiring existing supporters and attracting new audiences.

## **Setting foundations for the future**

The Gurkha Museum will be positioned to thrive and evolve in harmony with the evolution of the UK's relationship with Nepal and the Gurkhas over the decades ahead.

## **Outcome**

In summary, the project involves a full transformation of Gurkha heritage. The Gurkha Museum will be established as the global centre for Gurkha heritage and culture. The new galleries, facilities and capabilities will serve as a tribute to over 200 years of Gurkhas' loyal service to the Crown, providing an enduring platform to continue collating the stories of Gurkha service for generations to come.



# Drivers for change

“Gurkhas have made significant impact on global history and on me personally.

My grandfather was Field Marshal The Viscount Slim known to many as General Bill Slim and affectionately known by his soldiers as 'Uncle Bill'. He first met Gurkhas in Gallipoli in 1915, where he was struck by their bearing and bravery in conflict.

This encounter ignited a firm affection for these steadfast and loyal soldiers that lasted throughout his life. My grandfather, like many since, particularly enjoyed the life and comradeship of being part of a Brigade of Gurkhas' unit during his regimental service.

This comradeship is as strong today as it was when my grandfather commanded Gurkhas.

Today the Brigade of Gurkhas forms a relatively larger part of the British Army than ever before. We as a nation are indebted to these courageous soldiers, and we need to recognise the sacrifice the Gurkhas have made for our country and their contribution to global security.

The Gurkha Museum in Winchester has the opportunity, with the support from the Brigade of Gurkhas and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to transform from a static collection of military artefacts to the global reference centre for all Gurkha Heritage.

I hope you will join me in supporting the redevelopment of Gurkha Heritage.”

## The Viscount Slim

Vice Patron of The Gurkha Museum Trust Appeal



# A new visitor journey

The Museum's current layout is one-way and follows a linear timeline. The text on the wall format is one-dimensional and does not engage the modern visitor. The redevelopment project will change this.

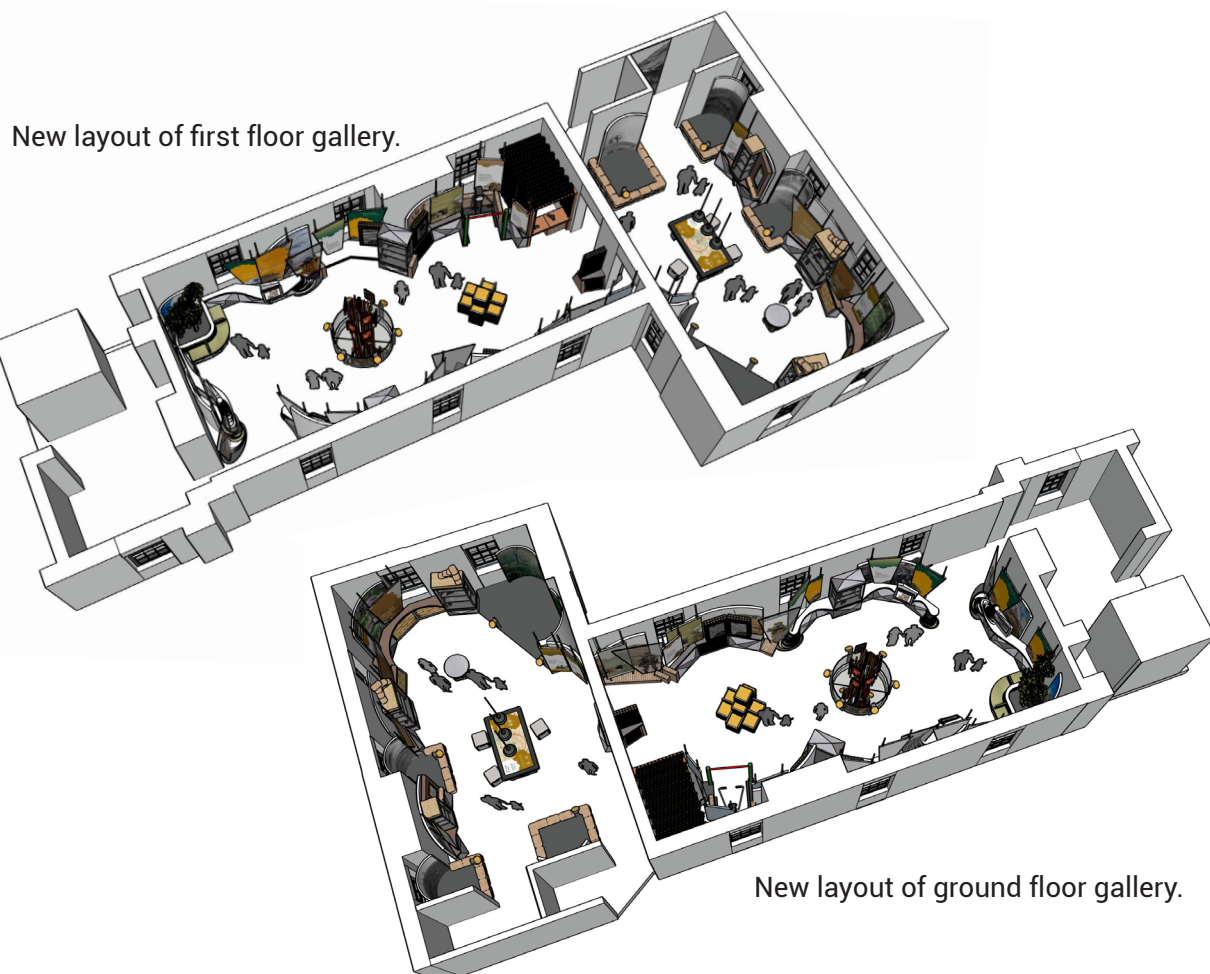
The new open plan layout will allow visitors to actively engage with Gurkha history in a manner that fits individual needs regardless of age and prior knowledge. Oral histories can be watched and listened to through a striking sculptural fireplace across both floors. A stylised chautara seating area will allow visitors to immerse themselves in the Gurkhas' homeland of Nepal. Using a variety of mediums, the ground floor will

continue to tell the story of the Gurkha soldier throughout the 19th Century and into the First World War.

The first floor will give the opportunity for visitors to interact with a war table and test their aim in a digital shooting simulator.

Dioramas, mannequins and projections will teach all ages of the Gurkha sacrifice during the Second World War as well as the recent service that Gurkhas continue to give.

Visitors exit the exhibition space through the gift shop where all profits support the upkeep of the collection for future visitors.



# Delivery timeline

“As the Chair of The Gurkha Museum Trust, this appeal is the culmination of a vision for Gurkha heritage that has been eight years in the planning. The Trust’s aspirations are bold and ambitious, launching a reimagined experience which will draw in visitors, both online and to the Museum. We aim to position the Museum as the accessible authority on scholarship of Gurkha heritage, and create a unique and remarkable destination for sharing that heritage and history.

## What has been achieved already

- The redevelopment project started in 2021 with a comprehensive consultation programme, leading to an outline vision for the future.
- The office space was redesigned to accommodate an uplift in staff to resource the vision in 2022.
- The Brigade of Gurkhas dedicated a significant uplift in its contribution from the Service Day’s Pay Giving Scheme for four years from 2022. The bid for development funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund was made and awarded in 2023.
- Capital works to improve the kitchen to better support military and corporate events.

- Capital works transformed the library into a state-of-the-art reference, research and education centre.

- The bid for the second round of National lottery funding submitted.

## Next steps:

- Fundraising campaign to match the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant.
- Consultations with stakeholders continue.
- The digitisation of the archives will begin in 2025.
- The outreach activity programme will be designed in 2024-25.
- Capital works on the two public galleries will start in 2025 and be completed by mid 2026.

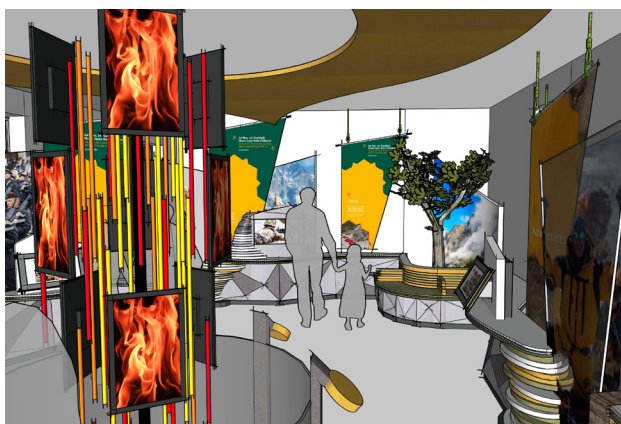
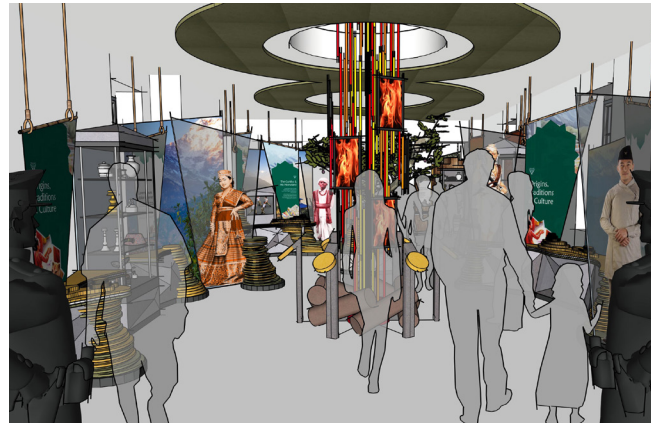
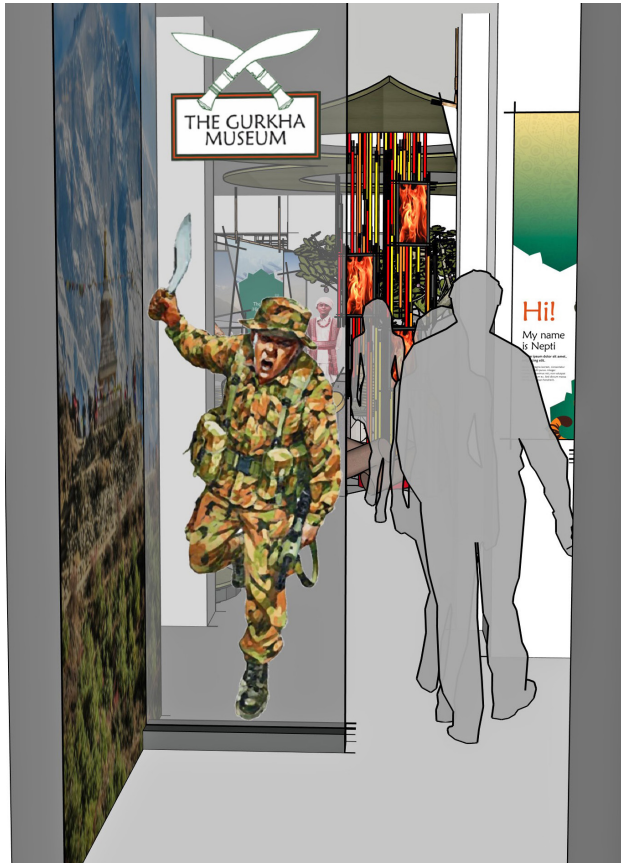
## Moving forward

When complete, The Gurkha Museum will be the global reference centre for Gurkha heritage and the must-visit destination which honours the Gurkhas’ historic, current and future contributions. Please help us secure this exciting future for The Gurkha Museum.”

## Martin Brooks

Chairman of The Gurkha Museum Trust





Graphics showing proposed redeveloped galleries. Large dynamic entrance will lead to an opened up exhibition space. A stylised sculpture depicting a camp-fire will be seen, heard and shared from both floors of the gallery space, captivating the visitor's attention. Across the Museum the use of appropriate materials will serve to communicate periods in time, geographical location and the Nepali heritage of the Gurkha soldier.



# Outline of costs

"The redevelopment of The Gurkha Museum, or *Project Kaida* using its Nepali name, is hugely significant for the global Gurkha and Nepali communities.

The military ethos is integral to the Gurkhas' 'way of doing things', and our specific *kaida* is fundamental to our distinct and enduring cultural and historical legacy. We have stories we need to share to a wider audience and the redevelopment of The Gurkha Museum, *Project Kaida*, will allow us to do this.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who will enable us to do so."

## Sudha Rai

Trustee of The Gurkha Museum Trust

The financial cost of transforming The Gurkha Museum is £5.2 million. All costings have been scrutinised as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund bid. It is planned £2.9m will be covered by a National Lottery grant, £300k of which we have already been awarded as part of the development phase. To receive the full National Lottery grant we need to fund-match £2m. Our fundraising efforts are being led by the serving Brigade and soldiers' individual fundraising efforts.

Our vision will only be realised through support from generous donors and funders. We appreciate and recognise every contribution to this historic redevelopment.

This is an ambitious charitable project, marking a unique, globally-renowned military relationship and legacy. Your support is vital.



# Faithful friends

“My support for the Gurkhas is well-documented but worth highlighting here. My father served with the 6th Gurkha Rifles for eighteen years. Indeed, my father owes his life to a Gurkha soldier, Tul Bahadur Pun who was subsequently awarded a Victoria Cross for his heroic actions in Burma in 1944.

I, like many others hold the Gurkhas in the highest esteem for their bravery, loyalty, and friendship. The Gurkhas have served alongside the British with distinction for over two hundred years and they have proved themselves again and again over their two hundred years of service.

It is this illustrious service that The Gurkha Museum Trust protects and preserves. I ask you today, to support the Gurkhas and their Heritage to demonstrate your gratitude.”

## **Dame Joanna Lumley DBE**

Vice Patron The Gurkha Museum Trust  
Appeal



# Your role in shaping the future of Gurkha heritage

As the Gurkha story continues to grow and change, so must the Museum. This ambitious redevelopment project involves: redesigning the public galleries; creating a state-of-the-art reference, research and education centre; digitising the archives; and funding an innovative outreach and education programme. This will provide greater access to Gurkha heritage on a global scale.

For further information please contact:

## **MR MARTIN BROOKS -**

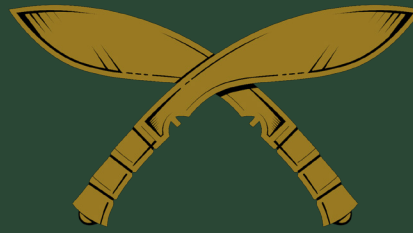
Chairman of the Trustees  
Chairman@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk

## **DR DAREN BOWYER -**

Director of the Museum  
Director@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk

## **MRS EMMA BORYER -**

Head of Fundraising and Marketing  
Development@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk



# THE GURKHA MUSEUM TRUST

## INVITATION TO HELP SECURE THE FUTURE OF GURKHA HERITAGE.

Appeal Vice Patrons: The Viscount Slim | The Right Reverend and Right Honourable The Lord Chartres GCVO ChStJ PC FSA FBS | The Lord Bilimoria CBE DL | Lieutenant General Sir Peter Duffell KCB CBE MC | Dame Joanna Lumley DBE FRGS | Lieutenant General Peter Pearson CB CBE | Lieutenant General Richard Wardlaw OBE | Colonel Denis Wood MBE | David Hitchcock Esq, OBE

The Gurkha Museum Trust is the definitive charity for Gurkha heritage.

Registered Charity Number. 1169920 | For further information on Project Kaida, please contact:

The Gurkha Museum Trust, Peninsula Barracks, Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8TP

T. +44 (0)1962 842832 | E. [Development@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk](mailto:Development@TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk) | W. [TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk/Appeal](http://TheGurkhaMuseum.co.uk/Appeal)

