

Norfolk Museums Service
– Performance & Strategic Update Report
A report by the Head of Museums

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on performance against Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) Service Plans.

The main items for consideration by this Committee are:

- Progress regarding development of the Keep at Norwich Castle
- Plans for 2016/17 including the exhibition and events programme and the Service's progress in achieving a balanced budget
- Arts Council England's new funding programme for 2018-22

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an update on performance against Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) Service Plans.

1.1 Performance Summary

1.1.1 Total museum visits across all 10 NMS sites for the period 1st April 2016 to 31st August 2016 were 188,203 compared to 194,394 for the equivalent period 1st April 2015 – 31st August 2015. This represents a 3% decrease on last year's total visitor numbers for the equivalent period. Factors impacting negatively on the overall visitor figure include an early Easter in 2016 (meaning Easter holiday visits were split between two financial years) and a very hot summer, which has seen a small percentage reduction in visits to Norwich Castle over the summer holidays. However, given that 2015/16 represents a record year for the Museums Service, the total visitor figure is remarkably positive and there is every reason to be confident going into the second half of the year that we will match last year's excellent figure of c400,000 visits across the sites plus outreach and special events attendance.

1.1.2 School visits across the 10 NMS sites for the period 1st April 2016 – 31st August 2016 were 17,356 compared to 15,317 for the period 1st April 2015 – 31st August. This represents a 13% increase. This is a very strong performance, especially as it is benchmarking against the excellent total for school visits achieved during 2015/16.

1.2 Performance/Service Plan highlights

1.2.1

Halfway to Paradise - The Birth of British Rock: exhibition at Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth

Halfway to Paradise transported visitors back to the dawn of British rock 'n' roll – when four Liverpool lads were stopping hearts and the vinyl record reigned supreme. Showbiz photographer Harry Hammond captured definitive images of leading British musicians and many visiting American artists. This exhibition from the V&A showcased his photographs and the exhibition also included memorabilia from the collections of people who were part of the Great Yarmouth rock scene in its heyday.

The exhibition ran until 2 October 2016 and included a full programme of events, talks and schools' programmes. This exhibition will be followed later in the year by an exhibition looking at life in the 1950s.

Art of the Mart: exhibition at Lynn Museum, King's Lynn

This exhibition looked at the art, craft and design of King's Lynn's funfair, known as 'the Mart'. The Mart opens each year on Valentine's Day, traditionally the first of the fairs in the Showmen's year. King's Lynn was famous in Victorian times as the home of creators of steam-powered merry-go-rounds, Savage's Ltd.

The exhibition ran until 11 September 2016.

LITTLE LIVES: Snapshots of Childhood 1800 to the Present Day: exhibition at Lynn Museum, King's Lynn

This new exhibition at the Lynn Museum touches on the stories of childhood over the last two centuries. Childhood objects from the museum collections together with photographs and paintings offer snapshots of the changing experience of childhood.

The exhibition ran from 23 September 2016.

'To watch the corn grow, and the blossoms set': the art of Claughton Pellew: exhibition in the Colman Project Space, Norwich Castle

Claughton Pellew (1890-1966) was a gifted painter and wood engraver, trained at the Slade School of Art. Rediscover his exquisite drawings and prints, inspired by the harmony of country life, on the 50th anniversary of his death.

The exhibition runs until late autumn.

Flint Rocks: exhibition at Ancient House Museum

Everything you ever wanted to know about flint but were afraid to ask. From fossils to flakes and soldiers to strike-a-lights, this exhibition throws light on this very versatile stone. Discover the people who

worked and used it, and find out about flint's Japanese cousin, obsidian.

The exhibition runs until 29 October 2016.

British Art Show 8: exhibition at Norwich Castle

The largest contemporary art show in Britain came to Norwich and the East of England for the first time in its history during the summer. The exhibition was shown at Norwich Castle, Norwich University of the Arts and The Forum and was delivered in partnership with Norwich University of the Arts (the lead partner) and the Southbank Centre, London. It was supported by Arts Council England and key local sponsors included Intu Chapelfield, Larking Gowen chartered accountants and Mills & Reeve solicitors.

A major national art commission with artist Alan Kane saw *The History Train*, a horse-drawn procession carrying special art works, travelled through Norwich on 18 June.

The exhibition ran until 4 September 2016 and helped contribute to a strong performance over the summer at Norwich Castle.

'Sixty Years On': Norfolk Contemporary Art Society; exhibition at Norwich Castle

An exhibition celebrating the impact of NCAS on Norwich Castle's collections over the last six decades.

Exhibition in the Timothy Gurney Gallery running until Spring 2017.

Fishermen & Kings: The Photography of Olive Edis. Exhibition at Norwich Castle

An exhibition celebrating the pioneering photography of Olive Edis who worked in North Norfolk in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As well as being a talented portrait photographer, Edis was also the world's first female war photographer and this exhibition showcases both her photographs of local people and celebrities alongside her record of women during the First World War and her documentary on the battlefields of Northern Europe.

The exhibition is part of a wider project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund with additional support provided by Arts Council England, East Anglia Art Fund and the John Jarrold Trust.

A touring exhibition of Edis' work will be shown at community venues across North Norfolk during 2017.

The exhibition runs from 8 October 2016 to 22 January 2017.

YMCA 160th anniversary exhibition: Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell

This exhibition looks at the history of the YMCA Norfolk over the last 160 years and was curated by a group of young people at the YMCA with support from the curators at the Museum of Norwich.

The exhibition forms part of a larger project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The exhibition opened on 22 September 2016.

1.2.2 Learning Programmes

The learning teams across the County continue to deliver a number of award-winning programmes for all ages with a focus on the priority groups of schools, disadvantaged communities and our Looked After Children.

Dr Robin Hanley, Head of Operations & Learning and Colly Mudie, Learning Manager at Norwich Castle, represented the Service at the national GEM (Group for Education in Museums) Conference in Edinburgh, presenting on the work of the Museums Service.

In September, Norwich Castle hosted an after-school development session for teachers and sixth-form coordinators with a view to developing new programmes aimed at 16-18 year olds from across the County.

As previously reported, the Department for Education (DfE) and Arts Council England have confirmed a further extension to the schools' literacy programme 'Museums and Schools'. This funding extension is enabling NMS to roll out the very successful *Stories from the Sea* in North Norfolk whilst continuing to build the programme in Great Yarmouth.

A partnership project application to deliver educational theatre sessions for schools in the Shirehall Courtroom has been successful. The project is being supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Special learning programmes for the under 5's continue to attract very large numbers across the County, including *Little Kippers* at Time & Tide Museum, the *Bear Hunt* and the *Castles* workshops at Norwich Castle. Recent evaluation of the *Little Kippers* sessions at Time & Tide Museum showed the positive value placed on the programme, including the following feedback:

Jonah and I love coming to Little Kippers. It gives us the chance to explore the museum and learn about the exhibits in an exciting and toddler friendly way. Jonah always enjoys the craft activity provided and they are well thought out and superbly resourced. His favourite so far was the explorer session. He's constantly using the vocabulary he picked up during this session within his play.

We love Little Kippers! Samuel has come to love Time and Tide because of it and we make visits between the monthly sessions to see things in our own time. Polly always packs lots in and there is a fantastic variety of activities with the rare opportunity to actually touch an exhibit, make something well thought out (we loved our guitars :)), have a story and the all-important snack!

1.2.3 Teaching Museum & Skills

Following national recognition in May by the national Museums & Heritage Awards 2016, in September the Teaching Museum won an award in this year's prestigious Festival of Learning Awards.

Norfolk Teaching Museum was one of 28 regional and national winners clinching the Central England Employer award for its outstanding achievement in adult learning and contribution to its local community. Sarah Gore, Teaching Museum Manager, also won a Norfolk County Council Outstanding Contribution Award (OSCA) during the period.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has launched a second round of *Skills for the Future*, a programme which focuses on the development of heritage skills and supports training for entrants to the heritage sector. NMS ran the largest Skills for the Future programme in the UK in partnership with the Museum of East Anglian Life in Suffolk. We will be submitting an application for the new programme which will, as with the last project, be run by the team at Gressenhall.

1.2.4 Marketing and PR

On Thursday 8 September at a special presentation and media press call at the Castle, Art Department staff announced that a painting by the famous Belgian surrealist artist, René Magritte, in the Norwich Castle collections hides one quarter of a lost Magritte painting underneath.

The presentation by Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art at the Castle, and Alice Tavares da Silva, a freelance conservator, described how Alice's eagle eyes first spotted that the Magritte painting, 'La Condition humaine' (1935), in the Castle collections might hide an exciting secret. They explained how, in the process of examining the painting in preparation for its loan to the Pompidou Centre in Paris for a major Magritte exhibition, Alice discovered that Magritte had painted over a portion of an earlier, larger work, 'La Pose Enchantée' (1927), which until recently, had been thought lost.

The discovery received excellent national and regional coverage and was also picked up by many international newspapers and art fora.

1.2.5 Partnerships

NMS continues to work closely with the national charity *Kids in Museums* and other learning partners on the 'Takeover Day' initiative which gives young people the chance to run an institution for the day.

One example from the many Takeover events running across the 10 NMS museums was the event at Time and Tide Museum on 12 August when the Museum's Twitter feed was taken over by teenagers from Creative Collisions youth arts network. The young people involved used social media to promote the collections and were asked to think about how the culturally diverse communities of Great Yarmouth are represented in the museum.

During the period, the Museums Service also supported the national Heritage Open Days programme in September with free access and special events across the whole of the Service. The weekend was the most successful to date, with many thousands of visits taking place over the three days.

1.2.6 Commercial Developments

A key element of the current Service Plan and of meeting the challenges of the budget reductions ahead is the successful delivery of the Service's commercial income targets. Key developments since the last meeting are listed below:

- The first summer of registry weddings at Norwich Castle has been a great success, with numbers exceeding expectations and advance bookings for 2017 looking very strong. In September, Norwich Castle hosted its first wedding reception in the Rotunda and across our other sites a growing number of bookings have been secured for Strangers' Hall and Gressenhall.
- The Arts Council England supported project developed in partnership with Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) to create commercial opportunities using the Museum's collections has been completed. Evaluation is being completed on this innovative project.
- External Services – the Museum's national-standard Design and Conservation teams continue to offer professional services commercially to other museums and heritage sites. Project work for a number of external clients is being delivered for the forthcoming financial year, including work for the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (SCVA) and the National Trust.

For more details visit [**www.conserveanddisplay.co.uk**](http://www.conserveanddisplay.co.uk)

- An increasing number of commercial bookings for Norwich Castle continue to be delivered, including major events and celebrations for local businesses.

1.3 Conclusion

- 1.3.1 Despite the challenges of an early Easter and a very hot summer, the Service's financial performance up to the end of September has been positive and, with a strong exhibitions and events programme in place across the 10 museums over the next two quarters, a breakeven budget position is forecast.

Commercial income strands including conference and banqueting, conservation and design services and weddings continue to develop positively, especially the Registry partnership at Norwich Castle.

2. Strategic Developments

2.1 Norwich Castle Keep

Norfolk Museums Service has received earmarked funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project.

An initial development grant of £462,400 is a major boost to the multi-million pound plan to transform Norwich Castle's iconic Keep into one of the region's premier heritage attractions. A further £8.7 million has been earmarked towards the project and a second application for the full grant will be made at a later date.

Along with the recreation of the 12th Century Royal Palace, the project will enable a unique form of partnership, displaying national treasures from the British Museum collections alongside exquisite artefacts from Norwich Castle's own medieval collection, in a new *British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period*.

The initial grant from the HLF provides development funding to help the Service progress its plans and undertake a major public fundraising campaign. This first award will enable a programme of study to record, interpret and understand the Keep fully, as well as identify essential repairs and conservation work.

In terms of energy efficiency, the project aims to bring the latest environmentally sustainable technologies into the building ensuring it is fit for the 21st century.

A fundraising plan is in place to meet the match-funding target for the project and this will be kept under regular review by the Board of the Norfolk Museums Development Foundation (NMDF).

Tender returns are expected shortly for the professional services and project management elements of the project.

Work has progressed well on the Activity Plan over the summer with new events and activities being trialled as part of the Learning Team's Medieval Madness programme. This included the reintroduction of Medieval Mystery Plays to Norwich for the first time in 500 years.

An event to celebrate the securing of a Stage 1 HLF pass was held in the Keep on 4 October with thanks to the partners who had supported the application including Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council, New Anglia LEP, the Friends of Norwich Museums, Norwich BID and Arts Council England.

- 2.2 Norfolk Museums Development Foundation (NMDF) & Fundraising**
Delivery of the fundraising strategy via the Norfolk Museums Development Foundation continues to progress well and a Board Development Day has been held which has been helpful in assisting the Trust in developing a clear vision which complements the work of the Joint Museums Committee and our other sister charities.

A new website for the Foundation has been created to give the charity a profile for potential supporters and grant giving bodies – <http://nmdf.org.uk/>

An application from the NMDF to the Peter Cruddas Foundation to support our partnership work with the Norfolk Youth Offending Team (YOT) has been successful. The grant will fund projects at Norwich Castle to help young people aged 16 and 17 who are working with the YOT to move into education, employment or training. With this funding support, the Museum will run a three month animation course this autumn and a further course next year. The young people will work with the Museum's learning team, a reparations worker and an experienced animator to gain film and photography skills. They will work together to devise stories about the collections and the Castle to create animations which will provide them with a portfolio to achieve an accredited qualification with an Arts Award.

- 2.3 Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse – Voices from the Workhouse project**

The *Voices from the Workhouse* development project at Gressenhall, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other key funders including DCMS Wolfson and Breckland DC, is progressing according to schedule and the main exhibition was opened to the public in May.

The VIP opening with the Heritage Lottery Fund took place on Friday 8th July, with the relatives of workhouse inmates whose stories are told in the main exhibition cutting the ribbon to officially open the new galleries.

Positive work on the digital App to support the interpretation in the new galleries has been completed during the period and the Heritage Lottery Fund has also given their approval to the redevelopment of the Collections Gallery above the new workhouse displays.

Learning and outreach work with local schools and community groups linked to the project continues.

The Gressenhall project team have been recognised for their hard work and dedication to delivering an exemplary project by Norfolk County Council in the form of an Outstanding Contribution Award (OSCA).

2.4 Arts Council England

Whilst NMS continues to deliver its current funding programme (2015-18), work is underway to prepare for the new funding round in the autumn. Consultation has been completed and the Arts Council have confirmed a 4 year settlement for the period 2018-22.

The Arts Council has also confirmed that it will bring museums into line with the rest of the arts portfolio in terms of having one major funding programme but with three levels of investment giving different stages of responsibilities.

Norfolk Museums Service has been tasked with a national leadership responsibility for the Arts Council's Goal 4 Diversity and Skills. This will involve coordinating a national conference in December and a publication containing case studies drawn from NMS's work and that of 5 other Major Partner Museums across England. NMS is also working with Kids in Museums, the national charity, to develop a new Takeover Day programme aimed at introducing children from diverse backgrounds to the idea of working in museums and the cultural sector.

The Museums Service has received a very positive end of year report from the Arts Council with particular credit given to the Museum's progress embedding new income generation initiatives and activities, and its award-winning work with children and young people.

2.5 Deep History Coast Project

NMS curatorial staff continue to progress the *Deep History Coast* Project initiative.

Staff continue to work on the Deep History Coast (DHC) publication. Work is continuing, together with Natural History Museum specialists, on a review and analysis of Norfolk's faunal collections from the Cromer Forest Bed. Dr David Waterhouse appeared on the Channel 4 documentary 'Walking Through Time', concerning Britain's lost land bridge. A DHC public 'Fossil Roadshow' event was delivered at Time & Tide Museum over the summer and behind the scenes tours as part of Heritage Open Weekends in September

NMS staff continue to work with North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) on the DHC Steering Committee in order to shape the direction of the project in North Norfolk. Specialist advice and support has also been provided to North Norfolk's developing DHC Coastal Community Team work, with further meetings scheduled.

A partnership application led by NNDC to the Government's Coastal Communities Fund was submitted at the end of June and has been successful in obtaining a Stage 1 pass. Further work will be put into the application over the coming weeks. Dr David Waterhouse is also helping NNDC with the development of a Deep History Coast brand which can be used by partners and businesses in North Norfolk.

2.6 DCMS National Museums Review

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has begun a National Museums Review, the first such review in more than 15 years.

As part of the Review, the Museums Service received a visit in August from Neil Mendoza, Chair of the Review, Dr Simon Thurley and Kate Bellamy from the DCMS.

In parallel to the National Review, the Museums Association has created a Museums Taskforce to examine the state of the museums sector across the UK and produce a report by May 2017. NMS is represented on the Steering Group for this piece of work.

3. Museum Development across Norfolk

3.1 Museum Development across Norfolk

NMS continues to have a leadership role for the wider museums sector across the East of England. The Service is in receipt of a grant of £1.2m from Arts Council England to provide professional support, advice and guidance to museums for the three year period 2015-18. The programme of support is delivered by SHARE Museums East. Recent developments include the launch of the 2016-17 training calendar which offers over 80 events including training courses, workshops, conferences and seminars.

SHARE Museums East continues to provide Accreditation advice to museums in the region with a dedicated email enquiries line and regular county group updates and briefings.

Forward planning seminars and a grants award scheme have been announced to assist museum boards in reviewing and developing their forward plans to support improved organisational resilience.

The annual SHARE Museums East Volunteers Awards was held at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in June.

This year's annual SHARE Museums East conference will be held in November at the newly developed National Horseracing Museum at Newmarket.

For more information on NMS' leadership role in museum development in the region and the SHARE scheme visit: <http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk>

4. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 4.1 The NMS Service Plan places diversity, equality and community cohesion at the heart of service development and service delivery. It aims to ensure that activities included in the service plan are accessible to diverse groups in Norfolk and that all policies, practices and procedures undergo equality impact assessment.

These assessments help the service focus on meeting the needs of customers in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation.

5. Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act

- 5.1 NMS is working hard to help address the issues of social exclusion, one of the key triggers for crime and disorder. NMS provides services that are accessible to local people, encourage participation in cultural activities by people who are at risk of offending, engage offenders through a range of cultural projects, assist schools in improving pupil attainment and deliver opportunities to increase the number of people who are in education, employment or training.

Through these and many other projects the NMS is using its resources to contribute towards reducing crime and disorder in Norfolk.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Meeting the Service's financial targets for 2016/17 is dependent on the delivery of commercial and fundraising targets as well as the maintenance of high visitor numbers across the 10 museums.

Following the opening of the new *Voices from the Workhouse* galleries at Gressenhall and a strong exhibitions and events programme across the County, the Service remains optimistic of meeting its challenging targets.

The redevelopment of the Keep at Norwich Castle is the key focus for the Service for the coming period.

7. Recommendation or Action Required

7.1 The Joint Museums Committee is asked to consider and comment on:

- Progress regarding development of the Keep at Norwich Castle
- Plans for 2016/17 including the exhibition and events programme and the Service's progress in achieving a balanced budget
- Arts Council England's new funding programme for 2018-22

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

Steve Miller
Acting Assistant Director Community and
Environmental Services (Cultural
Services), Head of Norfolk Museums
Service
Tel: 01603 493620
Email: steve.miller@norfolk.gov.uk



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