

NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting Held at Gressenhall Rural Life Museum on 26 July 2018
at 2.00pm**

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Mr P Duigan
Mr D Harrison
Mr H Humphrey
Mr M Kiddle-Morris
Mr T Smith
Mr J Ward (Chairman elected during meeting)

Norwich City Council

Dr E Fulton-McAlister
Dr J Huntley

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Mrs E Nockolds

Broadland District Council

Mr D Buck

Co-opted Member (Non-Voting)

Museum Friends

Mrs F Devonshire

1 Election of Chairman

1.1 Resolved

That Mr J Ward be elected Chairman of the Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

(Mr J Ward in the Chair)

2 Election of Vice-Chairman

2.1 Resolved

That Mr D Buck be elected Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

3 Minutes

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 April 2018 were confirmed by the Joint Committee and signed by the Chairman.

4 Apologies for absence and Tour of Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

4.1 The Chairman welcomed to the Committee those new Members who were attending their first meeting.

- 4.2** Apologies for absence were received from Mr B Lawn, Ms K Fawcett, Mr R Kybird, Mr G Nobbs, Mrs B Palmer, Ms C Rumsby, Mr R Savage, Mr M Storey and Ms R Trevor.
- 4.3** The Joint Committee placed on record thanks to Hannah Jackson, NMS Operations Manager (West) and Dr Megan Dennis, NMS Curator, for the tour that they had conducted of Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse that immediately preceded this meeting. Members were given the chance to find out about what life was like within the workhouse walls through the stories of those who lived and worked there over its 200 year history. The tour included the recently completed Collections Gallery with over 2,000 objects telling the story of life, work and play across the county.

5 Declarations of Interest

- 5.1** Mr T Smith declared an “other interest” in item 14 (the review of NMS collections Development Strategy) because he was a member of the Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway Society who were the organisation behind the William Marriott Museum located at Holt Station.

6 Matters of Urgent Business

- 6.1** There were no matters of urgent business.

7 Political Representation on the Joint Museums Committee

- 7.1** The annexed report (7) by the Secretary of the Joint Committee was received.
- 7.2** Members received a report that set out the political representation on the Joint Committee and asked for appointments to be made to the Urgent Business Sub-Committee for 2018/19.

7.3 Resolved –

(a) That the political composition of the Joint Museums Urgent Business Sub-Committee for 2018/19 be as follows:

Conservative	4
Labour	2
Liberal Democrat	1

(b) That the following Members be appointed to serve on the Joint Museums Urgent Business Sub-Committee for 2018/19:

- Mr D Buck (Conservative)
- Mr D Harrison (Liberal Democrat)
- Mr H Humphrey (Conservative)
- Vacancy (Labour)
- Dr J Huntley (Labour)
- Mr T Smith (Conservative)
- Mr J Ward (Conservative)
- Mrs E Nockolds (Conservative substitute member)

8 Breckland Area Committee

- 8.1** The annexed report of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 14 May 2018 was presented by Mr P Duigan.
- 8.2** The Chairman drew the Joint Committee's attention to the annual SHARE Museums East Volunteers Awards that were referred to on page 17 of the agenda. The Assistant Director, Community and Environmental Services, agreed to let Members have further details after the meeting about these awards which can be found at Appendix A to these minutes.
- 8.3** Mr Humphrey asked for clarification around the figure of approximately 10,000 volunteer hours recorded for Gressenhall in 2017 (page 17 of the agenda). (Note: the answer can be found at Appendix B to these minutes).
- 8.4** The Assistant Director, Community and Environmental Services, drew attention to the new exhibition highlighting the story of Duleep Singh and his family, launched as part of the *Festival of Thetford and Punjab* at Thetford Ancient House. He said that the *Festival of Thetford and Punjab* was a partnership project between Essex Cultural Diversity Project, working with Norfolk Museum Service, Norfolk Library Service and Norfolk Arts Service, and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The festival worked with a wide range of partners, venues and event organisers to put on different events that appealed to a wide variety of audiences and had the potential to grow in importance in the Norfolk cultural calendar in future years.
- 8.5** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

9 King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Committee

- 9.1** The annexed report of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee meetings held on 14 May 2018 was presented by Mrs E Nockolds.
- 9.2** In introducing the report, Mrs E Nockolds referred to Norfolk Day on 27 July 2018 when it would be possible for the public to buy a special Norfolk Day ticket for use at Stories of Lynn, Lynn Museum, True's Yard Museum and the Custom House.
- 9.3** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

10 Norwich Area Committee

- 10.1** The annexed report of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meeting held on 5 June 2018 was presented by Dr E Fulton-McAlister.
- 10.2** In introducing the report, Dr E Fulton-McAlister referred to the successful crowdfunding campaign to put the Samson figure, one of the City's most iconic figures, back on public display. She also referred to the successful submission of the second stage bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project and the recent opening of *The Paston Treasure: Riches and Rarities of the Known World* exhibition.
- 10.3** Members drew attention to a new partnership with an organisation called *History Mystery* to create a range of unique Escape Room games with an historic theme

which would complement existing operational offers at the Shirehall and at the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell. The NMS was the first museums service in England to enter into a commercial arrangement where the historic building and objects from museum collections were used as the direct inspiration for games of this kind.

10.4 Members referred to the work of the 2018-19 cohort of museums trainees who delivered a huge range of impressive projects and programmes across the county. In reply to questions, it was pointed out that there were over 400 applicants for these posts and that the British Museum had introduced a similar training scheme to that of the NMS. The NMS trainees came from a wide range of backgrounds. On completion of their individualised training programmes virtually all of the former trainees had gone on to secure jobs in the culture and heritage sector.

10.5 It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

11 Finance Monitoring Report for 2017/18 (Outturn)

11.1 The annexed report (11) by the Assistant Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.

11.2 Members received a report that covered the Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) budget outturn for 2017/18, including the revenue budget, reserves and provisions and the capital programme.

11.3 Members pointed out that the budget over-spend of £49,000 on staffing was spent on extended opening hours and additional events across the county and should be considered in the context of the £90,000 surplus on admissions income which was 6.85% above target.

11.4 The Joint Committee **resolved** to note –

The final revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions positions for 2017/18.

12 Risk Management Report

12.1 The annexed report (12) by the Assistant Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.

12.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided Members with the latest Norfolk Museums Service Risk Register as at 31st January 2018.

12.3 Members were given an update on progress with the management of risk within the NMS. Members were informed of the positive progress that had been made against the risks on the register and that a new risk would be added to the register at the next meeting to stress the importance of the NMS performing well in the delivery of the newly signed-off Arts Council England (ACE) Business Plan for 2018-22.

12.4 The Joint Committee **resolved** to note –

1. The closure of risk RM14132 - Failure to secure Arts Council England

(ACE) funding as a National Portfolio Organisation, following sign-off in June 2018 of Arts Council Funding for 2018-2022 and that a new risk would be added to the risk register at the next meeting to stress the importance of the NMS performing well in the delivery of the Arts Council England (ACE) Business Plan.

- 2. The risks at Appendix A to the report and to determine that the mitigating actions identified in the report were appropriate.**

13 Norfolk Museums Service – Performance & Strategic Update Report

13.1 The annexed report (13) by the Assistant Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.

13.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided progress with performance over the current financial year 2018/19, details as to museum education and learning programmes, marketing and PR, partnerships, commercial developments, Norwich Castle Keep and other strategic developments, NMS fundraising, the Arts Council England funding programme and national priorities for the museum sector.

13.3 During discussion, the following key points were noted:

- The Joint Committee was informed that the NMS had successfully delivered its Service Plan priorities for 2017/18, including a balanced budget. The Service remained on track to deliver its key priorities in terms of programmes and events for 2018/19.
- The Joint Committee analysed the number of visits made by members of the public to the museums operated by the Norfolk Museums Service for the financial year 2017/18. During that period, Museum visits across all 10 NMS sites were 426,110, a 10% increase on what had been a very successful previous year.
- The numbers of school visits to NMS museums for the financial year 2017/18 were confirmed as 49,229, a 1% decrease on the previous year's record breaking figures and the second highest annual figures for schools visits ever recorded. The Service expected to maintain school visits at the 45,000+ level for 2018/19.
- Wedding bookings for 2017/18 continued to exceed the year-to-date figure in comparison to the previous year's bookings and to have a positive impact on attendance figures and on the use of museum facilities.
- The Joint Committee's attention was drawn to the large amount of work that was put into the opening of *The Paston Treasure: Riches and Rarities of the Known World* exhibition, the result of years of research, undertaken jointly with the Yale Center for British Art, part of Yale University. Members were informed about the extensive national media coverage for the exhibition and asked for details about the loan arrangements and about whom they could contact if they wanted to arrange their own exhibition tour. (Note the direct contact for members interested in a tour is: Dr Francesca Vanke, Keeper of Art & Curator of Decorative Art Email: Francesca.vanke@norfolk.gov.uk Direct dial: 01603 493634. The details which were requested by the Joint Committee can be found at Appendix C to these minutes.
- The Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England was progressing well and

according to schedule. The second round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund has been submitted on time in June, and the planning application had been submitted to Norwich City Council. Outcomes on both of these key pieces of work would be decided at the end of September.

13.4 The Joint Committee resolved:

- 1. To note progress regarding development of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England.**
- 2. To note the final 2017/18 position in terms of delivery, and the key Service Plan priorities for the current financial year 2018/19, including delivery by the NMS against Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund programmes.**

14 Review of NMS' Collections Development Strategy

14.1 The annexed report (14) by the Assistant Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.

14.2 Members drew attention to the digitisation work that was planned for the County Historic Environment Record and asked for further details about this improvement work which can be found at Appendix D to these minutes.

14.3 Resolved:

That the Joint Committee agree to the Collections Development Strategy as set out in the report and place on record thanks to all the officers in the NMS Collections Management Team for their hard work in the management and care of museums collections.

15 NMS involvement in the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) "Kick the Dust" programme

15.1 Dr Robin Hanley, Assistant Head of Museums (Head of Service Delivery), gave the Joint Committee a presentation on NMS involvement in the HLF "Kick the Dust" programme.

15.2 The Joint Committee noted the following key points:

- The NMS had been awarded £776,500 by the HLF for the "Norfolk Journey's" project which involved working in partnership with YMCA Norfolk, Creative Collisions - Great Yarmouth and Norfolk Library and Information Service.
- Additional match funding was contributed by Arts Council England, the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, the Geoffrey Watling Charity and Norfolk County Council.
- The NMS was the only museum service in England to take a leading role in the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Kick the Dust' initiative.
- Taking place at heritage sites across the county, including Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, Time and Tide Museum, Lynn Museum and Norwich Castle,

the four-year “Norfolk Journeys” project would work with nearly 8,000 young people aged 11 to 25 years, giving them the opportunity to play a role in shaping their heritage.

- The project would engage a broad range of young people, including young people who were the most difficult to reach for museums.
- Despite NMS’ excellent track record of working with this age group, “Norfolk Journeys” could be expected to have a transformative impact on the NMS, challenging the Service to change its organisational culture and embed a new way of working which really met the aspirations of young people in the County.
- The national project “Norfolk Journeys” was supported by a steering group of young Heritage Ambassadors, who were on a mission to ‘stir up heritage’, and to help advise on how money should be allocated.
- Young people were directly involved in appointing the project consultants and had contributed their opinions at steering group meetings.
- Informal activities were being used to consult those young people who already used museums, while those not currently engaging with museums or who had barriers to participation were contacted through an online survey and focus groups.

The meeting concluded at 4.10 pm.

Chairman

Appendix A The 2018 SHARE Volunteer Awards held at the Museum of East Anglian Life in Stowmarket on 6 June 2018

Set out below are those who were nominated from NMS for Awards : -

- **Highly Commended** - The research team for digital from Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse
- **Highly Commended** – Casey Hobbs, Stories of Lynn

NMS Nominees list: -

Museum Name	Nominator	Nominator Job Title	Category	Team or Individual	Nominee Name
Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse	Megan Dennis	Curator	Digital	T	Gressenhall Research Team
Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse	Richard Dalton	Farm Officer	Visitor Experience Award	I	Helen Coperthwaite
Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse	Mike Crisp	Assistant Farm Officer	Visitor Experience Award	T	Gressenhall Landscape Conservation Team
Lynn Museum	Sam Bellotti	Curatorial Trainee	Digital	T	Lynn Museum Digital Scanning Volunteers
Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery	Jenni Williams	Formal Learning Officer	Learning	I	Michelle Zielonka
Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery	Jenni Williams	Formal Learning Officer	we couldn't do without	I	Amanda Waring
Stories of Lynn, Kings Lynn	Rachael Williams	Learning and Engagement Officer	Outstanding Young Volunteer	I	Casey Hobbs

Full list of Winners: - <http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk/volunteer-awards/>

Appendix B Clarification around the figure of approximately 10,000 volunteer hours recorded for Gressenhall in 2017 (as noted in the Breckland AMC minutes on p.17 of the JMC agenda).

There were 9,327 recorded on-site volunteer hours at Gressenhall in 2017. This figure was supplemented by a significant number of “off-site” volunteering hours – e.g. the work of the volunteer archive team transcribing digitised workhouse records as part of the Voices from the Workhouse project. These off-site contributions will have taken the total figure to around 10,000 hours for the year. These figures clearly reflect the enormous contribution made by volunteers at Gressenhall – and indeed at all of NMS sites.

Appendix C *The Paston Treasure: Riches & Rarities of the Known World*

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery regularly borrows high profile objects and artworks to support its temporary exhibitions programme. The temporary exhibition galleries at Norwich Castle conform to the high security and environmental specifications of national and international museum lenders and meet the requirements of the Government Indemnity Scheme administered by Arts Council England. The current exhibition *The Paston Treasure: Riches & Rarities of the Known World* features a significant number of important loans from both national and international institutions. The standard conditions around loans relating to security and environmental controls apply with this exhibition.

Appendix D The County Historic Environment Record

What is the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER)?

The Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) is the comprehensive and definitive record of the historic environment of the county of Norfolk. It holds information on almost 62,000 archaeological sites, finds, historic buildings, industrial sites, marine and coastal remains, defences, and parks and gardens as well as over 70,000 records of related events and over 62,000 sources of information. It is one of the largest and most comprehensive records of its type in the country and is in continuous use for planning, site and landscape management, research, education, community-led heritage projects and public interest. The record itself is held on a computerised, searchable database with integrated digital mapping. An abridged version of the database can be accessed on-line via the Norfolk Heritage Explorer website (www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk) and bespoke exports from the full database are available by request.

What do the NHER Archives consist of and why are they important?

A less well-known fact is that the NHER digital database is supported by an extensive paper and photographic archive containing selected unpublished archaeological reports and documents including original notes by HES staff, original plans and illustrations, architectural plans, photographs, slides, press cuttings, published leaflets, and correspondence. This is a unique resource containing a large quantity of original work and primary sources of archaeological information which are not available anywhere else. The quality of the archive, particularly in regard to archaeological finds, has drawn researchers from across the UK and further abroad

for many years. However, by 2013 it had become clear to staff that the archive was not being used to its full potential. It required **improved documentation, wider access, improved storage, and increased security**, all of which could be achieved by digitising these resources.

What has the NHER Digitisation Programme achieved so far?

The NHER Digitisation programme began in earnest in late 2013 with a reorganisation of the primary HER Archive (previously known as Secondary Files) into categories for preparation and scanning, a task which identified well over 100,000 paper and photographic entities. Preparation of the first category began in August 2014 and since this time we have processed over 450 transfer boxes of paper archive material. This represents approximately 60% of the paper archive, which is the primary focus of the programme. The remaining 40% is expected to be scanned by March 2020.

Whilst the paper element is the main focus of the programme, the interconnected nature of the paper and photographic archives means that it has not been possible to consider one element in isolation and therefore a significant amount of work has also been carried out with the photographic archives. This has included compiling detailed catalogues of much of this material for the first time as well as digitising key elements. Scanning of the first 500 images in our Finds Illustration collection is almost complete and the next batch is in preparation. A small but nationally important collection of air photos taken by the Royal Flying Corps between 1915 and 1918 was digitised in October 2017, and a selection of aerial photographs of the Brecks were digitised in March 2017.

Much of the work associated with the project is concerned with the wider processes of documenting our archives within the primary database, improving the overall quality of the database and visibility of the archives, as well as ensuring that the digital files created are suitable for long-term curation. Gathering metadata, tracking down and recording copyright details, and redacting sensitive information from unpublished documents are all key elements of the work.

A few facts and figures of progress so far:

Paper Items Scanned:

- 1,893 Unpublished Contractor Reports
- 24,494 Record Cards – HER
- 6,121 Record Cards – OS
- 25,832 Data Transfer Forms
- 2,183 Borehole reports
- 1,350 HER Notes
- 3,250 Newspaper articles
- 1,220 Slide Index Records
- 398 Air Photo Flight Records

TOTAL: 66,741 Files

Photographic Items Scanned:

- 1,927 Aerial Photographs
- 438 Finds Polaroids (Sample)
- 163 Royal Flying Corps Air Photos

Catalogued:

- 10,593 Finds Polaroids
- 10,120 Digital Finds Images
- > 34,000 HES Aerial Photographs
- 3,394 Other Aerial Photographs
- 3,450 Historic Maps

The Future: How this will change the HER Service?

The effects of the digitisation programme are already being felt by HER users. Requests for material are increasing as collections become more visible within the primary database and many of our enquiries for archive material are now completed via email instead of requiring a journey to our offices. In addition, requests for photographs are being processed much more quickly due to improvements in documentation.

By completion of the project:

- *Everything that we hold will be visible within the digital record for the first time.*
- *Items will be able to be sent to individuals quickly and easily, reaching a wider audience and requiring less staff time.*
- *New charging opportunities will be explored, supporting future sustainability of the service.*
- *Opportunities will exist for developing self-service downloads in future.*
- *New guidelines for source data entry will be created, which will streamline data entry time.*

For further information on the Norfolk Historic Environment Record Digitisation Programme, please contact Heather Hamilton (Historic Environment Team Leader, Records) at heather.hamilton@norfolk.gov.uk or 01362 869 282.

If you need these minutes in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Customer Services on 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.