

Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Report title:	Performance and Strategic update
Date of meeting:	2 November 2018
Responsible Officer:	Steve Miller – Assistant Director, Culture and Heritage
Strategic impact This report provides an update on performance against Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) Service Plans.	

Executive summary

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

Recommendations:

- **To note progress regarding development of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project**
- **To note the position for the current financial year 2018/19, including delivery against our Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund programmes.**

1. Background

This report notes the performance of Norfolk Museums Service over the current financial year 2018/19, including the exhibitions and events programme across the 10 museums, the Service's award-winning learning programmes and the Service's work with groups including Looked After Children, carers and foster families. The report also provides an update on all major projects, including the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project and the new Heritage Lottery Fund supported youth development programme, *Norfolk Journeys*.

2. Performance Summary

- 2.1 Total visits across the 10 museum sites for the period 1 April to 31 August 2018 were 187,419 compared to 217,631 for the period 1 April to 31 August 2017, a 16% decrease on the year to date. Despite a strong exhibitions and events programme, the extended period of very hot weather impacted across all museum sites. Whilst this represents a disappointing decrease in total visits compared to last year's record-breaking visitor numbers, the year-to-date is broadly comparable to 2016/7 and is in line with other museums and visitor attractions across the UK.
- 2.2 School visits across the 10 sites for the period 1 April to 31 August 2018 were 17,978 compared to 17,766 for the period 1 April to 31 August 2017, a 1% increase on last year's strong figures.
- 2.3 Despite the current pressures, the Service is still hoping to achieve c.400,000 visits across the 10 museums for 2018/19 and to maintain school visits at around the 45,000+ level.

3. Performance/Service Plan highlights

3.1 Armistice: Legacy of the Great War in Norfolk; Norwich Castle

Armistice: Legacy of the Great War in Norfolk is a major centenary exhibition commemorating the end of the First World War.

The displays explore the breadth and depth of the effect of the War on Norwich and Norfolk. The physical impact on the county, including coastal defences, and changes in agriculture and industry is examined, alongside the stories of communities and individuals whose lives were transformed.

The impact on the county was phenomenal - geographically vulnerable to invasion, large numbers of troops were stationed or passed through Norfolk. By 1917 the primary YMCA centre in Norwich at St Andrews Hall was being used by 25,000 soldiers a week. There were over sixty auxiliary hospitals and forty-seven airfields around the county. Norfolk suffered the first sea bombardment and the first fatal zeppelin air raid of the War. The fishing industry was severely disrupted by U-boats and mines, and many trawlermen were part of the Naval Reserve.

Over 12,000 men of the county did not return and are commemorated on village memorials and school Rolls of Honour. Many more came back injured or forever changed by their experiences. The exhibition looks at the systems put in place to help these men to cope on their return, including ex-servicemen's organisations, county work schemes, homes for heroes, and soldiers' smallholdings.

Celebrating resilience and adaptability, as well as commemorating loss and remembrance, the rich displays show fine art and textiles alongside locally manufactured goods, such as boots for European armies and wire netting, which made the 'wire road' enabling troops to walk through the Sinai desert.

A series of finely crafted artworks by Paddy Hartley focus on the subject of remembrance and memorialisation. Called Papaver Rhoeas, these unique and exquisite field poppies will gradually change throughout the exhibition.

Posters, photographs, archives and interactive displays complement the diverse objects drawn from around the county, for this uniquely Norfolk exhibition.

Exhibition runs 20 October 2018 – 6 January 2019.

3.2 Circus! Show of Shows; Time and Tide, Great Yarmouth

This exhibition details the origins of Circus from the Ancient Greek 'Hippodromes' through to the Great Yarmouth 'Hippodrome' of modern day, and will feature a series of loans from private lenders and objects drawn from the Norfolk Museum Service collections.

Many of the pieces featured have not been displayed in public since they were last used in performances and will be themed around animals in circus, women in circus, inspiring future circus performers and key local stories to Norfolk including:

- Pablo Fanque (William Darby), the notable Black Circus owner and Equestrian trainer, who was born in Norwich, a poster advertising his circus was the inspiration for John Lennon when writing the Beatles

- classic “Being for the benefit of Mr. Kite!”
- Clown Roma (Animal trainer, Marcus La Touche) who was from Swaffham in Norfolk and travelled with a Hungarian Circus before retiring back to the county with his dog Viscount
- The Great Yarmouth Suspension bridge disaster which occurred following a stunt by Nelson the clown who sailed down the river Bure in a washtub pulled by four real geese causing the deaths of 78 people, mostly children
- The history of the Great Yarmouth Hippodrome which turns 115 years old this year, among many other stories and images

A programme of talks and events are planned to run alongside the exhibition including a talk by co-curator Professor Vanessa Toulmin from the University of Sheffield on Friday 12 October.

The exhibition is part of a nationwide museums partnership with Museums Sheffield and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, supported by the National Fairground and Circus Archive in Sheffield and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Exhibition runs Saturday 6 October 2018 – Sunday 3 March 2019.

3.3 **Drawn to the Coast: Turner, Constable, Cotman; exhibition at Time and Tide, Great Yarmouth**

Explore Great Yarmouth and its coast through the lives and works of Turner, Constable and Cotman at Time & Tide Museum this summer.

This exhibition looks at the British masters’ connection with the area and also the relationship between past and present. Paintings, drawings and etchings by JMW Turner, John Constable and John Sell Cotman are displayed alongside social history objects from the museum’s maritime collections.

This exhibition explores how these artworks placed our small coastal community within the national consciousness. The Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex Sketchbook by JMW Turner will be on loan to Norfolk for the first time since its creation by the artist and will showcase a unique perspective of the town and East Anglia. The exhibition includes works on loan from Tate, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service and the East Anglian Art Centre and is generously supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Young people and community groups have contributed to the curation and design of the show, exploring through art and artefacts the history of the town and the beauty of the coastal landscape that continues to inspire artists.

Exhibition ran 26 May – 9 September 2018

3.4 **Visible Women; Norwich Castle**

This exhibition brings together work from the modern and contemporary collection made by women. It explores diverse and wide ranging themes - some of the works look specifically at ideas around female identity whilst others explore subjects that are more abstract or remote in their nature.

The title of the exhibition was adapted from the seminal book 50% Visible Women created by the radical feminist artist Penny Slinger (b.1947) while at the Chelsea College of Art, London in 1969. Using photographic collage and

original poetry, Slinger's book examines how a woman is seen and how she sees herself; women take on multiple identities such as woman as goddess, woman as object of desire, and woman as mother, among others. What connects all these artists in this exhibition is their exploration of the human experience. Whether this is one that can be argued as 'gendered' is up for debate.

The exhibition coincides with the Women of the World WOW Festival in Norwich from 26-29 April 2018.

Exhibition runs 14 April until Spring 2019.

3.5 **The Paston Treasure: Riches and Rarities of the Known World; Norwich Castle**

This beautiful exhibition explores the world of the seventeenth century from the vantage point of a single masterpiece, The Paston Treasure. This work survives as a record of a lost art collection, owned by the Paston family at their Norfolk country house, Oxnead Hall, at the height of their wealth and fame. These magnificent artefacts, gold and silver, pictures and precious stones, gathered from around the known world, made Oxnead Hall a true treasure house during this period.

The Pastons' wealth was short-lived: within fifty years of the picture being painted, they were bankrupt, their collection sold and Oxnead abandoned. Their works of art are now dispersed worldwide, but the surviving treasures from the painting, and others once in the Paston collection have returned to Norfolk to be reunited with the picture for the first time in three centuries.

Our unique painting is internationally famous, not just as a typical still life, but as the key to unlock a dramatic and ultimately tragic story: of a family, a collection, and a great house. The first clues to the story are in this painting. They open up a world we never knew existed, and we have made many new discoveries.

This once in a lifetime exhibition is the result of years of research, undertaken jointly with the Yale Center for British Art.

Exhibition ran 23 June – 23 September 2018.

3.6 **Animal ABC; Lynn Museum**

From Ammonite to Zebra! This family friendly exhibition looks at the variety of the Lynn Museum collection with a focus on the animal kingdom.

Lynn Museum was founded in 1844. At this time there was a great interest in the natural world. The museum curators collected a wide range of objects from Norfolk and overseas.

Over the years the museum has continued to collect and now has a diverse collection of over 55,000 objects.

Displayed are a range of objects from, or inspired by, nature. These include items from the museum's archaeology, art, social history, textiles and natural history stored collections. Highlights from the display include a 170 million year old ammonite fossil, a watercolour by Sir Alfred Munnings, RA and a cape made from ostrich feathers.

Exhibition runs 30 June 2018 - Saturday 8 June 2019.

3.7 Duleep Singh special Exhibition and Pride of the People; Ancient House Museum

Two shows running at Ancient House Museum exploring the story of the Maharajah Duleep Singh and LGBT Norfolk stories through objects in the collections. Both exhibitions have been co-curated by the Ancient House Teenage History Club.

Both exhibitions run until 1 December 2018.

4. Learning Team highlights

4.1 After many years with Norfolk Museums Service, Colly Mudie, Learning Manager Norwich, has taken retirement. During her time with NMS Colly developed the learning team in many ways, securing several prestigious Sandford Awards for Excellence in Education and receiving many accolades from key stakeholders and funders. We would like to record our sincere thanks to Colly for all her efforts over so many years.

4.2 Many of the NMS museums offered free entry and special activities over the annual Heritage Open Weekends in September, with excellent numbers attending the events across the County. The total numbers of free visits for 2018 across the 10 museums was 11,411 compared to 9,822 free visits in 2017.

4.3 NMS is part of the partnership delivering the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England funded *Great Place* scheme. This national programme will deliver a range of new learning programmes in both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

The project is now in the delivery phase and is progressing very well.

4.4 Norfolk Museums Service continues to work with partners in both Great Yarmouth and Norwich as part of the Cultural Education Partnerships (CEPs). CEPs have been created across England to help young people access high quality cultural experiences.

The Great Yarmouth CEP is chaired by Colin Stott, Learning Manager for the Eastern Area and was one of the three original CEP pilots in England.

4.5 The Learning team are very responsive to feedback from schools and operate a continuous evaluation process. The following feedback is typical of the sort of response which the team receive from school teachers, this one following a recent visit by Loddon Primary School to Cromer Museum:

'I just wanted to say a huge thank you for our wonderful trip today. We do lots of trips at Loddon and I have been doing them for 11 years now and I can honestly say I have never seen every single child so engaged and for every single minute of the day. I have also already had many messages from parents saying how excited the children were when they got home.'

'We shall definitely see you again in the future. Keep up the great work and please pass on my thanks to all involved.'

5. Teaching Museum & Skills

- 5.1 The Teaching Museum trainees for 2018/19 have reached the half way stage of their placements and are all doing very well.



To remind Committee members, the trainees are:

- Kate Raczynska – Armistice Exhibition
- Laura Reeves – Collections Management
- Ruth Stanley – Learning and Youth Engagement (Time and Tide)
- Samanth Parker – Curatorial (Western)
- Andrew Tullett – Coastal Treasures (King's Lynn)
- Monika Saganowska – Coastal Treasures (King's Lynn)
- Jessica Harpley – Costume and Textiles
- Nicole Hudson – Collections and Exhibitions (Time & Tide)

Planning for the 2019/20 intake is currently underway.

NMS has been awarded £776,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Norfolk Journeys' project. The project seeks to empower young people to develop their own pathways into the County's heritage. This project forms part of the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Kick the Dust' initiative, a new £10m grant programme which aims to transform how heritage organisations engage with young people.

- 5.2 NMS was the first project partner nationally to receive Permission to Start and project planning has gone well. Following recruitment over late summer, a strong team is now in place.

6. Marketing and PR

- 6.1 Norfolk Museums Service is a major lender to the British Library's once-in-a-generation exhibition, 'Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War'. Star objects from the Norfolk collections include Spong Man, the Winfarthing Pendant and the Harford Farm Brooch. The exhibition has been met with huge critical acclaim and five star reviews and the London Evening Standard proclaimed

Spong Man as its favourite item in an exhibition which also includes the Alfred Jewel, the Mappa Mundi and the Codex Amiatinus. Thanks go to Dr Tim Pestell, Curator of Archaeology at NMS for leading this partnership and the NMS Conservation team for their work preparing for this major exhibition. The show is on until 19 February.

- 6.2 PR for the Paston Treasure exhibition over the summer was very successful with major coverage secured regionally and nationally, including BBC Radio 4's Front Row, the Times, Telegraph, Guardian, Country Life and the Lady Magazine.
- 6.3 The bus campaigns for Paston Treasure and Drawn to the Coast ran over the summer holidays and received a very positive response.
- 6.4 Marketing over the September period has been focused on the forthcoming exhibitions 'Armistice: Legacy of the Great War in Norfolk' and 'Circus! Show of Shows'.
- 6.5 Social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram continue to grow in terms of the number of followers and active engagement.

7. Partnerships

- 7.1 NMS is pleased to announce a long-term partnership with the University of East Anglia. The partnership was announced as part of the University's welcome programme for its international students which took place in September. Cllr John Ward and Professor Neil Ward Deputy Vice Chancellor and Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) for UEA made the announcement to the international students at Norwich Castle, with an official announcement via the UEA's website.
- 7.2 Norfolk Museums Service is currently working with partners in the New Anglia Cultural Board to put in an application to the Government's Cultural Development Fund, part of the Industrial Strategy. Following the submission of a successful Expression of Interest (EOI), we have been invited to put forward a full application with a deadline of the end of October.
- 7.3 Norfolk Museums Service supported Broadland DC and the Aylsham and District Team Ministry with the delivery of last summer's 12 Towers Project and is currently helping to publicise and support the forthcoming Repton anniversary events. Thanks go to Samantha Johns and Rosalind Palmer from NMS's Collections Management department, for delivering a number of collections outreach activities across Broadland as part of the Repton festival.
- 7.4 Norfolk Museums Service is currently supporting the Paston Footprints project, an HLF supported project being led by UEA and the Paston Society with input from the Norfolk Records Office. The project will deliver a Festival and the digitisation of letters relating to the family.
- 7.5 NMS is currently working with Norfolk Arts Service and the Norfolk & Norwich Festival to support the King's Lynn Festival in terms of their future development. This partnership work sits within the Arts Council supported Cultural Destinations project and the new Cultural Partnership work with the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk.

The King's Lynn Festival will take place 12-14 October and will include an exhibition of contemporary art from the NMS collections curated by Rosy Gray,

8. Commercial Developments

- 8.1 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:
- 8.2 Wedding bookings for Norwich Castle for 2018/19 continue to exceed the year-to-date figure in comparison to last year's bookings. Across other sites, weddings continue to be delivered at Strangers' Hall, Elizabethan House and Gressenhall and the Museums Service continues to actively work with the Registrar team on the 'Marry in Norfolk' campaign.
- 8.3 The Museums Service continues to work successfully with Visit East Anglia and a tourism organisation UK Countryside Tours to develop tourism packages for the US alumni market, based on characteristically English experiences. Initial interest in the USA for the *Friendly Invasion* campaign has been hugely positive and the first major bookings are confirmed.
- 8.4 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.

The Design Team continue to secure an impressive range of external contracts, across the County and beyond.

For more details visit www.conserveanddisplay.co.uk

- 8.5 An increasing number of commercial bookings for Norwich Castle continue to be delivered, including major events and celebrations for local businesses.
- 8.6 The Museum has now signed a new partnership agreement with an organisation called *History Mystery* to create a range of unique Escape Room games. These games will run initially at Shirehall and the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell from the start of June and will have an historic theme. The games will complement existing operational offers.

8.7 Conclusion

The Service is on track to deliver its key priorities in terms of programmes and events for 2018/19. Following the very hot summer, there is a current budget pressure but with a strong programme ahead and careful management of costs, a breakeven budget is still a realistic prospect.

9 Strategic Developments

9.1 Norwich Castle Keep

- 9.1.1 Following submission of a Stage 2 funding application in June, Norfolk Museums Service was successful in securing a further £8.7m from the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project.

A full update will be given on the project at the Committee meeting.

9.2 Norfolk Museums Development Foundation (NMDF) and Fundraising

- 9.2.1 Delivery of the fundraising strategy via the Norfolk Museums Development Foundation continues to progress well. The website for the Foundation has been recently updated – <http://nmdf.org.uk/>
- 9.2.2 Current focus for the Foundation remains the Keep development project. The submission of applications to grant-giving trusts and foundations is ongoing with submissions to the Foyle Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation currently live.
- 9.2.3 The public fundraising programme for the Keep project went live in September 2017. The campaign is entitled 'Keep Giving' and includes a range of ways to support the Project, such as Text Giving, Keep Giving merchandise and on-site promotion. A new initiative, Adopt an Object, allows members of the public to adopt a museum object connected with Norwich Castle. For more details, visit www.adoptanobject.co.uk
- 9.2.4

9.3 Norfolk Museums Service – 5 Year Strategy

- 9.3.1 NMS' current 5 Year Strategy will come to an end in 2018 and the Service is beginning the creation of a new Strategy to cover the period 2018-2022. The Strategy will support the new NCC Strategic Plan 'Caring for our County' and will also respond to City and District strategic priorities. Additionally, the new 5 Year Strategy will take account of the recent findings in the Mendoza National Museum Review and the new priorities outlined by Arts Council England and by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A session for JMC members and key stakeholders was held at Norwich Castle in May and the new Strategic Framework for 2018-22 was discussed. Thanks to those who were able to attend and other Members who have shared their views independently. The very helpful input has been included in the ongoing planning work. A final draft of the Strategy is expected to be completed in the Autumn.

9.4 Arts Council England

- 9.4.1 NMS was successful in its application to be included in the Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) family for the period 2018-22. NMS was awarded £4.812m for the four year period.

In addition to the NPO application, the Service also submitted a successful application to continue as one of the nine national providers of Museum Development services through SHARE Museums East (SHARE Museums East is now described as a Sector Support Organisation or SSO). NMS was awarded £1.745m for the four year period.

- 9.4.2 The Museums Service 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.

A key focus for the Arts Council is the *Creative Case for Diversity*. Jo Warr will give an update on this important goal at the Committee Meeting.

- 9.4.3 The New Anglia Cultural Board will be hosting a major national Summit to take place in Norwich on 8/9 November 2018.

9.5 Deep History Coast Project

- 9.5.1 NMS curatorial staff continue to progress the *Deep History Coast* Project initiative.
- 9.5.2 Staff continue to work on a Deep History Coast (DHC) publication and are currently supporting development work being led by North Norfolk District Council.
- 9.5.3 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 Sheringham Museum over the summer and behind the scenes tours as part of Heritage Open Weekends.
- 9.5.4 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.

9.6 DCMS Inquiry on the Social Impact of Participation in Culture and Sport

- 9.6.1 Mary Muir, Arts Officer, has coordinated a collective response to the DCMS Select Committee Inquiry the Social Impact of Participation in Culture and Sport. The response included several Museums examples including the Teaching Museum and the work the Service has been doing around health and wellbeing. For more details, visit:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/digital-culture-media-and-sport-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/socialimpact/>

9.7 Museums Association National Taskforce Report

- 9.7.1 Following the completion of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) Mendoza Review of the museums sector, the Museums Association has now completed its national review. NMS were part of the steering group for this work.

The main findings included concerns for the long-term sustainability of many museums in the UK and the need to review the national policies around collections. For more details, visit;

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/news/28022018-museums-taskforce-calls-for-consistent-funding-levels>

Following delivery of the Review, NMS has been asked by DCMS to help with the delivery plan on the area of local authority run museums.

9.8 Health & Wellbeing

- 9.8.1 Following the Health & Wellbeing Conference held at Norwich Castle in May and a follow up conference led by the Norfolk Arts Service, development work

continues on a range of initiatives to support Norfolk residents including projects on the topic of mental health and early onset dementia. Many of these programmes are being delivered in partnership with NCC's Public Health services and third sector partners.

- 9.8.2 A creative development session was held on 4 April at the Museum of Norwich with colleagues from Public Health, Childrens Services and Adult Services to look at the ways in which NMS and other Cultural Services departments can work successfully together to tackle some of the County's biggest challenges.
- 9.8.3 Sir Nicholas Serota, Chairman of Arts Council England, provided the following quote for inclusion in Norfolk's Health & Wellbeing Strategy: "There is growing evidence that engagement in activities like dance, music, drama, painting and reading help ease our minds and heal our bodies. The national Creative Health Inquiry has set a clear mandate and policy framework for the cultural sector to continue its impressive work in improving people's health and wellbeing. It is most encouraging to see just how much potential and ambition there is for joined-up action on this vital work in Norfolk".

10. Museum Development across Norfolk

- 10.1 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 per annum 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.
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 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.
- 10.4 Arts Council England funding will enable the recruitment of a new museum development officer post from April 2018. The post-holder will support museums across the County in a variety of ways and will be based at Cromer.
- 10.5 The 7th Annual SHARE Museums East conference Facing Change, Moving Forward was held at the John Bunyan Museum in Bedfordshire on 6 November 2017. The keynote speakers were Julia Kauffman OBE (Chair, Small Charities Coalition) and Bernard Donoghue (Director, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions). The 8th Annual SHARE Museums East conference will take place at the Firstsite Gallery in Colchester on 19 November 2018.
- 10.6 For more information on NMS' leadership role in museum development in the region and the SHARE scheme visit: <http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk>

11. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 11.1 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.

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