

Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Performance & Strategic update
Date of meeting:	31 March 2017
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
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 Keep at Norwich Castle
- To note the plans for 2016/17 including the exhibition and events programme and the Service's progress in achieving a balanced budget
- To note the Arts Council England's new funding programme for 2018-22 and progress with the Service's funding applications

1. Background

This report notes the performance of Norfolk Museums Service over the current financial year 2016/17 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 and foster families. The report also provides an update on all major projects including the Voices from the Workhouse project at Gressenhall and the Keep development at Norwich Castle.

2. Performance Summary

- 2.1 Total museum visits across all 10 NMS sites for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 January 2017 were 327,869 compared to 331,299 for the equivalent period 1 April 2015 – 31 January 2016. This represents a 1% 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 saw a small percentage reduction in visits to Norwich Castle over the summer holidays. On the positive side, the autumn exhibition *Fishermen & Kings: the Photography of Olive Edis* at Norwich Castle proved very popular.
- 2.2 School visits across the 10 NMS sites for the period 1 April 2016 – 31 January 2017 were 36,019 compared to 36,526 for the period 1 April 2015 – 31 January 2016. This represents a 1% decrease on the year-to-date. A strong final two months is expected with very good advance bookings for February and March, giving the possibility of matching or even exceeding last year's excellent total school visits figure of 45,000.

- 2.3 Overall, the visitor figures for 2016/17 are likely to match last year's record visitor figures of c.400,000 visits across the 10 museums.

3. Performance/Service Plan highlights

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

This 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 opened on 23 September 2016 and continues into 2017.

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

An exhibition celebrating the impact of Norfolk Contemporary Art Society on Norwich Castle's collections over the last six decades.

Exhibition in the Timothy Gurney Gallery running until spring 2017.

3.3 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 ran from 8 October 2016 to 22 January 2017.

3.4 Punk in the East. Exhibition at Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell.

An exhibition celebrating 40 years of punk heritage and influence in Norwich and beyond, told through stories, photos and punk memorabilia.

The exhibition ran from 22 October – 28 January 2017.

3.5 Never Had It So Good: Exhibition at Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth

Emerging from austerity and rationing, the 1950s was a time when Britain led the world in the quality and innovation of its decorative and applied arts, and when good design became affordable by all. This exhibition creates a vision of the 1950s through many different aspects of design, both inside and outside the home.

Never Had It So Good is a touring exhibition from Compton Verney Museum in Warwickshire.

The exhibition runs from 22 October 2016 - 5 March 2017.

4. Learning Programmes

- 4.1 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.

- 4.2 Norwich Castle has run another successful **annual art project with local Young Offenders**. The group learned about the history of the Castle, as first a Norman royal palace and then a prison, with a particular focus on the array of historic graffiti on the stone walls of the Castle Keep.

As well as finding out about the past, the young people learned new skills. The time spent at the museum counted toward their reparation orders, but it is also hoped that the project will have sparked an interest in learning and making that will develop after the life of the project, and that the young people now feel welcome in the museum and it is a place they would be comfortable visiting. The project, which has been running for over 10 years, builds on a long tradition of working with underrepresented and difficult to reach groups.

- 4.3 **February half term Rowdy Romans.** This year's half term theme at Norwich Castle was 'Rowdy Romans', taking a light-hearted look at life in Roman times linked to our Boudicca Gallery. Actor Neil Paris performed *A History of the Roman Empire* in 20 minutes which was specially written for us and included lots of interactivity. Brutus the Roman soldier took visitor through weapons and tactics that were used in the Roman army and Belona's Battlestar Training Academy showed how the Romans kept fit. Visitor learned about how gladiators fought with fight expert Keith Wallis and how to make themselves beautiful the Roman way.

Visitor feedback was excellent, many saying that it was our best programme yet. There were lots of activities and something for everyone.

- 4.4 **Together to the Workhouse Door.** NMS and Norfolk Arts Service have been successful in a Grants for the Arts funding bid to Arts Council England, for a project to be delivered in partnership with Sinfonia Viva, a nationally recognised orchestra. This exciting project will see an orchestral and sung performance by Sinfonia Viva and a choir of school children, volunteers and members of adult community groups at Gressenhall in June 2017. The words will be co-produced by school children and community groups and will be performed at evening and schools' performances.

Gressenhall's Learning Team will be heavily involved in developing an Inspiration Day to provide material for the choral piece and in a Sharing Day following the main performances at which schools will share their own creative responses to the stories from the workhouse. The project is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the continued contemporary relevance of the workhouse and to promote Gressenhall's offer shortly before the start of the summer holidays.

- 4.5 **EAL initiative in Great Yarmouth.** This year to date 1,672 students from 26 schools have attended Stories from the Sea events. This is 84% of the target for the year of 2000 pupil visits and represents a significant contribution to the increasing visit numbers at NMS sites in the east of the county. The funding for this project, which comes from the Department for Education and Arts Council

England, has created the resources to significantly increase schools programming by developing a number of new literacy events. These provide immersive experiences and use collections to really engage students with writing.

Last term learning staff carried out a research project looking at ways to make schools events more accessible for students with English as an Additional Language (EAL), using the 'Explorers' literacy event as a test case. NMS staff have been working with the Advisor for Norfolk County Council's 'Educator Solutions' team, working with Norfolk Schools to improve attainment for EAL students. NMS also worked with a local writer, Greta Healey, who came via the Writers' Centre Norwich.

- 4.6 **Lynn Museum schools.** Lynn Museum has continued to work closely with local schools to deliver a broad range of formal learning sessions. Learning programmes have been adapted following recent changes to the history National Curriculum and the Seahenge and early history displays and themes are proving especially popular with schools with total numbers up on last year's figures. New boxes of handling artefacts are being created for use with schools including a new prehistoric box used by the Learning Officer and freelance educators to help children investigate local history and archaeology.

5. Teaching Museum & Skills

- 5.1 The final assessment stage for the forthcoming cohort of Teaching Museum trainees was completed at the end of February. As in previous years, a very high quality group of trainees will be undertaking placements across the County.
- 5.2 As previously reported, an application was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 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. Unfortunately, with a very high number of submissions, NMS was not successful.
- 5.3 A joint application for *Kick the Dust*, a new Heritage Lottery Fund programme aimed at developing opportunities for young people aged 16-25, was also submitted in November by the Service in partnership with YMCA Norfolk. A decision is expected later in the year.

6. Marketing and PR

- 6.1 Ahead of the forthcoming summer exhibition at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, *Norfolk & Nelson*, the Service put out to the press the story of the capture of the ensign of the French warship, Le Généreux. The story was the subject of major features in the EDP and Evening News, while the image of the ensign was picked up by The Telegraph, The Times, The Mirror and The Daily Mail, as well as by a number of international newspapers including those in France and Australia.
- 6.2 As previously reported, the Magritte painting from the Norwich collections, *La Condition Humaine*, featured on BBC East Inside Out on 31 January. The story of the hidden painting also made the list of the top 10 international art discoveries of 2016.
- 6.3 Publicity and marketing work has been completed to promote the opening of the forthcoming exhibitions 'Small Stories: At Home in a Dolls' House' at Norwich

7. Partnerships

- 7.1 New Routes, a Norwich-based charity which aims to foster community links for recently settled refugees, has teamed up with Strangers' Hall to give asylum seekers and refugees a warm welcome and some valuable experience, working on the museum's annual 'deep clean'.

The group were given training and then went to work alongside other volunteers and museum staff, cleaning the museum from top to bottom with the utmost care using brushes and special Museum Vacs—vital work in helping staff identify any problems before they become too big, caring for the objects and ensuring the museum looks at its best for the forthcoming year. The aim was to give the refugees a constructive work experience, to help them make connections in the local community and to understand a little more about the history of the city.

- 7.2 The Museums Service will be lending the wing of the P10 aircraft to be displayed in the ground-breaking Norwich International Aviation Academy. The wing, from the first steel-framed plane in the world, was made by Norwich manufacturing company, Boulton & Paul and was exhibited at the Paris Air Show in 1919.
- 7.3 Lynn Museum collections can now be viewed in high resolution detail online thanks to a new Google partnership. More than 160 artefacts and artworks from Lynn Museum in King's Lynn can be viewed online around the world, thanks to a special arrangement with the Google Cultural Institute.

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 To date, over 500 ceremonies have been held within the Benefactors' Room at Norwich and advance bookings for 2017/18 are 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.
- 8.3 The Museums Service is working with a tourism organisation UK Countryside Tours to develop tourism packages for the US alumni market, based on quintessential English experiences. The team at Gressenhall has helped to create an offer around the history of English agriculture focusing on leading figures like Jethro Tull and Charles Townshend.
- 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 have recently secured some highly prestigious contracts, including one to support the design of a new dementia-friendly ward at the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital.

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 Conclusion

Despite the challenges of an early Easter and a very hot summer, the Service's financial performance up to the end of January has been positive and, with a strong exhibitions and events programme in place across the 10 museums over the current and final quarters, a break-even 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.

9 Strategic Developments

- 9.1 **Norwich Castle Keep.** 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.
- 9.1.1 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*.
- 9.1.2 Following permission to start, which was obtained on 14 July 2016, the Project Team have officially entered the Development Phase of the project. The work being undertaken during this period will form the basis of the second-round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, which is expected to be submitted in late 2017/early 2018.
- 9.1.3 The following key meetings have been held to date:
- The second Academic Advisory Board meeting was held on 16 September 2016
 - The second Project Board meeting was held on 12 October 2016
 - The second HLF Monitor/Mentor meeting was held on 21 October 2016
 - The third Project Board meeting was held on 4 January 2017
- 9.1.4 Following a European tender process, Artelia Projects UK Ltd were appointed to provide project and cost management services for the Development and Delivery phases of the project in November 2016. The evaluation panel consisted of members of the NMS Senior Management Team and Norfolk County Council Corporate Property Team, and approval to appoint was granted by the Project Board. An inception meeting with the Project Team took place on 14 December 2016 and the contract officially commenced on 9 January 2017.
- 9.1.5 Regular communication is being held between curatorial and project teams at NMS and the British Museum in order to develop concepts for the British Museum Partnership Gallery of the Medieval Period within the Keep.

- 9.1.6 A new member of staff, Dickon Whitewood, was successfully appointed as Research Assistant on 28 November 2016. This 12-month HLF-funded post will focus on gathering archival material for Development-Phase work, as well as researching the townscape of medieval Norwich.
- 9.1.7 A consultation session was held on 5 September 2016 with The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, which resulted in favourable responses to the design proposals for the Castle Keep and entrance hall.
- 9.1.8 A drone survey of the exterior of the Keep was completed in March.

9.2 Norfolk Museums Development Foundation (NMDF) & Fundraising

- 9.2.1 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.
- 9.2.2 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/>
- 9.2.3 Current focus for the Foundation remains the Keep development project for which a large amount of preparatory research and advocacy work is being undertaken ahead of the submission of applications to grant-giving trusts and foundations in the New Year.
- 9.2.4 An application to the Garfield Weston Foundation for the support of the Keep development was submitted in February. Applications to other funders including the Foyle Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation are in preparation.
- 9.2.5 The forthcoming Norwich Castle exhibition programme, including the Nelson exhibition in the summer and the Rembrandt exhibition in the autumn, are also being supported by fundraising through the Foundation.

9.3 Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse – Voices from the Workhouse project

- 9.3.1 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 2016.
- 9.3.2 Learning and outreach work with local schools and community groups linked to the project continues.
- 9.3.3 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).
- 9.3.4 The final element of the capital works, the redeveloped Collections Gallery, is nearing completion and will be fully operational by May. The new gallery will be used by a range of users, including young people's groups.

9.4 Arts Council England

- 9.4.1 The East Contemporary Visual Arts Network (ECVAN), of which NMS is a leading member, has been successful with an application to Arts Council England's Ambition for Excellence strategic fund. Receiving a grant of £600,000 over three years will enable ECVAN to deliver a new project: New Geographies of the East.

New Geographies of the East is an ambitious programme that will deliver 10 major site-specific visual arts commissions, developed with and for communities in the East of England and with international partners from the Netherlands. The programme will be accompanied by an extensive community engagement programme and an artist and curator development initiative.

The project will develop new audiences for contemporary visual art whilst strengthening and deepening relationships between artists and curators in the East of England and the Netherlands. Nine lead partners from ECVAN will collaborate with three partners in the Netherlands; The Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, Casco: Office for Art, Design and Theory and If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want to be Part of Your Revolution. They will work alongside a host of additional local partners including Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Vivacity Peterborough and CPP Marketplace, Fenlands & Forest Heath and others.

- 9.4.2 As planned, NMS submitted an application to be included in the Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) family for the period 2018-22.

In addition to the NPO application, the Service also submitted an application to continue as one of the nine national providers of Museum Development services.

- 9.4.3 Norfolk Museums Service has been tasked with a national leadership responsibility for the Arts Council's Goal 4 Diversity and Skills. This has involved delivering a national conference on 12 December and publicising 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.

- 9.4.4 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.

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 the Deep History Coast (DHC) publication.

- 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 Time & Tide Museum over the summer and

behind the scenes tours as part of Heritage Open Weekends in September

- 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.
- 9.5.5 A partnership application led by NNDC to the Government's Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) was submitted at the end of June and has been successful in obtaining a Stage 1 pass. The second round application was submitted in December following a programme of exploratory work and detailed planning supported by NMS. If successful, the funding will enable the development of new tourism facilities across the North Norfolk Coast and improvements to the area immediately in front of Cromer Museum.

9.6 DCMS National Museums Review

- 9.6.1 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has begun a National Museums Review, the first such review in more than 15 years.
- 9.6.2 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.
- 9.6.3 Jo Warr and Jamie Everitt attended roundtable meetings at DCMS in March.
- 9.6.4 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.

9.7 Health & Wellbeing

- 9.7.1 Following the Health & Wellbeing Conference held at Norwich Castle in May, development work has been undertaken over the summer and early part of the autumn. An application has been made to the national Great Place programme, funded by the Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The application proposes a series of health and wellbeing projects across the County, led by Creative Arts East and supported by Norfolk County Council's Cultural Services and Public Health.

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 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.
- 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 The annual SHARE Museums East Volunteers Awards is in planning for June 2017.
- 10.5 This year's annual SHARE Museums East conference was held in November at the newly developed National Horseracing Museum at Newmarket. The theme of the conference was Place Making and speakers included Paul Bristow, Director of Strategic Partnerships at Arts Council England and Robyn Llewellyn, Regional Director of the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 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.
- 11.2 These assessments help the Service focus on meeting the needs of customers in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation.

12. Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 Through these and many other projects the NMS is using its resources to contribute towards reducing crime and disorder in Norfolk.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 A break-even position is expected for the financial period 2016/17.
- 13.2 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 is confident of matching last year's record visitor figures of c.400,000, including school visits of around 45,000.
- 13.3 The redevelopment of the Keep at Norwich Castle continues to progress positively.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

Officer name : Steve Miller

Tel No. : 01603 493620

Email address : steve.miller@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.