

Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Report title:	Performance & Strategic Update Report
Date of meeting:	11 January 2019
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.**
- **To note the requirement of Arts Council England regarding financial reporting and approve the recommendation regarding cash flow (see 9.4.3)**

1. Background

- 1.1. 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, *Kick the Dust Norfolk*.

2. Performance Summary

- 2.1. Total visits across the 10 museum sites for the period 1 April to 30 September 2018 were 233,005 compared to 266,605 for the period 1 April to 30 September 2017, a 13% decrease on the year to date (although a modest improvement on the year-to-date figure reported at the last Joint Museums Committee). Despite a strong exhibitions and events programme, the extended period of very hot weather earlier in the year impacted across all museum sites.
- 2.2. School visits across the 10 sites for the period 1 April to 30 September 2018 were 21,955 compared to 21,997 for the period 1 April to 20 September 2017, on track against last year's excellent 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.

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.

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. **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.

Exhibition runs 14 April until Spring 2019.

3.4. **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.

3.5. **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 ran until 1 December 2018.

3.6. **Viking: Rediscover the Legend; Norwich Castle**

Some of the most significant Anglian and Viking treasures ever discovered in Britain will go on display together at Norwich Castle.

Featuring star objects from the British Museum and Yorkshire Museum, Viking: Rediscover the Legend offers a fresh perspective on how Vikings shaped every aspect of life in Britain. The exhibition includes the Anglian York Helmet, the most outstanding example of its type to survive, as well as the most significant Viking hoards ever found in the UK - the Vale of York Viking Hoard, Cuedale Hoard and the Bedale Hoard. These finds will be shown alongside highlights from Norwich Castle's collections and will be interpreted in new ways to challenge our perceptions of what it means to be Viking.

Exhibition runs from 9 February 2019 – 8 September 2019

4. **Learning Team highlights**

4.1. Following the retirement of Colly Mudie, Learning Manager Norwich, the recruitment process for this key post has now been successfully completed, with the new post-holder expected to start in the New Year.

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. The NMS museums also opened free on 8 December 2018 as part of the National Lottery #ThanksToYou initiative.

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. The Norwich CEP has been relaunched with good representation from Norfolk County Council, including Libraries, Arts and Museums.

5. Teaching Museum & Skills

- 5.1. Recruitment for the Teaching Museum's 2019/20 intake is currently underway. A strong response is expected.
- 5.2. Early development work on the Norfolk Kick the Dust project, a new £10m Heritage Lottery Fund supported national programme which aims to transform how heritage organisations engage with young people, is progressing well.

Dr Robin Hanley, Assistant Head of Museums (Head of Service Delivery) and Christine Marsden, Project Co-ordinator Kick the Dust, attended a national meeting in Manchester in November to plan the evaluation of the various programmes.

The NMS Kick the Dust project team are based across the County.

6. Marketing and PR

- 6.1. The Winfarthing Pendant, an Anglo-Saxon treasure acquired through the generous support of the Art Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) and the Friends of the Norwich Museums, was voted as the nation's favourite acquisition for 2018 in a national poll. Thanks go to Dr Tim Pestell, Senior Curator of Archaeology, for managing both the acquisition and the work with the Art Fund. The Pendant is currently on display at the British Library.
- 6.2. Norwich Castle was selected as the East of England venue for the live broadcasts during the BBC's 'Children in Need' on 16 November. As well as the Keep being used for interviews and performances, the external Keep wall was projected onto during the evening.
- 6.3. 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'.
- 6.4. Initial scoping is underway to prepare for 2020, a year in which a series of high-profile Norfolk offers will happen. Further details will be provided at the next JMC meeting.
- 6.5. Social media channels including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are invaluable in enabling the Museums Service to engage with a wide range of audiences. All channels are continuing to grow in terms of the number of followers and active engagement. Below are details of the Museum's main social media channels.

Twitter

Total number of Twitter accounts: 17

Total number of followers as of 5 December 2018: 61,527

Increase of followers from April – December: 2,524

Percentage increase of followers from April – December 2018: 4.27%

Facebook

Total number of Facebook accounts: 13

Total number of followers as of 5 December 2018: 27,474

Increase of followers from April – December: 2,802

Percentage increase of followers from April – December 2018: 11.35%

Instagram

Total number of Instagram accounts: 6

Total number of followers as of 5 December 2018: 8,024
Increase of followers from April – December: 1,147
Percentage increase of followers from April – December 2018: 16.67%

7. Partnerships

- 7.1. The long-term partnership with the University of East Anglia continues to develop well with new initiatives and several student placements planned for the New Year.
- 7.2. Norfolk Museums Service worked 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. A response to the application is expected in the New Year.
- 7.3. 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.
- 7.4. 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 took place from 12-14 October and included an exhibition of contemporary art from the NMS collections curated by Rosy Gray, Curator of Contemporary & Modern Art.

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.
- 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 including the *Friendly Invasion* campaign which is aimed at the United States' market.
- 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 new 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. *The Merchants' Vaults*, set in the Undercroft of the Museum of Norwich, will be joined in the New Year by a second game, run from Shirehall. *The Merchants' Vaults* has an average '5 Star' Trip Advisor review.
- 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 the departure of Dr John Davies, Chief Curator and Project Director and Angela Riley, Project Manager, the new team led by Dr Robin Hanley and Hannah Jackson, is now in place.
- 9.1.2. The Project Board met on Tuesday 20 November. Two new members have been added to the Board, Nikki Rotsos, Deputy Chief Executive at Norwich City Council and Jeannine De Sousa, Capital Projects and Facilities Manager at Norfolk County Council.
- 9.1.3. The focus over the coming weeks will be procurement and detailed design work. An update will be given to Members at the meeting on the contract procurement route and evaluation criteria which will be going to Norfolk County Council's Communities Committee in January for formal review and approval.
- 9.1.4. Planning for the Partnership Gallery with the British Museum is progressing very well. A meeting with Jonathan Williams, Deputy Director of the British Museum, is planned for January 2019.

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. 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.
- 9.2.4. 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

9.3. 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 early in the New Year.

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 over the current period is the *Creative Case for Diversity*. Following a presentation by Jo Warr at the last Committee Meeting, regular updates on this important matter will be given over the coming period.

9.4.3. **Arts Council England Funding Agreements**

Arts Council England (ACE) requires all of its National Portfolio Organisations to submit a monthly cash flow statement as a payment condition of the funding agreement. ACE is aware that some of their funded organisations that are governed by Local Authorities are not able to provide cash flows at a Service or project level. In these instances they are able to waive this payment condition by exception on the condition that the organisation's governing body provides confirmation that they don't require a cash flow as it not feasible to provide one in the format required.

On the advice of NCC's finance team, Members of the Joint Museums Committee are asked to approve a request to ACE to waive this condition for NMS's National Portfolio Organisation grant for 2018-22 and for NMS' Subject Specialist Organisation grant for Museum Development for 2018-22 and to provide assurance that NCC will commit to underwrite any cash shortfalls across the life of the funding agreements.

Recommendation: that Joint Museums Committee Members note and approve this request.

- 9.4.4. The New Anglia Cultural Board hosted 'Beyond the Hype: Re-Wiring the Cultural Economy' a major national Summit at Dragon Hall on 8/9 November 2018. The Summit was very well attended, with keynote addresses from Darren Henley, Chief Executive of Arts Council England and Doug Field, Chairman of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

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.
- 9.5.3. 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.

9.6. **Museums Association National Taskforce Report**

- 9.6.1. 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.

9.7. **Health & Wellbeing**

- 9.7.1. 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.
- 9.7.2. A creative development session was held 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.
- 9.7.3. 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".

9.7.4. The Strategy was officially launched at a conference at the King's Centre in Norwich on 5 December.

9.8. **Volunteering**

9.8.1. With support from Arts Council England, NMS have appointed Michelle Gaskin to the role of Volunteer Coordinator. Updates on our development work with volunteers will follow in future meetings.

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 has enabled the recruitment of a new museum development officer for Norfolk. Su Booth, the new post-holder, is supporting museums across the County in a variety of ways and is based at Cromer.

10.5. The 8th Annual SHARE Museums East conference took place at the Firstsite Gallery in Colchester on 19 November 2018. The conference dealt with a range of current topics including the new Accreditation standard and delivering major projects. Keynote addresses were given by Isabel Wilson, Senior Manager Museums Development, Arts Council England and Tim Bryan of the British Motor Museum, Gaydon.

For more information on NMS' leadership role in museum development in the region and the SHARE scheme visit: www.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 with protected characteristics.

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. Good progress is being made on all programmes and plans for 2018/19 with a continuing focus on new sources of earned income, fundraising and capital developments.
- 13.2. The Norwich Castle Gateway to Medieval England project continues to progress positively as we move to the delivery phase.
- 13.3. Early work on the new Arts Council England business plan for 2018-22 continues progress positively.
- 13.4. **Recommendation: that Joint Museums Committee Members note and approve the request regarding the Arts Council England proposal relating to cash flow (9.4.3)**

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:

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