

# Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Performance and Strategic Update Report</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>5 April 2019</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Steve Miller, Assistant Director, Culture and Heritage</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b> 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 National Lottery Heritage Fund programmes.
- To note progress regarding our National Lottery Heritage Fund project 'Kick the Dust Norfolk'.

## 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 National Lottery Heritage 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 2018 to 31 January 2019 were 330,991 compared to 371,820 for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 January 2018, an 11% decrease on the year to date. The last quarter has seen a continuing improvement on the year-to-date figures, though the impact of the very hot summer continues to leave a legacy in terms of the overall visitor numbers.
- 2.2. School visits across the 10 sites for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 January 2019 were 38,353 compared to 39,800 for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 January 2018, still broadly on track to match 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. Viking: Rediscover the Legend; Norwich Castle**

Some of the most significant Anglian and Viking treasures ever discovered in Britain have gone on display 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, Cuerdale Hoard and the Bedale Hoard.

These finds are being 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.

A varied programme of talks and events run alongside the exhibition.

Exhibition runs 9 February 2019 – 8 September 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 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. **Medieval Medicine; Time and Tide Museum**

Explore the methods of five medieval medical practitioners and discover how archaeological science has uncovered more about these individuals and their patients.

Get up close to human skeletons from the period and discover diverse approaches to treatment. Find out about diseases through interpretation; including a facial reconstruction of an unfortunate leprosy sufferer.

Discover medical methods through the barber surgeon's chest of tools, the physician's uroscopy wheel and the apothecary's medicinal ingredients and treatments.

Plus a chance to see the short film *A Touch of Plague*, written by Horrible Histories author, Terry Deary, exclusively for the exhibition.

Exhibition runs 30 March - 22 September 2019

### 3.6. **Snettisham Treasure; Lynn Museum**

The Snettisham Treasure is the largest assemblage of Iron Age bronze, silver and gold objects found in Europe. It consists of a number of separately buried hoards containing torcs (neck rings), coins, ingots and other objects.

Visit to see a special display of three items from the famous Snettisham Treasure, on loan thanks to generous support from the British Museum.

Exhibition runs Tuesday 12 March - Sunday 1 September 2019

### 3.7 **Redisplay of Samson; Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell**

The famous oak statue of Samson, carved in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, will be going on display at the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell on 2 April.

The conservation and redisplay was made possible thanks to a successful crowdfunding campaign and generous support from The Art Fund (Art Happens), the Friends of the Norwich Museum, Paul Bassham Trust, the Geoffrey Watling Charity and the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society.

Exhibition: permanent.

## 4. **Learning Team highlights**

4.1. Dr Helen Lunnon, currently a Lecturer in Cultural Heritage at the University of East Anglia, will be taking up her post of Head of Learning for Norwich in April.

4.2. The NMS museums enjoyed a very strong February Half Term with special family

events taking place across the 10 museums. At Norwich Castle the week was filled with Viking themed events branded as 'Legendary', including a 'Viking beauty salon'.

- 4.3. The NMS museums opened free on 8 December 2018 as part of the National Lottery #ThanksToYou initiative. The #ThanksToYou initiative will run again in 2019.
- 4.4. NMS is part of the partnership delivering the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England funded *Great Place* scheme. This national programme is delivering 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.

- 4.5. 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 has been successfully completed and the new Trainees are as follows:

Emma Price	Learning and Youth Engagement
George Baines	Keep Learning Team
Katie Carter-Street	Costume and Textiles
Wednesday Batchelor	Collections Management
Paula Murphy	Curatorial Western
Tom Beese	Museum Development

- 5.2. Excellent progress is being made with the Norfolk 'Kick the Dust' project, a £750,000 project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This national project aims to transform how heritage organisations engage with young people and in Norfolk the work is being delivered in partnership with the YMCA Norfolk and other key public and third sector partners.

Dr Robin Hanley, Assistant Head of Museums, will give a presentation on the early successes of the project at the Joint Museums Committee meeting.

## **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. Following its successful loan to the British Library, the pendant has returned to Norwich Castle.
- 6.2. Marketing over the last period has focused on *Viking: Rediscover the Legend* and the *Circus! Show of Shows* exhibitions. Media coverage for the opening of the Viking exhibition was particularly strong, helped by the presence of Dr Hartwig Fischer, Director of the British Museum, who opened the show.
- 6.3. Work is underway to prepare for 2020, a year in which a series of high-profile Norfolk projects and anniversaries will be delivered, including the first phase of the 'Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England' project. A meeting of the key stakeholders took place at County Hall on 27 February.
- 6.4. Norfolk Museums Service has been shortlisted in the 2019 Museums & Heritage Awards (the 'Oscars' of the museums and heritage world) for the restoration of the historic statue of Samson, led by the Museum's conservation department and Plowden & Smith. The announcement of the winner will be made at the annual awards ceremony in May.

## **7. Partnerships**

- 7.1. The long-term partnership with the University of East Anglia continues to develop well with new initiatives including student placements and a visit from UEA partners the University of Georgia planned for March.
- 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. The application was unsuccessful, but the Board has been encouraged to take forward several of the project strands through alternative funding programmes.
- 7.3. Norfolk Museums Service is currently supporting the Paston Footprints project, a National Lottery Heritage Fund 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. Further developments are being planned for 2019.

## 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. Planning is currently underway for the coming wedding season.
- 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](http://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 Merchants' Vaults* escape room game, set in the Undercroft of the Museum of Norwich, continues to exceed expectations for the first year of operation and 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 of 2018, there is a continuing budget pressure, but with the early strong performance of the 'Viking: Rediscover the Legend exhibition' and continuing careful management of costs, achieving a breakeven budget, or very close to, is still possible.

## 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 21 January 2019. 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 current focus continues to be procurement and detailed design work. An update will be given to Members at the meeting on the current procurement timelines and the project schedule.
- 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, took place in January 2019.
- 9.1.5. Following the successful granting of Planning Permission for the project, the discharge of the planning conditions is currently underway.

## **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 several new trusts and foundations 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](http://www.adoptanobject.co.uk)
- 9.2.4. Discussions with potential new corporate sponsors are currently underway, led by Jo Warr, Head of Development.

## **9.3. Norfolk Museums Service – 5 Year Strategy**

- 9.3.1. The new 5 Year Strategy has been completed and is currently with the Museum's designers. The 5 Year Strategy reflects the priorities of NMS' partners and major funders.



#### 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.

Additional funding was secured from Arts Council England in January 2019 to develop a new Subject Specialist Network focusing on workhouses nationally. This network will be led by the Gressenhall team.

- 9.4.2. Norfolk 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 continues to be the *Creative Case for Diversity*.

#### 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 are supporting North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) in the delivery of new external interpretation boards and a digital App. A stakeholders' event took place in March.
- 9.5.3. NMS staff continue to work with North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) on the DHC Steering Committee in order to shape the future direction of the project in North Norfolk.

#### 9.6. **National Lottery Heritage Fund**

- 9.6.1. The Heritage Lottery Fund has been rebranded as the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). The NLHF has also launched its new Strategic Funding Framework for the period 2019-24. For further details, visit <https://hlf-live.axis12.com/publications/strategic-funding-framework-2019-2024>

#### 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. London Arts in Health Forum and the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance are working together to expand the very successful London Creativity and Wellbeing Week into an annual national event from 2019. Building on our long-standing collaborative arts and health partnership working, Norfolk Arts Service is initiating an inaugural Norfolk Creativity and Wellbeing Week 10-16 June 2019. This presents an exciting opportunity to work together to promote the many ways in which arts and culture contribute to health and wellbeing in Norfolk. 46 partners, organisations and creative practitioners have already signed up to deliver the largest number of events in any area outside of London. NMS will work with the Arts Service on this exciting programme. For more details and an interactive map showing the events, visit

<http://www.creativityandwellbeing.org.uk/>

- 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.sharemuseumseast.org.uk)

## **11. Issues, Risks & Innovation**

- 11.1. Issues:  
There are no new issues identified in this report.
- 11.2. Risks:  
There are no new risks identified in this report.
- 11.3. Innovation:  
New initiatives in the Museums Service include the Service's work with the Arts Service on the Health & Wellbeing agenda and the Service's Kick the Dust Programme working with young people across the County.

## **12. Conclusion**

- 12.1. Good progress has been made on all programmes and plans for 2018/19 with a continuing focus on new sources of earned income, fundraising and capital development.
- 12.2. The 'Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England' project continues to progress positively.
- 12.3. Positive progress has been achieved in terms of delivering against the new Arts Council England programmes for 2018-22.

### **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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