

The Norwich Museums

Members' briefing October 2012

Visitor Numbers

2012/13 *See figures attached*

Visitor numbers for September at Norwich Castle were 13,550 compared with 13,878 in 2011.

The Bridewell Museum has continued to attract good levels of visitors with 2,379 in September. This makes a total of 8,214 visitors to date. The target number needed to deliver the agreed business plan for a complete 12 month year is 14,000.

August visitor numbers at museums and galleries across the country were adversely affected by the Olympics, however visitor numbers to date at Norwich Castle and the Norwich Museums as a whole remain higher than for the same period in 2011.

School Visits

School visits continue to hold compared with significant drops in school visits at other museums across the country. School bookings for the forthcoming academic year are looking good. Learning Officers are liaising with teachers with regards the development of school's packages for the Bridewell Museum.

Finance

NMAS needs to make significant budget savings over the next few years. These are cumulative savings to the core NCC budget, not one-off savings for just one year. They were part of the Big Conversation public consultation and have been agreed by the County Council.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
In Year Savings	234K	145K	161K
Total Cumulative Savings	234K	£379K	£540

The savings represent approximately 10% of NMAS's budget.

NMAS has made or is on the way to making the savings for 2011-12 and 2012-13. In Norwich this has included relocating the Royal Norfolk Regimental Collections to Norwich Castle and the Costume and Textile collections to Shirehall, staff restructuring, changing the way we deliver out of hours security at Norwich Castle and bringing down energy costs through the installation of LED lights. ACE funding, including the appointment of a Commercial Manager will enable NMAS to build our resilience within a local authority framework by exploring ways to generate increased income and contribute towards efficiency savings.

At present there is no detailed information with regards the public sector funding situation beyond 2013/14, but the general indication is that further budgets savings will be required.

Funding

Shine a Light – on collections in the NMAS Superstores

NMAS has been successful in a bid to the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation for £89,000 for a project to help improve collections care, documentation and access in the NMAS Superstores at Gressenhall. Competition for this fund – administered by the Museums Association and focussing on “behind the scenes” collections management projects – was tough, with only 6 projects funded from a total of 74 applications. This project will see the creation of a project team of staff, trainees and volunteers working on NMAS-wide collections in the Superstores.

Norwich Castle Temporary exhibitions

Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A FORGOTTEN FRIENDSHIP

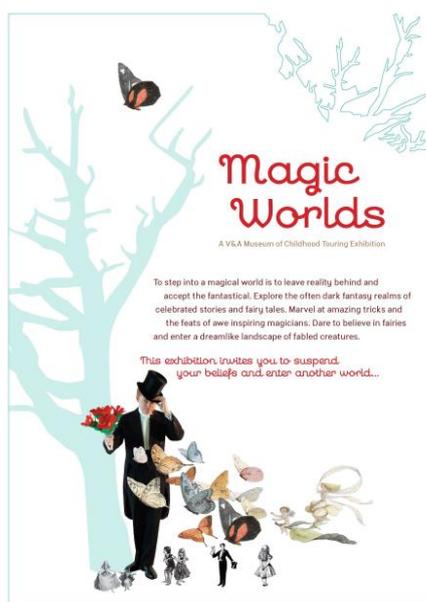
Saturday 20th October to Monday 31st January

The first exhibition devoted to the British artists Cedric Morris (1889-1982) and Christopher Wood (1901-30) opened this month.

Norwich Castle Open Art show 2012: VISION AND REALITY

Sat 20 Oct – Sunday 9 Dec 2012

A selling show of 145 works chosen from 140 artists from across the region.



Sat 26 Jan – Sun 14
April 2013

MAGIC WORLDS

*loan exhibition from the
Museum of Childhood
(V&A)*

Summer 2013

Following on from the former Biennial festival; *Contemporary Art Norwich CAN*, and to take advantage of the promotional opportunities offered by the Norfolk and Norwich Festival held in May, Norwich Castle programmes a contemporary art show in its temporary exhibitions every other year. The last contemporary art show was in 2011 featuring French artist Hubert Duprat. In 2012 Norwich Castle intends to take advantage of its good relationship with Arts Council England ACE and put together an exhibition with loans from ACE's contemporary sculpture collection which includes works from national and internationally known artists. We are also hoping to work with NNF to commission a work for display in Norwich Castle's Keep during the two weeks of the Festival.

Autumn 2013

Curiosity: Art, Wonder and the Pleasures of Knowing

A touring exhibition from the Hayward Gallery, in collaboration with the Turner Contemporary in Margate.

This exhibition, in the words of the curators, “is devoted to wonder, awe and mystery in contemporary art and beyond. It draws on the rich tradition of the *Wunderkammer* or cabinet of curiosities, reveals surprising meetings between art and science, and explores the ways that artists today mine themes of fascination, inquiry, obsession, monstrosity and invention. Its content ranges from seventeenth-century collections of manmade and natural wonders to key works by contemporary artists.” The juxtapositions between art and science will be of particular importance and interest in this exhibition, showing how the two areas may merge. The show will include, for instance, early art depicting natural phenomena unusual for the time, such as the Durer engraving of the rhinoceros, or phenomena of which scientific developments had made people aware for the first time, such as a mid-17th century engraving of a magnified flea seen under the newly invented microscope, or Leonardo da Vinci’s drawings of the inside of a human skull. The show will also include works exploring other meanings of ‘curiosity’ – such as *The Eavesdropper* by Nicolas Maes (1657), and even a ‘What the Butler Saw’ machine!

Spring 2014

Empire: Roman Power and People

Norwich Castle is working with the British Museum to bring this archaeology exhibition to Norwich. It is expected to be particularly popular with schools and will be the focus of the annual Family Focus series of activities between Christmas and Easter.

Summer 2014

The Wonder of Birds

This will be a multi-media exhibition exploring many aspects of the subject of birds, curated by Francesca Vanke, Keeper of Fine and Decorative Arts, with assistance from David Waterhouse (Natural History) and Ruth Battersby Tooke (Costume and Textiles). The exhibition will examine a range of issues: from the development of the scientific discipline of ornithology, to conservation and extinction of species, to interpretations of birds in art; from the symbolic meanings of birds, to their uses in decoration and fashion. The exhibition will encompass ideas around birds as predators and prey, as symbols of status and of domesticity, birds in the natural landscape and in East Anglian identity, migration and exoticism as well as the enduring power of bird song and flight within the human imagination.

The exhibition will combine works from NMAS’s own art collections with those of natural history and textiles. But will also include key loans from other institutions, both national and regional including work by ground-breaking early bird artists such as John James Audubon and Thomas Bewick. We will also be seeking to incorporate works by important contemporary artists and photographers. Many of these are based in East Anglia, since this region is world-famous for its abundant bird-life and unique habitats.

Major art loans already identified include: Hans Holbein *Lady with a Squirrel and a Starling* (National Gallery), John James Audubon *Hawk Attacking Partridges* (Victoria Gallery, University of Liverpool), George Frederick Watts *Dedication to Beauty and Innocence* (Watts Gallery), Constantin Brancusi *Maiistra*, Max Ernst *Forest and Dove*, JMW Turner *The Cave of Despair*, Cedric Morris *Landscape of Shame* (all Tate) and others from national institutions.

Autumn 2014

In collaboration with Norwich University of the Arts NUCA, who will be celebrating their 70th Anniversary, Norwich Castle is pulling together an exhibition of the work of **John Wonnocott and John Lessore**, nationally known artists who have taught at NUCA during their long careers. This will be the first exhibition of their work in Norwich. Linda Morris, guest curator and Norwich Castle's art department are liaising with other museums and art galleries with regards the possibility of touring the exhibition to other UK venues.

Museum and Gallery refurbishments

Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum Display in Norwich Castle

A project assistant, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund HLF, has been recruited to develop the interactive digital timeline element for the new displays on the Rotunda Balcony.

Improvements to the permanent displays

The Norwich Museums now have a modest annual budget as a result of ACE major partnership grant funding to support repairs, replacements and modest enhancements to the permanent displays. Curatorial and Display staff are currently compiling a work list to be rolled out over the next two and a half years. This will include updating the general Norwich Castle Introduction film and the films in the Boudica Gallery.

Bridewell Museum

Learning resources, including spaces and materials are being developed and liaison is taking place with schools and other learning providers with regards the development of the learning programme and school visits. The final funding claim to the Heritage Lottery Fund needs to be submitted at the end of December 2012. The Bridewell Curator of Community History and learning department staff are developing informal learning programme, to include family activities during school holidays and series of talks and other activities for adult visitors during term time.

Special events

Christmas at the Castle

Friday 7 December, 5-9pm

A craft fair, baroque music and dancing, and a special Christmas menu in the Cafe, all wrapped up in our first Christmas evening event, as the Castle sparkles with lights and music to celebrate the Festive season.

On Saturday 8th December, 10am-4pm Christmas moves to Strangers' Hall and the Bridewell Museum where visitors will be treated to a range of Christmas themed activities and a discount incentive to encourage visitors to visit both sites.

There is a daily programme of drop-in activities and talks in Norwich Castle throughout the year, inspired by the temporary exhibition programme, permanent displays, significant anniversaries and local and national celebrations, together with family focused activities on Saturdays and during the school holidays. See web site for up to date information for Norwich Castle, Strangers' Hall and Bridewell Museum.

Other News

External Signs Update

Planning permission has been awarded for the replacement of Norwich Castles' external directional signs leading into and within Norwich Castle Gardens. Quotes have been obtained and an order has been placed for production and installation.

Teaching Museum

The recruitment of 8 posts of ACE funded Museum Trainees for January 2013 has commenced. Four of these posts will be based in Norwich. Adverts were placed on NCC jobs, MA website, Leicester University museum jobs website and The Guardian website, and also be circulated via regional networks, NMAS social media champions and the MENTER (East of England Black and Minority Ethnic Network) e-bulletin.

Interested applicants were invited to book a place at a briefing session at Norwich Castle on either 21 or 22 September where they found out more about the scheme and decided if they want to apply. Over 500 people attended the open days and 400 applications for Museum Trainee posts have been received. Shortlisted applicants have been invited to an assessment centre on either 24, 25 or 26 October. Selection will be based on a strengths-based approach looking at attitudes and aptitudes. Successful applicants will begin their posts in January 2013.

If you want to discuss any matters in this briefing please contact Rachel Kirk rachel.kirk@norfolk.gov.uk or Vanessa Trevelyan vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk

For further information about the Norwich Museums, their services and programmes check out the website on www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk where you can also sign up to receive regular e-bulletins.