

Norwich Area Museums Committee 7 January 2020

## **Norwich Museums briefing: September to November 2019**

### **1. Exhibitions at Norwich Castle**

#### **1.1 *Viking: Rediscover the Legend* (9 February – 8 September 2019)**



This major partnership exhibition from the British Museum and York Museums Trust had an extended run from 9 February to 8 September 2019 and saw strong levels of visits. The exhibition explored what it meant to be a Viking and how the Vikings transformed and shaped every aspect of life in Britain.

Featuring star objects from the British Museum and Yorkshire Museum, *Viking: Rediscover the Legend* provided visitors with a fresh perspective on how the Vikings shaped many aspects of life in Britain. The exhibition featured a number of iconic objects including an Anglo-Saxon York Helmet - the most outstanding example of its type to survive, a knight from the Lewis Chessmen and other significant Viking treasures from across the UK.

These finds were shown alongside highlights from Norwich Castle's own extensive collections, including many items on display for the first time.

The exhibition galleries featured a range of different approaches to interpretation that made the exhibition accessible for visitors of all ages. A comprehensive programme of schools and other activities was delivered, including gallery tours led by the Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) exhibition curator Dr Tim Pestell.

#### **1.2 Timothy Gurney Gallery - *Lines of Sight: Sebald's East Anglia* (10 May 2019 - 5 January 2020)**

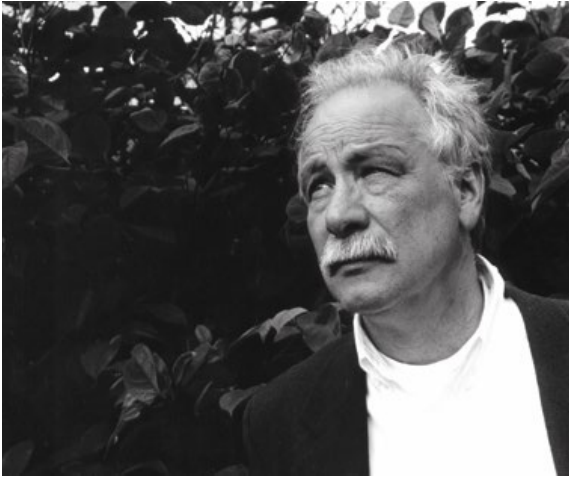
This exhibition brings together a diverse selection of celebrated artworks, curious objects, archive material and the author's own, unseen photographs to tell the story behind the creation of one of East Anglia's most famous literary masterpieces, *The Rings of Saturn* (1995).

A broad programme of talks has complemented the exhibition.

From the mystery of Sir Thomas Browne's skull to the secret landscapes of the Cold War, from the ghostly vessels of the vanished Herring fleets to intricate pattern books of Norwich silk weavers, this exhibition gathers the threads of Sebald's enigmatic text to present a uniquely poetic visual portrait of East Anglia that will appeal to both those familiar and new to his work.

W.G. Sebald (1944 – 2001) is one of the most revered authors of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. His evocative and unclassifiable prose works: *Vertigo* (1990), *The Emigrants* (1992), *The Rings of Saturn* (1995), and *Austerlitz* (2001) - continue to attract a remarkable international following. His reputation and the passionate devotion of readers to his work have grown significantly since his untimely death in 2001 at the age of 57.

The exhibition is a collaboration with the University of East Anglia and is sponsored by The East Anglia Art Fund and The Book Hive



W.G. Sebald ©University of East Anglia

### **1.3 Tor Falcon – Rivers of Norfolk (12 July 2019 – 12 January 2020)**

This remarkable body of drawings is the result of a three-year project revealing the wonderful variety and beauty of Norfolk's rivers. This exhibition is on show in the Colman Project Space and is supported by the East Anglia Art Fund.

Norfolk's rivers and their tributaries are the focus of Falcon's most recent body of work. Over the last four years, Falcon has painstakingly researched and captured her subject, drawing on location within the landscape. The artist describes being captivated by the poeticism of first encountering the rivers as an alphabetical list, with 'names that read like an Old English poem of all things watery and damp.' The result is an exceptional series of drawings that powerfully evokes this unique county. A second hang of Falcon's work opened in October 2019.



Tor Falcon *The Wensum at Attlebridge* © Courtesy the Artist

#### 1.4 *Coming Home*: Nelson Portrait – 12 October 2019 to 26 January 2020

A famous portrait of Admiral Lord Nelson, painted by William Beechey, is currently on display at Norwich Castle as part of a major National Portrait Gallery loan programme – *Coming Home*. This project sees 50 portraits of iconic individuals from the national collection travelling to the towns and cities most closely associated with their subjects. This portrait of Lord Nelson by William Beechey is considered the most faithful likeness of Norfolk's most famous son. It was commissioned by the City of Norwich in recognition of Nelson's Norfolk roots, and was painted by Beechey, prior to the large full-length portrait by the same artist which is still in the Civic collection in Norwich.



Horatio Nelson by Sir William Beechey, 1800 © National Portrait Gallery, London.  
Purchased with help from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, 1985.

## 2. Forthcoming exhibitions

### 2.1. Laura Wilson - *Deepening* 18 January – 29 March 2020

*Deepening* is a new film work by artist Laura Wilson exploring the hidden landscape of Must Farm, the well-preserved settlement of the Late Bronze Age (1000 – 800BC) located on the edge of a working quarry at Whittlesey, near Peterborough. The site has revealed many important discoveries about how people lived and worked. *Deepening* explores these discoveries, opening up questions around labour, trade and everyday life.

Wilson's work has been commissioned as part of *New Geographies*, a three-year project which aims to create a new map of the East of England based on unexplored or overlooked places. For this project, the public was invited to nominate unexpected places in the region that they found meaningful and interesting. Over 270 sites were identified and ten artists commissioned to highlight some of those places through new site-specific work. Wilson responds to the nominated site 'View from the North Brink across the Fens' from which Must Farm is visible.



Must Farm © Courtesy the Artist

## 3. Curatorial Work

### 3.1 Art Department

#### Exhibitions

Dr Francesca Vanke has been working on the exhibition scheduled for Norwich Castle in November 2020, *Castles: Reality, History and Myth, Paintings from the National Gallery, London*. In addition to six core paintings from the National Gallery, additional loans have been secured from the Victoria and Albert Museum and requested from the British Museum. There will also be loans from private lenders. The exhibition will be accompanied by community participation from the English + Group, with whom Dr Vanke has been working for several months, and

young people from *Kick the Dust: Norfolk*, in addition to further learning programmes.

Dr Giorgia Bottinelli was a Curatorial Scholar at the Yale Center for British Art, Yale University, between 20 October-16 November to undertake research for the Castle's bicentenary exhibition devoted to John Crome, which will take place in the spring-summer of 2021. During her time at Yale she studied collections of Crome's work at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as the Yale Center for British Art; she was also able to access their archives and other resources at the Yale Libraries which are otherwise unavailable, including rare books and manuscripts.

Dr Bottinelli has also curated *Where Land and Water Meet: Norfolk's Rivers, Streams, Brooks and Broads*, an exhibition of over fifty works on paper – watercolours, drawings, prints and books – which will open in the Colman Watercolour Gallery in mid-February 2020. The exhibition looks at how generations of talented artists, often working *en plein air* or 'on the spot', have captured many different aspects of Norfolk's waterways over the years. Some of the artworks testify to the rivers' importance as arteries for the transport of goods and people, for fishing and other industries, and for supplying the energy that powered mills. Also included are drawings and watercolours which focus on how the rivers Yare and Wensum impacted on the architecture of Norwich, whilst others emphasise the use of waterways as sites of leisure and as homes to diverse species of flora and fauna. Some of the works are topographically accurate, whereas others are atmospheric renderings of romantic landscapes and ruins. Looking at them now, we can see how drastically Norwich and Norfolk have changed – architecturally, physically and environmentally – over the last two centuries.



*Fye Bridge* Charles John Watson 1885



Dr Rosy Gray has been curating a new exhibition, *Spotlight: Works from the Modern and Contemporary Art Collection* for the Timothy Gurney Gallery from 25 January 2020 to 13 December 2020. It will showcase Norwich Castle's outstanding collection of modern and contemporary art, including works by Gwen John, Andy Warhol and Bridget Riley. At the heart of the exhibition is a changing display of ten recent acquisitions. These include works by some of the most exciting artists working today, including Oreet Ashery and Eva Rothschild.

Dr Gray is also working on an unusual and ground-breaking show for the Boudica Gallery, 18 January – 29 March 2020: *Laura Wilson: Deepening* (see 2.1 above). Other planned projects for next year include a small spotlight exhibition of the recent donation by Sir Timothy Colman, *Heron in the Shallows* by Maggi Hambling, scheduled for the Colman Project Space, 1 Feb – 31 May 2020.

### **Art Acquisitions**

Following the successful acquisition of Turner's *Walton Bridges*, Dr Vanke has been working with the NMS Learning team to develop linked educational programmes and has also given the first public talks based around this important painting. Plans are also progressing for the painting to tour to Kings Lynn, Colchester and Ipswich.

NMS has recently been gifted a collection of around 300 English drinking glasses dating from c1690-1840. This generous gift will greatly enhance the NMS holdings of historic glass in the decorative arts collection. With the help of a volunteer, Dr Francesca Vanke has now begun to accession and document these objects.

## **3.2 Archaeology Department**

The Archaeology Department has continued to make progress with its strategic purchasing of finds discovered and submitted through the Treasure Act. These have included raising the funds for an unusual type of eighth-century silver-gilt sword pommel (£975 with grants coming from a local metal-detectorist group, the V&A Purchase Grant Fund and The Headley Trust), and an extremely rare early Anglo-Saxon votive figurine. The latter portrays a bearded figure wearing a helmet and belt but nothing else, with his hands by his groin emphasising his phallus. The figurine is presumably a fertility deity of pre-Christian date and one of fewer than ten known from Britain; Norwich Castle now joins the British Museum in being the only collections containing such figurines.



Anglo-Saxon votive figurine

Department staff have continued to be occupied principally in two longer-term projects, namely the Keep redevelopment and the transfer and ordering of excavation archives in the NMS off-site archaeology storage facility. The latter is essential to NMS long-term storage plans, whereby newly-accessioned excavation archives are managed away from both the Shirehall and Gressenhall stores. Excellent progress has been made in this by NMS curator Alan West, with more accurate records made of the contents of new excavation archives, allowing for the rapid identification of material.

### 3.3 Natural History Department

The NMS Natural History department has been involved in supporting the Norwich Science Festival since its inception in 2016. This year's festival took place 18–26 October, with nine days of exhibitions, shows and an abundance of hands-on science activities for all ages and levels of knowledge. Senior Curator of Natural History Dr David Waterhouse is a steering group member of the festival run each year by the Forum Trust. For the past four years Dr Waterhouse has taken interesting and exciting specimens to the Forum from the NMS Natural History and Geology collections. The 2019 Festival was the biggest yet, with over 137,000 visits to the Forum. To celebrate 150 years of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society (NNNS), the NMS Natural History teamed up with members of NNNS with an interactive table at the Forum – which received a conservative estimate of 15,000 visits over two days.

For the first time Norwich Castle was a venue for Norwich Science Festival – hosting a sell-out 'Animal Top Trumps' talk from TV stars Prof Ben Garrod and Lizzie Daily in the Auditorium. The Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell also supported the festival by hosting a popular 'Marvellous Machines' trail. Norwich Castle, the Museum of Norwich and Strangers' Hall all took part in the 'Hidden Elements Trail' celebrating 150 years of the Periodic Table with chemical elements hidden in venues around the city.

In partnership with Norwich Castle's Learning department the Science Festival's 'Creatures of the Night' torchlit tours of the Natural History Gallery were developed and run across the week. Described as a 'total showstopper', these tours were fully booked, and saw visitors plunged into darkness as they explored some of the most intriguing specimens in the collection. A small selection of visitors' feedback is provided below:

*"Tour was brilliant. The use of the torches kept my three children engaged for the full 30 minutes when normally they would just run around the gallery. The lady leading the tour was utterly fantastic."*

*"Boys liked the hippo. Good humour and informative. Good to highlight global decline and damage occurred by humans. We need to look after our planet and animals."*

*"Amazing idea – guide was fundamentally awesome" (Feedback from a professor of ecology at UEA)*

*"An inspired idea to hold the event in the dark. The audience (many children) were completely engaged. Well done!"*

*"Lots of information and history you wouldn't know"*

*"Son now very aware of endangered animals and wants to help"*

### **Deep History Coast**

In 2014 NMS Curators Dr John Davies and Dr David Waterhouse developed the idea of 'Deep History Coast'. The long-term aim of the project was to achieve a national profile for the exceptional natural and archaeological attractions across Norfolk in order to generate significant tourism visits from the rest of the UK and beyond, and to accomplish this through promotion of the county's outstanding internationally important Designated museum collections, linking them within the historic environment.

North Norfolk District Council are a key partner in the Deep History Coast initiative and have invested a significant amount of resources into developing the project in the North Norfolk area, supported by a number of NMS staff. Dr Waterhouse has acted as scientific advisor and wrote the palaeontological and geological text for a series of 11 'Discovery Trail Points' on a 22 mile stretch of coast between Weybourne and Cart Gap that were installed during 2019. Dr Waterhouse also worked closely with App' designers 'Jam Creative' to produce a new Deep History Coast App. The latest North Norfolk stage of the project is a refurbishment of the North Norfolk Tourist Information Centre in Cromer. Dr Waterhouse has been advising local graphic design company 'Ugly Studios' to ensure that the extinct creature reconstructions are accurate, and that facts and figures are correct. The new North Norfolk Deep History Coast Discovery Centre will open shortly, featuring a museum map table, Deep History leaflet and retail gondolas, an Ice Age animal activity trail and an immersive wall where visitors will be able to sit amongst Steppe Mammoth and extinct rhinos, as well as find out more about North Norfolk's fascinating deep past. The new centre will also signpost visitors to the nearby NMS site at Cromer Museum.



### 3.4 Costume and Textiles Department

#### **Textile Treasures exhibition**

This exhibition, scheduled for summer 2020, celebrates some of the best loved textiles in the Norwich Costume and Textile Collection, showcasing personal histories, local associations and highlighting contemporary issues.

The exhibition includes examples of patchwork, applique, smocking and embroidery on bedcovers and costumes in all their colourful beauty. These varied objects offer an insight into the lives of ordinary people providing an intimate view of objects not usually on show to the public which evoke empathy and connection with our past. Many of the bedcovers have national historical significance. Exhibits include Lorina Bulwer's embroidered letters, made using quilting techniques, they are two layers of patchwork joined by text embroidery stitches with applique figures.

The Duvet of Love by David Shenton will be another important item in the exhibition. This is a mosaic of badges attached to a double duvet cover with two male figures embracing, made partly as a memorial to the artist's two friends who died of HIV. The badges are very diverse in content with many supporting and highlighting the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ rights.

#### **Acquisitions**

NMS has acquired four pieces of embroidery made by artists from Barrington Farm Arts Trust, Barbara Symonds and James Gladwell. James won the top prize at the *Inheritance* Open Art show in 2018. Barrington Farm is a day centre for people with learning disabilities offering a well-equipped studio staffed by professional artists who aim to support individual talent and enable people to find a voice through their creativity. The purchase was funded by the Costume and Textile Association. The works join a growing collection of contemporary textile art which reflects themes seen in the historic collection and shows a continuum of practice in textile techniques and making.



*Man with hand nose* James Gladwell 2016

## Costume & Textile Volunteers

Volunteers have been developing a tour of the stores for the public events programme. They successfully delivered a pilot in October which received very positive reviews, with the next tour planned for Saturday 29 February. Four volunteers have each worked on a script for a store - womenswear, handling collections, library and archive collection and the large main store with information about collecting, documentation, collections care and access to collections. The volunteers have chosen a few key objects to show to the groups.



Volunteers preparing collections for tours

## Conference

In November the Costume & Textile Department welcomed over 40 delegates to the annual Dress and Textiles Specialists Conference. The conference theme was 'Redressing Diversity', with papers on the recent Frida Kahlo exhibition at the V&A, Pride T-shirts, Orthopaedic Footwear, Collecting Contemporary African Fashion and Norman Hartnell's Sequinned Pyjamas. In addition to the papers all delegates went on tours of the Museum of Norwich, including a loom demonstration, stores tours with a focus on representing diversity in the NMS Costume & Textile collections and an object in focus session split between David Shenton's Duvet of Love and Lorina Bulwer's embroidered letters.



Conference delegates visiting the stores

## **4. Strangers' Hall**

### **4.1 Volunteer work**

To inform the celebration of the forthcoming centenary of Strangers' Hall as a City of Norwich Museum, a preliminary assessment of archive material relating to the history of Strangers' Hall is underway. This includes a wide range of manuscript and printed documents, photographs, museum records, old guidebooks and Bolingbroke Collection items. Together these give a fascinating insight into not only the history of the building and its restoration, but also the establishment of the first social history museum in the country, alongside the outlook and aspirations of early curators and collectors. Over the next months the documentation of this collection will be upgraded, with an intern from the UEA MA in Cultural History and Museology helping prepare the way for celebratory displays in the museum's centenary year, 2022 – 23.



Volunteers assessing collections at Strangers' Hall

### **4.2 Lord Mayors Coach update**

The return of the Lord Mayors Coach to Strangers' Hall, following its conservation and reupholstery at Fairbourne Carriages in Kent, took place in October. The sumptuous new plush fabric in a vibrant pink with dark green trim sets off the coach interior effectively. The provision of a special frame will aid the removal of the cloth for easier cleaning. The smaller pieces of upholstery fabric removed during the process have been frozen and are being cleaned. These will be stored at the NMS Collections Centre, with a full photographic record being kept.



Detail of new upholstery in the Lord Mayors coach

### 4.3 Other activity

Strangers' Hall curatorial volunteers have continued auditing the doll collection, working primarily on the smaller dolls which have not before been adequately identified and recorded. In November, curators Cathy Terry and Bethan Holdridge were involved in tours and demonstrations for members of the DATS conference at the Museum of Norwich. Staff have also been preparing the museum for the major Christmas programme of family days and tours, involving research on Christmas past for new 'Deck the Hall's tours and talks to the Friends of Norwich Museums and East Anglia Art Fund and the organisation of ' *The Night before Christmas* event, which transforms the museum into scenes from Clement C Moore's poem *Twas the Night Before Christmas* from the end of November until 21 December.



Christmas decorations at Strangers' Hall

## **5. Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell**

### **5.1 Exhibition – ‘Norwich in 1959’ 6 July to 5 October 2019**

This exhibition provided the focus for city-wide celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Norwich being twinned with Rouen in Northern France. One of the exhibition highlights was the Anglia TV silver knight emblem. Anglia Television launched in 1959 and is one of several stories about the city which are detailed in the exhibition. As a timely reminder of the success of Norwich City football Club, the story of the glorious '59 FA Cup run is also told, with loans from the club and fans. Forming a backdrop to the 1959 displays are a series of contemporary images of the two cities by local photographer Stefan Ebelewicz.

The exhibition has also provided a focus for work with young people recruited through the NMS-wide *Kick the Dust: Norfolk* project. A group of students were recruited and given responsibility to develop one display case of 1950's costume and worked with NMS staff through every step of the curatorial and creative process, including selecting the objects, working on the conservation and final display of the objects and writing exhibition text and designing a graphic drop back.

### **5.2 Rouen – Norwich. The strengthening of the twinning partnership**

As part of continuing events to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Norwich being twinned with Rouen, NMS staff Jenny Caynes and Anna McCarthy were invited to visit Rouen in November. NMS first made links with twinning partners in the city in May, when brewers from Rouen bought beer specially blended with brewers in Norfolk across the channel in a Viking boat. Northmaen Brewers and Norfolk Brewhouse featured in the *City of Ale* event at the undercroft at the Museum of Norwich. A party of over twenty French delegates from Rouen came to Norwich for the opening of *Norwich in 1959* in July. The exhibition at the Museum of Norwich detailed the story of the origins of the twinning, explored the links between Norwich and Northern France which go back further than 60 years, and displayed beautiful contemporary photographs of the two cities.

The NMS staff were invited as part of a wider delegation from the city to the annual Rouen Film Festival; *This is England*. The wider delegation included the Lord and Lady Mayoress, Vaughan and Vivien Thomas, and representatives from UEA, NUA and the Garage. Norwich-based film directors Guy Myhill and Joanna Coates were invited as Film Festival judges. The three-day visit provided the perfect opportunity for the NMS staff to meet with partners in the tourism, heritage and museum sector to share ideas for future working partnerships.

The NMS staff met with Delphine Crocq the Head of the Tourist Office of Rouen and heard about plans for the forthcoming Normandy Impressionist Festival, to which they are hoping to attract overseas visitors. At a meeting with Sylvain Amic Director of the Réunion des Musées Métropolitains - Rouen Normandie, staff



learned that the organisation of museums in Rouen is very similar to NMS, with a family of nine museums including fine art, social history and a museum dedicated to ironwork. The Réunion des Musées Métropolitains were very interested in developing a relationship with NMS through international loans, shared best practise and future cultural exchange.

The collection of photographs of Rouen and Norwich which were at the Museum of Norwich during the summer moved to Rouen Town Hall, and the NMS staff joined the civic reception hosted by the city's Deputy Mayor.

The visit provided an excellent opportunity for staff to share ideas with colleagues in similar fields in our twin city, to promote our work and our service, share best practice and explore ways to use the existing professional connections between our two cities to create opportunities for future cultural exchanges.



### **5.3 Museums at Night - 'The Magnifi-Scent Museum'**

After a week of research, planning and practising during October Half Term, the big night finally arrived for the team of young event organisers, recruited through the National Lottery Heritage funded *Kick the Dust:Norfolk* project. The team of ten, most of whom had not met before, were given the challenge of coming up with an evening's programme of family-friendly activities around the museum at night, all based on the sense of smell. They had just one week to develop and promote their programme.





The Kick the Dust team

The team, all aged 15 to 17, rose to the occasion and devised a series of 'smell stations' bringing the history of Norwich to life. These included a sniff and tell session about the development of Coffee Houses in Georgian Norwich, taste tests of chocolate and nostalgic tales of Caley's and Mackintoshes, and an invitation to discover medicines in the past through the sense of smell in the pharmacy.

Staff were delighted to welcome the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Vaughan and Vivienne Thomas to the event. Tickets were free and the evening was fully booked.



#### 5.4 Museum of Norwich – and Milly J Shoes

NMS curator Bethan Holdridge recently took a group of women from *English +*, a Norwich-based charity which offers free English lessons to refugees and asylum seekers, to meet award-winning local shoe designer Milly J. NMS staff have been working with the group who visit both the Museum of Norwich and Strangers' Hall for several months, using collections and the history of Norwich as a springboard for conversation. The group enjoyed making decorative shoe clips and finding out about Milly's bespoke shoes. Meanwhile, Milly is busy making a shoe specifically for the Museum of Norwich.



Milly J and the English+ group

### 5.5 History Mystery Norwich – a new game at the Museum of Norwich

Building on the success of the *Merchants Vaults* escape game in the undercroft, the team at History Mystery have developed a brand new game called *Goin' up the City*. This new game is played in the main upstairs galleries, out of hours, and uses the 20<sup>th</sup> century life displays as a backdrop for the game on the theme of the trials and tribulations of getting ready for a night out in the city. Players are asked to find clues in the permanent displays, to reach the final goal of a great night out ending in a local nightspot. The game which has just gone live has so far been received well by players. *Merchants Vaults* continues to run weekdays during museum opening hours and Friday and Saturday night and Sundays.



## 5.6 Dementia Friendly work

The work to establish a Dementia Friendly Museum continues. NMS is forging a partnership with Friend in Deed; a Norfolk based charity that creates friendship across generations through intergenerational schemes, to reduce isolation and promote kindness. The impact can be extremely beneficial to all involved:

*My Grandmother is still full of beans following her visit to the museum. She showed more energy and vibrancy than she has in such a long time...reminiscing and talking to people who were genuinely interested in her life meant a lot to her... Her memory has been getting gradually worse, but her long term memory is still sparkling and I loved watching her talk about her past and she really enjoyed stepping back in time.*

## 6. Learning Team – visitor programme, schools and projects

### 6.1 Like a Bat Out of Hell – October Half Term visitor programme

With a broad Halloween theme, the October half term visitor programme at Norwich Castle offered a range of activities facilitated by the NMS learning team. Seven days of programming encouraged children, families and adults to participate in fun, facilitated activities and explore many aspects of the NMS collections in new ways. Staff collected 261 feedback cards and 96.6% of our visitors rated the activities as Very Good or Excellent.



As well as a 'Shot in the Dark' selfie station and 'Creepy Keep tours', in the Castle Rotunda visitors were given the opportunity to handle historic object associated with prisoners' experience, tours of the dungeons and a performative story-telling event 'A Prisoner's Tale' continued the theme and provided a way to engage visitors with the Castle long history as a gaol and prison.

## ***Creatures of the Night – torch-lit tours of the Natural History Gallery***

Building on the success of an activity run as part of a previous Museums at Night, staff developed a new family-friendly tour of the Natural History Gallery, with support of Dr David Waterhouse, the collection's curator. The gallery was plunged into darkness except for minimal lighting in the cases, and each visitor was given an individual torch. The tour leader guided visitors to look in close detail at items in the collection, with 'Halloween' and night-time creatures being the focus. The tours were fully booked and received excellent feedback. 97% of visitors completing evaluation forms rated the activity 'very good' or 'excellent'. Feedback comments include:

*"Seeing the animals in the dark using torches in the dark helped focus on particular exhibits."*

*"We loved that the torches were a focus for the children. It held their attention"*

*"I liked all the facts about it"*

*"Clear, precise and informative"*

*"Being in the dark with torches – the children were engaged for the whole 30 minutes"*

*"Amazing idea – guide was fundamentally awesome" (Feedback from a professor of ecology at UEA)*

*"An inspired idea to hold the event in the dark. The audience (many children) were completely engaged. Well done!"*

With the support of colleagues from the NMS Costume & Textile Department, the learning team also offered *The Lamp is a Vamp* – behind the scenes access to the NMS collection of Victorian mourning costume, expertly led by Teaching Museum Trainee Katie. Weekends during school holiday period bring a considerable number of adult visitors to the Castle, and this event was specifically designed for that audience. 96% of visitors completing evaluation cards rated the activity 'Excellent', with comments including:

*"Brilliant to see the textiles and talk was very interesting. Social history so good we stayed for both talks";*

*"The whole talk was extremely informative";*

*"Very interesting historically and socially"*

*"Informative. Awesome collection".*



## 6.2 Youth Offending Team Castle Project

In December NMS held the Castle Project's end of term show at Norwich Castle. The young people, members of the Norfolk Youth Offending Team (YOT) and Castle staff shared tea and cake before viewing a display of objects made in response to the museum collections by the participants during the term.

It was the first occasion on which children on prevention measures and their YOT workers participated in the programme. As a prevention intervention this new strand of the project has been seen by the NMS *Kick the Dust* project and YOT team as being very successful and to be repeated.

To raise awareness within the YOT team of the opportunities provided by partnership working with NMS, staff have holding a 'taster event' aimed at YOT workers to show them what the programme does and give them confidence when thinking of engaging their children.



## 6.3 ST\*ART Club autumn term success



On 16 November ST\*ART Club held their exhibition and private view to celebrate another successful term creatively interrogating and responding to the museum collections. Two free places help widen access to the arts and heritage in Norwich, and participation offers children aged 8-11 the opportunity to develop an awareness of the world around them and their place in it, fostering collaboration, investigation and

understanding in a safe yet stimulating environment. NMS is grateful to East Anglia Art Fund for their continued support.

## 6.4 Heritage Fund 'Kick the Dust' programme

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (formerly known as the Heritage Lottery Fund) is providing a grant of £776,500 for the project *Kick the Dust: Norfolk*,

under the NLHF's Kick the Dust programme. This consortium project is being delivered in partnership with YMCA Norfolk and Creative Collisions (a youth arts network based in Great Yarmouth). The project aims to engage with 8,000 11-25 year olds – including those most hard to reach - during a four year period from 2018-22. Through the project the young people will be able to participate in a range of structured heritage activities that will develop their skills, experience and confidence and support progression.

The project team comprises:

- Project Coordinator – Christine Marsden (based at Museum of Norwich)
- Project Worker (Norwich) – Rachel Daniel (based at Museum of Norwich)
- Project Worker (East) – Kate Cooper (based at Time & Tide)
- Project Workers (West) – Rachel Duffield (based at Gressenhall); Rachael Williams (based in King's Lynn)

Partnership working has been successful in terms of engaging with young people and in enhancing partners' existing offers for young people. One of the key partners for 'Kick the Dust' is the YMCA. NMS funds embedded youth engagement worker posts in YMCA and these workers have been working alongside the three 'Kick the Dust' Project Workers around the county to deliver a range of heritage-based activities. Up to November 2019, 533 participants from the YMCA had taken part in the 'Kick the Dust' programme. Having built up trust with the 'Kick the Dust' Project Workers and other staff, the young people have gained in confidence and have started to move from 'player' to 'shaper' activity.

Up to November 2019, there have been 3,842 participants engaging with 2,182 hours of high-quality Kick the Dust activities.

The impact of the Norfolk Journeys project on young people's lives and the increasing contribution they make to the work of NMS continues in Norwich as well as across the county. Two highlights exemplify the scope of activities and engagements which Kick the Dust is enabling in the city:

***The Magnificent Museum – The Museum of Norwich at Night. Saturday 2 November*** (see 5.3 above)

All activities were developed and delivered by a team of young people as part of the Kick the Dust project. Coming together for the first time just six days before the event, the group was skilfully guided by Rachel Daniel, but given freedom to create and invent their own programme – from devising the theme, through researching the collections, planning the activities, and finally delivering the event to the general public.



### **‘Interactive workplace’ experience – Parkside Special School**

Development of the ‘Interactive Workplace’ model with Parkside school (SEN model) at the Museum of Norwich for twelve Year 11 students on 11 November. Six staff members of NMS staff supported and delivered six interactive sessions across two hours. All of the group met in the Old School Room and following the introductory session were divided the group into three teams. Each team moved around the activities in a carousel with each activity lasting 30 minutes including a retail activity in the Old Shop and a conservation and cleaning practical activity. To support the pupils’ recognition of the different skills they used or developed through the experience a ‘self-evaluation’ form was devised using visual graphic devices to represent each element – e.g. team-working, time-management, problem solving. The relationship with the staff is growing ever stronger and future partner activities are in the planning to sustain and deepen the pupils’ involvement with all three Norwich museums.

### **6.5 Norwich Learning Team – Schools Update**

The NMS learning team continues to facilitate and deliver high-class curriculum-based sessions for schools at the three Norwich museum sites to large numbers of school children. Notable developments this term have been a strong increase in enquiries and bookings for events at Strangers’ Hall (Norwich at the Time of the Great Fire, and Robert Kett/Kett’s Rebellion sessions). These sessions can run on days when the museum is not open to the general public and thereby increases the use of the building, providing an excellent experience for the school children.

	<b>Castle</b>	<b>Museum of Norwich</b>	<b>Strangers’ Hall</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Sept-19</b>	594	105	170	869
<b>Oct-19</b>	1369	64	401	1834
<b>Nov-19</b>	2186	140	367	2693
<b>Total</b>	<b>4149</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>5396</b>

### **6.6 Norwich Museums Primary School Programme**

The *Life in a Castle* outreach programme (part of the Keep project Activity Plan) has started very well. Staff conducted a pilot session in September which was well received. A number of staff have been trained to deliver away from the museum. The programme has been rated as Excellent in evaluation feedback, with comments including “*The Ladies were amazing!*” *They loved the artefacts* and the “*Brilliant pennant making activity*”.

The Autumn term saw the first *Meet Florence Nightingale* schools' event at the Museum of Norwich. Following meetings with the curators and building service colleagues based at the Museum of Norwich, space to store the resources and objects relating to the sessions was created, uses of the galleries finalised and health and safety measures discussed. This led to a very successful first *Meet Florence Nightingale* event and consequently for other visits during the term. Using the atmospheric undercroft as a reconstruction of Nightingale's field hospital at Scutari has been very well-received, and the move has taken pressure away from delivery spaces at the Castle, enabling more bookings of other events to be taken, with Romans and Egyptians remaining by far the most popular events in numerical terms.

#### **Sample evaluation feedback –**

Toys: Rated Excellent

*"We had a lovely visit. It was well organised and at just the right pace..."*

Anglo Saxons and Vikings: Rated Excellent

*"Storytelling was amazing"*

*"A really great day. Smoothly organised. Children readily engaged. Excellent range of activities, all presented to a very high standard."*

*"Epic!"*

*"Organisationally great, Subject knowledge great. Activities well run and interesting"*

### **6.7 Norwich Museums Secondary Programme**

It remains a stand-out achievement of the Norwich Learning Team that NMS runs a considerable and very successful secondary schools programme. This is a strand of educational delivery that museums traditional struggle to facilitate and an audience which is challenging to attract. The ongoing investment in training, programme development and hard work to build positive relationships with Norfolk school teachers continues to pay off in this area. Recent examples of the success of this programme include:

*Egyptians* with 63 Y7-9 students from the Ashley School. The school is a special school and all their students had a vast range of special needs. Some of our staff were worried about this but the students, teachers and school staff were excellent and everyone had a very positive day. The school staff thanked staff profusely at the end of the event.

*Historic Environment* with 20 Y10 students from St Felix. As there is always such a small number of students from this school every year it is possible to offer a bespoke provision delivered by the lead Learning Officer. The day includes tours of the Keep, Prison Buildings, Courtroom and Museum Highlights. All students, teachers and staff thanked the team at the end of the event.

The Keep redevelopment project has necessitated a considerable number of changes to secondary school programmes and many of these have run for the first time this term. First-time delivery of the *Storming the Castle* 'Finance session' away from the Keep demonstrated it needed revising as there were too many calculations and they were too difficult. Learning Officer Jenni Williams collaborated with a Maths teacher from Hellesdon High School regarding this and have planned accordingly. It is an example of the excellent relationship the Norwich Learning team has with teachers across Norfolk and how we work with teachers to ensure our programmes are relevant and appropriate to their pupils' needs.

#### **Sample evaluation feedback –**

Historic Environment: Rated Excellent:

*"Brings the subject to life"*

*"Makes teaching easier"*

*"All of it excellent as usual!"*

A level Tudors: Rated Excellent:

*"Enables me to offer reference points to bookwork and provide a local perspective on national history"*

*"The trip was easy to book and well produced. The resources were well made and relevant to the age group and course"*

*"Delivery by staff was excellent throughout"*

*"Thanks for such a well ran and enjoyable visit – we will be back!"*

## **6.8 Early Years and SEND**

### **Early Years Castle Outreach pilot**

This term has seen one outreach visit to Caterpillars Nursery, Norwich, which proved very successful. The children engaged with the activities well and enjoyed the event. Feedback from the nursery staff was very positive and they could not suggest any ways in which the activities could be altered to improve them. They thought the activities were well suited to the children's abilities and that the children enjoyed the sessions.

### **SEND group visits**

The learning team has welcomed several Special Educational Needs groups to the Norwich Museums this term. Staff devise bespoke sessions in response to the abilities of the participants and through object handling and multi-sensory stimulation even those with the most severe support needs are able to take part. A notable example was a medieval object workshop session with pupils from the Clare School – which included handshakes wearing armoured gauntlets!

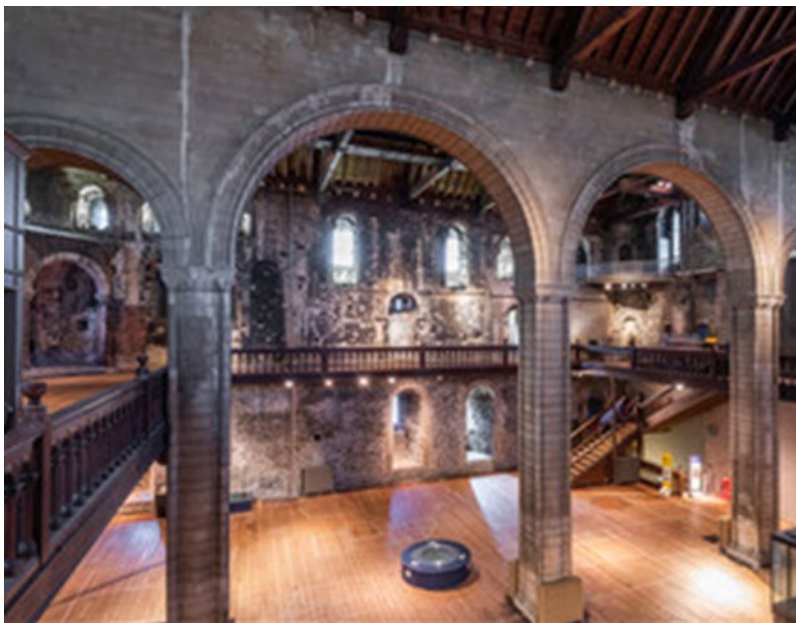
## 7. Other Developments

### 7.1 Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project update

During the period covered by this report, work has been progressing on the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project. A programme of pre-construction surveys and investigations has been initiated. The targeted nature of this survey and investigation works has enabled visitor access to be maintained to the Keep, allowing visitors to continue to appreciate the 'clear-view Keep'. An accompanying programme of events is helping visitors make the most of this unique moment in the Keep's history.

Detailed planning work is underway for the new exhibition galleries, including the creation of detailed case specifications and layouts for the new British Museum partnership gallery, with NMS staff now working closely with colleagues from the British Museum and object loan lists being finalised. In preparation for construction work beginning, staff from the NMS Collections, Design & Technical and Conservation teams oversaw the removal of all displays from the Keep.

The Learning team are starting to deliver the four-year Activity Plan which forms a key part of the project, with a number of pilot events being run. The formal launch of the Activity Plan took place on Saturday 5 October with the contemporary dance performance *Fight or Flight!* performed in the Keep. This inspirational event saw young people from local dance and movement groups showcase a contemporary dance inspired by the fight or flight response, supported by the Sadler's Wells National Youth Dance Company.



The "Clear View" Keep

## New communication branding – construction phase

New temporary branding has been created to support communications with visitors and the wider public during the construction phase. This branding will be used on construction site hoardings, in social media and in other project communications. A full re-branding exercise will take place in advance of project completion.



The proposed new *Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn* branding

This temporary branding will have five key communication messages:

*Royalty Revealed:* We are re-creating the palace of Norman Kings – one of 12th Century Europe's most important and sophisticated castles

*The People's Palace:* For the first time in 900 years everyone will be able to explore all 5 levels of the Keep – from basement to battlements

*Medieval Treasure:* The British Museum's first medieval gallery outside London will bring treasures of international importance to Norwich

*Keep Learning:* Over 5 years of events and activities will open up the medieval world to all ages

*A Jewel in the Crown:* Norwich Castle will take its place as one of the UK's premier heritage attractions

## 7.2 Wider Impact Group

The Wider Impact Group coordinates all operational issues arising from the delivery of the main Keep project. Work has been progressing well in preparation for the construction phase, with initial works completed and awaiting implementation. Completed works include:

- Temporary entrance/ticket desk constructed in the Decorative Arts Gallery
- All collections decanted from the Keep, the Bigod Tower and Fitch Room.
- Egyptian Gallery key collections relocated to the Decorative Arts Gallery.

- Office and back of house areas relocated to other areas within the Castle, Shirehall and Shirehall House.
- Construction of a new permanent wedding guest and temporary Bridal entrance.
- Learning delivery spaces relocated.

Going forwards the Wider Impact Group will be looking at the operational and facilities management associated with the new-look museum. It will also concentrate on the visitor journey and ensuring the visitors to the museum will have the very best visitor experience.



The new permanent wedding guest entrance corridor



The temporary 'pop up' catering unit located in the Rotunda





The new temporary ticket desk located in the Decorative Arts Gallery

### 7.3 Other events and venue hire

September saw a repeat of the popular UEA Welcome event, aimed at bringing together new international students and introducing them to some of Norwich's history and what the city has to offer. Later that month NMS celebrated the unveiling of the new Turner acquisition *Walton Bridges* which takes pride of place in the Colman art gallery and has already become a favourite with visitors.

In November Norwich Castle hosted a live BBC broadcast from the Keep of the Victoria Derbyshire show. The show was linked to the General Election and involved a question and answer session involving audience members and a selection of regional politicians. Live broadcasting requires a lot of preparation, but effective liaison between staff at the Castle and the BBC ensured the event was a success, with minimal impact to the visitors. The event showcased the dramatic space inside Norwich Castle Keep to a national audience.

## 8. Visitor Numbers

Detailed visitor numbers will be circulated at the meeting.

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