

The Norwich Museums Members' Briefing Paper December 2013

Visitor Numbers

2013/14 - See Appendix 1

Visits to the Norwich Museums up to the end of October 2013/14 are, as a whole comparable with visitor numbers in 2012/13.

High visitor numbers at Norwich Castle during October as a result of a busy October half-term week and a popular special exhibition have brought visitor numbers back on a par with last year. They are now only 2,000 visits or 1.75% lower for the equivalent period in 2012/13. This positive trend should continue given the popularity of the current exhibition *Curiosity*, the forthcoming Roman Empire Exhibition which is already attracting lots of attention, and a full and vibrant events programme.

Visitor numbers at Strangers' Hall continue to hold up, and as a result of the success of opening an additional 2 days per week during June to September, the Friends' have generously agreed to fund this initiative again in 2014.

The Bridewell Museum has received similar visitor numbers to date as last year. As discussed at the previous AMC meeting, the Museum will be renamed the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell. We are currently working on the new brand which will be rolled out with the new publicity material in the Spring. Renaming the museum will help to reposition it within the Norwich Museums offer and establish it as Norwich's museum.

School Visits

2013-14 See Appendix 2

Having a full compliment of Learning Officers once more has contributed towards a reverse in the downward trend in school numbers at Norwich Castle reported in September. November has also been busy across all three sites and school bookings are looking healthy, particularly at Strangers' Hall. Overall, school visits to the three Norwich sites are slightly higher than in 2012/13.

An element of our ACE Designated Development Fund application called *Interpreting Early Man*, involves the development of archaeology learning resources and sessions for Key Stage 2 school pupils. This will enable us to support teachers to deliver this new element in the new national curriculum being implemented in Autumn 2014. We will hear whether our application has been successful early in 2014.

OTHER LEARNING SERVICES NEWS

Intergenerational Project

From February to June 2013, eight Year 12 Art and Design students from OPEN Academy and eight older participants from Age UK met weekly at Norwich Castle and other local venues, to take part in various cultural activities as part of an intergenerational Project.

The project team also included two young volunteers. The Intergenerational Project placed each student with an older participant for the duration of the project, so that

each pair would have time to talk and learn from one another. It was hoped that the project would help form the basis for Arts Award qualifications for the students.

The overarching theme of the project was taken from the Dutch paintings and objects in the Norwich Castle and Strangers' Hall collections. Each session began with tea and cake in the Castle café for the older participants and the Age UK staff and helpers. Once the students had arrived there was a 15 minute talk on a Dutch painting which was then linked to an art or craft activity. Participants also created several types of art and craftwork over the project period.

Other group sessions included photography at Strangers' Hall and Norwich Castle, creating portrait photographs loosely based on 17C Dutch painted portraits; wool-wrapping; printing inspired by paintings; and willow sculpting which encouraged partnership as it often required more than one pair of hands!

To mark the close of the project, a celebration was held at the Castle. Students and older participants were invited to bring along family and friends, and work completed during the project went on display.

All partners would like to make the project sustainable and ongoing. We are planning a repeat project for early 2014. In order to integrate Arts Award properly (*one of the key learning points was that more time needed to be devoted to this element*), it will be delivered over a period of 24 weeks, so that every other week can be dedicated to portfolio building.

Norwich Castle Temporary exhibitions

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Curiosity: Art, Wonder and the Pleasures of Knowing

Special Exhibition Galleries 28 September 2013 – 5 January 2014



'Curiosity' is a detailed and spectacular meditation on the nature of wonder, fascination and enquiry. Contemporary art is shown alongside historical artefacts and works by artists including Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Durer. The exhibition explores past and present fascinations such as criminology, natural history and the origins of museums' Brian Dillon, Curator.

A Hayward touring exhibition, in collaboration with Turner Contemporary, curated by Brian Dillon in association with New York art and culture magazine Cabinet.

History rising

This is an ambitious region-wide study of cultural heritage and museum display in East Anglia by Dutch artist Marjolijn Dijkman curated by Jes Fernie. Norwich is hosting various events and installations including an exciting new mobile for the Castle Rotunda.

JOHN SELL COTMAN: A Picturesque Tour of Norfolk and Normandy, Colman Watercolour Gallery to Sunday 16 March 2014

The programme has been selected under the European cross-border cooperation programme INTERREG IV A France (Channel) – England, co-funded by the ERDF

Frances Kearney, New Work

Colman Art Galleries Project Space to Sunday 23 March 2014

These beautiful yet disquieting photographic tableaux have been made especially for Norwich Castle. Displayed within the context of the Norwich School of paintings they demonstrate Kearney's fascination with human behaviour, landscape and the effect of nature on the human psyche.

LOOKING FORWARD

- **Roman Empire: Power and People**

A British Museum Tour. Special Exhibition Galleries, February to April 2014



Norwich Castle will host the largest ever UK exhibition of Roman artefacts on loan from the British Museum this autumn.

Roman Empire: Power and People brings together over 160 stunning pieces from the British Museum to explore the story of one of the most powerful empires the world has ever seen.

Highlights include sculpture from the villas of the Emperors Tiberius and Hadrian, coins from the famous Hoxne treasure, beautiful jewellery and even near-perfectly preserved children's clothing from Roman Egypt.

The exhibition explores the wealth, power and organisation of the Empire, but also how the Romans viewed their provinces and other peoples. Religious, military and personal objects give an insight into the lives of people across the Empire, from northern Britain to Egypt and the Middle East. These fascinating objects show how the influences of the many people and places that the Romans came into contact with were absorbed and adapted into the Empire.

- **The Wonder of Birds**

Special Exhibition Galleries 24 May – 14 September 2014

- **Autumn 2014: John Wonnocott and John Lessor**

- **Summer 2015: Jeff Koons.** A touring exhibition from the **Artist Rooms**

- **Summer 2016:** Leading venue with Norwich University of the Arts for **The British Art Show 8**

Exhibition proposals under discussion and development but not yet confirmed or funded:

- Building an exhibition around a loan of a Manet painting owned by the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for Spring 2015
- Collaboration with Writers' Centre Norwich focusing on literary heritage Autumn 2015
- Digital/New Media exhibition Spring 2016.
- A V&A Museum of Childhood exhibition focusing on Dolls Houses and the history of the home in 2017
- Building a touring exhibition around the Paston Treasure in 2018

Events

LOOKING FORWARD See the *What's On* leaflet for full details

In Norwich Castle there will be a series **talks and special events** running throughout the Spring supporting the exhibition programme and new displays including talks by guest speakers, curators, writing and art workshops and family activities.

Spooky city

Norwich Castle, Norwich City Council and the Forum joined up to provide a programme of activities for Halloween, including pumpkin carving and displays, and culminating in a parade from Norwich Castle to the Forum. Norwich Castle attracted 1500 visitors over the day, many of whom arrived in costume – adults and children – and generally got in to the spirit of the event.

Takeover Day

Norwich Castle will be taking part in this *Kids in Museums* national initiative. Local children and young people from Chapel Break Infant School, Norwich Museums Youth Forum and others will take over Norwich Castle on Friday 22nd November running their own activities and events.

Christmas Events

Norwich Castle will be hosting its 2nd Craft Fair and Christmas Event on Friday 6th December 5-9pm. An evening of live music, entertainment and Christmas shopping. Visitors can enjoy Christmas carols in the Bridewell Museum's courtyard and make festive decorations inspired by the collections on Saturday 14th and 21st December, and Father Christmas will be visiting Strangers' Hall.

First World War Commemoration

Events and activities

The Norwich Museums are exploring ideas and funding opportunities for commemorating the First World War.

We have discovered that there are a large number of WW1 related projects happening across the county, many of which involve research. As a result the level of enquiries and requests to access our own archives has increased considerably. In order to support this level of activity we are exploring the possibility of raising funding to support individual and group research. This could include providing guidance material on the available resources in Museums, Libraries and Archives, also key material at other institutions and online.

Norwich Roll of Honour

We are continuing to explore funding opportunities in order to conserve the roll of Honour and to improve its interpretation.

Museum and Gallery refurbishments

Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum Display in Norwich Castle



The new displays and interpretation have been completed and are being received well by the public.

EU funded Norman Connections Project and HLF funded Collecting Cultures Projects



The main floor of Norwich Castle Keep has undergone a modest but beneficial re-display and reorganisation. The interpretation of the Castle and medieval collections have been re-interpreted, relocated and grouped together to create a more attractive and coherent display.

The hugely popular Norwich Castle model has been completely refurbished and the 72 small openings which had encouraged people to post all sorts of small items and rubbish have now been filled. The under fives Castle has been replaced with a much superior version and the thrown and other interactive displays have been adapted and improved.

Further improvements including historic reconstructions and new interpretation in the Bigod Tower and on the Keep balcony are currently being installed and will be in place for the formal opening in early December.

Conservation News

A Masterpiece in the Making... Preparation for a major loan to the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

The Masterpieces: Art and East Anglia Exhibition at the SCVA opened on the 14 September, and celebrates the artistic heritage of East Anglia from antiquity through to the present day. This ambitious project includes over 270 Masterpieces, 49 of which are lent from NMAS collections, constituting over a sixth of the entire exhibition. This may well be the largest loan to a single institution since the birth of NMAS.

Supporting the project at this level has been challenging and required detailed communication and coordination between many different disciplines including Conservators, Technicians, Curators, Registrars and Coordinators etc. over many months. The collections came from across the museums service including: Norwich Castle, Bridewell, Gressenhall and Time & Tide Museums. The range of objects was wide and varied, from the Happisburgh flint hand axe, Norwich shawls, Cotman watercolours to a gold torc, an architectural model and Medieval stained glass and many others.

Digital Development

A digital interpretation project

Strangers' Hall has been a period house museum with recreated room interiors for well over a hundred years. One of the challenges curators face is how to refresh the displays and update the interpretation as the state of knowledge about early domestic interiors progresses, and as visitor's interests evolve.

A new partnership project has been established, working with Dr Chris King (University of Nottingham) and Dr Anthony Masinton (University of York) to use digital reconstruction to synthesize knowledge from a wide variety of sources. The aim is to build a computer model showing what we think Strangers' Hall was like in the past.

The brief is to present a snapshot of the Little Parlour as it looked in the early seventeenth century, making visible all the details, from the mouldings of the ceiling and mullioned windows, to the painted fireplace and original doorways. This room is not easy to interpret as its fabric dates from several periods. But by gathering information from surviving features elsewhere in the museum, from comparable Norwich merchant houses, and results of research over the last few years, some of the missing information can be reconstructed.

The first step has been to carry out high specification panoramic photography known as photogrammetry. This picks up specific points which are used to make a wire frame model of the room with its features, which can then be rotated, rendered and coloured to add the detail. The technical difficulty of creating the numerous different textures found in a typical room are immense: not just glazed windows, wooden panelling and carved wood chests, but the lustre of pewter or glazed ceramics, deep-piled table carpet or a painted wallcloth is considerable. The room then has to be 'filled' with correct-for-period furniture and furnishings, using documentary sources such as the wills of former residents, inventories of wealthy Norwich merchants, together with furniture and small object from our own collections. Even the authenticity of lighting the room will be considered: the appearance of a room lit by daylight through the more opaque early glass windows or by candle light being very different to its modern tungsten-lit presentation.

Other News

Designation Development Fund

A funding bid has been submitted to the ACE Designation Development Fund for £90,000 to deliver a project called *Interpreting Early Man*.

This project focuses on our collections relating to the earliest periods of human activity in this region, from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age, including material relating to the earliest evidence for human activity in Europe. Through this project, we will collate, record, digitise and publish research into these collections, radically improving our own understanding of the material and effectively disseminating existing research. While our in-house archaeology and natural history teams have an authoritative understanding of the subject matter, we have no dedicated pre-history specialist, so the project will also bring in relevant expertise to study and record further data which will give us a sustainable body of information to use in our study centre, display and schools work.

Sharing our understanding of our prehistory collections is an integral and essential part of this project. A key concern that this project would address is the change in the National Curriculum which is giving enormous prominence to the teaching of prehistory at KS1. As the guardians of outstanding collections in this area, and with a national reputation for museum learning, we aim to be at the forefront of developing innovative and excellent programmes for the study of history at KS1. In partnership with the University of Leicester we will be exploring the challenges and opportunities of interpreting prehistory collections through schools events at KS1, leading to a sector-wide seminar/conference on the subject in spring 2015.

We are also working towards creating an important prehistory display at the Castle in 2015-16 and this project would fund the creation of a display brief and some of the display and conservation costs associated with that display, which will be in a prominent location in the heart of the Castle. This project will also crucially provide the research basis for such a display. Delivered within the project will be one or more family events on prehistory in spring 2015 as part of our popular programme of Family Saturdays'.

Teaching Museum

On 2 October Norwich Castle hosted a national workforce development event Teaching Museums: developing today's workforce, opening the door for tomorrow's. . The day was attended by over 70 delegates including key stakeholders, colleagues from Higher Education and museums across the country as well as NMAS staff involved in delivering workforce development programmes. The aim of the day was to:

- provide a forum for people interested in workforce development in museums to share ideas, practice and discuss current challenges
- share the learning from Norfolk Museums' Teaching

The keynote speakers were John Orna-Ornstein, the new Director of Museums for Arts Council England, Gaby Porter, Board Member for the Museums Association (MA), and Jo Reilly, Head of Participation and Learning for the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The recruitment for the 2nd round of Teaching Museum trainees started on 26th July with two open days which prospective candidates had to attend. The applications deadline was on 8th September and the assessment process took place later in October. 8 new museum trainees have been appointed including two trainees to work on the Norwich events programme and the World War 1 programme.

New Publication

'A Vision of England: Paintings of the Norwich School' was launched at Norwich Castle on 15th November at Norwich Castle and a book signing session with author Dr Giorgia Bottinelli took place at Jarrolds on Saturday 16th November. This book represents the final element of the Great British Art Debate Heritage Lottery Funded project which funded the refurbishment and re-display of the Norwich Galleries in 2012 and a number of temporary exhibitions between 2008 and 2013. The book is on sale at all NMAS's museum sites and at bookshops in the City, and negotiations are taking place to sell the book digitally through Amazon's Kindle.

If you want to discuss any matters in this briefing please contact Rachel Kirk rachel.kirk@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.

APPENDIX 1

MUSEUM VISITS 2013/14		APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	TOTAL TO DATE	Annual TOTAL
Castle Museum															
	2011/12	13,502	12,790	12,731	18,423	23,434	13,878	15,624	10,896	7,352	9,558	14,489	16,231	110,382	168,908
	2012/13	21,242	12,846	15,198	18,019	19,998	14,202	14,469	13,224	8,757	8,346	20,218	16,465	115,974	182,984
	2013/14	17,529	15,710	11,979	14,473	21,492	13,130	19,628						113,941	113,941
Strangers Hall															
	2011/12	903	668	918	1,013	1,286	842	1,076	884	750	CLOSED	418	911	6,706	9,669
	2012/13	764	650	677	687	876	978	1,085	941	684	CLOSED	357	1,203	5,717	8,902
	2013/14	735	880	1,107	1,042	1,349	1,281	1,025						7,419	7,419
Bridewell															
	2008/09	732	673	920	756	1,016	872	963	283	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	5,932	6,215
	2012/13	CLOSED	CLOSED	75	2,745	3,015	2,379	1,609	1,473	996	1,029	1,662	1,490	9,823	16,473
	2013/14	1,556	1,453	953	1,152	1,621	1,250	1,400						9,385	9,385
Norwich Castle Study Centre															
	2011/12	137	159	140	111	130	259	257	236	74	190	106	100	1,193	1,899
	2012/13	178	77	98	157	107	142	168	149	178	91	159	163	927	1,667
	2013/14	237	185	200	178	114	127	220						1,261	1,261
NORWICH MUSEUMS TOTAL															
	2011/12	14,542	13,617	13,789	19,547	24,850	14,979	16,957	12,016	8,176	9,748	15,013	17,242	118,281	298,757
	2012/13	22,184	13,573	16,048	21,608	23,996	17,701	17,331	15,787	10,615	9,466	22,039	18,118	132,441	208,466
	2013/14	20,057	18,228	14,239	16,845	24,576	15,788	22,273	0	0	0	0	0	132,006	132,006

\$ Pre-refurbishment

* Totals for Norwich Museums 2011/12 does not include Bridewell figures as closed to public for refurbishment.

APPENDIX 2

SCHOOL VISITS 2013/14		APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	TOTAL TO DATE	Annual TOTAL
Castle Museum															
	2011/12	550	1,287	1,985	2,097	37	510	1,489	2,529	772	1,583	1,580	2,946	7,955	17,365
	2012/13	565	1,788	1,576	1,900	83	619	1,320	2,155	1,032	1,082	2,575	3,037	7,851	17,732
	2013/14	668	1,066	1,897	1,088	0	537	1,794						7,050	7,050
Strangers Hall															
	2011/12	29	168	164	94	0	0	223	253	78	CLOSED	68	447	678	1,524
	2012/13	0	154	160	145	0	0	431	472	89	CLOSED	87	454	890	1,992
	2013/14	59	181	232	152			371						995	995
Bridewell Museum	2012/13	0	0	0	0	0	33	62	140	-	-	9	46	95	290
	2013/14		144	86	86		67	67						450	450
TOTAL SCHOOL VISITS															
	2011/12	579	1,455	2,149	2,191	37	510	1,712	2,782	850	1,583	1,648	3,393	8,633	27,522
	2012/13	565	1,942	1,736	2,045	83	652	1,813	2,767	1,121	1,082	2,671	3,491	8,836	19,968
	2013/14	727	1,391	2,215	1,326	0	604	2,232	0	0	0	0	0	8,495	8,495