

The Norwich Museums

Members' briefing December 2012

Visitor Numbers

2012/13 See Appendix 1

Visitor numbers for October at Norwich Castle were 14,287 compared with 15,624 in 2011. This difference can be explained by the fact that much of the October half-term holiday - always a busy week - fell in November this year meaning that a higher proportion of visitor numbers will be accounted for in the November figures. *(Average visitor numbers during half-term are 1,000 and above on week days)* Visitor numbers for the half-term week Sat through to Sunday at Norwich Castle were actually 29 higher than the previous year.

The Bridewell Museum has continued to attract good levels of visitors with 1,609 in October. This makes a total of 9,823 visitors to date.

Visitors to Strangers' Hall remain steady and are 20% lower than last year despite being open 2 days rather than 4 days per week.

Visitor numbers to date at Norwich Castle and the Norwich Museums as a whole remain higher than for the same period in 2011 taking into account the fact that the Bridewell wasn't open this time last year.

School Visits

School visits continue to hold up across the Norwich Museums which is very pleasing in the current economic climate. We know anecdotally from other museum learning officers across the country that numbers have fallen in other areas. Schools appreciate our approach - providing active, stimulating sessions which use drama, objects and art at the heart. School bookings for the forthcoming academic year continue to look good. **See Appendix 1**

Norwich Castle's School Sessions

Our most popular events are Life in a Castle for 5-7 year olds, Romans and Egyptians for 8-11 year olds and Storming the Castle for 11-14 year olds.



Storming the Castle is a Maths based events for secondary schools using Maths skills to work out the best way to attack and defend the Castle in 1215 – a real life event when it was under siege by the French. This is the only event of its kind in the country and has received national attention.

We offer a diverse programme which includes Literacy as well as Maths as well as Art & Design, Bio-diversity, Geography and Religious Education. For nurseries and playgroups we have a programme of themed activities including Teapots, Castles and Going on a Bear Hunt. About one-third of our work is with secondary schools, it is unusual for a museum to do so much secondary work.

Take One Picture

Norwich Castle is the regional partner for National Gallery's very successful approach called Take One Picture. Norfolk schools have been delighted to be able to take part in Take One locally, London is too far and too expensive to visit easily with primary children. We now see teachers teaching independently in the Art galleries in a way that did not happen before.

Teacher Training

Over the past five years we've worked increasingly with Teacher Training in order to raise awareness of museums and equip teachers of the future with the skills and confidence to make the most of museums in their teaching careers. Another first in the UK is the partnership work with UEA when groups of trainee teachers teach children from local schools in the museum as part of their teacher training course. This work is coming to fruition now and increasingly we are seeing teachers who first had contact with us during their training.

We are delivering more of the schools programme in-house, working side-by-side with professional actors and artists.

Schools at the Bridewell Museum

Michelle Sorenson, the Norwich Museums Learning Officer with responsibility for developing and delivering schools' packages at the Bridewell Museums has been working with schools to develop and trial sessions at the Museum

The Bridewell Museum is welcoming school groups for the first time since its refurbishment. In November 36 excited Year 3s from Wensum Junior School, Norwich visited for the day.

The children were organised into small groups to look around the museum asking questions, drawing, reading and collecting information from displays and photographs. They found out about landmark buildings in the city (including, the Bridewell itself), past trades and industries of Norwich, what they produced and the people associated with them.



They interviewed John Newstead who created the pharmacy collection and heard about the work of chemists in the past, experiencing some of the smells and objects of the trade. Each group also took part in a handling session where they were able to explore more closely some of the tools and products of the industries.



The children enjoyed the interactive elements in the museum. Enthusiastically trying on wigs, hats and shoes, listening to audio posts, playing games and admiring some of the large and unusual objects on display like the loom, fire engine, beam engine, dairy cart, telephone exchange and 'jigsaw wall'.

The visit gave museum staff a chance to assess the logistical challenges of organising school groups in the museum for arrival, lunch and activity spaces.

See Appendix 2 attached for example of information, timetable and background information given to teachers for a session called A Day in the 60s: Changing Times

More school bookings are already in place for November and December and work will continue with schools to develop workshops and educational materials to support a range of curriculum areas. See below for schools that have already visited or booked.

School Name	Date	Year Group	Number of Students	Activity/Notes
Avenue Out of School Club	30.8.12	1-6	20	Self Led
Wensum Junior School	28.9.12	3	34	Norwich Industries Handling Workshop
Roman Hill Primary School	17.10.12	5	62	Self led
Home Educated Group	7.11.12	6-11	20	Self led
Home Educated Group	8.11.12	2	2	Self led
St Thomas More Junior	13.11.12	4	26	Workshop
St Thomas More Junior	14.11.12	4	26	Workshop
St Thomas More Junior	15.11.12	4	26	Workshop
Hewett School	20.11.12	7-11	10	Self led
St Andrews Primary School	21.11.12	3-4	11	Self led
Mile Cross Primary	30.11.12	6	49	Changing Times: Britain in the 1960s
Home Educated Group	20.12.12	6	1	Self led
Avocet House	20.12.12	7	2	Specialist Education Services (WWII role-play facilitated by Katrina Siliprandi)



Under fives

October saw the launch of '**Snapdragons**' at Norwich Castle. This is an exciting new regular activity session for children aged 2-4 years which aims to introduce the collections to young children and their parents or carer in a fun way that encourages interaction and rich conversations.

Each month the group will explore a different theme using objects, stories, trails and creative craft activities to inspire imagination and curiosity. Unusual topics, not usually associated with an under 5s audience, will be investigated in a playful way e.g. Romans, Saxons, Egyptians, Life in a Castle, bones and teeth.

This month the children experienced life in Roman and Iceni times by using ideas such as 'hiding things' and 'round shapes' to explore the world of round houses, chariots, and hidden treasure.



Children tried on Roman armour and Iceni cloaks, painted woad on their faces to frighten the soldiers away, ground up herbs and collected hidden coins.

The whole session is introduced and drawn together by a dragon puppet 'Snap' the dragon who the children become familiar with through repeated songs and action rhymes every month.

The sessions can be booked in advance and have been advertised through Children's Centres.

We were delighted with the response to the first Snapdragons and look forward to a very successful future.

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 David White, Chief Executive of Norfolk County Council and Derek Murphy, Leader of the Council has circulated an email confirming that further budget savings can be expected and informing staff about a comprehensive review of the authority's functions.

Norwich Castle Temporary exhibitions

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A FORGOTTEN FRIENDSHIP

To Monday 31st January

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

Norwich Castle Open Art show 2012: VISION AND REALITY

To Sunday 9 Dec 2012

A selling show of 145 works chosen from 140 artists from across the region. Sales from the show have been good this year helped by the sale of a high value work by local artist Bruer Tidman. The East Anglian Arts Fund EAAF organises the show in collaboration with Norwich Castle. It provides a valuable source of income which EAAF uses to support Norwich Castle's temporary exhibition programme.

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Magic Worlds: Fantasy, Illusion and Enchantment

A V&A Museum of Childhood touring Exhibition

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

Saturday 26 January - Sunday 14 April 2013

To step into a magical world is to leave reality behind and accept the fantastical. Explore the often dark fantasy realms of celebrated stories and fairy tales. Marvel at amazing tricks and the feats of awe inspiring magicians. Dare to believe in fairies and enter a dreamlike landscape of fabled creatures. This exhibition invites you to suspend your beliefs and enter another world... For the child in all of us!

See Appendix 3 for press release and images

This exhibition is the focus of Norwich Castle's annual family focus Jan-April season of events. *Please see Events Section for details.* Tom Blofield, the owner of the visitor attraction Bewilderwood and author of a number of children's books has agreed to open the exhibition and to provide two storytelling sessions as part of our events programme.

Contemporary Art Commission May 2013

Norwich Castle and Norfolk and Norwich Festival and working in partnership to commission contemporary British artist Brian Griffiths to create a landmark commission to be exhibited in Norwich Castle's Keep in May 2013 for the duration of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival. The Keep has not been used in this way before and it will be very interesting to see the space being used in a different way for a short period. Existing exhibits and interactives will be either relocated for the 3 week period or incorporated into or hidden by the art work itself. The very popular *Museums at Night* event will take place during the Festival, providing everyone with the opportunity to see the art work in the transformed Keep free of charge.

Summer 2013 Exhibition

The artist Brian Griffith has also been invited to curate the Summer 2013 Temporary Exhibition of contemporary sculpture from the Arts Council England collection. Brian will choose loans from the Arts Council England's collection of contemporary sculpture which includes works from national and internationally known artists such as. This exhibition will be launched with the commission during the Norfolk and Norwich Festival in May 2013.

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, the Learning Services Team are already liaising with schools with regards incorporating the exhibition into the schools programme, and will also 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 developing 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. Guest curator Linda Morris 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

Norwich Castle's Anglo-Saxon and Viking Gallery

The largest hoard of Iron Age coins found in Britain since 1849 is on display at Norwich Castle's Anglo-Saxon and Viking Gallery. The hoard of 840 gold alloy coins was found by metal detecting near Wickham Market in Suffolk in 2008. The coins, a denomination now called staters, were buried in a pottery jar. They were issued by the Icenii tribe who occupied parts of modern day Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge.

Colchester and Ipswich Museums purchased the hoard and are working in collaboration with other museums to tour the hoard around the Eastern Region.

Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum Display in Norwich Castle

A Listed Building Consent application for converting a cupboard leading off the Rotunda Balcony into a first world war trench experience to enhance the new displays has been submitted to Norwich City Council. The cupboard is currently used for storing the enormous ranges of light bulbs used in Norwich Castle. The development of the new displays is well underway. The current *About My Person* display of costume and textile collections will be dismantled in January/February, enabling the cases to be reconfigured and refurbished and fitted out with new display lighting. Since August a Conservator has been working on the collections one day a week and the recently appointed project assistant is working with designers on the interactive timeline.

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. In addition to repair and replacement this will include updating the Norwich Castle Introduction film and the A/V interpretation in the Boudica Gallery. Also new interactives for the under fives, touch screen interpretation for the Paston Treasure painting and a range of new signage leading up to and in the Castle entrance and elsewhere in the museum.

Events

Dark Nights: New exciting Half Term Art activity at Norwich Castle

During October half term visitors to Norwich Castle helped to make a large scale 3D Art activity depicting an estuary scene, inspired by the boat paintings in the current Cedric Morris and Kit Wood exhibition. Local artist Emma Jarvis masterminded the project which was led by in-house Learning Assistants over the course of the week.

Visitors made models of houses, boats, trees and a very large lighthouse. The scene was lit up with coloured light bulbs to pick up on the theme of Dark Nights, which gave a magical feel when the gallery lights were dimmed for a few minutes during the day.



Visitors loved the activity

'the best thing you've done'

'I'm taking my boat back to Germany where I live as museums there don't do anything as exciting as this'

Next half term in February Emma will be building a Magic World using the exhibition from V&A museum of Childhood of the same name as a stimulus.

Poetry Event

Back in the summer we were approached by Arts Council funded poetry promoter, Jaybird, to see if we'd be interested in hosting a poetry performance, 'I Gaze Like An Astronaut From My Kitchen'. The show featured four up-and-coming poets who've worked with producers, designers and directors to create twenty minute showcases of their work using theatrical techniques such as props and lighting in order to present poetry in a fresh and engaging way. Julia Bird, the director of Jaybird, was keen to do a show in Norwich using some of the city's iconic spaces, including the Castle and the Forum. Writers Centre Norwich gave their backing to the project, helping to coordinate and publicise the event and selling tickets. The decision was taken to go ahead as it provided an opportunity to see if we could attract new audiences to the Castle by hosting a different kind of event which didn't involve any financial commitment from the service, other than allowing the audience free entry to Norwich Castle with the purchase of their poetry ticket.

As part of our Arts Council England plan we are also looking to collaborate more with other cultural partners, including the Writers Centre. The event was held on 24th November and was a modest success in terms of attracting audiences - 23 in a venue [the Colman Gallery] with a capacity of 50, but it was highly rated by those who attended and the venue worked well. It has proved that the Castle can host live literature successfully, has begun the WCN collaboration [a meeting exploring further opportunities takes place in December], and also forged a link with the Forum.

Christmas at the Castle

Friday 7 December, 5-9pm

A craft fair, baroque music and dancing, live owls in the Keep and a special Christmas menu in the Cafe, all wrapped up in our first Christmas evening event 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. There will be a discount incentive to encourage visitors to visit both sites.

Family Focus Season: Late January-East 2013

For the last 3 years Norwich Castle has delivered a season of family focused activities and events on Saturdays between Christmas and Easter. These have proved popular, particularly as many leisure and heritage attractions are closed to the public during this period. The programme of events and activities for 2013 has been developed around the Magic Worlds temporary exhibition which opens in late January and also National Science Week in March. They include storytelling, magic lantern and puppet shows, creative writing, magicians, craft activities and talks.

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 website on www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk for up to date information for Norwich Castle, Strangers' Hall and Bridewell Museum.

Other News

A recent article in the monthly glossy, *Country Life*, focused on the Re-imagined project to redisplay NMAS' renowned collection of Norwich School paintings. The beautifully illustrated article devotes six pages to the work of the Norwich School artists, particular Cotman and Crome, demonstrating the importance of the collection to the story of art in Britain. It's great to see the hard work to re-display these great paintings being recognised so positively in a national publication.

Strangers Hall



Cathy Terry, Curator of Social History at Strangers' Hall, was recently invited to participate in a lecture series in Norwich and Ghent, as part of the Shaping 24 project – Strategies for Heritage Access Pathways in Norwich and Ghent.

The project is part-funded by the European Regional Development fund and led by partners Norwich HEART and Ghent City

Council, as part of their strategy to develop each city's most significant buildings as heritage attractions.

The Shaping 24 initiative not only enabled audiences in each city to learn a little of their parallel histories, but also offered the chance for museum curators, archaeologists and archivists to meet their European counterparts and find out about the challenges and opportunities facing similar historic cities – thus establishing links which we hope will be built on in future.

Cathy spoke on 'The Norwich Strangers and their contribution to the Norwich textiles industry', and her lecture partner Ann Vannieuwenhyse, Director of the Museum of Industrial Archaeology and Textiles, covered the textiles history of Ghent and the setting up of MIAT. This museum is housed in a former linen mill and has a wonderful collection of early and more recent textiles and printing machinery.

Norwich, as one of the major cities of medieval England, has a history that in many ways parallels that of Ghent, the wealthy power-house of the Low Countries textiles industry. The cities' stories are closely intertwined in the areas of trade and industry, migration and settlement. As is often the case with textiles history, prosperity on one side of the North Sea spelled reversals for the other. In Ghent spectacular medieval cloth-making success was followed by a wool shortage and religious persecution which contributed to a long-lasting slump for the textile industry.

Meanwhile, the Flemish settlement and injection of technical expertise in Norwich during the 16th century boosted our own 'Norwich stuffs' and, by the 18th century, had underpinned city prosperity during the time it was considered 'second city' in the realm. By the 19th century however, Norwich textiles were beginning to decline, whereas the early industrialisation in Ghent gave it a new lease of life, specialising particularly in linen spinning. Numerous large factories and warehouses bear witness to this success. Today the Belgian textiles industry is very much alive and specialises in production of state-of-the-art technical fabrics for swimmers, astronauts and fire-fighters.

It was particularly illuminating to consider the individual histories of two cities which have as close cultural links as 'different sides of the same coin' and we are very grateful to HEART for making this possible.

.Image: Ghent's magnificent medieval cloth hall is just one of an incredible range of impressive medieval buildings.

Deep Clean: Call for volunteers!



The annual call has come round again for volunteers to get involved in Strangers' Hall's New Year deep clean .

The Deep Clean is also open to any interested museum volunteers who would like to support Strangers' Hall whilst gaining conservation cleaning skills. Training is provided.

There will be a training morning at Strangers' Hall on Monday 7th January. Contact Bethan Holdridge, Curatorial Assistant, 07825 063597



Norwich Castle has achieved 'Recommended on TripAdvisor' status.

Only businesses and attractions where all reviews achieve a 3+ rating on the influential travel website are eligible for the accolade, which comes complete with a 'Recommended

on TripAdvisor' sticker for display. You'll be glad to know that, of the service's museums which have received reviews, all have an average rating of four stars or more [out of a maximum of 5].

TripAdvisor is another useful source of feedback from visitors and as it is used by 50 million visitors every month, a valuable marketing tool. TripAdvisor offers a range of free marketing aids to help businesses promote themselves, such as email alerts when a new review is posted, How to Guides on optimising your TripAdvisor listing, tips on how to post management responses etc. If you're interested in finding out more visit: www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Owners.

2011/12 Curators' Report

This is currently being compiled. It will be circulated to Members when available early in the New Year.

External Signs Update

The installation of replacement Norwich Castle external signage leading into and within Norwich Castle Gardens commences week beginning 10th December.

Teaching Museum

Eight ACE funded Museum Trainees have been appointed following a rigorous recruitment process. Four of these posts will be based in Norwich and will commence in January 2013.

Member Induction : PROPOSAL FROM NORWICH MUSEUMS MANAGER

There are a number of procedures and processes particular to the work of museums which Members are unlikely to have come across unless they have worked or volunteered in museums. One example is the Accreditation Scheme operated by Arts Council England (ACE), which focuses on the way we deal with collections in terms of acquisitions and disposal, care and maintenance, storage, documentation, display and interpretation. To obtain Accreditation status which is essential to obtain funding from major organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and ACE, it is necessary to maintain certain standards, therefore decisions need to take this into account when making decisions. It might be helpful to Members to have a deeper understanding of different areas of museum work of which Accreditation is but one. The proposal of the Norwich Museums Manager is to prepare some induction sessions for Members in some key areas or on whatever else Members feel would be helpful.

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.