NORWICH
City Council

Norwich area museums committee

Date: **Tuesday, 02 March 2021**
Time: **14:00**
Venue: **Remote**

For further information please contact:

Committee members:

Norwich City Council:
Councillors Huntley (chair), Maxwell, McCartney-Gray, Price, Schmierer and Wright

Norfolk County Council:
Councillors Brociek-Coulton (vice chair), Barnard, Clipsham, Nobbs, Ward and Watkins

Co-opted non-voting members:
Amanda Geitner (East Anglia Arts Fund) and Felicity Devonshire (Friends of the Norwich Museums),Councillor King (Broadland District Council) and Councillor Easter (South Norfolk Council) and 1 vacancy (Norfolk Contemporary Art Society)

Committee officer: Jackie Rodger
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For information about attending or speaking at meetings, please contact the committee officer above or refer to the council's website.

IN TRAN
communication for all

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Agenda

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1 Apologies and changes to the committee membership

To receive apologies for absence and note changes to the committee membership

2 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public.
Please note that all questions must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda by **10am on Thursday, 25 February 2021.**.
Petitions must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda by **10am on Monday, 1 March 2021.**
For guidance on submitting public questions or petitions please see appendix 1 of the council's constitution.

3 Declarations of interest

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting)

4 Minutes **5 - 10**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020

5 Norwich Museums Update - December 2020 to January 2021 **11 - 28**

To receive a report on the activities of the Norwich Museums for the period December 2020 to January 2021

6 Reports from Representatives of the Volunrary Organisations

To receive reports from the representatives of the voluntary organisations that support the Norwich Museums

7 Schedule of Meetings 2021 to 2022

To approve a schedule of meetings, subject to approval at the Norwich City Council's annual council, as follows (all meetings to be held on Tuesdays, at 14:00):
8 June 2021
7 September 2021
7 December 2021
1 March 2022

Date of publication**: Monday, 22 February 2021**

NORWICH City Council

Item 4

MINUTES

Norwich Area Museums Committee

14:00 to 15:20 **8 December 2020**

Present:	City Councillors: Huntley (chair) Maxwell Schmierer	**County Councillors:** Brociek-Coulton (vice chair) Clipsham, Ward

Co-opted non-voting members:
Felicity Devonshire (Friends of Norwich Museums), Brenda Ferris (Norfolk Contemporary Art Society), Amanda Geitner (East Anglia Arts Fund) and Councillor Easter (South Norfolk Council) and Councillor King (Broadland District Council)

Apologies: City Councillors McCartney-Gray, Price and Wright
County Councillors Nobbs and Watkins

(The committee noted that at its November meeting, Norfolk County Council had appointed Council Barnard to this committee to take up a vacancy following the resignation of Councillor Brenda Jones. The committee officer apologised to the committee as agendas had been sent to the members listed on the front of the agenda for this meeting and therefore Councillor Barnard would not have received notification of the meeting and an agenda had been sent to Councillor Jones, who was no longer a member of the committee, in error.)

1. Public questions/petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2020.

4. Norwich Museums Briefing – September to November 2020

The assistant head of museums introduced the report and proposed that he and his colleagues would present the relevant sections and pause after each section to provide an opportunity for members of the committee to ask questions or comment.

The assistant head of museums presented section 1 of the report, praising the museums staff for their resilience and response to the ever changing situation. Norwich Castle, Time & Tide Museum and Lynn Museum had all reopened following the second lock down on 3 December (Gressenhall was now closed for the winter season). The museums service and activities had been impacted by the pandemic. Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) staff had been involved in supporting key services, in relation to the county council's wider Covid-19 response, including the registrars and trading standards. NMS staff have developed digital resources and this had led to an expansion in social media activity and engagement, whilst also providing resources for those in digital poverty or without access to digital content. There have been regular site checks of collections in the museums. NMS staff were also preparing to welcome limited numbers of school parties, when it was safe to do so.

The operations manager explained the Covid-19 safety procedures that had been implemented to enable the reopening of Norwich Castle to visitors, including one way routes through the museum, the wearing of face masks and social distancing, signage and barring access to interactives. Hand sanitisers were available at strategic points. Visitor contact information was being recorded through the NHS Test & Trace scheme. In January 2021, visitors would be able to visit the Royal Norfolk Regimental galleries, following the completion of works in the rotunda, and there would be a new costume exhibition, *Textile Treasures*. Wedding ceremonies had ceased during the second lock down but had recommenced on 3 December with a flurry of bookings and as many as four to five ceremonies a day. In reply to a question from the chair, the operations manager said that he would be meeting with the coordinators of the costume exhibition before Christmas and confirmed that the exhibition would open on 4 January 2021.

The learning manager for Norwich museums presented the section on the learning team activity. She said that arrangements were in place to welcome school visits in January 2021. A virtual programme had been developed which was available to support the schools programme, whilst there was a limited in person offer, and members were asked to share this information with teachers. As an update to the report, members were advised that bookings for the 'Christmas in the Past" live-streamed sessions had increased to 700 pupils since the publication of the agenda papers. Also news had been received of a successful bid for funding from Festival Bridge for a digital programme to support secondary schools which would be progressed in the spring. The learning team had developed ways that groups could engage with collections subject to Covid-19 security measures being in place. An important part of the recovery was to welcome young people back into the museums as part of the youth engagement programme, where there had been resistance or lack of engagement to the digital offer.

During discussion the chair congratulated the NMS staff for the successful bid for Festival Bridge funding. In reply to a question, the learning manager provided details of how schools were notified of the virtual programme. The 30 minute live streaming events had been well received. Uptake of the virtual schools' programme had been

relatively slow and the team was actively promoting the offer. School visits were valued and this was just a different way of providing this service. She would check to see if all schools in Norfolk had received the e-bulletins promoting the offer.

The assistant head of museums presented section 4 of the report, which updated members on the activities of the *Kick the Dust* programme. The project had adapted its delivery during the pandemic and continued to engage young people, particularly with residents of the YMCA and strengthening the partnership arrangement. Members were advised of an extended offer, in partnership with Festival Bridge, to provide 1800 board games "Trail of Trials" to young people aged 14 to 25. The game had been developed by the Time Turners group in King's Lynn and would be delivered before Christmas. Paragraph 4.3 included data on evaluation of the project and showed how the Norfolk *Kick the Dust* programme compared with other programmes across the UK. The chair confirmed that the committee would appreciate evaluation feedback at future meetings. In reply to a question from the chair, the assistant head of museums confirmed that there was no concern about the programme meeting its targets and that in fact it was likely to exceed them.

The assistant head of museums presented section 5 of the report which updated members on the progress of the Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn project. Construction works had been permitted during the second lockdown and the works had focused in the rotunda which should be completed in January 2021. Archaeologists had observed the works which had been carried out in consultation with the city council's planning and conservation and design officers. The basement flagstones and had been carefully removed and stored safely off site. The contract for the main fit-out of the exhibition had recently been out for tender.

The learning manager reported on the *Keep Project* activity plan. The partnership with Archant Press had moved to its second phase (section 3.5 of the report) raising the profile of the project by showcasing the main themes of the British Museum Medieval Gallery in the *Eastern Daily Press*, *Eastern Evening News* and via its online platforms, and had engaged a wide audience. Andy Peters had been commissioned to provide cartoon style graphics for the hoardings to promote the collections in Norwich Castle. The project's learning and engagement officer was working on a project to create historical figures with youth groups that would inform the second phase of the hoardings. The focus was on digital engagement. A series of five minute long recordings promoting the museum's objects, *Talking Objects*, had been launched on the Norwich Castle You Tube channel.

The assistant head of museums commented that the hoardings were important to let people know that Norwich Castle was open during the construction works.

Felicity Devonshire asked whether the Friends of the Norwich Museums tapestry would feature on the hoardings or whether a big reveal was planned. Several panels had been completed. The learning manager said that there were ongoing discussions about the promotion the *Keep Project* through the tapestry but it was not proposed as part of the graphics on the hoardings. The assistant head of museums commented on the outstanding work of the volunteers to continue working on the tapestry throughout the lockdowns.

The assistant head of museums presented section 6 of the report. The Freemen of Norwich had provided a grant for a series of films shared on Facebook to engage a

wider audience with the Museum of Norwich. As part of Black History month, the recent acquisition of a scarf, marking Justin Fashanu's 1980 goal of the season against Liverpool, was highlighted. During discussion, the vice chair commented that the Owen Mathers' design for the *Picturing the Pandemic* logo was excellent and asked whether it could be used again. The assistant head of museums said that he would check on whether this was possible. Members also noted the digital activity at Strangers' Hall, including the virtual tour for the Heritage Open Days this year.

Brenda Ferris said that this would be the last meeting that she was attending as she was stepping down from the committee. She hoped that there would be a place for the Norfolk Contemporary Arts Society when the project had been completed but the society was in limbo at the moment due to the pandemic. The chair thanked Brenda Ferris for her contribution to the committee and the cultural life of the city.

Amanda Geitner, also had to leave the meeting at this point, but said that the East Anglia Arts Fund was looking forward to supporting the Open Art Show *Somewhere Unexpected.*

(Brenda Ferris and Amanda Geitner left the meeting at this point.)

The senior curator of Norwich museums and keeper of fine and decorative art presented section 7 of the report and updated members on the curatorial activities. This included the *Textile Treasures* exhibition (4 January to 28 March); the major exhibition to mark the bicentenary of the death of John Crome, *A Passion for Landscape: Rediscovering John Crome* (23 April to 5 September). The Open Art Show would include landscapes with older images superimposed or "ghosted" over them. The Arts Fund had awarded a grant to Keep project curator, Andrew Ferrara, as part of a programme to support young curators. He would be working on an exhibition as part of the *Keep Project*. The success of this award was partly attributed to the lessons learnt from an unsuccessful bid 4 years ago. She also reported that Turner's *Walton Bridges* was on loan to Colchester Castle until March 2021.

The chair congratulated Andrew Ferrara on being awarded an Arts Fund award.

During discussion a member commented that a high quality copy of *Walton Bridges* was on display in Norwich Castle. The senior curator confirmed that the original would be returned in time for the Crome bicentenary exhibition next year. The chair thanked the senior curator and her team for their work on the planned exhibitions for 2021 in the context of the particular challenges of this year.

The operations manager presented the visitor figures for the period covered by the report. Further information about social media engagement would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting. It was reassuring that when Norwich Castle reopened to general visitors on 16 October, visitor numbers increased to up to 160 per day, which was encouraging for the planned reopening of the main temporary exhibition galleries and the Norfolk Regimental Museum in the New Year.

During discussion the operations manager explained that the visitor capacity at Norwich Castle had been reduced to a maximum of 420 during the building works and this had been reduced further to 120, to comply with Covid-19 security

measures. There was a reduced a loss of income but some of this had been planned for during the construction works. Pre-booked admissions had worked well in October, with a number of days fully booked. With regard to museum pass holders, the assistant head of museums said that pass holders had been given three months free to cover the period when the museums were closed. Financial information about the service was kept under review and was a function of the Norfolk Joint Museums committee.

RESOLVED to:

(1) note the report;

(2) record the committee's gratitude to County Councillor Brenda Jones and Brenda Ferris for their contribution to the work of this committee;

(3) ask the assistant head of museums to:

(a) in relation to *Kick the Dust* continue to include comparative performance data with other Kick the Dust projects in the UK;

(b) provide a summary of the social media data, to circulate to members of the committee with the minutes of the meeting.

CHAIR

Norwich Area Museums Committee 2 March 2021

Norwich Museums Update: December 2020 to January 2021

1. COVID-19 Service update

1.1 All Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) museums closed to visitors on 19 March 2020 as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The majority of NMS non frontline staff have been working remotely from home since this time. Following a phased COVID-secure reopening of four NMS museum sites including Norwich Castle during July and August, all NMS closed again from 5 November as part of the second national lockdown. Following the announcement that Norfolk would be in Tier 2, three NMS sites reopened to the public on Thursday 3 December. These sites were Norwich Castle, Time & Tide Museum and Lynn Museum, with the seasonal site at Gressenhall remaining closed until the start of the 2021 season. Following the announcement that Norfolk would be in Tier 4 from Boxing Day, all NMS sites closed again with effect from 24 December. Museums are legally required to close to visitors in both Tier 3 and Tier 4. All NMS sites remain closed to the public during the current third national lockdown.

1.2 Many museum activities and services, including general visits and school visits, have been severely impacted due to COVID-19. NMS staff have been involved in supporting key work relating to the Norfolk County Council's (NCC) COVID-19 response, including helping to coordinate volunteer activities, managing the distribution of food and medicine to residents who needed this support, and making telephone calls to identified vulnerable residents. NMS staff have recently been helping with other COVID response work including supporting the work of the NHS and the NCC Trading Standards team.

1.3 Throughout the period of the pandemic, NMS staff have developed a broad range of digital resources to support audiences, including resources for children and families. Digital engagement included a significant expansion of social media activity. Resources continue to be made available for those in digital poverty or without ready access to digital content.

1.4 The enormous range of NMS activity during the period of COVID-19 disruption continues to be captured in the weekly *Museums Mardle* staff e-newsletter. A reminder that members of the committee can be added to this distribution list on request.

1.5 The reopening of museum sites during 2020 followed the implementation of strict COVID-19 safety procedures that were reviewed and signed-off by the NCC Health & Safety and Wellbeing team. Reopening was also in accordance with sector-specific guidance issued by the National Museums Directors Council. All visits were pre-booked using timed tickets available from the Art Tickets website. To accommodate social distancing, site visitor capacity was significantly reduced.

1.6 Staff training has taken place at all NMS sites in advance of reopening. Staff are provided with any identified PPE and protective screens have been installed at key points. Enhanced staffing levels ensure that visitors can be provided with the necessary support and advice. Refresher training will take place in advance of the reopening of museum sites.

1.7 Planning work is underway to safely reopen NMS sites when this is permissible. It is intended that all NMS sites will reopen, either for general visitors or for pre-booked use by schools. This planning work includes the development of individual reopening plans for Norwich Castle, the Museum of Norwich and Strangers' Hall.

1.8 During periods of site closure, all NMS sites have been the subject of regular premises, security and collections condition checks. Statutory maintenance has continued, as have essential construction and maintenance works, with strict COVID management procedures in place.

2. Reopening at Norwich Museums

2.1 Norwich Castle reopening arrangements

Work is currently underway in preparation for Norwich Museums sites to reopen to the public once the current lockdown ends. Norwich/Norfolk would need to be either Tier 1 or Tier 2 of current Tier restrictions in order for museums to reopen.

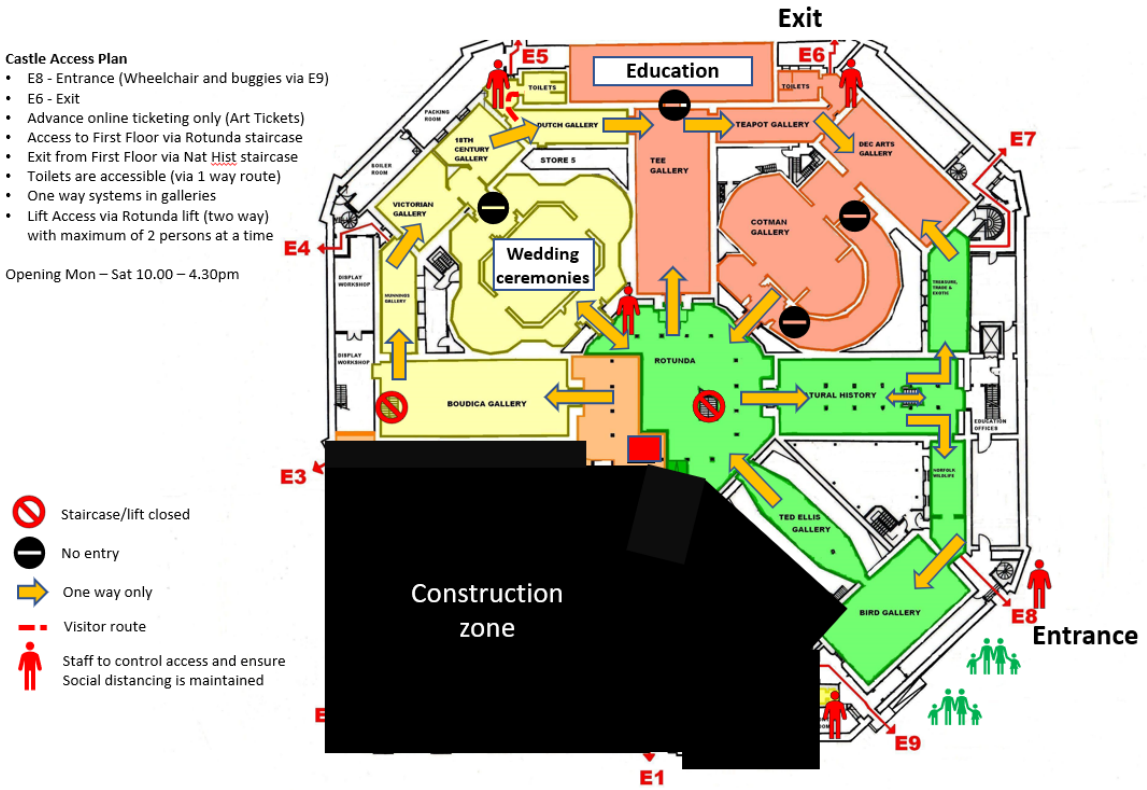
When Norwich Castle reopens, visitors will to continue using the entrance door E8 as the temporary COVID-19 entrance (please see the Castle plan below). Visitors using wheelchairs or with pushchairs can enter via door E9. The temporary visitor exit is via door E6. Visitors tour the building by following a recommended one-way route. Visitors are also able to access toilets. Visitors and staff are required to wear a face covering in areas accessible to the public and to adhere to a 2 metre safe social distance. To aid this, clear and distinctive COVID signage and floor markings have been installed to guide visitors through the one-way systems, as well as to the toilets and the exit.

Samples of the COVID signage and floor markings in use at all NMS sites

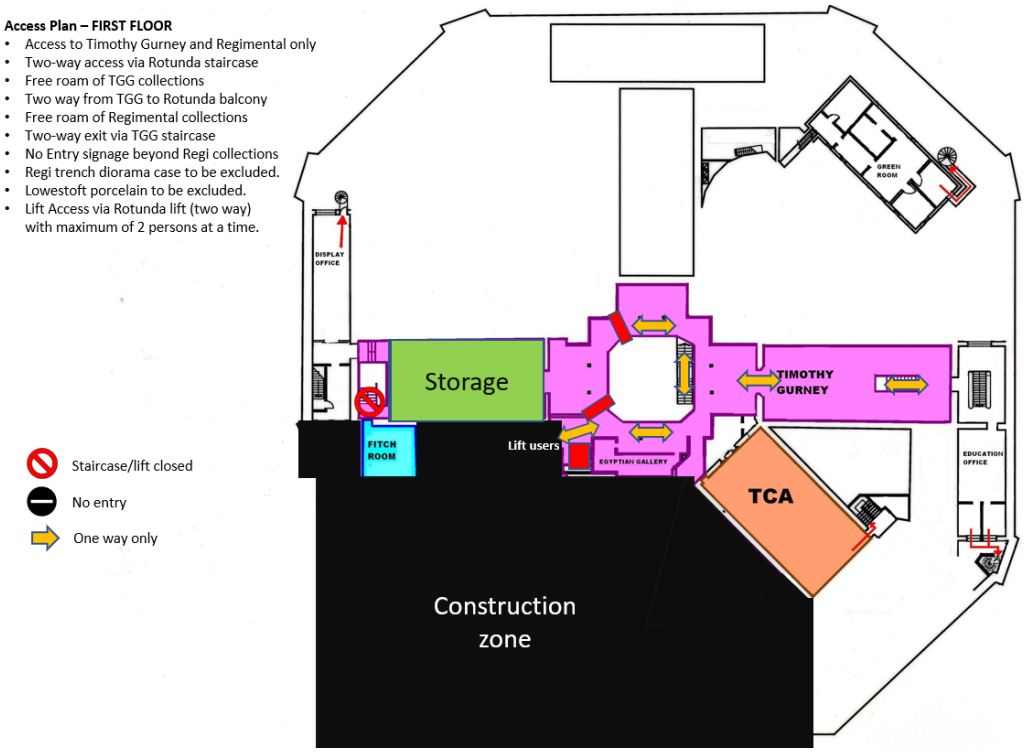
Interactives have been covered or barriered off to reduce the possibility of cross-contamination. The numbers of tables and chairs have also been significantly reduced to further limit touch points and to help reduce the volume of cleaning required. There are also stickers placed on case fronts requesting that visitors do not touch the glass.

Hand sanitiser dispensers has been placed at strategic points throughout the museum. All visitors are requested to sanitise their hands upon entry, after visiting the toilet and prior to exiting the museum. Additional hand sanitiser units have also been installed at points in the museum where there are increased risks of visitors touching door handles or push plates. Visitor contact information is being recorded for the NHS Test & Trace scheme, including via the NHS COVID-19 app. Visitors are legally required to wear face coverings at all times whilst inside the museum, unless exempt.

When Norwich Castle reopens, visitors will now also be able to access the Timothy Gurney Gallery, the Rotunda balcony including the Norfolk Regimental collections and the Rotunda lift. The opening up of these additional areas follows the completion of essential drainage alterations within the Rotunda that form part of the Keep project. This returns all of the Rotunda area to public use, representing an enhancement of the visitor experience.



Ground Floor Plan of COVID-19 visitor routes at Norwich Castle



First Floor Plan of COVID-19 visitor routes at Norwich Castle

2.2. Other Norwich site reopening plans

Staff are also currently working on plans to reopen both of the branch museums in Norwich. It is intended that the Museum of Norwich will open to the public at the same point as Norwich Castle. The Museum of Norwich will use a one-way system with all gallery spaces being accessible.

At this stage it is intended that Strangers' Hall will reopen for school and pre-booked group bookings only. This is due to the fact that as a complicated Tudor building with many items including furniture on open display, Strangers' Hall represents a significant challenge in terms of ensuring a COVID-secure visit. The site will therefore initially reopen to schools and other groups operating in bubbles to attend scheduled learning activities.

2.3. Norwich Castle wedding ceremonies arrangements

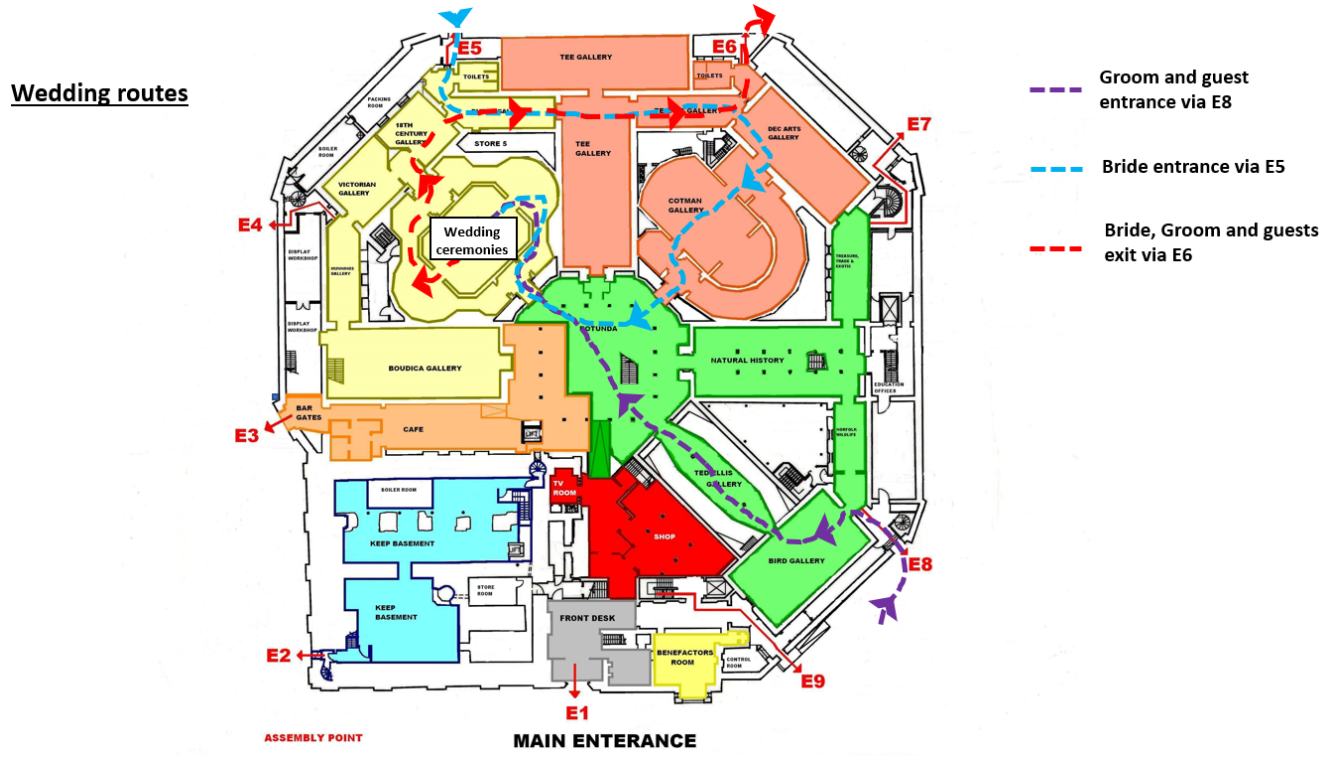
The provision of wedding ceremonies ceased as part of the third national lockdown, with the exception of certain ceremonies that fall under very specific legal exceptions. One ceremony has taken place during the current lockdown that qualified under these exceptions.

It is anticipated that weddings which needed to be cancelled as part of the current national lockdown will be rebooked at a later date. The spring and summer months are normally very busy for weddings at Norwich Castle, so it is anticipated that these months will be even busier with the addition of rearranged ceremonies.

Once ceremonies are permitted again, couples will continue to use the alternative COVID-secure arrangements provided in the Colman Galleries, with NMS staff working closely with colleagues from the NCC Registrars' team.

In order to ensure the safety of staff, visitors and wedding parties, the groom and wedding guests enter the Castle via door E8 along with general visitors where they make their way to the Ceremony Room (Colman Gallery). The bride arrives by vehicle and enters the Castle via door E5. The bride is then interviewed prior to being taken (via the one-way system) through the Cotman Gallery into the Rotunda and then the Ceremony Room. Once the ceremony is complete, the entire wedding party vacate the Castle via the 18th Century Gallery, Dutch Gallery and via door E6.

Only one wedding party is permitted on site at any one time. This enables staff to control the numbers of visitors and wedding guests and help reduce the possibility of queueing or congestion.



Plan of COIVD-19 wedding routes at Norwich Castle

3. Norwich Learning Team activity – highlights report

The Norwich Museums Learning Team have continued to develop and deliver programmes for established priority and target audiences through new modes of engagement. Staff have had to continue to develop new skills in order to reach audiences in new ways. To explore the programmes in more detail and get involved, please visit the *What's On* and *Learning at Home* pages of the Norwich Castle website: https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/norwich-castle

3.1 Staff updates

In December the Learning team welcomed Emma Clarke in the role of Learning Officer for Early Years and SEND Children. Emma previously worked at The Clare School and Norwich Puppet Theatre. Her post is part funded by the *Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn* project. Emma will be leading on the development of learning programmes for 0-5 years children and their adults, including the design of the new Early Years space in the redeveloped Keep and also building a creative learning programme specifically tailored for children with additional and special needs.

In January the team said farewell to Danie Hadley, Events and Visitor Programme Officer, who has left to take up a new role. Danie has delivered many events whilst at the museum, including those organised in conjunction with the hugely successful *Viking!* exhibition in 2019, the new collaboration with Adult Learning *Connect/Create* and the *SuperStitchers* art parcel sent to 400 Norfolk families in 2020.

In December and January, despite the return to national lockdown and museum closures, the Norwich Museums Learning Team have continued to deliver programmes remotely for established priority and target audiences. Staff have continued to develop new skills so the team can reach audiences in new ways. To explore the programmes in more detail, please visit the *What's On* and *Learning at Home* pages of the Norwich Castle website: https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/norwich-castle

3.2 On-site Schools Recovery

Staff have worked closely with the NCC Health, Safety and Wellbeing team to ensure that 'face-to-face' schools programmes could be planned to be COVID-secure and re-start at the three Norwich Museums. Approval to recommence the schools programme was achieved just days before the announcement that England would return to a national lockdown. All of the school bookings in the diary were due to take place during the lockdown period and regrettably had to be cancelled. The hard work of the learning team preparing for the return of schools will not be wasted. The team is ready to recommence the recovery process and restart the schools programme as soon as possible after the current national lockdown ends.

3.3 Schools Digital and Virtual programmes

Virtual outreach delivered direct to classrooms through digital platforms has now become part of the formal Norwich Museums learning offer. The team have launched a 'Virtual Schools' programme starting with three of the most popular primary level events – *Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, Ancient Egyptians,* and *Life in a Castle.* The Virtual

programme provides the high-quality curriculum links, learning outcomes, and engagement opportunities that underpin the historic success of the Norwich Museums schools programme. Teachers are provided with pre-recorded films, an associated pack of resources and lesson plans, and the opportunity for a live-streamed *Ask an Expert* session with learning staff (or alternatively questions answered by email for schools not wishing to participate in a live-streamed event).

In total for December and January the Learning team directly engaged with almost 1,200 school children through the livestream element of the new digital programme. Feedback has been extremely encouraging that we're continuing to positively contribute to children's learning. Some recent comments include:
'What a wonderful experience! The children loved it and parents had commented that it was great so thank you!'
'The videos were brilliant - the children really enjoyed them. The lesson plans were detailed and useful too.'
'The children … deepened their understanding and started to empathise more with different people from history and by the end of the topic were giving reasoned answers for their opinions.'

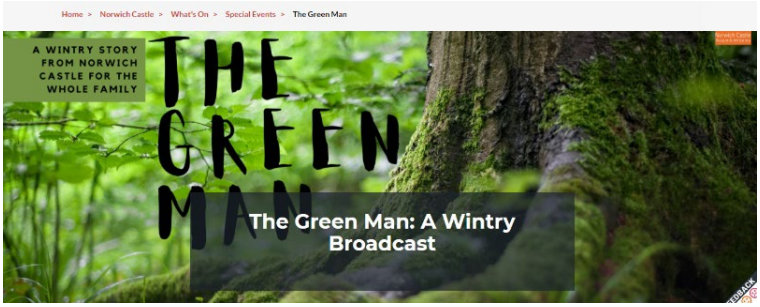
3.4. Children and Family Activities

On site at Norwich Castle

To support children (ages 7-11) and their adult companions visiting Norwich Castle, Teaching Museum Learning Trainee Alex Day continued the successful and COVID-secure 'zine' offer by creating a 'Festive Zine' activity. Alex encouraged on-site visitors to celebrate the season inclusively by making their own zine focusing on gifts, light and feasting.

This was accompanied by a 'winter' creative writing postcard. All visitors were encouraged to be inspired by works in the collections and a 'sentence starter' prompt to inspire the imagination.

Norwich Castle Digital Winter



Winter is a traditional time to gather together and tell stories. Norwich Castle converted the in-person *Green Man* event which was previously successful with family audiences at the museum. Learning team member Susie Childerhouse created an atmospheric and beautiful audio story of Maud, a knight and a green man. The story is available to listen to here: Special Events at Norwich Castle - Norfolk Museums

Strangers' Hall Christmas

This year's Strangers' Hall Christmas offer was a digital Advent Calendar #StrangersAdventofXmas. Each day the museum's social media audiences were treated to information and inspiration drawn from NMS collections and wider Christmas stories. The offer also included a unique recording of the Ashwellthorpe Ballad and the Boar's Head Carol: Strangers' Hall - The Boar's Head Carol | Facebook

Museum of Norwich

The *Norwich Knowledge* Festive Quiz was launched by Museum of Norwich, with local businesses and city Lanes organisations contributing the various rounds. A fun and engaging activity for families and friends to enjoy together online the quiz celebrated the history of the city, its buildings and people. To date the quiz has been played 227 times.

4. Kick the Dust: Norfolk – lockdown project activity update

The *Kick the Dust: Norfolk* project, funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund, has continued to engage with young people throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period. The project team have adapted their activities to support existing groups across Norfolk, in particular YMCA groups, using digital means.

From the start of the first national lockdown to 31 January 2021 there were a total of 2,089 interventions, involving 813 individual young people taking part in 987 hours of quality digital activity. 21 Kick the Dust groups have been taking part in 412 different digital activities across the county, with a further 11 YMCA groups involved in 117 heritage related activities plus an additional number engaging in activities left at their residences to complete independently during lockdown.

Total engagement numbers for the project from October 2018 to 31 January 2021 are 8,161 interventions, involving 2,528 individual young people taking part in 4,122 hours of quality activity. Of these interventions, 197 volunteering opportunities have been provided to 93 individual young people.

Of this activity 26% has been at 'Player' level, 47% at 'Shaper' level and 20% at 'Leader' level. Of these activities, 54% involve young people in leading and designing projects as well as acting as mentors to staff and other young people. Three young people currently sit on the Project Steering Group.

Please note that the *Kick the Dust: Norfolk* Project Coordinator Christine Marsden will give a verbal update on the project at this meeting.

4.1 Breakdown of participants
This has changed considerably since lockdown due to the high number of YMCA clients project staff have been engaging with through the enhanced digital offer.

- 7% aged 11-13 years
- 12% aged 14-16 years
- 32% aged 17-19 years
- 24% aged 20-22 years
- 25% aged 23-25 years

4.2 Target audiences (some young people fall into more than one category)

- YMCA clients – 41%
- Secondary schools – 30%
- FE/HE – 24%
- Young people with mental health issues – 15%
- Outside of mainstream education – 8%
- Young Offenders at those at risk of offending – 5%
- Looked after children and adopted living at home - 7%
- SEND – 6%
- NEET – 4%
- Care Leavers – 2%
- New arrivals and refugees – 2%
- Pregnant young mums and teenage parents – 1%
- Young Carers – 2%

4.3 Evaluation
As part of the feedback, young people are asked how aware they are of the range of job roles available within NMS and the heritage sector and how they perceived museums in terms of being spaces for young people. 72% of young people stated they had little or no knowledge of job roles in NMS or the heritage sector before taking part and 92% felt that museums were a space they could use and would use in the future.
Evaluation responses from this Kick the Dust project can be compared with those from the other eleven Kick the Dust projects currently running across the UK. This programme- wide evaluation has been commissioned by the National Lottery Heritage Fund from the evaluation specialists Renaisi.
Following their engagement with our project:

- 93% of young people said they had learnt new and interesting things about heritage (Renaisi survey 90%);

- 85% of young people felt that heritage reflected them (Renaisi 70%)
- 90% felt heritage would engage other young people (Renaisi 89%).
- 82% of young people said they were more likely to become a volunteer as a result of their involvement in KTD and this option was the most popular with work experience for all those who took part. (Renaisi 61%)
- 100% of young people stated they felt welcomed and respected by staff and 100% felt a sense of achievement.
- 84% of young people stated they now had a better understanding of heritage having taken part in the programme with 16% stating they weren't sure and needed more engagement. (Renaisi 78%)
- 70% of young people felt they had the opportunity to influence decisions. (Renaisi 66%)
- 88% of young people felt that there were jobs for young people like themselves to work in heritage. (Renaisi 72%).
- 65% of young people felt that heritage had helped them understand more about their own lives – it had given them context
- 81% said they had found heritage more relevant than they had before embarking on their Kick the Dust journey (Renaisi 77%).
- 96% of young people felt that the programme was easy and affordable to get involved in but had concerns that they may not be able to do this in the future if there was a significant cost to them. (Renaisi 92%).

5. Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn – project update

5.1 Impact of COVID-19

Whilst the award of the main construction contract was delayed due to COVID-19, project progress was maintained during the first national lockdown, with both the internal and external project teams working remotely to develop detailed designs for the construction works and to discharge pre-commencement planning conditions. The principal contractor has robust COVID-secure health & safety procedures in place for all staff and sub-contractors.

5.2 Main construction works

On 10 August, the Keep and surrounding site areas were formally handed over to the Principal Contractor, Morgan Sindall Construction following Contract Award for the main build. Internal and external secure hoardings are in place to demarcate the construction site and delineate the contractor compound on the mound. There is an additional contractor compound and deliveries access point in the Lower Castle Gardens. A tower crane has been installed on the mound. The internal hoarding line runs across the entrance to the Rotunda, separating the construction zone from the areas of the museum that will remain open to visitors throughout the project.

Recent construction works have included the completion of major new drainage connections in the Rotunda area and the reinstatement of the wooden floor. The Victorian flagstones from the Keep basement have been temporarily removed to facilitate contractor access. A verbal update on progress will be provided at the meeting.

The tower crane and entrance hoardings

6. Other activity

6.1 Museum of Norwich:
Celebrating community cohesion in the city

The Museum of Norwich has partnered with the UEA, Norwich City Council and Good Gym Norwich to celebrate and encourage neighbourliness. The result is the website - https://finecityneighbours.com/ which aims to keep alive the spirit of togetherness fostered in the first national lockdown. The website is full of ideas of how to support your neighbours safely and also acts as a portal for ideas of things to do in lockdown. Dr Ben Little from the UEA who led the project said: *We know from research conducted in the first lockdown that community-based support has been indispensable in our response to the pandemic.* The project was launched in January, with over fifty thousand postcards being delivered by Good Gym volunteers across the city centre. The project has cemented the good work the museum did at the beginning of last year, to collect stories, objects and photographs to reflect peoples' lives during the pandemic. It has also built on existing partnerships with the UEA and Norwich City Council.

Norwich-themed Christmas Quiz
For the Museum of Norwich Christmas digital event, staff capitalised on the appetite for quizzes and devised a *Festive Fun* quiz which could be downloaded and shared with families and friends. Neighbours of the Museum of Norwich including Jarrold's, Visit Norwich, Norwich Cathedral and the Theatre Royal all stepped forward to write a round each, and the end result was very successful. The quiz reached over 17,000 people on Facebook, with 150 people sharing it, making it amongst the highest of the museum's posts for 2020. It was downloaded over 500 times from the museum webpages.

Preparing to reopen
The Museum is preparing to reopen its doors to the public once national guidelines allow, and much work has been done behind the scenes to make the building COVID-secure and ready for visitors. The museum's one-way round system means that radical changes to the way visitors experience the displays have not had to be made. Currently, the museum plans to initially open Wednesdays to schools and groups and Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays to the public. Over the next few weeks, staff will be on site, carrying out conservation cleaning and preparing for reopening.

6.2 Strangers' Hall
Christmas events
With December usually being one of the busiest month's at Strangers' Hall, it was important to find alternative ways to mark the festive season. A series of daily collections-based Advent Calendar posts celebrating Christmas traditions and telling the story of the evolution of the festival was offered across all social media outlets. These included a new arrangement of a little-known Christmas Carol *The Boar's Head*, arranged and performed by Teaching Museum Communications Trainee Natascha Allen-Smith, and a reading of *The Ballad of Ashwellthorpe,* a local tale of lordly hospitality performed by Susie Childerhouse from the Norwich Learning team. Strangers' Hall also participated in and promoted Norwich City Councils' '*Selfie with an Elfie'* scheme to provide a COVID-secure city trail around Norwich arts venues. The Norwich Museums Learning team was able to deliver virtual sessions on Christmas Past usually offered at Strangers' Hall to over 600 schoolchildren in early December. The traditional volunteer Christmas celebration also moved online, with a fun and festive Christmas Quiz /Zoom party attracting most of the regular team.

Digital activity
January's YouTube offer from Strangers' Hall was occasioned by the discovery of original lecture notes from a lecture given in 1931 by former Curator of the Norwich

Museums, Frank Leney, an early exponent of period room settings and diorama in museum display. His notes were matched to a series of archive images of Strangers' Hall to recreate the original lecture, with commentary read by Jan Pitman, Western Area Learning Officer. As part of the promotion, 'Then and Now' archive photographs of period room displays proved particularly popular on social media. Additional social media activity over the period has included a regular *Saturday Selfie*, a series of Unusual Objects, participation in LGBTQ+ month, and support for NMS-wide media initiatives including #Padalong and #MuseumSnowballFight.

Curatorial activity

Curatorial work focused on support for the forthcoming Crome exhibition, documentation of the *Picturing the Pandemic* project and participation in NMS decolonisation working groups and webinars. Bethan Holdridge, Assistant Curator, is leading on the method to ensure that the annual Strangers' Hall Deep Clean of the collections, vital in ensuring collections audit and preventing pest and pollution damage, can be carried out in a COVID-secure manner. Cathy Terry, Senior Curator, participated in a series of focus groups as part of the UEA Medical School/ NCC study of the role of research within Norfolk County Council, reporting to the National Institute for Health Research, in connection with the recent social history team's research project *Picturing the Pandemic.* Tracey Mavor, Building Services supervisor, has supervised work on site to keep the building in good order, including repairs to guttering and downpipes. All members of the team are in the process of completing risk assessments, cleaning SSOWs, signage and display reorganisation to ensure that the museum is ready for the first school groups when lockdown restrictions ease, and working with the Norwich Learning team to adapt sessions to the changed situation. Strangers' Hall staff, inspired by the work of the Marmlade Trust in beating loneliness this lockdown, are setting up a new creative project making themed bunting, aimed at providing volunteers with a continuing involvement with the museum in isolation. As things progress this will be offered to museum volunteers elsewhere, Friends, and other organisations. Staff are also exploring the holding of a regular 'History Club' on the Meet Up platform, which will be open to anyone who would like to talk about the past with like-minded individuals.

7. Norwich Curatorial update

The Norwich specialist curators are continuing their work on exhibitions whilst facing the challenges of working remotely, with very limited physical access to collections.

Dr Tim Pestell, Senior Curator of Archaeology, is primarily focusing on the Keep redevelopment project. He is spending most of his time on practical aspects of the project at present but, along with other members of the curatorial team, has also been making regular videos for the NMS Youtube channel which offer viewers close-ups of some of the choice medieval objects planned for the new displays. Creating videos of this kind has of course been an important new development, for many different purposes, during the pandemic for several members of the curatorial team. Here are links to two of the most recent *Talking Objects* videos presented by Dr Tim Pestell:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oULlho29lVI
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKrHpPd_aH4

Dr Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art, continues to work on the important bi-centenary exhibition on Norwich School artist John Crome, entitled *A Passion for Landscape: Reimagining John Crome*. This exhibition is being supported by the Friends of Norwich Museums as part of their 2021 centenary celebrations.
Despite all the difficulties posed by continued lockdowns, the show is planned to open on 23 April 2021, as originally scheduled. To take the place of some loans now not available due to the impact of COVID, imaginative virtual interpretations will be utilised. For this show Dr Bottinelli is also working on a publication which will include much new research about this most enigmatic of artists. This publication, for which she won Paul Mellon funding recently, will form a lasting legacy of the exhibition, and will, unusually, include extensive conservation studies undertaken in collaboration with Tate Britain.
To coincide with this exhibition at the Castle, to compare how Norwich looked in 1821 in Crome's time, with how it appears today, there will also be an exhibition of photographs, *Crome's Norwich,* at the Museum of Norwich, produced by photographer Nick Stone. His work superimposes images of Norwich past and present. By juxtaposing Crome's views of Norwich with contemporary photographs he creates evocative 'ghost images' with the past and present merged as one. This show will be accompanied by maps showing the many sites in Norwich where Crome painted.

Dr Rosy Gray, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, is working on the East Anglia Art Fund's Open Art Show which is due to be displayed in the Timothy Gurney Gallery from 8 May 2021. To complement the themes of the John Crome exhibition, the topic this year is landscape, and the title *Somewhere Unexpected*. The topical aim is also to acknowledge the significance of our immediate environments in the shifting context of a global pandemic. The call-out to artists is open at present, due to close on 5 March and has already attracted over 100 submissions. For the first time, entries in the form of new media and performance are being invited for the exhibition. For more information see: www.eastangliaartfund.org.uk/somewhere-unexpected

Dr Gray also continues her work on other exhibition projects, including *Slaves of Fashion*, an exhibition with the Singh Twins planned for autumn 2022. This will include combining works from NMS art and social history collections with the Twins' large-scale paintings, and if fundraising is successful will also include a commission for our permanent collection. Dr Gray is also working with artist Yelena Popova on a new exhibition for the Timothy Gurney Gallery, planned for spring 2022. This exhibition focuses on Popova's exploration of the landscape, geology and nuclear histories. Popova has visited Sizewell on the Suffolk coast, as well as other nuclear sites across the UK, gathering stones and soil samples from each locality.

Dr David Waterhouse, Senior Curator of Natural History, has been working on aspects of the Deep History Coast project, including a funding bid in partnership with the NMS Learning team based at Cromer Museum. He has also recently undertaken a CPD session about the Deep History Coast via Zoom for teachers in both Cromer and Great Yarmouth. Dr Waterhouse is also continuing to work on the *More in Commons* exhibition at Gressenhall with Curator Dr Megan Dennis. He has also written a blog post entitled *Queer Nature*, for LGBTQ+ History Month
In terms of media activity, Dr Waterhouse has appeared on Radio Norfolk for their new 'Object of the Week' spot - in which other Norwich and NMS staff are also being featured - discussing fossils. He also appeared on the TV programme *Escape to the Country* to discuss responsible fossil collecting on the Norfolk coast. He is in the process of writing a script for a geology Youtube video for NMS Museums Pass holders.

Dr Francesca Vanke, Senior Curator and Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, has been finalising preparations for the loan of *The Fortress of Konigstein from the North* by Bernardo Bellotto from the National Gallery. *Castles*, the loan exhibition of which it was to have formed a key part, was unable to take place due to lockdown, but this painting is available and will be displayed as a single spotlight loan in the Colman Project Space from 22 March (provisional) – 4 July 2021.

Bernardo Bellotto (1722 - 1780)
The Fortress of Königstein from the North, 1756-8
National Gallery, London

This display will be accompanied by an online version of the cancelled *Castles* exhibition, incorporating some of the original loans. To mount an online exhibition including loans is a new departure for the tea, who are at present researching the most appropriate forum to accommodate this. It is anticipated that the Art UK website may be able to host a version of the exhibition. Staff are also planning an online events programme to accompany this prestigious loan, and Dr Vanke is at present writing a script for a short film about the painting, and a Zoom talk about the exhibition as a whole.
In addition, Dr Vanke has put together a mini online exhibition for the blog website to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month. This takes the form of an LGBTQ+ history of the twentieth century, through the work of ten artists in the collection dating from 1902-2018. The full blog can be found here -
https://norwichcastle.wordpress.com/2021/02/09/art-identity-lgbtq/
Also to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month, Dr Vanke recently appeared on Radio Norfolk's 'Object of the Week' slot, talking about a stoneware jug in the collection by gay ceramic artist Emmanuel Cooper.

Emmanuel Cooper (1938-2012)
Jug, stoneware, 1990s
Norfolk Museums

Dr Vanke has completed the texts for 45 decorative arts objects as part of Norwich Castle's entry for the Google Arts website, and separate entries based around the Paston *pietre dure* table-top and the *Paston Treasure* painting. These entries are all expected to go live shortly.

Ruth Battersby Tooke, Senior Curator of Costume and Textiles, curated the *Textile Treasures* exhibition in the Norwich Union gallery, featuring spectacular large-scale works from the NMS collections in time for its projected opening date of 3 January. However, due to the third national lockdown, the exhibition needed to be deinstalled, with plans to re-mount it, potentially in the Timothy Gurney Gallery during 2021. She has also devised a selection of linked events which can be undertaken online.

Kate Thaxton, Curator of the Regimental Collections, continues to work towards a major store re-organisation. She is also still working on the update of the Regimental Museum's website and responding to an increased number of enquiries, with more

people researching their family histories during lockdown. The recent digitisation of the World War One records has helped greatly with this process.

8. Participation numbers

An update on physical visitor numbers and digital participation will be provided at the meeting.

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