

Norwich area museums committee

Date: **Tuesday, 07 December 2021**
Time: **14:00**
Venue: **Council chamber, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH**

For further information please contact:

Committee members:

Committee officer: Jackie Rodger
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Norwich City Council:

Councillors Huntley (chair), Everett,
Grahame, Maxwell, Schmierer and Wright

Norfolk County Council:

Councillors Brociek-Coulton (vice chair),
Birmingham, Reilly, Rumsby, Ward¹ and
Watkins

Democratic services
City Hall
Norwich
NR2 1NH

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 Danusia Wurm (Norfolk
Contemporary Art Society)(and 1 vacancy)

www.norwich.gov.uk

Ex officio: Councillor Kybird (vice chair,
Norfolk Joint Museums committee)

¹ Chairman of Norfolk Joint Museums
committee

Information for members of the public

Members of the public and the media have the right to attend meetings of full council, the cabinet and committees except where confidential information or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private.

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

Agenda

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1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

2 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public in accordance with 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 7 September 2021

5 Norwich Museums Report September to November 2021 11 - 38

To receive the report on activities at the Norwich Museums for the period September to November 2021 (including a presentation from Hannah Jackson, Project Manager, on the Norwich Castle - Royal Palace Reborn)

6 Reports from the Representatives of the Voluntary Organisations

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

6(a) Friends of the Norwich Museums - report 39 - 40

7 Kick The Dust Project Update

To receive a presentation from Christine Marsden, Kick the

Dust Co-ordinator on the project.

Date of publication: **Monday, 29 November 2021**



Norwich Area Museums Committee

14:00 to 15:45

7 September 2021

Present:

City Councillors:

Huntley (chair, following
appointment)
Everett
Grahame
Maxwell
Schmierer
Wright

County Councillors:

Brociek-Coulton (vice chair, following
appointment)
Birmingham
Reilly
Ward
Watkins

Co-opted non-voting members:

Felicity Devonshire (Friends of Norwich Museums), Councillor King
(Broadland District Council), Danusia Wurm (Norfolk Contemporary Art
Society)

Ex-Officio member: Councillor Kybird

Apologies:

County Councillor Rumsby
Amanda Geitner (East Anglia Arts Fund)

1. Appointment of chair

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Huntley for the ensuing civic year.

2. Appointment of vice chair

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Brociek-Coulton for the ensuing civic year.

3. Public questions/petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

4. Declarations of interest

None.

5. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on
2 March 2021.

6. Friends of the Norwich Museums 1921 to 2021

The chair introduced Charles Bingham-Newland, chairman of the Friends of the Norwich Museums, and Francesca Makins, chairman of the Friends of the Norwich Museums 100 committee, and former chairman of the Friends, and welcomed them to the meeting.

Charles Bingham-Newland and Francesca Makins gave a joint speech, which provided a brief synopsis of the first 100 years of the Friends of the Norwich Museums. John Henry Walter founded the Friends of the Castle Museum, which subsequently called the Friends of the Norwich Museums, on 31 December 1920 because of his concern that works of art of local and national importance were being lost to the people of Norwich and Norfolk because there were public no funds to purchase them, used his connections to enrol subscribers from the aristocracy, gentry, businessmen, politicians and antiquarians. Some of the families of the original subscribers continued to support the Friends to the present day. The presentation took members through the growth of Friends of the Norwich Museums from 150 subscribers in 1929 and its many acquisitions, over the second world war and following decades to the present day. It changed from a funding body to one that organised loan and ever-changing exhibitions, working closely with museums' staff to support the museums, and actively sought acquisitions to augment the museums' collections through its subscriptions, and in partnership with regional and national organisations.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) thank Charles Bingham-Newland and Francesca Makins for their interesting and information talk;
- (2) record the gratitude of the committee for the sustained and contribution that the Friends have made to the cultural life of the city;
- (3) record the gratitude for the work that the Friends did for the Norfolk Museums Service and the people of Norwich.

7. Norwich Museums Report – June to August 2021

([The Norwich Museums Report – February to May 2021](#) was available on the city council's website with the papers for this meeting.)

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 ask questions or comment.

The assistant head of museums said he was pleased to reopen sites as the legal restrictions specific to museums were removed on 19 July 2021. Many of the Covid-secure measures were still in place in the museums to protect staff and visitors. The reopening of sites was in accordance with sector specific guidance issued by the National Museums Directors Council and the English Civic Museums Network. An information graphic was circulated at the meeting which provided an overview of the Norfolk Museums Service's activities for "A Year Like No Other: An Overview of 2020-21".

The operations manager referred to the report and updated the committee on the arrangements for the reopening of the Norwich museums. Visitors to Norwich Castle could now enter and exit through the external door E8 and the one-way system was no longer in use which would improve the visitor experience. The interim catering facilities, as part of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project, were now available within the Rotunda, where there was also an enhanced retail offer. The Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell had reopened on 22 May for three days each week (Thursday to Saturday). Strangers' Hall had opened on 22 August and would be opening on Wednesdays and Sundays. Weddings at Norwich Castle had continued to be busy with up to 6 weddings a day and this would continue into September.

During discussion a member asked that references to bride and groom entrances should not be gender specific. The operations manager apologised and said that he would refer this to the registrars who manage the weddings at Norwich Castle.

The learning manager presented section 3 of the report which highlighted the work of the Norwich Learning Team. The team had managed the visitor engagement programme to support the exhibition of Bernardo Bellotto's painting *The Fortress of Königstein from the North*, on loan from the National Gallery which included specific activities for early years and caregivers. Digital engagement had been developed during the pandemic would continue as it provided a rich programme that benefited visitors and the museums. School visits had recommenced at Strangers' Hall and the Museum of Norwich. Nearly 1,000 children attending facilitated activities from the beginning of June to the end of the summer term at the three Norwich museums. All available school visits were booked until mid-October at the three museums. The schools digital and virtual programme continued to be provided for all schools, as well as digital resources for schools to use before and after the museum visit. Public guided tours for groups of no more than six people had recommenced. Four webinars had been held in conjunction with the Crome exhibition, each attended by approximately 100 people during a period when Covid restrictions restricted the numbers of people who could have attended an in-person talk. In conclusion, the learning manager said that members were welcome to observe any learning sessions and to contact her if they wished to do so.

During discussion a member asked if there was any information about the other activities that schools engaged in combination with a visit to the museum, for instance visiting Dippy the Diplodocus at Norwich Cathedral, to make the most of the cost of coach hire. The learning manager said that most school visits were from 10:00 to 14:30 to fit around the school day and coach hire. Visits to the prehistory and natural history collections at Norwich Castle complemented the Dippy the Diplodocus exhibition.

In reply to a member's question, the learning manager said that they had not received any feedback on the Bellotto Boxes yet. The member said that a Holiday Afternoon Fun Session had been held at a community centre in her ward where the children had enjoyed the activities.

A member commented on the interesting learning programme and asked whether any activities around Norwich City Football Club's history and its move into the premiership were planned. The learning manager said that this was an interesting idea and could involve maths and history.

The assistant head of museums presented section 4 of the report, *Kick the Dust* and for the benefit of new members on the committee summarised the background to the project as follows:

- Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund;
- One of 12 Kick the Dust Projects in the UK;
- Working in partnership with YMCA Norfolk;
- Working with a target age of 11 to 25 year olds, but focussing on 16 to 25 year olds to engage with the museums.

The report contained statistics and an update on the project activities. The assistant head of museums suggested that the Christine Marsden, the project co-ordinator, attended the next meeting of the committee to give a presentation on Kick the Dust and provide more detailed information on individual projects and statistics. Members noted that the Kick the Dust project had continued to perform well and was ahead of other Kick the Dust project nationally.

The assistant head of museums presented section 5, Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn and updated members on the project. Members were assured that the wooden floor in the Rotunda had been carefully reinstated. All investigative surveys were overseen by the city council's design and conservation officers and carefully recorded. Dates for completion of the project were still subject to uncertainty but it was expected that construction works to the Keep would be completed by early 2023, and the new entrance, shop and cafe during 2022.

In reply to a member's question, the assistant head of museums said that archaeological discoveries on site were reported in the Eastern Daily Press on a regular basis. The mosaic floor in the entrance had been lifted and the crest would be reinstated following the completion of the main construction work. Discoveries had included a new understanding of the location of a staircase from the Georgian or Victorian period when the castle was used as a prison, and some of the excavation works revised information about the original castle and walls that had been on the Mound. Regular items in the local press in partnership with Archant and social media raised public awareness of the project.

The assistant head of museums presented the section on the Museum of Norwich and Strangers' Hall. Although Strangers' Hall had been built during the plague era, it was a difficult building to ensure Covid security and therefore had only been able to reopen to the public when restrictions had been relaxed. Preparations for reopening had included the installation of an air purification machine to improve ventilation in the Victorian rooms. The gardens and courtyards have benefited from restoration by the volunteer team during the period of closure. Activities at the museum include showcasing artworks created by local artists as part of the Edible East focus on food sustainability and opening to the public on the Heritage Open Days on 12, 15 and 19 September.

The assistant head of museums then referred to section 7 of the report, Norwich Curatorial Updates. Members noted the work of the curators during this period, including that David Waterhouse, the senior curator of Natural History and Geology had put together a small display to complement the Dippy the Diplodocus exhibition and provided a series of related lectures/talks and events.

In reply to a question, the assistant head of museums said that air handling plant was being replaced in the T galleries to ensure that the correct environment was maintained, and that the museum could continue to receive loans of paintings from other museums and galleries. The project was funded by the county council capital programme

The operations manager presented the visitor numbers set out in section 8 of the report. Under Covid restrictions Norwich Castle could only have a maximum of 126 people, including staff, in at any one time. This had increased to 420 following the relaxation of restrictions on 19 July 2021 albeit reduced because of the Gateway to Medieval England project. Attendances had been at full capacity during June and July. Visitors were encouraged to pre-book but off-the-street visitors could be accommodated.

The assistant head of museums referred to the appendix to the report *Headline Stats for Norwich Museums February 2012 – July 2021* and the range of digital interactions on social media. Members had previously received this with the minutes of the meeting.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the [report](#) and thank the officers for their presentation;
- (2) ask the assistant head of museums to invite Christine Marsden, project co-ordinator, to give a presentation on Kick the Dust.

8. Reports from Representatives of the Voluntary Organisations

Felicity Devonshire provided an oral update on the Friends of the Norwich Museums which was in its centenary year. The Friends were looking forward to the civic reception and a luncheon, hosted by their patron, Lord Cholmondeley.

Danusia Wurm said that she was pleased to be representing the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society on the committee. The society had strong links with Norwich Castle and would be funding two significant projects next year. The society worked closely with the Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) and provided a fine art prize and free membership to students. The society would be holding its open selling exhibition of artworks of its members in the Hostry, Norwich Cathedral, from 8 November to 5 December 2021 and would be recommencing its programme of talks on 27 January with a talk on Peruvian indigenous art.

RESOLVED to thank Felicity Devonshire and Danusia Wurm for their reports.

CHAIR

Norwich Area Museums Committee 7 December 2021

Norwich Museums Report: September to November 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. Following a phased COVID-secure reopening of four NMS museum sites including Norwich Castle during July and August 2020, all NMS closed again from 5 November 2020 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 2020. 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 2020. Following the government announcement that indoor museums could reopen from 17 May 2021 as part of Roadmap Step 3, seven NMS sites reopened to visitors in the week beginning 17 May. These sites were Norwich Castle, the Museum of Norwich, Lynn Museum, Time & Tide Museum, the Elizabethan House Museum, Cromer Museum and Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse (outdoor areas at Gressenhall had reopened on 12 April under Step 2). Subsequently, museum re-openings have taken place at Ancient House Museum and Strangers' Hall. All legal restrictions specific to museums were removed by the Government with effect from 19 July 2021 (Step 4).
- 1.2 Despite the ending of legal restrictions on 19 July, many of the existing COVID-secure systems and procedures remain in place, with a focus on keeping staff and visitors safe through minimising the risk of transmission. Visitors are being requested (rather than legally required) to follow these procedures. The key changes to NMS procedures include:
- The wearing of face coverings by visitors and staff is now “expected and recommended” rather than required by law
 - 2m social distancing is no longer a requirement. Visitors are instead being requested to abide by “respectful distancing” from other visitors and staff
 - Test & Trace venue check-in is now advisory rather than a legal requirement
 - The pre-booking of tickets is no longer a requirement, but is now recommended. Walk-in visits are permitted where there is sufficient site capacity
 - Site capacity limits have been increased (previously averaging 30% of normal capacity) and pre-booked ticket slots adjusted to accommodate an overall increase in visitor numbers.
 - Priority on-site activities have resumed including delivery to schools and young people. Some on-site public events have also resumed. All such activities are still the subject of strict COVID-19 procedures, with Safe Systems of Work being created to protect staff and visitors.
- 1.3 In terms of the COVID-19 procedures and systems that remain in place across NMS sites, the priorities remain:

- Ventilation – maintaining existing ventilation arrangements to maximise fresh air flow including supplementary air purifiers at relevant sites
 - Cleaning regimes – maintaining enhanced cleaning arrangements including toilets and regular touch points
 - Hand sanitisation – maintaining existing sanitiser stations and encourage regular hand sanitisation/hand washing. Additional hand sanitiser stations are being introduced where required (e.g. near reactivated interactives)
- 1.4 Many museum activities and services, including general visits and school visits, have been severely impacted due to COVID-19. During the pandemic 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 also been helping with other COVID response work including supporting the work of the NHS and the NCC Trading Standards and Registrars' teams.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 The reopening of museum sites during 2020 and 2021 followed the implementation of strict COVID-19 safety procedures that were reviewed and signed-off by the NCC Health & Safety and Wellbeing team. Reopening also took place in accordance with sector-specific guidance issued by the National Museums Directors Council and in liaison with the English Civic Museums Network.
- 1.8 Staff training has taken place at all NMS sites in advance of reopening. Staff are provided with any identified PPE and protective screens remain in place at key points. Enhanced staffing levels ensure that visitors can be provided with the necessary level of support and advice. Refresher training for staff took place in advance of the reopening of museum sites.
- 1.9 During periods of site closure, all NMS sites were the subject of regular premises, security and collections condition checks. Statutory maintenance continued, as did essential construction and maintenance works, with strict COVID-19 management procedures in place.

- 1.10 Since 4 October 2021 and in line with NCC practice at office hubs, an increased number of non-frontline NMS staff have returned to the workplace, with strict COVID-19 protocols in place. NMS has also implemented NCC Smarter Working principles across teams, which identify patterns of home and office-based working on a team and individual staff member level.

2. Reopening at Norwich Museums

2.1 Norwich Castle reopening arrangements

Visitors continue to use the external entrance door E8 as the temporary COVID-19 entrance and entrance route. Visitors requiring level access including those with wheelchairs or pushchairs can enter via entrance door E9. Visitors are also able to access toilets. Visitors and staff are advised to wear a face covering in areas accessible to the public and to adhere to a respectful social distance from other visiting parties.



Samples of the COVID signage in use at Norwich Castle

Hand sanitiser dispensers have 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 still being (optionally) collected for the NHS Test & Trace scheme, including via the NHS COVID-19 app.

A 'pop-up' catering offer continues to operate within the Rotunda areas of Norwich Castle along with a seating section. This interim offer will remain in place until the new catering facilities open as part of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project. An enhanced retail offer has now been installed within the Rotunda, with many more lines of stock being made available for purchase.



Temporary catering and retail units at Norwich Castle

2.2. Norwich museums opening arrangements

With effect from 10 November 2021, all Norwich Museum sites returned to their full pre-COVID-19 operating hours. These hours of opening are:

Norwich Castle

Monday – Saturday 10am until 4.30pm

Sunday 1pm until 4.30pm

Museum of Norwich

Tuesday – Saturday 10am until 4.30m

Strangers' Hall

Wednesday 10am until 4pm

Sunday 1pm until 4.30pm

2.3. Norwich Castle ceremonies arrangements

The number of ceremonies taking place at Norwich Castle have continued to remain strong. The NCC Registrars' team are still working through a backlog of ceremony bookings that had to be cancelled during the lockdowns.

Month	No of Ceremonies	Footfall
May	55	578
June	48	600
July	55	1365
August	56	1901
September	127	1663
Total	341	6107

3. Norwich Learning Team activity – highlights report

The Norwich Museums Learning Team continue to develop, deliver and evaluate the impact of learning programmes for priority and target audiences, including Norfolk schools and young people. Staff have continued to work from home, with some return to on-site working to facilitate the reintroduction of in-person events at all three city museums. To explore the programmes in more detail and get involved, please visit the *What's On* and *Learning* pages of the Norwich Castle website:

<https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/norwich-castle>

3.1 On-site Schools Events

The autumn term has seen strong interest from schools to come to the museums for facilitated activities. We continue to host schools in line with COVID-19 protocols designed to keep staff, other visitors and the school groups as safe as possible. The level of engagement and involvement of the pupils has been sustained, despite the continuing restrictions on the types of activity that are possible. At Norwich Castle, the most popular event this term is Ancient Egyptians. At Strangers' Hall the team has delivered many Robert Kett events, and at the Museum of Norwich Chocolate has been a popular topic.

The ongoing Coronavirus restrictions and the impact on capacity at the Castle from ongoing construction works has reduced the number of school children able to be hosted on any given day. Taking account of that reduction, the bookings diary for the autumn term was full to capacity with a waiting list, and the first half of the spring term is almost fully booked too. Across the whole autumn term, the learning team will have provided visits and events for approximately 6,000 school children and their teachers.



Recent feedback from our visiting schools:

I could not have asked for more - as a school we had various logistical problems with staffing, transport and timings, and with all aspects of the visit we were made to feel that none of this was a problem, nothing was too much trouble, and everything felt personalised.

The practical hands-on aspects really engaged all the children. In particular seeing the focus and engagement of one pupil ... I have never seen them make so much effort, be so interested for an entire day, and give such well thought out answers. The whole day really made the children think.

3.2 Schools Digital and Virtual programmes

Whilst the greatest demand has been for school groups to come to the museums, with the site's reduced capacity, digital provision continues to be important for a smaller number of schools. Some schools are needing to be particularly cautious as they have high numbers of children in at risk categories, and the increasing uncertainty of COVID-19 cases in classes which can cause bookings to be cancelled at short notice, we continue to offer digital learning programmes. These provide the high-quality curriculum links, learning outcomes, and engagement opportunities that underpin the success of the schools' programme and for school groups visiting on-site they are provided as pre- and post-visit resources to extend and enrich the learning event. The Norwich Castle project has also seen the conversion of two key medieval events (KS1 *Life in a Castle* and KS3 *Storming the Castle*) into digital formats for the duration of the project.

3.3 Visitor Programme Activities

October Half Term: *Goo, Guts and Gore*

October half term saw the first in-person activity programme delivered at Norwich Castle during a holiday period since March 2020. Continuing to work within the context of COVID-19 safety protocols and restricted capacity at Norwich Castle, staff devised a programme with included facilitated, in-person and digital engagements. Throughout the week, *Goo, Guts and Gore in the Natural History Gallery* gave visitors a chance to discover how gruesome some creatures can be. A QR code provided access to a *Goo, Guts and Gore* quiz and members of the learning team were present in the galleries to help visitors find their way. In the Town Close Auditorium, the Inspirational Science Theatre Company, led by Dr Ken, informed, disgusted and entertained children and their families with the scientific wonders of bacteria and the human gut. Tickets were limited to enable respectful distancing between families to keep everyone as safe as possible. Performances were free with museum admission, and each was fully booked. The third strand was a supported activity trail *Sickening Secrets of the Art Galleries*, encouraging family audiences to explore some of the less pleasant aspects of traditional art works and their making. Learning team staff were present in the galleries to support visitor engagement and enhance the quality of their visit. Evaluation and feedback collected for all three strands has demonstrated the value and importance of facilitated direct engagement for family visitors who seek engaging, fun and interesting experiences in a museum environment. October Half Term provided a robust pilot period of COVID-19-safe visitor programmes to recommence. This learning is informing the planning of Christmas activities at Norwich Castle.

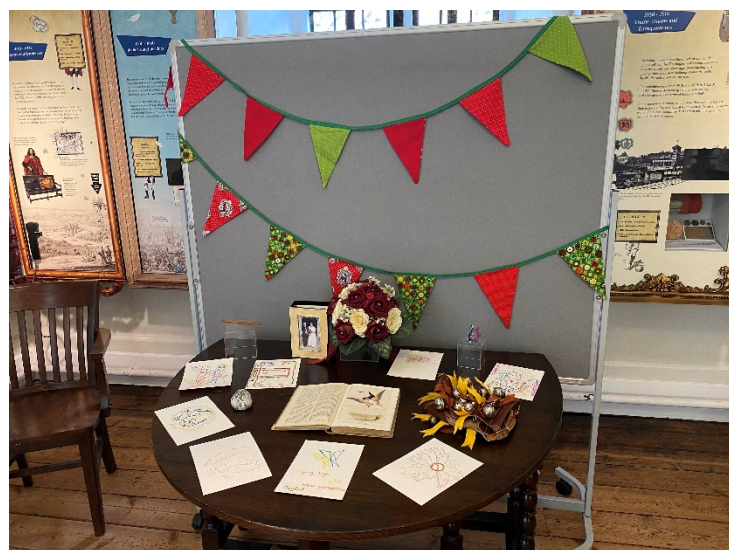
Snap Dragons and Snaplings – in person sessions for Early Years children

Through the pandemic period of museum closures, early years sessions were delivered online, with resources also being posted out to those families taking part. In recent months, staff have taken the step to host in-person activities at the museum once again, but within COVID-19 health and safety protocols in place. Small groups sizes, careful spacing of activity areas and individual family resource packs are all measures taken to maximise safety and minimise risk for participants and museum staff. Children in the early years age group have been affected in a very particular way by the pandemic, with those aged under 2 having lived their whole life with disrupted and partial access to

cultural and shared experiences. The impact of this has been seen during sessions, with heightened reluctance or uncertainty shown by small children to engage with settings and activities which are still new to them. Working with this age group staff have applied the strictest of COVID security measures and have received positive messages from parents thanking us for this level of care. Recognising ongoing vulnerability to infection and a significant proportion of people (young and old) in higher-risk categories is ensuring inclusivity for all in our programmes.

Adult Learning: Community Culture Club

The *Museum of Me* – is a display curated by participants of the first Community Culture Club event in November 2021.



The newly launched Community Culture Club is a programme of free creative sessions for older adults, based at the Museum of Norwich. The programme is designed to improve wellbeing, decrease feelings of isolation and loneliness, and create new social connections by bringing people together. The sessions are open to all older people, including carers, those living with a dementia or other long-term health conditions, and those who may feel lonely or isolated. Staff are working in partnership with NCC dementia

care services and the NCC Monument project (which has also provided tea and cake for the sessions), with whom museum staff have undertaken training around working creatively, sensitively and safely with older people, including those living with dementia, other long-term health conditions, or experiencing loneliness or isolation. The Community Culture Club project is a strand of the Norwich Castle project Activity Plan and delivers the project outcomes of engaging more people and a wider range of people with heritage, providing enjoyable experiences for all, and enhancing the local community as a positive place to live and work.

3.4 Kick the Dust – Norwich update

Rachel Daniel, the Norwich Kick the Dust Project Worker continues to develop and run a rich programme of activity driven by the interests and views of young people. Following several in-person activity taster sessions delivered in the summer, the new academic year has seen the renewal of several established groups, including some which had chosen not to meet virtually and therefore were coming back into the museums for the first time in nearly 18 months. Museum Club young people have now returned to on-site activity. As a permanently established group with a broad range of interests and ambitions, they are not linked to a specific project but take up and act upon opportunities as they arise.

Castle Curators

The Castle Curators group were present at a recent event welcoming British Museum trustees and colleagues to Norwich Castle. The event showcased various strands of the Keep redevelopment project, including the Castle Curators work on developing the recent exhibition at St Peter Mancroft and planning of the 'Community Case' which will be part of the new displays in the Keep. British Museum colleagues were inspired and impressed by the young people's work, professionalism and enthusiasm. As a result of this meeting, the Castle Curators group has been invited to the British Museum to collaborate on the loan of objects for the Community Case. The young people will experience the process of selecting, loaning, transporting and displaying objects from a national collection.

Faith and Ritual Interfaith week

This Kick the Dust group comprises young people with an interest in exploring Faith and Ritual in historic and contemporary societies. Supported through the Youth Accelerator Fund, this group includes young people who have previously been involved in Castle Curators and Art Lab, as well as new recruits. It is a partnership project linking the two NLHF funded projects running concurrently at NMS and drawing on the medieval faith objects to be displayed in British Museum Partnership Gallery at Norwich Castle and other Norwich collections. Over the past months, the group of young people have researched and interpreted places and people of faith significance in Norwich and have decided to develop this new understanding into a walking trail map of the sites. The trail is being piloted by other Kick the Dust young people at the Museum of Norwich, during Interfaith Week in November.

3.5 Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn Activity Programme

Troubadour Circus

Throughout September 2021, Norwich Castle and The Oak Circus Centre collaborated on a brand-new activity programme for ages 12 to 17. *Troubadour Circus* was a programme of free circus workshops led by award-winning tutors and devised and organised by the Norwich Learning Teaching Museum Trainee Alex Day. Young people practiced skills such as aerial hoop and acrobatics, gaining confidence and making friends. The programme resulted in a spectacular performance to a live audience.

900 years ago, in 1121, King Henry I visited Norwich and spent Christmas at Norwich Castle. Feasts and performances filled the royal palace and a sense of occasion swept through the streets of Norwich. With the help of Norwich Castle's curators, medieval objects in our collection and The Oak Circus Centre's expert tutors, young participants used circus skills to interpret and perform this keystone event in Norwich's history for



new audiences to enjoy. The 12 workshops were tailored for young people with no circus experience and The Oak Circus Centre supported participants every step of the way. The workshops took place at St. Michael Coslany church, a medieval parish church close to the centre of Norwich, which is currently the rehearsal and performance home of the Oak Circus.

The Norwich Tales



Over the past 6 months, Norwich Castle has worked with three local story-makers 'in residence' on the Norwich Castle project activity *The Norwich Tales*. The writers have been working with three different age groups to create stories through words, pictures and performance to bring the City's medieval heritage to life. On 25 October the learning team held a celebration event to talk about the making of the three new stories, all inspired by Norwich's medieval past. The event included readings and performances of the tales which were commissioned as part of the Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn project:

Tale 1: I See a Family by Rose Feather, supported by Emma Clarke (Learning Officer for Early Years and SEND Children)

A new illustrated story book for Early Years audiences inspired by Norwich's medieval trades. In two creative workshops families took part in 'Tangle Talk' which provided inspiration and content for Rose's story. Rose Feather is a picture book maker and workshop leader. She is interested in how illustration can draw out people's own ideas, life experiences and stories. In ongoing collaboration with Rose and with colleagues in NCC Early Intervention teams, staff are working on developing the project to provide the story book to EY practitioners to support their work with children in the Early Years and their caregivers in heritage and cultural settings.

Tale 2: A Norwich Bestiary by Daisy Henwood, supported by Rachel Daniel (Kick the Dust Project Worker – Norwich)

Performance poetry based on the world of medieval beasts and bestiaries co-created with young people. Kick the Dust collaborators fed in their ideas and creative writing to shape and refine Daisy's draft poems and also created a series of art works inspired by and depicting the animals and monsters of the new medieval Bestiary. Daisy is a writer, producer, and tutor. She is currently a producer for TOAST poetry, a monthly live event in Norwich, and in 2019 she received her doctorate from UEA. Rachel Daniel and Daisy

Henwood are continuing to develop the project, seeking to create a city trail linking the new poems and illustrations with medieval sites across our city.

Tale 3: Bedmaking by Shey Hargreaves, supported by Rosalind Hewett (Adult Learning and Participation Officer)

A new drama for adult audiences inspired by the history of care at Lazar House. Two lay sisters are changing a bed in between leprosy patients, their current patient having just died and been removed for burial. We join them as they make the bed ready for their next patient. In two creative writing workshops healthcare professionals shared their pandemic experiences and their creativity and inspired the direction and content of the drama. A further two workshops were held with adults at the Assist Trust, at Lazar House, investigating through fun and creativity practices of care and reasons for caring. Expert knowledge of health- and spiritual-care in medieval Norwich was provided by Professor Carole Rawcliffe (UEA). Shey Hargreaves is a writer and performer based in East Anglia. Since graduating from the University of East Anglia's Scriptwriting MA in 2011, she has written scripts for graphic novels, theatre, film and podcasts. Shey's research for *The Norwich Tales* led her to focus on Norwich's medieval hospitals, in particular Lazar House, an important institution regarding the care of leprosy patients living in the area. Having worked for five years as a receptionist in the Emergency Department at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, and with the NHS often taking centre stage in her work, the theme of care was a natural choice. The piece also holds a poignant historic mirror up to our own contemporary experiences of being in a world living through pandemic.

Christmas Projections: 16 November 2021 to 5 January 2022

Developed in partnership with Norwich BID and created by Matt and Rob Vale of *Illuminos*, this animated light projection on the west face of the Norwich Castle keep marks the 900th anniversary of a very special Christmas for Norwich and its Norman castle. In 1121—900 years ago this year—one of the most powerful medieval kings, Henry I, decided to use Norwich Castle as the venue for his Christmas court. The king's visit is one of the few recorded visits to Norwich by an Anglo-Norman king; it must have been a significant event in the history of the city and of East Anglia more widely. The animation, projected onto the exterior façade of the medieval Keep, tells the story of the royal Christmas visit, and its spectacular visuals convey the air of magnificence, excitement, and celebration that would have accompanied the event.



The animation draws inspiration and style from the visual richness and narrative traditions of manuscript illumination from Henry I's own time. The story is divided into

several segments, each looking like a richly decorated page from an illuminated manuscript. The sequence includes scenes of the approach of the king and his itinerant court to Norwich, the ceremonial welcome and reception (*adventus*) of the king outside the city, the approach and entry to the castle, the preparations for the feast, and finally, the great Christmas feast itself.

The approach to telling the story of the royal Christmas court through a series of animated manuscript pages allowed tribute to be paid to the visual aesthetic of the early twelfth century. It also allowed the reconstruction and reimagining of the impression made by King Henry I and his court on his contemporaries. There is only limited information about the king's visit at Christmas 1121, but this approach facilitated the drawing out of the wealth of knowledge about the period as a whole. The projections are also accompanied by a newly composed soundtrack, which can be accessed through a QR code and listened to on mobile phones whilst watching the projections.

4. Kick the Dust: Norfolk – project activity update

The *Kick the Dust: Norfolk* project, funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and delivered in partnership with a range of organisations including YMCA Norfolk, has continued to engage with young people aged 11-25 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 22 November 2021 there were a total of 4,516 interventions, involving 1,759 individual young people taking part in 2,035 hours of quality digital activity. Following the partial reopening and access to groups on site and in outdoor settings, the team has delivered 232 face to face sessions (36% of all delivery) with young people across the county, out of a total of 635 sessions delivered between May and November 2021.

Total engagement numbers for the project from October 2018 to 22 November 2021 are 10,588 interventions, involving 3,474 individual young people taking part in 5,167 hours of quality activity. Of these interventions, 252 volunteering opportunities have been provided to 104 individual young people.

Of this activity 5% has been at *Pre-Player* (introductory) level specifically designed for YMCA clients; 27% has been at *Player* (initial activity) level; 43% at *Shaper* (project development & delivery) level; and 25% at *Leader* (leadership) level. Of these activities, 70% involve young people in leading and designing projects as well as acting as mentors to staff and other young people through the *Digital Buddies* and Peer Mentoring programmes.

Since October 2018, the breakdown of project activity taking place in each NMS area: 47% in the West (covering Kings Lynn, Thetford and Gressenhall), 30% in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer and Sheringham) and 23% in Norwich.

Throughout lockdown, project staff have continued to develop and deliver an online training offer for all staff and volunteers who support youth engagement in NMS. In total 220 staff have taken part in training since October 2018, with 129 of these opportunities having taken part during lockdown.

Training allows our young volunteers and staff to work together and share best practice, something that will continue post lockdown. Key areas which staff and volunteers had identified for future training have been incorporated into this years' training plan and included a joint venture between the YMCA and Kick the Dust on a new interview preparation programme entitled *You're Hired!* for young people who may wish to progress onto the next cohort of the Bursary traineeship programme or into other employment. All places were filled on each of the sessions for young people and volunteers. Delivery of a new training offer was rolled out from October 2021. As the team have opened up opportunities to volunteers, a further 18 young volunteers have taken part in training including freelancer training workshops. These workshops enable young people to set up as freelancers in the future.

The Digital Buddy programme continues to expand with 6 young people supporting 5 Norwich based curators and the Events and Visitor Programme Manager for Norwich Castle with social media.

NMS and NCC continue to work together through the 'Making Creative Futures' group; its sub-groups the 'Norfolk Creative Collective'. The group has developed a new offer to support parents in developing their own creativity and communication skills to engage with their children in a more meaningful way and continues to play a key part in the delivery of activity as part of the DfE funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) project. The 'Adult Creativity' offer will follow the model that has been successfully used in the West with parents of children on the YOT programme.

Kick the Dust was set up as a three-stage journey (Player-Shaper-Leader), with young people developing transferable work-related skills and gaining experiences that they would struggle to find elsewhere, supporting them in securing employment. Staff have seen young people move through the programme, gaining the confidence to take on volunteering roles within NMS, with others securing their first job through the Government's Kick Start 6 month placement programme; three young people progressing onto the Kick the Dust Bursary traineeship programme who are set to complete their Level 3 Diploma in Cultural Heritage and two others who have taken up positions within NMS Front of House teams. Three young people currently sit on the Project Steering Group.

Take up continues to expand through the establishment of new partnerships with schools, colleges, NCC Children's Services and other cultural organisations. The launch of the new Kick the Dust web pages on the NMS site will support this growth and solidify the way NMS approaches youth engagement going forward – see: <https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/join-and-support/kick-the-dust>

Evaluation evidence shows that the programme has made a significant impact on young people and staff engaging in activity. As the project team moves to more face to face delivery, this impact will be greater as more staff engage in the co-delivery of activity and see the benefits to their own development.

4.1 Breakdown of Kick the Dust project 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
- 11% aged 14-16 years
- 30% aged 17-19 years
- 26% aged 20-22 years
- 26% aged 23-25 years

Data is collected around ethnicity through the Young People's Feedback form (should they choose to answer this question) and is based on the descriptions used by NLHF:

Breakdown of ethnicity:

- Asian – 3%
- Black - 0.5%
- Irish Traveller – 0.5%
- Mixed ethnic – 4%
- White – 92%

Those identifying as having a disability which can be a barrier to engagement:

- Disabled – 20%
- Non-disabled – 26%
- Prefer not to say – 54%

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

- YMCA clients – 35%
- Secondary schools – 35%
- FE/HE – 35%
- Young people with mental health issues – 17%
- Outside of mainstream education – 6%
- Young Offenders at those at risk of offending – 3%
- Looked after children and adopted living at home - 5%
- SEND – 8%
- NEET – 5%
- Care Leavers – 1%
- 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. 77% of young people stated they had little or no knowledge of job roles in NMS or the heritage sector before taking part. After their engagement, 81% of young people stated they now had a good understanding of the different job roles available in the sector. 91% stated that the skills they had learnt would be useful to them in the future. This shows that Kick the Dust enables young people to gain a greater understanding of the opportunities within NMS and the sector in general. Following their engagement, 90% of young people participating 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 the NMS Kick the Dust project:

- 98% of young people said they had learnt new and interesting things about heritage (Renaisi survey 90%);
- 97% of young people felt that heritage reflected them (Renaisi 70%)
- 98% felt heritage would engage other young people (Renaisi 89%).
- 91% 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%)
- 99% of young people stated they felt welcomed and respected by staff and 94% felt a sense of achievement.
- 80% of young people stated they now had a better understanding of heritage having taken part in the programme with 20% stating they weren't sure and needed more engagement. (Renaisi 78%)
- 94% of young people felt they had the opportunity to influence decisions. (Renaisi 66%)
- 81% of young people felt that there were jobs for young people like themselves to work in heritage. (Renaisi 72%).
- 61% of young people felt that heritage had helped them understand more about their own lives – it had given them context
- 78% 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 lockdown. The principal contractor has robust COVID-secure health & safety procedures in place for all staff and sub-contractors.

5.2 Main construction works

In August 2020 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. An internal hoarding line runs across the entrance to the Rotunda, separating the construction zone from the areas of the museum that remain open to visitors throughout the project.



Recent drone image of the construction site

Recent construction works have included the installation of structural steels and floors in the new WC block area (former café). Beam bearing points are also being carefully formed within the Keep area to carry the new steel floor structures. Piling work has recently been completed inside the Keep and within the museum entrance area. Additional specialist survey and investigative work has been undertaken, alongside archaeological excavations and watching briefs.

A verbal update on recent progress will be given at the meeting.



New steelwork and floors in the new WC block area

6. Other activity

6.1 Museum of Norwich activities:

Webinars

Over this period Bethan Holdridge, Assistant Curator, and Rosalind Hewett, Adult & Informal Learning Officer organised and hosted two live webinars.

The first was a talk by Nick Stone on his work for the Crome's Norwich Exhibition and the second by Michael and Frances Holmes on their new book about the history of Norwich Trams. The talks were attended by approx. 100 attendees for Crome's Norwich and approx. 50 attendees for Norwich Tram History.

Staff received positive feedback, with some people saying that they were very pleased to still see online content despite the museum opening more, as they were still nervous about joining public events.

Sample responses from participants:

"I thought the techniques displayed were fascinating. I found the introduction interesting. The links between the paintings and current landscape will make me look at the paintings and areas of the city with a new understanding of what I am seeing. The research to provide some of the historical background to the buildings painted was just the icing on the cake. Thank you - a brilliant session."

"The online talks are interesting and help to increase appreciation and enjoyment of the exhibitions. Please continue them!"

Heritage Open Days

For Heritage Open Days the Museum of Norwich welcomed nearly 300 visitors over the two free entry days. Visitors were pleased to see the museum open again. Response on social media was also positive, with 4,237 impressions for the museum's post on the first day of Heritage Open Days.

October half term

For October half term, families enjoyed a spooky scavenger hunt. There were just under 250 visitors over the four days, with positive visitor feedback.

Norwich Science Festival

The Museum of Norwich supported the Norwich Science Festival. Staff worked in partnership with artists linked to Edible East and The Quadram Institute, hosting a display in the museum's front window with art by Jennie Pedley, Holly Sandiford and young ceramist Florence Eade, all of which were inspired by the human body and the gut microbiome. In addition, the museum formed part of the microbe QR trail designed by Paramecium Press and families visited the museum during their search for Aggi the Apatosaurus' friends.

Black History Month

Two Black History Month (BHM) tours led by Paul Dickson proved successful and saw positive feedback from participants including: *Excellent... More of the same please and I enjoyed discovering the wealth of alternative history and getting a sense there is still more to unearth.*

Curator Hannah Henderson curated a busy social media schedule for Black History month, highlighting many local stories. The BHM posts were seen by around 28,866 people on Facebook alone. The post about Norwich born theatre proprietor and star Pablo Fanque was seen by 3,216 people, with 191 reactions / comments / shares. The Twitter campaign was also a success and most tweets in October were for BHM. Tweet impressions totalled 49.8k over the month, with an average number of people posts reached being 741. The post about Charles Willis Yearly, a black boot and shoe seller, attracting the most engagements (129).

The museum also welcomed a group of young people from the Mancroft Advisory Project and it is hoped this will result in a new project being delivered through the Kick the Dust project.

School Visits

The Museum has welcomed 298 school children and staff since September, including from Litcham Primary, Banham Primary, Norwich Primary, Colman Junior, Stalham High, Antingham and South Repps Primary.

Community Partnerships

Over the last 18 months whilst working from home, the Museum of Norwich team have made efforts to continue to engage with local people and organisations. This work now continues as more visitors return to visiting the museum.

Team member Bethan Holdridge has continued to work with the local English Plus group over lockdown, which has been very much welcomed by those in the group. Bethan kept in touch via What's App in various ways. One activity she created was a textiles project, which took inspiration from the Pitchford Quilt. Group members were asked to create a patchwork square inspired by the theme of 'home'. These squares are now on display in the *Textiles Treasures* exhibition at Norwich Castle. The group are looking forward to visiting the exhibition this month. Curator Hannah Henderson also accompanied the group to local community organisation the Shoe Box Hub on St Stephens Street, to hear about their work and explore the underground streetscape below their shop.

The museum team have also been engaging with Norwich Muslims, Norfolk Libraries and Information Service, the Norfolk Record Office, Norfolk Sound Archive, NCC Adult Learning, Better Together, The Mancroft Advisory Project & Loudspeaker Project, and Norfolk and Norwich Festival, amongst others, about future projects.

Farewell to Jazz, Museum Trainee

Staff said farewell to the Kick the Dust museum trainee Jazz at the start of October, after the completion of her 18-month traineeship. The pandemic has been an extremely challenging period for trainees and staff have worked closely with them on their Level 3 qualification. Jazz wrote to staff *"for 18 months I have been your trainee. Thank you SO much. You've given me so much knowledge... You guys have truly been the best!"*

6.2 Strangers' Hall

Opening arrangements and exhibition

Strangers' Hall has been open on Sunday afternoons and from 10 November also on Wednesdays. The autumn programme started with two days of free admission for visitors on the two Sundays of Heritage Open Days, when visitors also had the chance to view the new fractal portraits of local artist Will Teather. This exciting collaboration has offered the opportunity to bring to light new information on the sitters of the historic portraits, including Margaret Tryon, an indomitable figure who lived through the Siege of New York during the American Revolution. The show closes on 17 November.



Edible East trail

The front window installation, by local sculptor Chris Jackson, formed part of the Edible East science city-wide trail. The display was based on the historic vanitas paintings which acted as reminders of the frailty of the human condition. It depicted the distractions of modern life and the throwaway society, making a link with the historic food collections at Strangers' Hall, which date from times when more food was grown, sold and consumed locally. It included the work of other local artists with works ranging from an apron made with plants, growing out of the pockets and pot covered with seeds. The trail focused on saving the environment through sustainable food initiatives, including the pioneering research carried out by scientists at Norwich research Park involved breeding new plant varieties which are more resistant to changes in climate and disease. and community groups finding new ways of growing their own food has launched in Norwich.

Time Together: An online club to help combat loneliness and social isolation.

Recent figures for the National Office for Statistics show that one in fourteen adults say that they are lonely and that social isolation has a big impact on physical and mental health. For many people life is returning to some sense of normality, but there are a significant number who are still being advised to isolate or who are nervous about re-engaging. The Strangers' Hall team, supported by the NMS Learning Team and The Shoebox Community Hub, decided to pilot an online club to bring the museum into people's homes as well as reaching out to our under-represented audiences. Staff have already run two of the three pilot sessions. The first session introduced the group to the Strangers' Hall team via a talk about Tudor food followed by a cook-along pottage making session. The second session explored feasting and table manners, followed by making Ypocras, a medieval banqueting wine. A further event is scheduled for November.

Team member Bethan Holdridge has continued to co-ordinate a Museum related What's App conversation group with English+ Norwich, currently discussing the work of John Crome and the recent Crome exhibitions.



Time together at Shoebox

Collections

Several noteworthy objects have recently been offered to Strangers' Hall, including a remarkable, hand-illustrated family photograph album relating to the Upcher family, a magnificent doll's house created by a local couple gradually over their working lives and an unusual bazaar doll in glass dome, created by Sarah Ann Leethem in the 1890s and complete with all the miniature objects she made or collected to include within it.

Curator Cathy Terry hosted a visit to view the Norwich Snapdragons and related civic collections by Dr Nicole Sheriko. The three Snapdragons in the collections are considered to be extremely rare survivals of a giant puppetry pageant tradition in England, and Dr Sheriko's study will include them in her study of such creatures in Europe over the centuries, providing valuable context to the Norwich civic collections.

The annual collections deep clean is being carried out in January- February 2022 and planning is in place to tackle the increase in mould found in certain stores, which is in part the result of a lack of air circulation during lockdown.



Mr Taylor's Dolls house

Building & garden

Following leaks during heavy downpours, work has continued on assessing the roofing, drainage and areas of damp within Strangers' Hall, with investigations in the area between Strangers' Hall and the Strangers' Tavern and inspections of leading and roof tiling. The garden is benefitting from pleaching of the lime trees, work to some of the larger trees, pruning the box hedging and general tidying of summer growth.



Strangers Hall Knot Garden

Learning

Strangers' Hall has been busy with schools' visits since the start of term, with over 30 schools booked during the period September - November 2021. Most booked sessions are for *The Great Fire* and *Tudors*. Strangers' Hall has also hosted adult visit from the University of Cambridge Archaeology Students and Morley Educational.

Christmas 2021

Along with around 40 other venues, Strangers' Hall is participating in the Visit Norwich Christmas Crown trail, a city-wide trail in partnership with NMS and celebrating the 900th anniversary of King Henry I's Christmas Crown-wearing at Norwich Castle in 1121.

Christmas at Strangers' will be celebrated in the Great Hall on Sunday afternoons in December. Visitors will be entertained by the Fools Puppet Theatre Company with their seasonal tale of St Nicholas and the Wishing Tree, and musical accompaniment on the Hurdy-Gurdy. After the performance visitors tour the Victorian suite of rooms, traditionally decorated for Christmas, following a festive trail linked to the puppet show.

7. Norwich Curatorial update

Senior Curator of Costume and Textiles Ruth Battersby Tooke opened the *Textile Treasures* exhibition on 23 October. The exhibition will run until 20 February 2022 in the Timothy Gurney Gallery at Norwich Castle. The exhibition showcases bedcovers made using a variety of techniques including patchwork, applique, and embroidery. The pieces on show combine incredible artistry with emotional resonance which offer an insight into the lives of ordinary people articulating themes of collaborative creativity, gift-giving, recycling, friendship, family relationships and romantic love.

The show has been re-configured for its new setting in the Timothy Gurney Gallery, having been originally designed for an early 2021 slot in the Special Exhibition Galleries. This change has afforded an opportunity to showcase some recent

acquisitions including textiles responding to the pandemic which were made during the first national lockdown. Contemporary works include a group of embroidered squares made by members of the English+ heritage group who usually meet in the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell. When the group could not meet during lockdown, kits of cotton and embroidery thread and needles were sent out along with images of one of the bedcovers in *Textile Treasures*, a wedding gift made by patients in an Occupational Therapy unit in 1960. The resulting embroideries reflect narratives of home-making and personal histories which have now been added to the collections to increase representation of our diverse communities.

Another lockdown testimonial textile is the *Coronaquilt* made by members of the Costume and Textile Association for Norfolk Museums. With 80 squares made by 58 individuals, the quilt documents thoughts and feelings about this life-altering period that we are still living through and captures the early stages of the lockdown with its new terminologies such as 'super-spreaders', the visual icons of rainbows and a deep appreciation for the nation's key-workers.



Coronaquilt, 2021, made and donated by the Costume and Textile Association

Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art Dr Rosy Gray has been working on three contemporary exhibitions which open at Norwich Castle in 2022. The first is a solo show by artist Yelena Popova titled *Yelena Popova: Ode to a Flint* which opens in the Timothy Gurney Gallery in March 2022. Popova works across a range of media including painting, tapestry and installation. In this exhibition she explores the deep connections between the UK nuclear industry, landscape and the passage of time. Focusing on Popova's growing fascination with flint, the exhibition draws on Norfolk Museums

Service's own rich geological collections, in collaboration with NMS's Curator of Natural History, Dr David Waterhouse.

The second exhibition is a major touring exhibition from the Arts Council Collection, *The World We Live In: Art and the Urban Environment* which opens in the main temporary exhibition galleries in May 2022. This will be followed by the exhibition *Slaves of Fashion: New Works by The Singh Twins* which opens in October. *Slaves of Fashion* features a new work by The Singh Twins commissioned especially for Norwich Castle. Dr Gray is working alongside the newest member of the Art Team on these exhibitions: Kathryn Goulding Mountford, who has recently joined NMS as a Modern and Contemporary Art Trainee.



Yelena Popova, *Keepsafe I & II* (2019), Jacquard woven tapestry © the artist

Kate Thaxton, Curator of the Regimental Collections, has been managing the installation of a major new store for the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum (RNRM) and an accompanying upgrade in documentation, photography, and packing of the collection. The increased capacity of the roller racking has transformed the conditions under which the collection is kept. The uniforms collection has been individually re-packed, allowing both for improved air circulation to maintain its condition, and much greater accessibility. The bulk of this re-fit has now been completed.

In addition, Kate has been working with the Army Museums Ogilby Trust. 18,843 pages of documents and photographs - a large part of the RNRM First World War archive - can now be searched on-line through The Ogilby Muster which was launched in November. <https://www.theogilbymuster.com>

The Norfolk Regimental archives can be viewed here -

[https://www.theogilbymuster.com/search/results#/?query=*&page=1&type=flex&sort=Relevance&filterBy=Regimental Collection,%22Royal%20Norfolk%20Regiment%20Muse](https://www.theogilbymuster.com/search/results#/?query=*&page=1&type=flex&sort=Relevance&filterBy=Regimental%20Collection,%22Royal%20Norfolk%20Regiment%20Museum%22&spellCheck=true)



In late August-early September, **Dr Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art**, gave two tours of the John Crome bicentenary exhibition for visiting groups. This exhibition was deinstalled on 5 September, but her 20 minute digital tour of the show remains watchable on Youtube: -<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djv1WPKAC2k>

Giorgia has also been updating Modes and reshelving works on paper. Her exhibition for the Watercolour Gallery, *Where Land and Water Meet* is ready and will be installed in the new year.

She has also started working on the next Colman Project Space show for after the present *Alfred Cohen: New Horizons* exhibition comes down in February 2022. Her new exhibition will be based around the very fine Frederick Sandys' portraits in the collection, which includes the portrait of Cyril Flower.



Portrait of Cyril Flower, Lord Battersea, by Frederick Sandys, chalk on paper, 1877

Senior Curator of Archaeology, Dr Tim Pestell continues to focus on supporting the Keep redevelopment project. The range of work undertaken on this has been increasingly wide, comprising working on clearing planning approvals, ensuring all archaeological permissions and fieldwork have been undertaken and developing the gallery interpretative storylines and displays. He is also helping with the curation of the new Prison displays being planned and reinstalling the Boudica gallery. Finally, in recognition of his nationally important contributions in the field of archaeology, Dr Pestell recently took up the prestigious position of a seat on the Arts Council England Export Licence Reviewing Committee.

Senior Curator of Natural History, Dr David Waterhouse continues with identification enquiries and the recording of new finds including deer antlers, and mammoth molars. Pest management is also a large part of the department's work at present, with specimens from Norwich Castle's Natural History Gallery temporarily being taken off display for freezer treatment against clothes moths. Removed specimens will be returned to display as soon as the moths have been eradicated. David continues to work on a fossil display linking with the Deep History Coast project within Norwich Castle's British Wildlife Gallery, with a new mount and graphics for the West Runton Mammoth mandibles, and several replica hominin skulls (representing the unique evidence for different human species within Norfolk) going on display. Work has also started on a partial refresh within the Natural History Gallery – mainly updating handling areas.

Senior Curator of Norwich Museums and Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, Dr Francesca Vanke continues to work on a variety of projects. Chief among these are the exhibitions and activities based around *Walton Bridges* by JMW Turner over the next three years. She is preparing the forthcoming exhibition at Lynn Museum from June-October 2022, and is now also in discussion with Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich, concerning their exhibition in 2023. In addition, she is working with the Kick the Dust project to prepare an art workshop for Looked After Children based around the painting and is preparing a talk for the Norfolk Community History Club.

Dr Vanke has recently completed an online exhibition for the Art UK *Curations* series on *Turner and artists of the Norwich School*, which will shortly be available on the Art UK website. She has also recently taken part in the *Art Unlocked* series of talks, discussing six works of art in the Norwich Castle collections. This talk is available on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32XAUqO-3Bs>

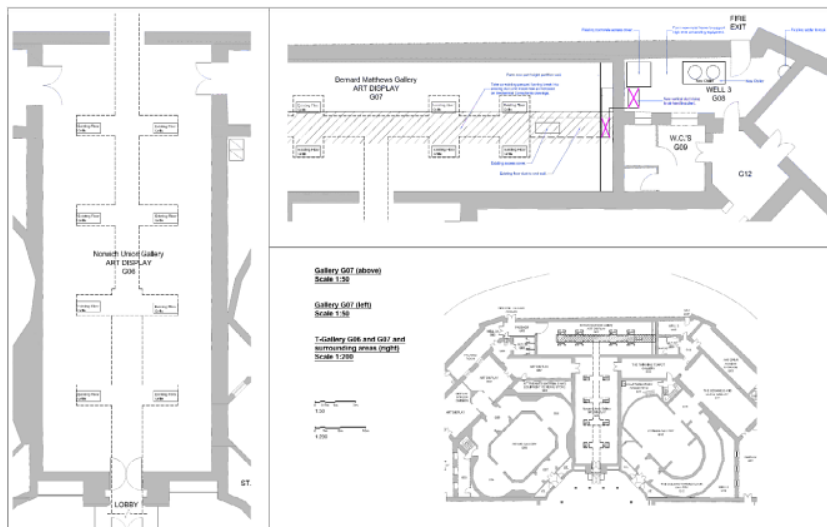
Dr Vanke continues to document the Marilyn Theobald teapot bequest and has now completed a new display in the Arts of Living gallery. This display is proving very popular with visitors. In September she gave an in-person talk in the Forum about the collection, as part of the Heritage Open Days events programme.



The new teapot display in the Arts of Living gallery

8. Project Refresh

On 8 November 2021 construction works started on Project Refresh at Norwich Castle. The project's principal aim is to improve the environmental controls of the temporary exhibition galleries (Norwich Union Gallery & Bernard Matthews Gallery) at Norwich Castle. This will ensure the Castle's long-term sustainability in being able to offer major exhibitions and host national and international loans. The project is funded through the Norfolk County Council capital programme. In recent years it has become increasingly challenging to meet lender requirements with regards to maintaining stable environmental control. This is in part due to outdated air handling plant, but also because of the historic nature of the building. The project will entail the introduction of new air handling plant and chiller units, but also some physical changes to the building and the way in which it is insulated.



New air handling plant will be installed within the E6 Lightwell. This new plant will service the Bernard Mathews Gallery and give it independent control. The existing air handling unit that previously serviced both galleries, will now only service the Norwich Union Gallery. By giving independent supply it will be possible to significantly increase the environment control of both spaces.

Norwich Union Gallery Roof Space



Works will also include an upgrade of the duct-work and installation of insulation within the gallery roof voids. This will ensure we can efficiently maintain the environment and recirculate a percentage of the conditioned air back into the gallery spaces.

Norwich Union Gallery Roof



Works will take approximately 5 months, with works due to be completed in April 2022.

9. Visitor numbers

	July	August	September	October	Total
Norwich Castle	8,053	12,796	7,652	6,902	35,403
Strangers Hall	0	0	450	508	958
Museum of Norwich	595	614	842	749	2,800

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Friends of the Norwich Museums

7th December 2021

As we approach the end of the year, we can look back on some highs and lows during our Centenary Year. The John Crome Bicentennial Exhibition stands out and was a very successful show, and given all the difficulties of the past two years, we can be very pleased with our involvement in the exhibition, being the main sponsors of this important show.

In October, Esther Morgan and her communications team invited all the volunteer stitchers of the Friends' Tapestry, to come for an event in the Town Close Auditorium. All the completed panels were on show, 9 in all, which is well over half way to the completed work. It was a wonderful occasion, and all the volunteers enjoyed meeting and talking. Also a short promotional film was made.

On the 12th November there was a Civic Reception at Blackfriars' Hall, hosted by the City Council for the Friends, in recognition of our Centenary Year, and as the speeches testified, showed the special relationship between the Norwich City Council and the Friends of the Norwich Museums. We enjoyed meeting each other and having a chance to talk, whilst appreciating a very nice tea of sandwiches and cakes. Our thanks to Councillor Jacob Huntley and Francesca Makins, Chair of the 100 Committee, FNM, and former Chairman of the FNM Council, for organising this successful and enjoyable event.

We are now making arrangements for a Centenary Luncheon at Houghton Hall, for the Friends, generously hosted by our Patron, Lord Cholmondeley, on the 20th May 2022. This event has had to be postponed from this year to next, because of the pandemic, and we are all very much looking forward to this special event.

Felicity Devonshire
Vice Chair, FNM,

