

Norwich Museums Report: December 2021 to January 2022

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. Legal restrictions specific to museums were removed by the Government with effect from 19 July 2021 (Step 4).
- 1.2 Legal restrictions relating to the wearing of face coverings in specific museum settings were reintroduced by the Government on 30 November 2021 and then extended to all museum visits when Plan B measures were adopted. Legal requirements relating to the wearing of face coverings were lifted from 27 January 2022 as the country moved out of Plan B restrictions.
- 1.3 Despite the ending of legal restrictions, 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.

- 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.
- 1.4 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)
- 1.5 Many museum activities and services, including general visits and school visits, have been 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 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.

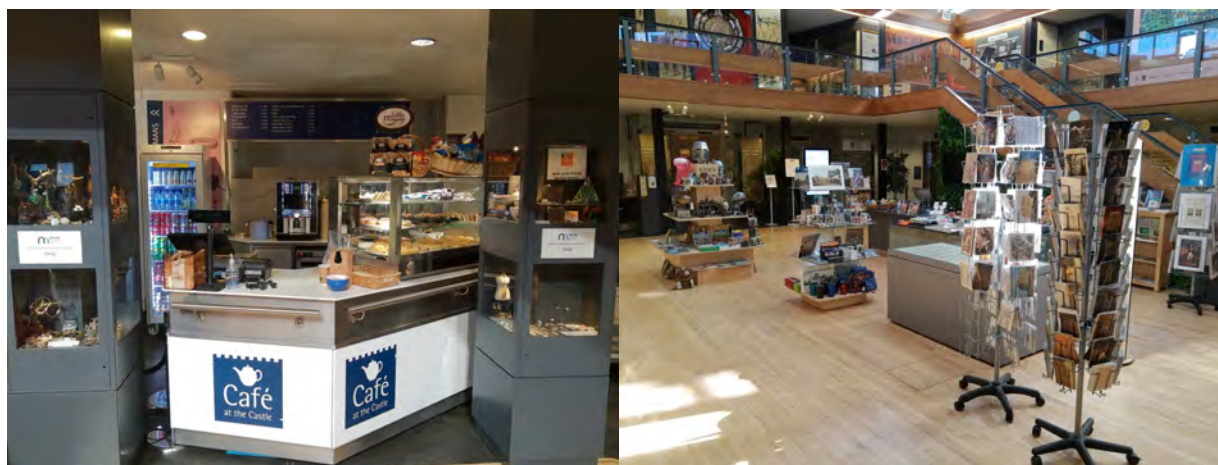
1.10 Since 4 October 2021 and in line with NCC practice at office hubs, an increased number of non-frontline NMS staff have returned to the workplace. NMS has also implemented NCC Smarter Working principles across teams, which identify patterns of home and office-based working on a team and individual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

2. Reopening at Norwich Museums

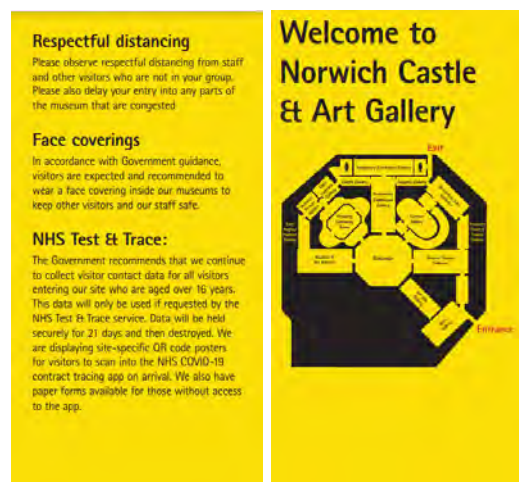
2.1 Norwich Castle reopening arrangements

Visitors continue to use the external entrance door E8 as the temporary 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.

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



Samples of COVID signage in use at Norwich Castle

Hand sanitiser dispensers are 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.

2.2 Norwich Castle ceremonies arrangements

The number of ceremonies taking place at Norwich Castle has continued to remain strong:

Month	No of Ceremonies	Footfall
May	55	578
June	48	600
July	55	1365
August	56	1901
September	127	1663
October	83	2062
November	49	1426
December	30	668
January	28	475
Total	531	10,738

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 months of December and January continued to see strong interest from schools wishing to visit the museums for facilitated curriculum-led learning activities. From the beginning of December through to February half term Norwich Museums facilitated on-site learning events for approx. 1,800 school pupils. 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 events in the first half of the spring term have been *Romans and Iceni* and *Ancient Egyptians*. Strangers' Hall has been closed during this period to allow for the conservation deep clean. Schools will be welcomed back to Strangers' Hall after the February half term holiday.



The maintenance of Coronavirus safety measures and the reduced capacity at the Castle due to ongoing construction works means that a maximum of 60 pupils plus their adult supporters can be hosted for facilitated events at the Castle each day. In addition, schools remain able to come on self-guided visits, and a range of worksheets and other resources remain downloadable from the website free of charge: [Trails and resources - Norfolk Museums](#)

3.2 Schools Digital and Virtual programmes

Recent feedback from our visiting schools:

"All engaging activities in their own right 'Julia' was especially fantastic at managing the livelier students who needed a number of behaviour reminders!"

"Everyone enjoyed the event!"

"Another great session, very helpful/accommodating staff!"

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. 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. In the first half of the spring term over 800 pupils participated in learning events which were delivered digitally.

3.3 Visitor Programme Activities

Christmas at the Castle was affected by the circumstances relating to Omicron variant case rates across the nation and government measures and guidance designed to keep people as safe as possible.



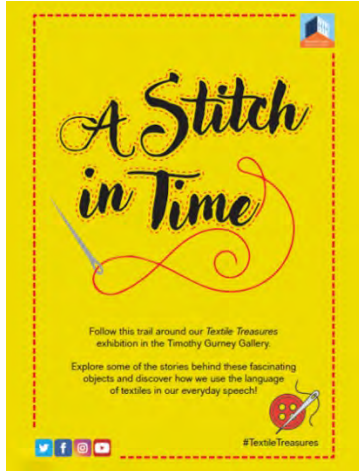
Visitor numbers to the Castle around Christmas were consequently low, but the people who did come in were supported by learning staff and a gallery trail investigating traditions of feasting and festivities in the medieval period and beyond. We also augmented the familiar 'Bucket Toys' interactive for Early Years children with additional props and toys on the same theme.

Due to Covid-19 cases and dynamic risk assessment of safe systems of working, it was decided not to go ahead with performances of a specially devised short play *The Story of the King*. All ticket holders were contacted directly, and several positive comments were received to

thank us for taking responsible decisions regarding people's safety at such a difficult time.

The Castle's 900th anniversary was also celebrated across the city with the Norwich BID leading on deliver of a *Christmas Crowns Trail*. Visit Norwich, in partnership with Norfolk Museums Service, encouraged everyone to soak in the special seasonal sights of Norwich when they launched four specially created Christmas walking trails to share the story of the Castle's foundation and the royal visit by Henry I and Queen Adeliza at Christmas 1121. It took place from 16 November through to 5 January, and saw shops, restaurants, hotels, and iconic historic buildings hide magical, festive, sparkling crowns in their windows and shop fronts for people to spot. Trail maps were available to pick up from a pop-up stall at Norwich Market provided by the Norwich City Hosts.





February Half Term at Norwich Castle

A Stitch in Time – to celebrate the final week of the *Textile Treasures* exhibition, and in collaboration with Senior Curator Ruth Battersby-Tooke, the Learning team have developed a family trail which encourages exploration of the textiles on show, some of the phrases we use in everyday conversation which have their roots in textile industry, and prompts for more activities families can do away from the museum after their visit. In addition, a ‘textile pack’ for Early Years children and accompanying adults supports enjoyment of the museum’s galleries more widely, using the patterns, textures and movements of fabric to guide their visit.

Textile Treasures Webinar Series

In January and February Norwich Castle has presented a series of online events exploring the themes and objects currently on display in the *Textile Treasures* exhibition. The webinars were held 5.30-6.30pm to encourage working adults to be able to participate, and approx. 100 people attended each of the four events. The series started on Tuesday 18 January with Ruth Battersby Tooke, the exhibition’s curator, introducing the themes explored in the exhibition and offering her unique insights into some of the artefacts. This was followed the next week by artist David Shenton talking about his own creative practice working with textiles and how it links with the exhibition’s themes. On Tuesday 8 February Costume and Textile Association members shared the creative process behind the *Coronaquilt*, an artefact made during the height of the pandemic, and the stories of some of the makers who contributed to it. The final talk in the series heard Deborah Phipps, Conservator for Norfolk Museums Service, and Ruth Battersby Tooke, Senior Curator of Costume & Textiles discuss how the historical textiles in the collection at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery are cared for.

Tickets for the online talks were provided free for members of the Costume and Textile Association, Norfolk Museums Service Volunteers, Norfolk Museums Pass holders, Friends of the Norwich Museums, Museum Association, Art Fund members, and East Anglia Art Fund members, and £5 for General Admission. We are grateful to the Costume & Textile Association for their generous support of this exhibition and the associated events programme.

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.

Saturday Art Lab

Meeting on Saturdays, either online or at the museum, Art Lab is an opportunity for young people aged 12 to 16 ([Saturday Art Lab - Norfolk Museums](#)) to work creatively in response to the museums and their collections. The current project the group are

leading the direction of is a new 'welcome' sign for the temporary entrance to Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery. A Visitor Services colleague had observed that the entrance to the museum could be made much more visually welcoming and it seemed a perfect project to be led by our group of artistic young people. They are working with illustrator Rose Feather to devise a graphic work which will enhance the visitor experience and showcase their ideas and skills.

Interfaith Group

This Kick the Dust group comprises young people with an interest in exploring Faith and Ritual in historic and contemporary societies. Supported through the DEFRA 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. Working with Project Curators Andrew Ferrara and Agata Gomolka, the group of young people have investigated and researched stories of medieval Norwich through objects related to belief and spirituality. The walking trail map of medieval sites of faith in Norwich that the group has developed was piloted

during Interfaith Week in November and after some editing and design work it will soon be available to pick up from the Museum of Norwich.

Castle Curators is another Kick the Dust Norwich group linked to the *Royal Palace Reborn* project. This group of young people was involved in the *Castle on Tour* 'pop up museum' display at St Peter Mancroft church and the Millennium Library Heritage Centre in summer 2021. A version of the exhibition has recently been installed at Lynn Museum in King's Lynn. The Castle Curators group have also met with partner colleagues from the British Museum and plans are being put together for the group to visit the British Museum to see medieval artefacts in their collections. The group was also the first to be welcomed to the Keep for a 'behind the scenes' hard hat tour – their visit was been captured on film and can be watched on the Castle's YouTube channel: [Meet the Castle Curators at Norwich Castle! - YouTube](#)

3.5 Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn Activity Programme Christmas Light Projections

As noted in the previous report to Norwich Area Museums Council, an animated light projection on the west face of the Norwich Castle keep marked 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, told the story of the royal Christmas visit, and its spectacular visuals conveyed 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 projections were 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. The lightshow animation has been filmed by Eye Film and is now available to watch on Castle's YouTube channel: [Castle 900: Festive Projections at Norwich Castle - YouTube](#)

Knight Club

Norwich Castle's sword fighting activity *Knight Club* recently went to Tendring Technology College in Essex. Over the course of a week *Knight Club* was delivered by Lee Warden, Keep Project Learning and Engagement Officer, for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Almost 1,000 students from their lower sets took part, using sword fighting as a method of understanding collaboration, working in partnership, and developing resilience skills, as well as exploring the fascinating world of a medieval knight. The College is now eager to make use of the free training and equipment to become a *Knight Club* provider themselves. Six teachers have put themselves forward to complete a 2-day training course which will allow them to provide *Knight Club* sessions at the school independently. If you know a school or group which would be interested in



having a *Knight Club* session or becoming a *Knight Club* provider, please contact Norwich Castle for more information.

Community Culture Club

Since November 2021, *Community Culture Club* has been run by the learning team at the Museum of Norwich. The sessions are free and open to older people, including carers, those living with a dementia, or other long-term health conditions, and those who may feel lonely or isolated. Each week in *Community Culture Club* we explore a theme that links medieval Norwich to the collections at the Museum of Norwich and a crafting activity. We had a good response to establishing the group and were at capacity with a waiting list before sessions even started.

Peter Ainsworth, Chairman of The Heritage Alliance has encapsulated why this type of work is vital, now more than ever: *“Joy, happiness and thoughtfulness have rarely been more needed than now. We have all faced our own challenges this year. But our country’s heritage has still provided much needed respite. Heritage is not just old stuff. It connects us, provides a sense of rootedness and place, and is vital to understanding who we are and what we would like to become.”* (Heritage, Health and Wellbeing report). Training from Arts4Dementia confirmed our approach that *being in the moment* is imperative, as well as giving each participant the space to bring their identity to the sessions. Responses from members describing the group in their own words demonstrate its value and importance: *The nurturing I have received within the group is helping me recover from my experiences of loss and to rebuild my confidence. I have a greater sense of belonging and ability to plan outings for myself now. Kindness can be contagious and so I hope that the improvement in my wellbeing might allow me to respond with compassion for others who are lonely or suffering.*



The project has been funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of *Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn*. Alongside the funding for the capital works is a five-year funded activity programme which aims to open up the medieval world to people in Norwich and beyond. As well as transforming an iconic medieval Castle, *Royal Palace Reborn* is also improving individual lives in the Norwich community. Funding available from the Keep Project Activity Plan for Community Culture Club ends in February, after which the efficacy of the programme will be fully evaluated, and plans developed for continuation of the project.

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 31 January 2022 there were a total of 4,928 interventions, involving 1,823 individual young people taking part in 2,208 hours of quality digital activity. Following the partial reopening and access to groups on site and in outdoor settings, the team has delivered 286 face to face sessions (39% of all delivery) with young people across the county, out of a total of 716 sessions delivered between May 2021 and January 2022.

Total engagement numbers for the project from October 2018 to 31 January 2022 are 11,000 interventions, involving 3,538 individual young people taking part in 5,340 hours of quality activity. Of these interventions, 262 volunteering opportunities have been provided to 124 individual young people.

Of this activity 4% has been at Pre-Player (introductory) level specifically designed for YMCA clients; 27% has been at Player (initial activity) level; 42% at Shaper (project development & delivery) level; and 27% at Leader (leadership) level. Of these activities, 74% 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 is: 47% in the West (covering Kings Lynn, Thetford and Gressenhall), 28% in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer and Sheringham) and 25% 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 243 staff have taken part in training since October 2018, with 142 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 29 young volunteers have taken part in training including freelancer training workshops. These workshops enable young people to set up as freelancers in the future.

Four young people have progressed onto the Kick the Dust bursary traineeship programme, with one Kick the Dust participant progressing onto the NMS Teaching Museum traineeship programme. Three other volunteers have taken on Young

Ambassador and Young People's Champion roles to support Institutional Change within NMS.

Training allows our young volunteers and staff to work together and share best practice, something that will continue going forward. Key areas which staff and volunteers have identified for future training have been incorporated into the next round of training. Delivery of the new training offer will be rolled out from January 2022, linked to a new outcome in the Institutional Change evaluation findings. This focuses on equipping staff to feel confident in working with young people facing more complex barriers to engagement, as well supporting Front of House and Visitor Services staff to have increased awareness of the opportunities to engage with young people including signing and autism awareness.

The *Digital Buddy* programme continues to expand with six young people supporting five 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 where members from across NCC Children's Services identify ways to engage the hardest to reach and most vulnerable children and young people through a joint effort. The group continues to play a key part in the delivery of activity as part of the DfE funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) project through the Big Norfolk Fun programme ([Big Norfolk Holiday Fun - Active Norfolk](#)) and through our own contributions to this through our Kick the Dust offer.

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.

Take up continues to expand through the establishment of new partnerships with schools, colleges, NCC Children's Services and other cultural organisations. The new Kick the Dust web pages on the NMS site 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.

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
- 13% aged 14-16 years
- 29% aged 17-19 years

- 27% aged 20-22 years
- 24% 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 - 1.5%
- Irish Traveller – 0.7%
- Mixed ethnic – 4%
- White – 90%

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

- Disabled – 20%
- Non-disabled – 15%
- Prefer not to say – 65%

How young people are finding out about Kick the Dust has changed since the beginning of the project, with 16% coming through social media posts and the new Kick the Dust web pages, 10% through flyers and posters, 19% through friends or a family member and 12% from having taken part in a previous Kick the Dust activity. Strong partnerships with NCC Children's Services and other cultural and youth organisations accounts for 43% of young people being signposted to Kick the Dust.

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

- YMCA clients – 34%
- Secondary schools – 25%
- FE/HE – 36%
- 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%

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 61% of these young people stated they now had a good understanding of

the different job roles available in the sector and a further 36% felt more knowledgeable. 91% stated that the skills they had learnt would be useful to them in the future. This shows that Kick the Dust as a programme enables young people to gain a greater understanding of the opportunities within the heritage sector and develop transferable work skills.

valuation 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:

- 80% of young people felt that there were jobs for young people like themselves to work in heritage with 13% not sure and needing to find out more. (Renaisi 67%).
- 90% of young people said they had learnt new and interesting things about heritage (Renaisi 85%); 85% of young people felt that heritage represented young people like them (Renaisi 73%)
- 81% of young people said they were more likely to become a volunteer because of their involvement in KTD (Renaisi 78%) and 81% stated they would be looking to take part in other local heritage events as a result of their engagement (Renaisi 73%).
- 96% of young people stated they felt welcomed and respected by staff (Renaisi 95%) and 84% felt a sense of achievement (Renaisi 82%).
- 90% felt heritage delivered in this way would engage other young people (Renaisi 92%) with 81% of young people stating they now had a better understanding of heritage having taken part in the programme although 19% weren't sure and needed more engagement. (Renaisi 85%)
- 64% of young people felt they had the opportunity to influence decisions. (Renaisi 64%)
- 92% stated there was something for everyone irrespective of background (Renaisi 91%) although this needs to be put into context of other demographic data for Norfolk.
- 98% 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 with 50% of this number stating financial concerns as a barrier. (Renaisi 93%).
- 78% of young people said they had found heritage more relevant than they had before embarking on their Kick the Dust journey with 19% neither agreeing nor disagreeing (Renaisi 81%).

Summary

As the Kick the Dust project enters its final year of funding, evidence clearly demonstrates the impact on young people and staff engaging in activity. As we deliver more face-to-face delivery, this impact is increased as more staff engage in the co-delivery of activity and see the benefits to their own development.

Kick the Dust was set up as a three-stage journey, with young people developing transferable work-related skills and gaining experiences that they would struggle to find elsewhere, to support them in securing employment. Whilst young people cite being involved in curation and creating exhibitions as the main areas they have enjoyed, it is through these activities that they hone their skills and understanding of the workplace, which will help them secure employment longer term.

Our aim this year is to support more working age young people to progress into employment, training or further learning and long-term volunteering. We have seen young people move through the programme, gaining the confidence to take on volunteering roles within NMS, others securing their first job through the Government's Kick Start 6-month placement programme; three young people completing their Bursary traineeship and gaining their Level 3 Diploma in Cultural Heritage in September 2021, two others who have taken up positions within NMS Front of House teams, five young people progressing onto the Teaching Museum and Kick the Dust bursary traineeship programme following their engagement in Kick the Dust, one young person progressing onto Teacher Training and three young people taking on the Young Ambassador and Young People's Champion roles. Others have stated that their involvement has helped them make choices around subjects and options at school and college.

Quotes:

'Make Yarmouth & Saturday Art Club have influenced me to do more creativity and thanks to Kick the Dust for helping and supporting us. I was really shy when I started and didn't speak much. I feel quite confident and have improved a lot more by being here and learning and artists and the history of Time and Tide' (Young Carer in the East).

'I chose film production after a National Saturday Club taster session at East Norfolk Sixth Form. She is now applying for a volunteering role as a result.' (Project Worker East)

'I still thought it was worth emailing to say thank you for the photos of the museum club enjoying the trail, it's so lovely to know they gave it such positive feedback as well! It was a lovely project to be involved in and I feel I have learned a lot about creating heritage projects in more practical terms, so thank you for that. I also hope that when I have the time there are more Kick the Dust projects I can get involved in!' (Young Person on the Faith and Ritual YAF project)

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 is bringing traffic and enquiries from young people who would not ordinarily come to us through our existing partnerships which will support this growth and solidify the way NMS approaches youth engagement going forward.

Planning is now in place to consider the next steps for Kick the Dust and the NMS Youth Engagement strategy, with the potential to build in cross-county partnership working with another Kick the Dust project in Leicester.

5. Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn – project update

5.1 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.



Drone image of the construction site

Recent construction works have included the fitting-out and mechanical and electrical installations in the new WC block area (former café). Additional specialist survey and investigative work has been undertaken, alongside archaeological excavations and watching briefs.

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

5.2 Wider Impact Group

Since the start of the Norwich Castle project, a separate working group was formed to help facilitate the delivery of the project. Its core aim is to ensure that we are able to successfully operate as an accessible museum throughout the construction works and to plan and implement the new facilities as they come back online. The Wider Impact Group is chaired by the Operations Manager and the areas covered include the following:

- Planning for operational changes to the museum
- Branding of the new look Castle upon project completion

- Manage the introduction of new admission and ticketing systems
- Implementation of the new catering and retail outlets
- Developing a Venue Hire offer for Norwich Castle
- Introduce new signage and wayfinding
- Managing the visitor journey
- Creation of a tours including a new dungeon tour experience
- The reinstatement of galleries and facilities

The working group will continue up to and beyond the completion of the Keep project and we will continue to update members on developments in future museum committee reports.

6. Other activity

6.1 Museum of Norwich activities

Christmas at the Museum

The Museum of Norwich celebrated Christmas in style this year with an enhanced courtyard display as well as an elf trail. The Museum also took part in the Norwich BID / Visit Norwich *Christmas Crown Trail*, which linked the museum with a wider Christmas initiative, even when the museum was closed due to the festive period and COVID.

Community Projects

The last few months have been busy with a number of active community projects:

Community Culture Club

Community Culture Club is a programme of free creative sessions for older adults, based at the Museum of Norwich, led by Adult Learning Officer Rosalind Hewitt supported by Susie Childerhouse. The programme is designed to improve wellbeing, decrease feelings of isolation and loneliness, and create new social connections by bringing people together.

The 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.



Community Culture Club has continued throughout December and January, with strong attendance each week. Participants have had fun, learned new skills and formed new friendships. The last session was held on 10 February after ten sessions. The group enjoyed a different focus each week. Sessions have included looking at chocolate, portraiture, potions, Valentine's traditions and medieval writing and illumination. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and the group were pleased to have been featured in an article in the EDP in January -

<https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/lifestyle/heritage/community-culture-club-helping-people-experience-norwich-history-8633770>

Art at Work

Curator Hannah Henderson has begun working with Art at Work CIC, an organisation that designs and delivers arts for wellbeing sessions in the community. Their latest programme is based on Norwich Textiles and is funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The group were welcomed to the museum on 9 February and enjoyed talking about the collections and finding inspiration for their work. On 16 February Hannah then joined the group at Norwich Castle Museum, where they were treated to a guided tour by Costume and Textile Curator Ruth Battersby-Tooke of the *Textile Treasures* exhibition.

Holly Sandiford, Project Lead, commented;

"What a wonderful visit to the Textile Treasures exhibition. Norfolk Museums Service has been so welcoming. A wonderful talk from Ruth Battersby-Tooke and the fabulous Hannah at The Bridewell too."

'Unlocking Our Sound Heritage' Podcast Project

For the last few months, staff have been working in partnership with Norfolk Record Office (NRO) on a pilot project linked to their British Library *Unlocking Our Sound Heritage* (UOSH) Project. UOSH is a project led by The British Library and is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It will digitally preserve almost 500,000 endangered sound recordings from across the UK and make 100,000 available online.

Curator Hannah Henderson and the museum's research volunteers have been working on this pilot project to help the NRO test how easily members of the public can access the newly digitised material. Staff also trained the volunteers how to create their own podcasts. Sessions were hosted at The Norfolk Record Office or online. The volunteers reported that they enjoyed learning new skills, such as sound editing and writing and recording podcasts, as well as better understanding the material at the NRO Sound Archive.



You can listen to the podcasts here -
YouTube:

Helen: 'The Great Flood of 1912' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woxe4wiPGlc>

Hannah: 'Superstitions at sea' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1iVI59udiQk>

Gerlinde: 'Rationing during the Second World War'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKuCZCfa0gY>

Barry: 'A good local pub' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWkZwdwioHE>

LGBT History Month Museum Club

Kick the Dust Project Worker Rachel has continued to host the twice monthly Museum Club at the museum. The latest session was held on 5 Feb and met Hannah Henderson, the museum's Curator. The young people enjoyed creating trails of the museum featuring their favourite collections. As part of LGBT History Month, staff also showed them the new LGBTQ+ display and recently acquired collections. The young people fed back saying *"it is good to see different people represented in the collections."*



Partnership with MAP Loudspeaker Project

Staff met the MAP Loudspeaker Project group on one of the Black History Month Tours led back in October. Since then, Curator Hannah Henderson and Kick the Dust Project Worker Rachel Daniel have been in discussion with colleagues from MAP on how we can work together. The first event was held on Saturday 29 Jan and the group looked at the recently acquired LGTQ+ collections.

February Half Term

This half term's activity – supported by Kate Malyon from the Learning Team - has been a *Last Rolo* trail, blending a romantic theme with local industrial history. The Rolo chocolate was first produced in Norwich in 1937. The trail was complemented with a craft activity where family visitors were encouraged to write a love letter to a loved one and learn to fold it in a traditional way, once popular in Regency and Victorian times.

6.2 Strangers' Hall update

Stranger's Hall closed on 22 December after a successful Christmas event season. The annual Deep Clean took place in January and early February. This closure period offers an unparalleled opportunity to tackle the ceiling to floor cleaning of all eighteen period room settings, the front windows, corridors and staircases, and also carefully clean and examine all the objects and furniture on display and take remedial action if needed. In recent years an army of volunteers has joined staff to help with the work, co-ordinated by Assistant Curator Bethan Holdridge, with training and supervision provided by the NMS conservation team. This year this was not possible due to Covid restrictions, but fortunately an appeal to other members of staff brought forward a number of extra helpers. Staff from the display team installed the scaffolding needed out to carry out the high level clean of the Great Hall, and opportunity was taken to rehang the Golden Ball and Golden Key in the Trade Signs display. The Deep Clean highlighted the impact of museum closures during Covid lockdowns, in that some displays and stores have

shown a substantial increase in mould. Having assessed the prevalence of mould in three stores, staff will be tackling this work over the coming months.

The closure has also offered the opportunity to investigate and carry out various building repairs including scaffolding in the back garden to deal with roofing tile slippages, recurrent damp affecting the boundary between the museum and Strangers' Tavern, an investigation of the heating system and improvements to ventilation. Some works are still outstanding, including repairs to the roofing Lady Paine's bedchamber, which suffers from an intermittent ceiling leak in wet weather.

The Deep Clean was the subject of an article in the EDP - <https://www.edp24.co.uk/lifestyle/heritage/covid-closure-led-to-moths-at-norwich-museum-8671812>



NMS curatorial and conservation staff involved in the Deep Clean

Current curatorial work is focused on planning initiatives to mark the centenary of Strangers' Hall as a City of Norwich Museum in 2023, with collecting and archiving projects involving Kick the Dust and the Museum of Norwich research volunteers about to commence, and two noteworthy new accessions: a Victorian Bazaar Doll and a 1990s doll's house collection lovingly created by a local couple who were well known traders on Norwich Market.

Strangers' Hall reopens to visitors on Wednesday 16 February and will be open on Wednesdays 10am – 4pm and Sunday afternoons 1 – 4.30pm. The half term event *Seeing the Lights* challenges visitors to count and examine the varied and changing ways in which we lit our homes past and present, as a prelude to the forthcoming *Love Light Norwich* Festival. Looking ahead, there are a number of schools and small group bookings for the Spring period in the diary.

7. Norwich Curatorial update

Senior Curator of Costume and Textiles Ruth Battersby Tooke has been working mainly on a series of events and webinars for her exhibition, *Textile Treasures*, which has had a successful run in the Timothy Gurney Gallery at Norwich Castle, closing on 20 February 2022. This exhibition showcased bedcovers made using a variety of techniques including patchwork, applique, and embroidery.

The webinar series has been very popular, totalling around 80 viewers for each session. They have included guest speakers, such as artist David Shenton, and textile conservator Deborah Phipps, as well as members of the Costume and Textile Association who made and generously donated the unique *Coronaquilt* during lockdown.

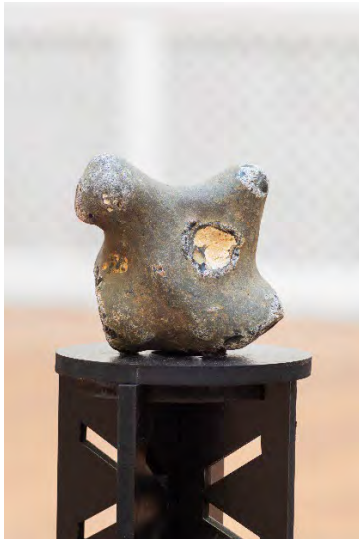
In addition, the family programme during February half-term was also textile-centred. This has included a variety of making and learning activities, and explorations of medieval textiles, to tie in with the themes of the Castle Keep project.



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 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 will be on display in the Timothy Gurney Gallery 12 March – 10 July 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 Museum Service's own rich geological collections, in collaboration with NMS's Curator of Natural History, Dr David Waterhouse.



Yelena Popova *Ode to a Flint*,
Credit: The Holden Gallery, Manchester

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 T-Galleries on 21 May 2022. This exhibition comprises painting, sculpture, photography and film, and explores urban life, featuring 29 works created between 1950 and 2020. Exploring themes from urban development, to migration and the relationship between inner cities and suburbia, the artists presented in this exhibition respond to a variety of places across the world. The exhibition will be accompanied by a public programme.



Michael Andrews *Lights II: The Ship Engulfed*, 1972, acrylic on canvas, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © The Estate of Michael Andrews, Courtesy of James Hyman Fine Art

Kate Thaxton, Curator of the Regimental Collections, has almost completed her installation of the new store for the RNRM and an accompanying upgrade in documentation, photography, and packing of the collection. She aims to have this completed by the end of February. In addition, Kate is working on a complete update and re-organisation of the RNRM website.

Dr Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art, has been working on two new shows for the Colman Project Space. One of these will be based around the Frederick Sandys' portraits in our collection. The other will showcase Henry Moore's spectacular set of lithographs and etchings of Stonehenge dating from 1973, including *Against the Sky*, pictured. This exhibition will coordinate thematically with the upcoming Yelena Popova *Ode to a Flint* exhibition, and also the important loan of Seahenge from Kings Lynn to the new British Museum exhibition *The World of Stonehenge*.



Henry Moore, *Against the Sky*, lithograph on paper, 1973

Senior Curator of Archaeology, Dr Tim Pestell continues to focus on supporting the Norwich Castle 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.

Senior Curator of Natural History, Dr David Waterhouse has been working on *Ode to a Flint* with Rosy Gray, and also with trainee Bea Prutton for the social media for this exhibition. He also continues to work on matters related to the Deep History Coast project, including an interview with Radio 4 at Happisburgh. He has recently completed a new display 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). He is also preparing for a Youtube discussion session with Paston School on the subject of the Deep History Coast.

In addition, David is putting together handling trays of natural history specimens for the Learning Team and is advising colleagues at Gressenhall about a future display. He also recently undertook another interview for Radio 4, alongside a curator from the Natural History Museum, on Margaret Fountaine and the butterfly collection. Work has also started on a partial refresh within the Norwich Castle Natural History Gallery, and for the re-installation of the recently frozen taxidermy specimens, which will occur before the end of March.

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. The forthcoming exhibition at Lynn Museum from 25 June – 16 October 2022, *Turner and the moods of water: rivers, estuaries and the sea* is well under way. Turner has always been especially admired as a painter of earth, air, fire and water, the ‘four elements’. Many other artists, including those of the Norwich School, were also deeply inspired by the ways in which he captured these fundamentals of nature. This show compares how artists who either influenced Turner, or were influenced by him, portrayed the element of water, including rivers, estuaries and the sea. It includes works by John Sell Cotman, George Vincent, James Sillett and others from the Norwich Castle collections, and Kings Lynn artist Henry Baines’ *The Fisher Fleet Looking East*, which will be displayed alongside *Walton Bridges* itself.



Henry Baines *The Fisher Fleet Looking East*, undated

An artist-led workshop for 15 children, comprising Looked After Children and Museum Club members took place in early December. This is a development of the ongoing partnership which Norwich Castle has with Children's Services at Norfolk County Council. After this workshop, all the Looked After Children said they wanted to become members of the Museum Club so they could come back again - this suggesting that the activity had been successful and that the painting had assisted this group, who might not have engaged with art, to do so, and to want to continue doing so.



Turner-based art workshop for young people

Francesca's talk for a Norwich Community History Club, which meets weekly in St Stephens Church to promote wellbeing through discussions of historical topics, took place on 15 February. This was fully booked, elicited very positive feedback, and several people expressed a wish to visit the Castle who had not done so before, to see the painting in person.

Francesca's online exhibition for the Art UK Curations series on *Turner and artists of the Norwich School*, is now available on the Art UK website. It may be viewed here –

[Turner and artists of the Norwich School | Art UK](#)

In addition, Francesca continues to document the Marilyn Theobald teapot bequest. The display in the Arts of Living gallery is proving very popular and has led to requests from the Visitor Services team for more information, to enable them to provide a tour of the gallery. Therefore she is currently writing a new gallery talk for the teapots collection. Francesca has also just put together a handling collection from teapots in the bequest for the Learning Team to use for the young children in the Snapdragons and Snaplings groups. She is in the process of working with Kick the Dust trainee Sophie Hockaday on another teapot handling collection and accompanying discussion notes for teenagers.

8. Project Refresh

Works have been progressing well on Project Refresh at Norwich Castle, funded through the Norfolk County Council capital programme.

The project will deliver a significant improvement to the environmental management of the important 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 continue to host major exhibitions featuring national and

international loans. 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 see some physical changes to the building and the way in which it is insulated.

Since the last meeting of the committee some of the major internal works have now been completed. The glazing within the Norwich Union Gallery has now been reinstalled following the installation of a VCL (Vapour Control Layer) and works to improve the lagging and ductwork within the roof void. We have also now had a steel gantry installed in an external lightwell. This gantry will house the new air handling plant that will feed to the Bernard Matthews Gallery.



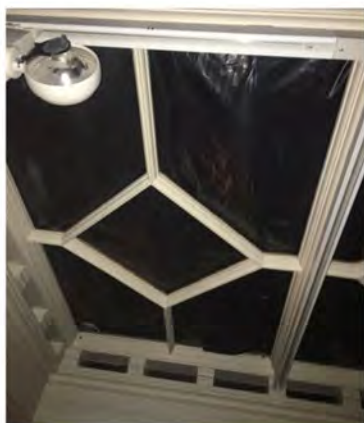
Packing room steelwork
Lift



Steelwork Gantry
construction



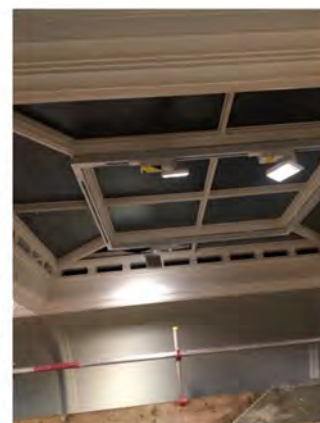
Steelwork Gantry Installed



VCL installed to
Scaffolded Areas



Ductwork Lagged to
Scaffolded Areas



Glazing reinstalled to
Norwich Union gallery

9. Visitor numbers

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	TOTAL
Norwich Castle	0	2,732	5,309	8,053	12,796	7,652	8,964	6,226	4,068	4,962	60,762
Museum of Norwich	0	115	504	595	614	842	749	767	422	647	5,255
Strangers Hall	0	0	0	24	39	450	508	521	460	0	2,002

Report contact:

Dr Robin Hanley
Assistant Head of Museums
Norfolk Museums Service,
Shirehall,
Market Avenue,
Norwich NR1 3JQ.
Tel: 01603 493663
Email: robin.hanley@norfolk.gov.uk