



Norwich area museums committee

Date: **Tuesday, 05 September 2023**
Time: **14:30**
Venue: **Council chamber City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH**

Committee members:

Norwich City Council:

Councillors Huntley (chair), Hoechner, Kidman, Oliver, Schmierer and Wright

Norfolk County Council:

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

Co-opted non-voting members:

Amanda Geitner (East Anglia Arts Fund) and Felicity Devonshire (Friends of the Norwich Museums), Councillor Bailey (Broadland District Council), Councillor Graham (South Norfolk) and Danusia Wurm (Norfolk Contemporary Art Society)

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

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Agenda

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- 1 Apologies**
To receive apologies for absence
- 2 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)
- 3 Minutes** **5 - 12**
To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023.
- 4 Norwich Museums Report - May to July 2023** **13 - 44**
Purpose - To receive the report on the activities at the Norwich Museums for the period May to July 2023.
- 5 Reports from the Representatives of the Voluntary Organisations**
This is a standing item to receive reports from the non-voting members of the committee who represent the voluntary organisations that support the Norfolk Museums Service.

Date of publication: **Friday, 25 August 2023**



Norwich Area Museums Committee

14:30 to 16:45

6 June 2023

Present:

City Councillors:

Huntley (chair – following appointment)
Hoechner
Kidman
Oliver
Schmierer
Wright

County Councillors:

Ward (vice chair – following appointment)
Birmingham

Co-opted non-voting members:

Felicity Devonshire (Friends of Norwich Museums) and Danusia Wurm (Norfolk Contemporary Art Society), Councillor Booth (Broadland District Council) and Councillor Graham (South Norfolk District Council) and Councillor Kybird (ex officio member)

Apologies:

County Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Reilly, Rumsby and Watkins, Amanda Geitner (East Anglia Arts Fund)

Also present:

Robin Hanley, assistant head of museums
Stuart Garner, operations manager
Francesca Vanke, senior curator of Norwich Museums and keeper of fine and decorative art

1. Appointment of chair

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Huntley as chair for the ensuing civic year.

2. Appointment of chair

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Ward as vice chair for the ensuing civic year.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Public questions/petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

5. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2023.

6. Norwich Museums Report – February to April 2023

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 for members to ask questions or comment.

The assistant head of museums presented the first section of the report. A large proportion of the COVID-19 measures were still in place which included CO2 monitoring that could be accessed by staff remotely and in person. The levels of volunteering, both indoor and outdoor, continued to improve. The chair queried whether volunteering had reached pre-pandemic levels. The assistant head of museums said that he would provide the figure within the minutes¹. Additionally there had been a diversification of the types of volunteering, this included online volunteering.

The operations manager presented section 2 of the report. He highlighted that the retail offer in the Rotunda had been enhanced which included stock related to exhibitions at the Castle Museum. He referred to section 2.2 of the report which detailed the number of ceremonies that had taken place at Norwich Castle. The winter months had seen relatively strong numbers despite this usually being the quiet period for ceremonies. In response to a member's question the operations manager said that he was not aware of a particular reason for the low numbers in March and would need to compare the year-on-year figures to identify if this was typical.

The assistant head of museums presented section 3 of the report. He highlighted section 3.1 of the report on the Formal Learning offer. This included the Early Years learning provision, where the service aimed to engage with children as soon as possible, whether this was directly or with other providers. The service also provided a programme for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Learning events for *The Last Voyage of The Gloucester* exhibition had been adapted for different audiences. This demonstrated that the Learning teams were being embedded with exhibitions as early as possible to develop the learning offering. More events would be rolled out in September 2023. The learning service also worked with trainee teachers to make them aware of the offer, as well as encouraging them to bring pupils into the museum. The assistant head of museums said that as part of the Castle Keep project new spaces for education services were being developed based on the designs of the learning team.

A member commented that the positive feedback was good to see, especially in regard to provision for SEN schools.

¹ The assistant head of museums confirmed that the figures for total volunteer numbers across NMS were 19/20 - 528; 20/21 – 156; 21/22 – 160; 22/23 - 298

In response to a member's question the assistant head of museums said that the learning team engaged directly with a number of different schools and teachers around the formal offer for schools. This included using a network of teachers to test sessions. As part of the work, the service was looking at which schools in the area were not as well engaged with the offer and were looking to understand the barriers that prevented these schools from using the offer. He highlighted the travel bursary that the Norfolk Museums Service offered to schools to help address the cost of travel.

A member queried whether there was a link between children visiting the museums as part of school groups and then visiting with parents, carers or guardians. The assistant head of museums said that pupils visiting on a school trip were vouchers to encourage repeat visits.

In response to a member's question the assistant head of museums said that the service provided bespoke sessions for Home Education groups and provide resources for home educators to use for lessons. He said that an update would be provided to a future committee meeting.

The assistant head of museums presented section 3.3 of the report, Visitor Programme Activities. He highlighted the variety of activities that had been held during the February 2023 half term holiday. These sessions were run in partnership with Norwich Science Festival. He also highlighted the *Anarchy* May half term activities that had been developed through the Norwich Castle Keep activity plan. These innovative activities demonstrated the creativity of the learning teams to provide sessions for visitors of all ages.

A member queried whether there had been any collaboration between the Sainsbury Centre and Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) for the Sainsbury Centre relaunch. The assistant head of museums said that there were good links with the Sainsbury Centre, but this was something to explore further.

In response to a members question the assistant head of museums said that he would need to clarify why the specific time period for the *Anarchy* May half term activities was chosen. There were strong links to the Stephen and Matilda civil war to Norwich, in part because of Henry I, whose visit to Norwich was the basis for the reconstructed castle spaces being created as part of the Castle Keep project.

The assistant head of museums presented section 4 of the report, Kick the Dust: Norfolk – project activity update. The initial funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) had ended in March 2023. The report provided a summary of the activities that had occurred. A key focus of the project had been progressing participants through the programme where possible. Participants of Kick the Dust had organised an event to celebrate the end of the NLHF funded project. Representatives from the project also visited the Houses of Parliament to speak about the benefits of the funded project on young people's lives.

As previously reported to the committee the Kick the Dust: Norfolk project would continue through three year funding from Arts Council England (ACE) and funding from Norfolk County Council's Public Health department. This would allow additional data to be captured to measure the positive outcomes on mental health of the

project. NMS, with YMCA Leicester had also recently been successful with a Round 1 application to the NLHF. The joint project team were currently in the development phase of the application which would lead to a Round 2 bid submission. If this bid was successful delivery of the project, *Your Heritage Your Future*, would commence in late 2024.

A member queried whether university students still benefitted free access to the museums. In response the assistant head of museums said that university students would be able to access the museums by showing their university pass. The service had, before the pandemic, hosted events for new international students to inform them of the abilities to do this. He said that Kick the Dust participants were given a pass to be able to visit all NMS museums. This pass was valid for one year but would be renewed upon request by the individual.

In response to a member's comment the assistant head of museums said that Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) had strong links with the museums service. NMS often hosted textiles students for activities. The updated logo had been designed by NUA.

The assistant head of museums presented section 5 of the report, Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn – project update. The work in the Keep was ongoing. He highlighted that the committee had been on a site tour in March 2023. This had allowed members of the committee to see the parts of the project that had been handed back to the service, and those still in progress. This included the toilet block and the new pop-up café. The next section to be handed back would be the Percival wing, which included the new entrance, shop and café. The steelworks within the Keep had been installed and the steel for the roof viewing platforms would shortly be installed. Within the Keep, the service was looking at having bespoke fire doors made so that these would resemble medieval doors. There was also work ongoing within the British Museums gallery to complete the fit out of the cases and development of the tapestry that would be on display. NMS were planning for visitors to be able to enter in the Keep by Easter 2024.

The chair commented that it was positive to hear that work was progressing well. The assistant head of museums said that the service would look to provide another tour for members at a later date.

The assistant head of museums presented section 6 of the report, other activity across Norwich museums. He said the report detailed how aspirational the staff for both Norwich Museums were in terms of providing a varied offer for visitors. A key focus of the Museum of Norwich was building on its partnerships with other organisations such as Vision Norfolk, English Plus and the universities. He detailed some of the activities that had taken place at the Museum of Norwich during the school holidays.

As Strangers' Hall would be celebrating its centenary in July 2023 there would be a full programme of activities at the museum which included reworking the window displays to entice visitors into the building. The service was looking at creating a strong narrative based around historic characters linked to Strangers' Hall.

A member queried whether there were plans to remove the graffiti on the sides of the building. The assistant head of museums said that the service worked with the city

council to remove the graffiti. The city council are responsible for building maintenance and were normally quick to respond to reports of graffiti.

In response to a member's question the operations manager said that repairs to the roof had taken place and the rooms that had been affected by damp would be allowed to dry up. These rooms would not be useable until the rooms had dried due to the risk of mould to other parts of the building.

(Councillor Kidman left the meeting at this point)

A member asked about the condition of the Lord Mayor's coach and whether it would be possible for the civics to see the coach. In response the operations manager said that the coach was currently wrapped up and the service was looking at how to future proof the coach against further damage.

The senior curator of Norwich Museums and keeper of fine and decorative art presented section 7 of the report. She highlighted that *The Last Voyage of the Gloucester: Norfolk's Royal Shipwreck, 1682* had been very popular with around 30,000 visitors since it had opened. She had held a number of events around the exhibition with more planned which included a session that explored the importance of shipwrecks within art from the Stuart period. She was also working on an exhibition for Norwich Castle for autumn 2024, this would explore landscape in art over time and would include works from Turner and other artists.

The senior curator of costume and textiles had been working on moving the collection for repair works to be completed on Shirehall. The senior curator of natural history and geology had recently left the service to work for another organisation but would continue to be involved with NMS through the book he had written, *Exploring Norfolk's Deep History Coast*. The curator of modern and contemporary art had recently opened a new exhibition in the Colman Project Space called *Wall Existing* which explored Norwich's medieval walls. A new exhibition, *Where Land and Water Meet: Norfolk's Rivers, Streams, Brooks and Broads* had recently opened in the Watercolour Gallery at Norwich Castle by the curator of historic art. This exhibition showcased a range of drawings featuring the county's waterways.

The curator of regimental collections had been working on the new website for the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum. This work had been done with students from a range of the further education institutions in Norwich. The aim was to encourage engagement by young people in the collection. The senior curator of archaeology was working on the Norwich Castle project and had updated a number of displays within the museum.

The operations manager presented section 8.1, Wider Impact Group, of the report. He explained that this project group looked at facilitating the Keep project. The group was currently working on preparing for the Percival wing to be handed back. This included producing new branding and wayfinding, as the layout of the museum would be significantly altered through the project. The new layout would also contribute to detailing the history of Norwich Castle. He highlighted that the group was looking at the entire customer journey, both before visiting and during the visit to the museum. The group had also been looking at how parts of the museum could be offered as a venue for hire, which would contribute to revenue for the museum.

A member asked whether the intention was still for the shop and cafe would be free entry to visitors. The operations manager confirmed this would be the case, and there would be a ticket barrier between the museum and café and shop area.

In response to a member's question the operations manager said that the Castle would be able to be host musical events.

The operations manager referred members to section 8.2 of the report. This detailed a successful bid to the ACE's Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND). This funding would be used to upgrade the outdated building management system which controls the relative humidity and temperature of the building.

Referring members' attention to section 8.3, Shirehall Courtroom, the operations manager highlighted that work on removing the dry rot from the building was ongoing. The work had been briefly stalled as the extent of the dry rot appeared to be greater than originally thought. The service was working with a structural engineer to ensure that the roof was supported.

The operations manager presented section 9, Visitor numbers, of the report. He said that the dip in numbers in February for Norwich Castle was due to the de-installation of *The Singh Twins: Slaves of Fashion* exhibition and the subsequent installation of *The Last Voyage of the Gloucester: Norfolk's Royal Shipwreck, 1682* exhibition. The other sites in Norwich were also seeing increases over previous years.

The operations manager gave an overview of the social media performance of each of the Norwich Museums sites. The full report would be circulated to members outside of the meeting. For Norwich Castle some of the most engaged with posts had been commentary on the Harford Brooch across both Instagram and Twitter. The service had started an Instagram page in the 2023/24 financial year for the Museum of Norwich and thus far the post that had been engaged with the most had been about the history of the building. On the Instagram page for Strangers' Hall the most engaged post had been about the annual deep clean.

The members thanked the assistant head of museums and his staff for the report.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) note the Norwich Museums Report February to April 2023 and;
- 2) ask the assistant head of museums to organise a visit of Strangers' Hall before the next committee meeting.

7. Reports of the Representatives of the Voluntary Organisations

Felicity Devonshire, Friends of the Norwich Museums, had provided a written report which had been circulated to members at the meeting and was available on the website [here](#). She highlighted that the Friends were helping with the centenary celebrations of Strangers' Hall. The Friends were reaching out to other organisations to help with improvements such as new front window displays.

Danusia Wurm, Norfolk Contemporary Art Society (NCAS), addressed the committee and said that NCAS had held a number of successful talks, and the programme of

talks would continue in 2023. The organisation had been involved in the Norfolk and Norwich 2023. NCAS continued to support NUA students, which included sponsoring prizes for graduates. On the 6 July 2023 NCAS would be holding an auction in the Council Chamber at City Hall to raise money.

RESOLVED to thank Danusia Wurm and Felicity Devonshire for their reports and record the committee's gratitude to the voluntary organisations that support the Norwich museums.

8. Meeting dates

RESOLVED to note the schedule of meetings for the civic year 2023-24, as approved at Norwich City Council's annual council.

CHAIR

Norwich Area Museums Committee 5 September 2023

Norwich Museums Report: May to July 2023

1. COVID-19 & infection control update

A number of the COVID-secure systems and procedures implemented across Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) sites during the pandemic remain in place. Infection control priorities remain:

- Ventilation
- Cleaning regimes
- Hand sanitisation

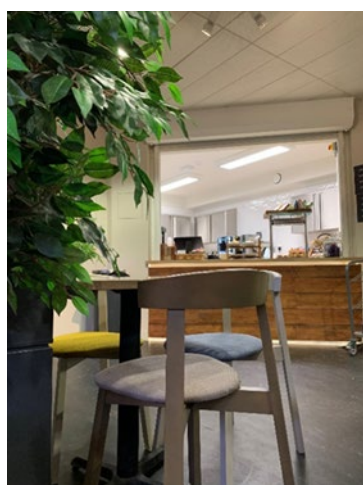
CO2 monitors provided through Norfolk County Council (NCC) continue to operate in a number of spaces across NMS where there is more limited natural/mechanical ventilation. These CO2 detectors are monitored locally by staff and also link into the LoRaWAN network, facilitating the use of monitoring dashboards to track live data and trends.

2. Norwich Museums operations

2.1 Norwich Castle opening arrangements

Due to the ongoing construction works at Norwich Castle, visitors continue to use the external entrance door E8 as the temporary entrance and exit route. The one-way system introduced as a response to COVID-19 has been deactivated.

The new 'pop-up' catering unit 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 project. A temporary retail offer continues to operate within the Rotunda, with increased lines of stock available for purchase.



The new 'pop-up' café operating in the Rotunda

2.2 Norwich Castle ceremonies

The number of ceremonies taking place at Norwich Castle has continued to remain strong, with 743 having been completed within the past 12 months.

| Month | No of Ceremonies | Footfall |
|-----------|------------------|----------|
| August | 57 | 1245 |
| September | 85 | 2621 |
| October | 62 | 1613 |
| November | 53 | 1162 |
| December | 22 | 539 |
| January | 18 | 383 |
| February | 53 | 1060 |
| March | 16 | 480 |
| April | 56 | 1678 |
| May | 65 | 1396 |
| June | 151 | 3468 |
| July | 73 | 2070 |
| Total | 711 | 17715 |



The Colman Gallery wedding space

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 carefully managed the reintroduction of in-person learning events at all three city museums. To explore the programmes in more detail and get involved, please visit the *Learning Hub* pages of the Norwich Castle website: [Learning - Norfolk Museums](#)



3.1 Early Years

Earlham Nursery Partnership:

As part of our ongoing partnership with Earlham Nursery, Learning Officer Emma Clarke visited the children and staff in their setting and ran 'reflection and celebration' activities with the children. Together we made some 'mini museums' displaying our favourite objects and images from the project. All children received a certificate and a small gift from the Castle gift shop. After school, Emma and Learning Manager Jan Pitman joined staff for a reflective discussion and to plan the project for the next academic year. Our discussion centred around ways that we can work with school staff to improve access to our museums for families from this area of multiple deprivation.



Early Years visits to the Last Voyage of the Gloucester

It is important that our exhibitions are accessible to all visitors. As part of her work with Early Years, Learning Officer Emma Clarke led children from Chapel Break Infants and Langley Prep on visit to the Gloucester exhibition. Children met an 'underwater archaeologist' and, after sharing the story of the wreck of the Gloucester, became underwater archaeologists themselves. They explored the gallery and engaged in hands-on activities to discover more about the wreck. Teacher feedback: *"perfectly pitched"*



3.2 SEND

Bespoke Medieval sessions

Emma Clarke, Julie Pleasants and Maja Michaliszyn have trialled a 'team teaching' approach to deliver Medieval object handling sessions for young people with SEND from Lessingham All Saints, Cambrian Home Tree and Compass Belton. A key part of Emma's role is to ensure that museum staff are supported to engage effectively with

people with access needs. Having modelled different approaches to working young people, staff worked together to deliver the object handling, before reflecting upon the sessions afterwards.

3.3 Conferences and Masterclasses

Art Teachers' Masterclass at Norwich Castle on Saturday 24 June

Nine participants from primary, secondary, free, and academy schools, and home education signed up for this year's *Teachers' Masterclass*, based on the current *Wreck of the Gloucester* exhibition. The leader, Sarah Beare, is a multi-media artist, but with a particular interest in drawing and illustration.

Sarah introduced her own practice then outlined the first few drawing exercises, encouraging participants to concentrate on one element of a drawing at a time before developing the drawing with shading, line, and detail. Emphasis was on silhouettes, scribble drawing, negative space, and taking different angles and perspective on the same object. All then went into the exhibition armed with four colours, pastel paper, and chose an object, or group of objects to begin drawing. Throughout the day, emphasis was on how drawing an object teaches one to see that object in its entirety, thoroughly, and in new ways.

Participants were enormously inspired by the class: *'brilliant day, thank you all!'* One particularly appreciated *'having time to try different techniques'*; another the *'lovely facilities and help from staff'*. Those who'd been before agreed that the Masterclass was *'always well run'* with a *'good teacher'*.

The event was supported by the Norwich Freemen's Charity.

Migration in Norfolk conference at Strangers' Hall

On Friday 6 July, teachers from around Norfolk attended a conference focusing upon the history of migration at Strangers' Hall. Local historian and author Frank Meeres gave a talk to teachers after which they took a tour of the museum, exploring its connections with immigration, with Learning Officer Jenni Williams. Delegates then headed to the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell and took part in object-handling, trails and tours relating to the city's industries.

One teacher said: *"It was great to hear such an expert as Frank talk on migration before learning more about Strangers' Hall and the Museum of Norwich."*

A level conference in partnership with UEA

A Level students experienced a first taste of university through lectures, tours and seminars at Norwich Castle on Mon 10 July. The theme of the conference was the hot topic of decolonisation and speakers include UEA's Dr Sherzod Muminov, Associate Professor in Japanese History, Dr Camilla Schofield, Associate Professor in Modern History, and Laura London, Lecturer in Secondary Education.



Students from across Norfolk were treated to tours and talks around objects and artworks displayed or stored in the museum with Jenni Williams, Kate Malyon and Maya Michaliszyn from the museum's Learning team.

One student said: *"It was a really interesting day and good to hear from university lecturers and museum staff about stuff we don't usually learn about in the classroom."*

3.4 Cultural Access Forum

On the 10 May Norwich Castle hosted a discussion and sharing of learning regarding their ongoing work with the d/Deaf community. The event was attended by five external colleagues – freelancers and representatives of other arts and cultural organisations in the city, as well as with four colleagues from NMS.

3.5 Visitor Programme Activities

Norwich Castle & Keep Activity Plan

To celebrate Refugee Week 2023, we held a sharing event for our project *Friends & Fabric* (referenced in the previous report). The project was delivered in partnership with New Routes and Art at Work CIC. New Routes is a Norwich-based charity that supports refugees and asylum seekers living in the city. We held the sharing event at The Forum, and displayed work that had been created over the course of the project. Project participants proudly came to see their work on display, and along with members of the public took part in a creative activity led by Art at Work.





Works included those inspired by the Bircham Cope and the Bellerophon Tapestry. New Routes were so pleased with the outcomes of the project, that they asked us to extend the run of sessions until the summer holidays, which we were able to do thanks to the Norwich Castle Royal Palace Reborn project. Project staff were invited to the New Routes community meal, and we were honoured to share delicious food with everyone before our final session on Thursday 20 July.

Snapdragons and Snaplings

In July, our *Brilliant Builders* Tuesday Snapdragons for pre-school children included a very special trip outside the front of the Castle, where staff from the main build contractor Morgan Sindall helpfully provided a special 'up and down' of the crane for us.

Participant feedback: *"Super engaging, loads of activities without being overstimulating"*
"This was our first session and we loved it! Great atmosphere, so friendly and welcoming and lovely things to explore and do. We will be back!"



UEA Drama: *Mumper the Time Travelling Dog*

On 20 May, five UEA students presented two, 20-minute family performances linked to the Gloucester exhibition. Part of an ongoing partnership supported this year by Learning Officer Emma Clarke, the planned collaboration for next academic year will focus on providing experiences for children under five in line with our developing Early Years strategy.

Summer Programme & RNLI partnership

Our summer holiday programme has been inspired by our latest exhibition, *The Last Voyage of the Gloucester: Norfolk's Royal Shipwreck, 1682*. Visitors can find out all about the amazing story of the Gloucester, explore life at sea by navigating trails, investigate magical marine objects, create an illustrated page or book of the shipwreck story in our art and craft workshops and discover and impersonate just who would have been on board as part of our selfie station.

We have partnered with the RNLI for this year's summer programme. RNLI volunteers across Norfolk will be hosting a range of interactive activities for families to get involved with including crew kit dress ups, water safety, history and education on saving lives at sea. Rebecca Whyte, RNLI Community Manager, North and East of England, said: *'The*

RNLI are very excited to be a part of this special exhibition celebrating important local heritage. Working alongside the team at Norwich Castle, the RNLI will bring lots of activities for families and young people, raising awareness around water safety, the role of RNLI across Norfolk, with special recognition of World Drowning Prevention Day on Tuesday 25 July.'

3.6 Museum of Norwich

The Garage's Introduction to the Creative Industries Programme

In May we welcomed participants from The Garage's *Introduction to the Creative Industries* Programme to the Museum of Norwich. The programme is designed for 18-30 year olds and introduce learners to the wide variety of work and roles that exist within the creative Industries and support them to take their next steps into training or work. Participants had some time to explore the museum before hearing about the career paths of Social History Curator Hannah Henderson, Learning & Engagement Officer Rosalind Hewett and Kick the Dust Project Worker Amelia Long.

The Garage's creative wellbeing group

The Garage runs a creative mental health group for adults, and in May we welcomed them to the Museum of Norwich for a workshop on the history of medicine. Using the workshop model developed for Community Culture Club, we ran a series of sensory activities to immerse the group in the learning. Sarah Witcomb, Community Producer said: *"Thank you so much for hosting us and making it such a lovely experience on Saturday. It was great to see everyone having a lovely time outside our venue and comfortable in a new space. You really helped one of the participants feel at ease when she didn't want to listen to the medieval medical related talk, thank you."*

New Routes

Over the summer holidays New Routes runs an extensive programme of activities for their participants supported by NMS. In August we hosted the International Families Club at the Museum of Norwich. Staff saw familiar faces from the *Friends & Fabric* project, as well as meeting new people. Participants explored the museum, took part in our summer activities and enjoyed the sun in the museum courtyard.

3.7 Strangers' Hall

City of Ale

This year's City of Ale festival celebrated the twinning of two great beer cities, Norwich and Leuven. The initiative was a long-held ambition and vision of renowned beer writer Roger Protz. Four brewers from Norfolk were twinned with brewers from the Flanders region of Belgium to create unique collaboration brews celebrating our shared history. As part of the festival's launch, we hosted a special event at



Strangers' Hall in May. Attendees tasted four Belgian & Norfolk beer collaborations and chatted to the brewers behind them.

MAP Young Parents

We have just started working with the Mancroft Advice Project's support group for young parents. The project supports young people aged 25 and below who have children. Rosalind & Emma ran a gentle workshop in the garden at Strangers' Hall, and then took the young family on a tour of the house. The many staircases proved very popular with the young participants.

4. Kick the Dust: Norfolk – project activity update

The Kick the Dust: Norfolk project, initially funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and delivered in partnership with a range of organisations including YMCA Norfolk, continues to engage with young people aged 11-25. The project provides a structured progression pathway for young people: *Player-Shaper-Leader*.

Following the successful conclusion of the National Lottery Heritage Fund funded Kick the Dust project, Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) has secured additional funding through an Arts Council England NPO Uplift award for the period 2023-26. This will enable NMS to continue to support young people in the three Levelling up for Culture places of Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Thetford. This additional funding will enable young people to participate in high quality cultural and heritage activities that develop their creative and digital skills and potential, as well as prepare them for the workplace. Additional funding has also been identified to support continuing Kick the Dust activity in Norwich.

During 2023-24 NMS is also receiving funding from Norfolk County Council (NCC) Public Health to support Kick the Dust activities that focus on the mental health and wellbeing of Norfolk young people.

NMS is partnering with Norfolk Library & Information Service (NLIS) to deliver an exciting programme of activity enabling us to strengthen partnership working between museum and library staff and increase levels of cultural engagement by young people in a sustained way, employing the successful Kick the Dust approach to youth engagement that uses the three-stage progression model *Player-Shaper-Leader*. The programme will be aimed at those in the three priority places aged 16-25 years, with opportunities for 13–16 year olds to engage as part of the progression framework.

The key aims of the new Kick the Dust project are to:

- develop transferable work-related skills with the aim of supporting more working age young people into employment, training or further learning;
- develop digital skills linked to creative industries to address the digital skills gap in the heritage and cultural sectors;

- increase young people’s creative skills and for young people to gain a range of new cultural experiences;
- encourage an appreciation of the history and culture of their local communities.

Young people will work alongside professionals to develop their transferable work-related and creative skills, through the co-production of activity and events, volunteering and work experience operating at a level that meets their needs.

The following data is based on the start of the project covering the period 1/5/23 to 9/8/23.

Number of interventions with young people:

Between 1/5/23 and 9/8/23 there have been 282 interventions involving 149 individual young people taking part in 374 hours of quality activity. 92% of the activities were face to face, the other sessions being offered online with young people in the principal target areas.

This blended approach offers a wider range of opportunities for young people to engage in heritage:

- 17% of activity was at Player level (to introduce new young people to the project)
- 63% at Shaper level (longer term project with young people determining the content)
- 20% at Leader level (long term engagement – young people leading projects, acting at governance level, mentoring staff)
- 82% of all activity involved young people in leading and designing projects

Breakdown of activity taking place in each area:

- 60% (50 opportunities) in the West (covering Kings Lynn, Thetford),
- 19% (15 opportunities) in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer)
- 19% (15 opportunities) in Norwich
- A further 2 opportunities were offered to young people at alternative venues outside of Norfolk including attendance at the ‘Young People and Skills’ conference in London at the Houses of Parliament and Norwich City Hall in May 2023.
- 18 volunteering opportunities have been provided to 10 individual young people.

The young people have access to all of NMS sites and can visit with a friend or family member for free during their engagement for that year. Free passes were issued to those beginning on the programme in June 2023. Data shows that passes are being used outside of the times the young people would attend a session in their home museum. To the end of July, 8 young people had used their free pass – 1 at Gressenhall, 1 at Ancient House Museum, 3 at Time and Tide, 1 at Elizabethan House and 2 at Norwich Castle.

We continue to deliver a blended training offer for all staff and volunteers who support youth engagement in NMS. Staff input to the training programme will be formulated as the new project progresses and needs are identified. Training around safeguarding was

delivered in-house in June, two of the new Project Workers took part of a Mentoring in Museums course, the team attended the Library Living Networks event on video making in July and further opportunities are being planned for the Autumn term to include SEND and Mental Health First Aid training as well as social media working with a specialist from Libraries and the Young Ambassadors.

Our offer to support our young people around the important theme of mental health and wellbeing is on-going and this will be measured through the new evaluation framework using data from the young people's feedback forms. At the end of the NLHF funded project in March 2023, 26% of young people identified as having a mental health issue. Up to 31 July 2023 data shows that 24% of the individual young people who have taken part in the new programme of activity identify as having a mental health issue (an increase of 1% on June data), showing the need for this programme. Through a systematic approach to evaluation, in partnership with Libraries, the team will be able to demonstrate impact on those taking part and the young people will be able to monitor their progress through the programme in relation to skills, confidence and mental health.

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 through our Kick the Dust offer. The focus is on mental health and wellbeing and now has representation from the NCC Public Health team.

Target audiences: (some young people fall into more than one category) as of 31/6/23

- FE/HE – 18%
- YMCA clients – 6%
- Secondary schools – 15%
- Young people with mental health issues – 24%
- SEND – 3%
- Outside of mainstream education – 9%
- NEET – 15%
- Looked after children and adopted living those at home - 0%
- Care Leavers – 0%
- Young Carers – 0%
- New arrivals and refugees – 6%
- Pregnant young mums and teenage parents – 0%

Impacts on mental health and wellbeing

The new young people's feedback form includes the 78 positively worded items from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale for assessing a population's mental well-being. The Young Ambassadors worked alongside Norfolk Public Health team to

devise the questionnaire, and this will be used in addition to the other measures to show impact in this key area.

Of the 8 responses to 31/7/23, the following data chart highlights how young people were feeling before taking part in Kick the Dust:

| QUESTION – pre engagement | All of the time | Some of the time | Often | Rarely | Most of the time |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| I've been optimistic about the future | 14% | 43% | 14% | 28% | 0% |
| I've been feeling useful | 28% | 43% | 14% | 14% | 0% |
| I've been feeling relaxed | 28% | 43% | 0% | 14% | 0% |
| I've been dealing with problems well | 14% | 28% | 43% | 14% | 0% |
| I've been thinking clearly | 14% | 28% | 57% | 0% | 0% |
| I've been feeling close to other people | 14% | 28% | 28% | 28% | 0% |
| I've been able to make up my own mind about things | 20% | 0% | 43% | 14% | 0% |

The following data chart highlights how 4 young people were feeling following their engagement in Kick the Dust:

| QUESTION- post engagement | All of the time | Some of the time | Often | Rarely | Most of the time |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| I've been optimistic about the future | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 0% |
| I've been feeling useful | 25% | 25% | 50% | 0% | 0% |
| I've been feeling relaxed | 25% | 25% | 25% | 0% | 25% |
| I've been dealing with problems well | 25% | 0% | 50% | 25% | 0% |
| I've been thinking clearly | 25% | 25% | 50% | 0% | 0% |
| I've been feeling close to other people | 0% | 0% | 75% | 25% | 0% |
| I've been able to make up my own mind about things | 25% | 0% | 75% | 0% | 0% |

Summary

The NLHF funded Kick the Dust project ended in March 2023 with evidence clearly demonstrating the impact on young people and staff engaging in activity. The programme is now moving into a new phase, with funding support from ACE and NCC. Kick the Dust is a three-stage journey, with young people developing transferable work-related skills including digital 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 as we move forward is to support more working age young people to progress into employment, training, or further learning and long-term volunteering. The strong partnerships that have been developed through Kick the Dust provide a strong base on which to build, bringing new young people into museum and library spaces.

Success comes in many guises and this month we have had one of our YMCA young people progress into independent living and gain a place on a Level 3 Access course, with the Kick the Dust programme and pre traineeship giving her the confidence to take these steps. She has also secured a role in the Visitor Services team for Norwich Castle. Another young person has progressed from being a Young Ambassador to gaining a L4 Apprenticeship with Channel 4 in London.

Quotes from our Young Ambassadors regarding their engagement in Kick the Dust and their involvement in the 'Done and Dusted' celebration event, show the impact that the programme has had on them:

'Kick the dust gave me hands on experience of the industry I want to work for while becoming more proficient in the skills I need to get me there.' Chloe, Young Ambassador

'The most important thing that Kick the Dust did for me was increase my confidence through representing the voices of other young people, inspiring me to pursue a career in the museum sector by showing me that it's a place where I'm able to make positive institutional change.' Emily, Young Ambassador

'A fantastic opportunity to develop my confidence, experience and skills for future employability, and learning more about different opportunities in the heritage sector, as well as the next steps I want to take and my future aims' Emily following her engagement in Kick the Dust

'Kick the Dust has played such a key part in my life and helped me secure employment when most doors were closed to me, giving me the skills and confidence to move forward. It is like being part of a family.' Jazz, Young Ambassador

'My experience has been highly positive. It has allowed me to connect with other young people with a similar interest in the industry. It has also provided me with varied work experience that will contribute significantly to my search for employment in the sector. I have learnt so much more about the heritage sector and the abundance of roles at play, which has led me to new interests and career goals. Engaging with people currently working in the sector has been invaluable and deepens my understanding of the importance of the work the museum services do in the local community.' Marr, Young Ambassador

New funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund

A successful National Lottery Heritage Fund *Grants for Heritage* Round 1 application was submitted to the NLHF for the *Your Heritage Your Future* project. The application was submitted by YMCA Leicester, with NMS as Lead Partner. This complex application was put together by a joint project team of staff from YMCA Leicester and NMS, who will now work on the Development Phase of this application, ahead of a Round 2 bid submission in early 2024. If the Round 2 bid is successful, project delivery would commence in later 2024.

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

Sectional completion of the first phase of the project took place on 11 August 2022, with the formal handover of the new WC block area, which includes accessible toilets, baby changing facilities, a new Changing Place and a 'pop-up' catering facility. The Changing Place is now fully operational and registered <https://www.changing-places.org/find?toilet=2026> .

The installation of internal steelwork structures in the Keep has been completed, with new floor levels installed. Joinery and mechanical & electrical installation is ongoing. The final phase of steelwork installation is ongoing on the Keep roof.

Installation of structural steels has been completed in the new entrance area and adjoining Percival wing of the building. The next key phases will be the installation of the new glazed atrium roof in the entrance area.



New Changing Place

6. Other activity across Norwich museums

6.1 Museum of Norwich

The Museum of Norwich team has been busy delivering a broad range of activities.

Exhibitions

Threads of Connection: A Creative Response to Our Textile Heritage

23 November 2022 – 3 June 2023

Curator Hannah Henderson has been collaborating with Art at Work CIC, a local not for profit organisation that creates art-based projects to promote wellbeing and good mental health. The *Threads of Connection* project has been undertaken by their arts for wellbeing group for women and has focused on the Norwich textile industry. This project was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).

Through visits, talks, creating and making, the participants have gained new knowledge and become experts in their fields of research. They have also harnessed their creativity to bring our textile heritage to life. As part of the final stage of the project, Hannah Henderson and Holly Sandiford, Group Leader, supported the group to create their own exhibition, which showcases some of the women's artwork.

Feedback from the group's participants showed that the women were so engaged and inspired by the project, that they expressed a genuine interest to continue their learning journey:

"I have loved this group bringing history and art together."

"Being a volunteer for the first time has really helped my confidence."

"I enjoyed spending time at the Bridewell. Please can we have more time next time?"

Subsequently, Art at Work successfully applied for a further three-year funding package from NLHF. The group will be based at the museum for the next three years, meeting in blocks of eight weekly sessions, three times a year. Staff have greatly enjoyed working

with Art at Work on this past project and have learned so much from them in terms of developing our wellbeing arts practice. The partnership has been mutually beneficial in many ways. This new 3-year project will empower the participants with more time, enabling them to pursue a deeper exploration of their local heritage. Furthermore, this continued partnership will enable our team to learn first-hand from expert practitioners in wellbeing arts work, enriching our own practice and enhancing future public programmes.

The Art at Work exhibition was extended to early June and was a highlight event for Creativity and Wellbeing Week.



Events

For our May Half Term holiday activities staff once again took inspiration from our fabulous shoe collection and asked visitors to consider what shoes can say about ourselves. Kate Malyon, from the Norwich Learning Team designed a *Shoe About You* activity; a 3D paper shoe that could be decorated in a way that says something about you. Visitor comments included:

'Relaxing and made me reflective.'

'It made me calm and happy and gave me lovely memories.'

'Thank you for the sparkles for the shoes. Shoe making was such a lovely and fun activity.'

During Refugee Week, Assistant Curator, Bethan Holdridge, joined up with the People from Abroad Team for an event at the Forum. Bethan devised the historic component to the quiz, using museum objects that demonstrate the influence of Strangers in Norwich over the centuries. These included a Norwich City Football Club pin badge showing a canary and a book of Rumsey Wells silk lining samples inspired by the eighteenth-century silk weaving industry.

In July we were pleased to work with the Art Library Society (ARLIS) and local Art Book creators Bookscapes. To coincide with ARLIS' national conference held at the Forum, Bookscapes curated an art exhibition based in the medieval Undercroft and inspired by the stories and collections in the museum. As visitors travelled through the museum they were met with a mock-up 'Movement Slip' that connected the place in the museum

with the artwork in the Undercroft. The connections they made were new and inspiring and plans are already underway to work with them again.



We were very pleased to once again welcome a new cohort from the women's well-being group Art at Work, who have created fabulous textiles based on the sixteenth century Strangers. The group commenced their weekly programme in May with a light introduction to who the Strangers were and a visit to the displays on the Strangers in the museum and concluding with a visit to the undercroft, where we know some Strangers resided. The participants enjoyed the morning so much that we will be presenting the same offer to the next group who commence in September.

During July we once again participated in a very successful Lanes Fayre. We opened the old shop, offered the Kett's Rebellion VR and welcomed 430 visitors.

Our summer exhibition has also inspired our summer programme. Curator Hannah Henderson has been working closely with Norwich Puppet Theatre's Young Curators group to present the exhibition *Snap and Beyond*. The exhibition looks at the history of puppeteering on an international and national scale. Working with the Puppet Theatre, the Norwich Learning team have also devised a holiday trail and the Puppet Theatre have developed a shadow puppet activity that is jointly hosted on Tuesdays. The Puppet Theatre are also hosting a more involved shadow puppet making workshop, *Out of the Shadows*, that will use the undercroft space.

In July we said goodbye to our *Postcard Poems* and *Figurine It Out* displays from Wayland Academy and Sheringham High through the Young Norfolk Arts Collective

The end of the month undercroft tours continue to be very popular with visitors.

Conservation

In June, with the assistance of the NMS Conservation Team, we undertook a Deep Clean of the *England's Second City* display, which included costume rotation and the removal of one object - a mutilated medieval stone angel from St. Michael Coslany - for

the new Norwich Castle displays. Assistant Curator, Bethan Holdridge, is currently planning a Deep Clean of the wider museum to take place in October. It is intended for this to become an annual activity.

New Collections

We continue to be offered a wide variety of items for the collections. One item that has been recently accepted are some coins that were held by Joy Burton during the Baedeker Raids of 1942. Joy, then aged four, was living on Northumberland Street and was in her house when the bomb hit. The house collapsed around her, her precious money box that she was holding melted and she was left holding the coins. When Joy approached Curator, Hannah Henderson, at the Laynes Fayre, it was clear that these coins were a significant artefact with a very special story to tell.



Researchers

Staff receive many enquiries asking for the identification of items or enquiries about the collections via email. Ellen and Mary Donovan visited see some baker's tins we have from Walter Bussey's bakery. Mary was his niece and used to come and stay with her Uncle in Norwich during the 1940s. Mary remembered the tins being used and was delighted to be able to see and handle them once more.

Rae Blair, from Australia, also visited us and our volunteer researchers group to find out more about the Bridewell for an historical fiction she is writing based on her husband's family. His great-great-great grandmother was kept in the Bridewell before being transported to Australia. The book will be a prequel to her current novel *'More Than I Ever Had'*.

6.2 Strangers' Hall

Engagement

In May the regular women's well-being Art at Work group visited Strangers' Hall hoping to gain a greater understanding of historic textiles in situ to complement their current

programme. The group loved the hall and not only gained inspiration from the textiles but from the house and wider collections as well.

In July Emma Clarke, Learning Officer, ran a special morning for the MAP Young Parents project, providing accessible but fun activities in the garden and Toy Room.

Guided tours continue to be offered free with museum admission on the last Wednesday of each month.

Refugee Week - 19–25 June

Assistant Curator, Bethan Holdridge and Claudia Mussi from English+ were interviewed for Radio Norfolk's *History at Home* series. The featured object was the peg-doll that Claudia had made as part of a joint project celebrating national dress and culture for Refugee week 2022. Bethan talked about the selection of dolls made by Polish and Latvian displaced persons in Wentorf Camp in 1945 that are in the Strangers' Hall collections. Claudia described how working with the museums helped her, and others, understand her new city and country and to make it feel like home. Members of the English+ group then came to Strangers' to see the dolls they had created in a new display in the Toy Room, followed by tea and biscuits in the garden.



Bethan also joined up with the People from Abroad team to demonstrate the impact of people arriving in the city today and through history. Together they devised a quiz based around stories of recent, famous, immigrants and historic objects from both the Strangers' Hall and Museum of Norwich collections that were introduced, influenced or were connected to refugees from previous centuries.

The final Refugee Week event was also part of the City of Ale festival. Three local brewers collaborated with three brewers from Flanders to brew four unique beers to celebrate 'The Strangers' for the fortnight long festival. Participants were welcomed to Strangers' Hall garden to sample the new beers, meet the brewers and find out about the brewing connections between Norfolk and Flanders.

In July the MAP Young Parents group were treated to a special activity session at Strangers' Hall led by Emma Clarke and Rosalind Hewett from the Learning team.

Collections and Researchers

As well as selecting and preparing objects for the new displays, Curators Cathy Terry and Bethan Holdridge have had a busy spring supporting research visits and tours from leading specialist groups including the Beadwork Society and the Dolls House Society. As part of this a specialist report on the condition of the very rare 17th century beaded christening basket has been produced by Jane Marie Griffin. Individual researchers have included Maria Andrew, archivist at the Theatre Royal, Sue Derby, researching the Prosser family history, Henriette Marsden, doctoral researcher University of Humboldt Berlin, viewing key items in the domestic crafts collection, and Frances Jones, researching the instructional material in the Sarah Glover collection from a singing teacher's perspective.

Strangers' Hall Centenary Programme

The generous support of The Norwich Freeman's Charity and Friends of Norwich Museums for the *Strangers' Hall 100* centenary programme has provided a welcome investment into internal and external displays and funded a programme of imaginative activities, with free events aiming to maximise inclusion. The street front of the museum has been newly painted and an eye-catching combination of cutout figures, iconic buildings and objects have been installed in the windows.

Our commissioned designer Hannah Broadway was invited to encapsulate Strangers' long history in an engaging and contemporary way, which she has done by creating displays which are playful and imaginative, yet based on real people and museum objects. Community groups and young people participating in the Kick the Dust project provided collage portraits of Norwich's finest.



New window displays at Strangers' Hall



Inside the museum new interpretation panels use archive photos and documents from the early days of the museum. They tell the story of the founding of Strangers' Hall by Leonard Bolingbroke, his *'munificent gift'* to the City of Norwich and the opening as a City of Norwich Museum in 1923. They throw light on Strangers' Hall's pioneering work in the vanguard of the early Folk Life museum movement in the UK and the era of significant donations including the Breton collection.

In the Parlour, a beautiful refurbished original display case juxtaposes collections from 1922 with those especially chosen by local young people from the Kick the Dust contemporary collecting project to reflect home life in 2023. New displays include Mr & Mrs Taylor's Dolls House, a Victorian Bazaar Doll and peg dolls in National costume, created by local English Plus group members.



The *Strangers' Hall 100* celebrations launched on 9 July with 469 total visitors, some visiting as part of the Norwich Lanes Fayre. Strangers' Hall also held a tea party to thank funders and stakeholders on 26 July, with thanks delivered by Head of Museums Steve Miller, Chairman of the Norwich Friends Charles Bingham-Newland and Strangers' Hall Curator Cathy Terry, followed by tours of the building for attendees.



The Centenary provides the unifying theme for the programme of varied family events and activities taking place during the spring and summer. *See Blue* in May half term focused on the blue and white delftware ceramics which form such a notable accent in our period room settings. Visitors could choose to design and paint their own commemorative plate to mark their favourite object of Strangers' centenary, or use a special viewer to turn white objects blue.

For our summer holiday activities *Challenge 100* offers each visitor a choice of illustrated 'zines based on our 'Top 100' objects, which were selected during the Easter holidays. Continuing the theme of Strangers' Hall former residents, on Wednesdays we are also offering the chance to make your own finger puppets. We look forward to a week of Free Admission days supported by the Norwich Freeman, during which visitors will be invited to join in preparations and meet costumed characters as we recreate the Grand Opening of Strangers' Hall in the year 1922.

Publicity and Media

In May Strangers' Hall helped celebrate the renewal of the NMS status as a Museum of Sanctuary. Working with Teaching Museum trainee, Daniel Bokenham, Assistant Curator Bethan Holdridge produced a short film filmed in the Great Chamber, for the City of Sanctuary social media feeds, in which she explained the unique role of museums in helping establish a sense of time, place and belonging for people seeking sanctuary.

In July, Bethan was the 'expert witness' for the Podcast *That Shakespeare Life* (currently the second most popular Shakespeare Podcast in the world). Bethan talked about the sixteenth century Strangers in Norwich and their relationship to Strangers' Hall and the wider city.

Curator Cathy Terry provided the BBC Radio Norfolk interview for the *History at Home* broadcast, focusing on the history of Strangers' Hall and the new Centenary displays to publicise the July launch. Strangers' Hall was also the subject of a feature article on its history by Derek James during the previous week.



Young people creating a front window collage portrait

7. Norwich Curatorial update

Dr Francesca Vanke, Senior Curator of Norwich Museums and Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art continues to deliver tours and events based around the current exhibition *The Last Voyage of the Gloucester: Norfolk's Royal Shipwreck, 1682* which opened to the public on Saturday 25 February. The ship sank off the Norfolk coast while on the way to Edinburgh, carrying James, Duke of York, brother of King Charles II and the heir to the English throne. Over 150 lives were lost.

This unique exhibition displays fascinating historical contextual material on loan from national and international museums, alongside objects rescued from the wreck, revealed to the public for the first time. In the exhibition we explore the story of the ship itself, as well as detailing the extraordinary endeavours of the divers from Norfolk, Julian and Lincoln Barnwell, who found the wreck in 2007, and the ongoing conservation of the rare artefacts rescued so far.

Francesca has taken part in a two-day conference, and a series of research seminars connected to the exhibition.



The Wreck of the Gloucester, 1682, Johan Danckerts, c 1682,
© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

An 80-page catalogue, written jointly by Dr Francesca Vanke, Ruth Battersby-Tooke and co-curators Prof Claire Jowitt and Dr Ben Redding, maritime historians from UEA, accompanies this show.



The Last Voyage of the Gloucester exhibition, Norwich Castle

The exhibition has proved resoundingly successful, with almost 60,000 visits to date. Together with Dr Ben Redding from UEA, one of the co-curators, Francesca went on BBC Look East on 10 August to publicise both the exhibition and new research by Ben.

The holiday programme has been reported on elsewhere but in particular, the Black History event, which took place on 5 August to celebrate Jamaican Independence Day, was a great success. It comprised a panel discussion with several distinguished speakers, and live music.



Panellists at the Black History event discussion:
 L-R: Antonio Fumero, Richard Semitego, Molly Samuel-Leport MBE,
 Danny Keen, Nic Careem, John Bird, Baron Bird MBE

Francesca also continues to work on *Crossing, Constructions and Connections*, the exhibition for Time and Tide Museum based around the Turner painting *Walton Bridges*. The opening of this show will coincide with the opening of the new Third Crossing in Yarmouth, material from which is included in the exhibition.

In addition, she is working on the Turner-based exhibition for Norwich Castle, which will open in October 2024. She is in the process of writing loan requests and has so far secured loans from the Royal Academy, Tate and the Dulwich Picture Gallery.

Dr Giorgia Bottinelli Curator of Historic Art has recently acquired a new work for the collection. She successfully fundraised from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund, the V&A Purchase Grant Fund and the Friends of Norwich Museums to buy, as a hybrid AIL, the beautiful *Panoramic Landscape with Cornfields and Dunes Beside the Sea* by the important Dutch landscape artist Jacob Isaacksz. van Ruisdael (1628/9 - 1682). Dutch landscape painting was influential in England, and Ruisdael was important for the development of the work of the Norwich School of Artists in the early 19th century. JMW Turner also admired his work. This painting is therefore a highly significant acquisition which will help us to contextualise the story of British landscape painting more fully. It has gone on display in our permanent galleries in the Castle.



Panoramic Landscape with Cornfields and Dunes Beside the Sea,
 now on display in the Cotman Galleries in the Castle

Giorgia has also been cataloguing 13 further new acquisitions of works on paper. These were donated to NMS from a large bequest to the Art Fund from a collector, Nina Drucker. The artists included in our selection are Thomas Shotter Boys, John Sell Cotman, David Cox, Hannah Chapman Gurney, John Middleton, Samuel Palmer, John Varley and Peter de Wint. They include work of some of the finest watercolour artists of the 19th century, including Palmer, as seen below. This is an area of focus for our collections, and one which we are trying to consolidate. Norwich Castle already has a strong collection of watercolours of John Sell Cotman and most of the artists we have selected from the Nina Drucker Bequest will help us to tell a more comprehensive story of 19th-century British landscape watercolour.



A Road past a Farm, undated, Samuel Palmer (1805-1881)

Dr Rosy Gray, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art is working on a new project with conceptual artist Mark Wilsher, entitled *Five Paintings* (30 September 2023 to 31 March 2024). Based in Norwich, Wilsher's practice incorporates sculpture, drawing and performance. In recent years, Wilsher's work has explored artworks in different situations to understand, and bring out, the relationship between the artwork and its physical and social context. For Norwich Castle, Wilsher presents a project woven throughout the historic painting collections. He has worked closely with the curatorial, technical and conservation teams over the last year to realise this new work. A small publication accompanies the project and will be available at Norwich Castle from September.

Rosy is also working on three other upcoming exhibitions. Further information on these will be available at the next update.

Kate Thaxton, Curator of the Norfolk Regimental Museum has been documenting two fascinating new acquisitions. She writes:

"Many of the items that come into the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum appear to be insignificant and are not beautiful display items. They are, however, full of resonance of a particular time, place or person. Recently we have received two donations associated with the 7th Battalion, 1940-45. The Battalion was part of the 51st Highland Division which found itself trapped at St Valery en Caux, an impossible escape route compared to Dunkirk. As a result, those that survived became Prisoners of War of the Germans for the rest of the War. What have come to us are related to that period of captivity.



Photograph: recto depicts RSM Jolly in PoW camp; verso the inscription addressed to his mother in Norfolk, 1942

RSM Jolly kept a log of the forced march when the Germans were moving their prisoners away from the allied advance in the spring of 1945. Over March and April he recorded the deaths by starvation, the marching, frostbite and cattle truck journey, and often mentions individuals by name. Like any diary or memoir that comes into the collection, it will be transcribed by our volunteers and the transcription attached to the MODES documentation. The diary, along with medals and photographs were sent to us by his family in Australia.



Pyx belonging to Reverend King, 1940

The other items relate to the Rev. King, who became Padre to the 7th Battalion when he arrived in France in 1940. They include his Pyx- a small round container to carry the consecrated host (Eucharist) for Holy Communion. A plain brown cord enabled him to wear it around his neck and he used it throughout his captivity. Also 'The Priest's Book of Private Devotion', which is inscribed for his birthday from 'Mum & Dad' as well as an Oflag stamp, as passed for use by the German censor. One can only imagine how comforting it must have been to have that home connection with him."

The Natural History Curator's post is vacant at present, but former curator Dr David Waterhouse's and Dr John Davies' book, *Exploring Norfolk's Deep History Coast*, mentioned briefly in the last report, is now out, and available in the Castle Museum shop.

Dr Tim Pestell, Senior Curator of Archaeology continues to be fully occupied with the Norwich Castle project. He has been focusing on conservation, build and planning

elements, but has also done a large amount of display and interpretation work, and has been overseeing other colleagues in these areas.

Tim has continued to work on the redisplay of Prison material in the Rotunda and on updating the displays in the Boudica Gallery, which should be completed soon.

Tim has also managed to continue some of his archaeology curatorial work: answering archaeology enquiries from visitors and scholars, writing various funding applications for new acquisitions, and working with finders and landowners concerning various Treasure cases. He has also continued working on the Leverhulme-funded Rendlesham research project, for which he sits of the steering group for their NLHF-funded element.

Tim has continued to sit on the Reviewing Committee for the Export of Works of Art.

Research visit by delegation from Hawaii

From 31 July to 1 August the NMS Collections Management and Conservation departments welcomed a group of visitors from Hawaii along with a Phd researcher from the University of Cambridge for a two-day research trip to view a Hawaiian canoe, which is held in the NMS large collections store at Gressenhall.

The research guests were delighted to be joined by the Deputy Lieutenant Mary Rudd, NCC Chairman Councillor Barry Stone and Chair of the Norfolk Joint Museums Committee Councillor John Ward for an official welcome, which included the presentation of a garland brought from Hawaii. Our visitors came to research the history of the canoe, the technical aspects of construction and the links between the Royal Family of Hawaii and the UK. Alike Bumatay, Paul Higgins, Zak Shamose and family are working to keep the tradition of canoe carving alive, a tradition of great cultural importance in Hawaii and Polynesia.

The canoe (Wa'a) was gifted to Norwich Museums in 1891 from Mr H Armstrong, a British diplomat to Hawaii in the 19th century. The Wa'a was a gift to him from the last King of Hawaii, King Kalakaua. His Consort Queen Kapi'olani came to the UK for the celebrations of Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1887, visiting several cities including Norwich where the party enjoyed tours of the Cathedral and the Castle.

We were privileged to observe elements of conservation to the Wa'a, making corrections to the seat and replacing some of the lashings with more appropriate techniques. To see the outrigger attached for the first time in many years and to see the vessel complete was a particularly significant moment, alongside a masterclass in a 300-year-old family tradition of methods of lashing.

We are looking forward to future research and collaborations with our international colleagues, which will help us enhance our understanding of the Wa'a in our care and support improved interpretation informed by Hawaiian expertise and knowledge.



8. Other developments

Shirehall Courtroom

Works within the Shirehall Courtroom to treat the outbreak of dry rot are underway. There had been a slight delay due to the need to identify a suitable methodology for installing scaffolding in a way that ensured the protection of the historic fabric of the building. All relevant permissions have now been obtained and the remedial work is due to commence in the coming weeks.

NMS has been working alongside Norse and Norwich City Council Planning colleagues to plan this complex project. T.C Garrett Roofing have been appointed as the Principal Contractor. The remedial works will include the removal and replacement of affected

timbers along with the introduction of steel interventions, to reduce the risk of future outbreaks. Once works start, they will take approximately 6 months to complete.



The SW corner of the Courtroom where the dry rot is prevalent

Norwich Castle External Lift

The work to replace the broken glazing on the external lift was completed in July. The new glass panel was lifted into place with the aid of the tower crane located on the Castle mound.



The replacement glazing panel being fixed into place

Wider Impact Group

Since the start of the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project, a separate project group has been operating to help facilitate the delivery of the project. Its core aim being to ensure we can successfully operate as an accessible museum throughout the construction works and to plan for and implement the new facilities as they come

back online. The Wider Impact Group is led by the Norwich Operations Manager and the areas covered include the following:

- Planning for operational changes to the museum
- Branding
- Managing the introduction of new admission and ticketing systems
- Implementation of the new catering and retail outlets
- Developing a Venue Hire offer for Norwich Castle
- Introducing new signage and wayfinding
- Managing the visitor journey
- Creation of a tours including a new dungeon tour experience
- The reinstatement of galleries and facilities
- Planning for legislative Health & Safety and Premises Management considerations

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

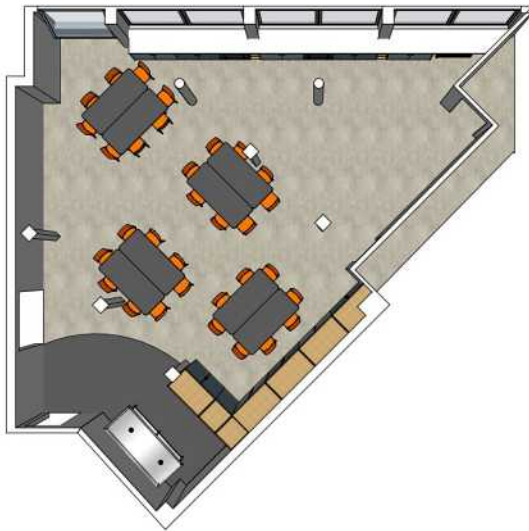
Developing plans for new facilities at the Castle



Examples of the décor for the new Castle Restaurant



An illustration of the new Retail shop at Norwich Castle



A plan of the new Education Activity Room at Norwich Castle

9. Visitor numbers

| | | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | YEAR TO DATE | TOTAL | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|--------|--------|
| N O R W I C H | Castle Museum | 2021-22 | 0 | 2,732 | 5,309 | 8,053 | 12,796 | 7,652 | 8,964 | 6,226 | 4,068 | 4,962 | 8,110 | 6,605 | 16,094 | 75,477 |
| | | 2022-23 | 8,129 | 6,857 | 9,070 | 8,289 | 9,390 | 8,084 | 8,900 | 7,259 | 2,995 | 7,483 | 7,914 | 14,373 | 32,345 | 98,743 |
| | | 2023-24 | 13,471 | 9,922 | 10,889 | 12,590 | | | | | | | | | | 46,872 |
| | Norwich Castle Study Centre (Shirehall) | 2021-22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 23 | 27 | 0 | 62 |
| | | 2022-23 | 24 | 59 | 43 | 56 | 46 | 29 | 85 | 46 | 49 | 82 | 116 | 121 | 182 | 756 |
| | | 2023-24 | 106 | 53 | 126 | 92 | | | | | | | | | 377 | 377 |
| | Museum of Norwich | 2021-22 | 0 | 115 | 504 | 595 | 614 | 842 | 749 | 767 | 422 | 647 | 1,308 | 1,165 | 1,214 | 7,728 |
| | | 2022-23 | 1,406 | 1,552 | 1,044 | 1,666 | 2,476 | 1,970 | 1,431 | 1,406 | 1,387 | 1,185 | 1,587 | 1,917 | 9,668 | 19,027 |
| | | 2023-24 | 1,589 | 1,378 | 1,241 | 2,064 | | | | | | | | | 6,272 | 6,272 |
| | Strangers Hall | 2021-22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 39 | 450 | 508 | 521 | 460 | 0 | 302 | 883 | 24 | 3,187 |
| | | 2022-23 | 478 | 642 | 639 | 635 | 779 | 843 | 713 | 620 | 863 | 16 | 329 | 986 | 2,394 | 7,543 |
| | | 2023-24 | 468 | 522 | 453 | 1,185 | | | | | | | | | 2,628 | 2,628 |

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