

Norwich area museums committee

Date: **Tuesday, 13 December 2016**
Time: **14:00**
Venue: **Norwich Castle**

For further information please contact:

Committee members:

Norwich City Council: Councillors Brociek-Coulton (chair), Davis, Jones (T), Maguire, Price and Thomas (Vivien)

Norfolk County Council: Councillors Bremner, Dearnley, Morgan, Sands (M) and Hannah (vice chair), (1 vacancy)

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

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Agenda

1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

2 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public (notice to be given to committee officer in advance of the meeting in accordance with appendix 1 of the council's constitution)

3 Declarations of interest

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

4 Minutes

3 - 6

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2016.

5 Norwich Museums' briefing for period August to December 2016

7 - 14

Purpose - To update members on the work of the Norwich museums to December 2016.

Date of publication: **Tuesday, 06 December 2016**



Norwich Area Museums committee

14:00 to 15:20

13 September 2016

Present:	City Councillors: Brociek-Coulton (chair*) Davis Jones (T) Price	County Councillors: Bremner Morgan
Co-opted non-voting members:	Brenda Ferris (Norfolk Contemporary Art Society), Ceri Lamb (Friends of Norwich Museums), Amanda Geitner (East Anglia Arts Fund) and Councillor Hardy (South Norfolk District Council)	
Apologies:	City Councillors Maguire and Thomas (Vi), County Councillors Hannah, Dearnley and Sands (M), Councillor Buck (Broadland District Council) and Councillor Ward (ex officio member)	

1. Public questions/petitions

There were no public questions or petitions received.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

Subject to the correction that the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society had contributed to an acquisition of the Andrew Dadson photograph it was:-

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2016.

4. Norwich Museums briefing for period June to August 2016

The head of operations and learning presented the report. During discussion the officers referred to the report and answered members' questions.

The committee noted that Norwich Castle was one of only four venues chosen to host the British Art Show. The arrival of the show included a parade of Suffolk Punches from Gressenhall, all of which were stewarded by heavy horse experts.

A forthcoming exhibition on the photography of Olive Edis would occupy two of the main galleries from October and would be curated by Alistair Murphy of Cromer museum. This exhibition was complimenting the work at Cromer museum around improving the online catalogue of Olive Edis photographs. The learning team was developing a series of events around this exhibition and a publication catalogue supporting the exhibition would be available for sale. Amanda Geitner said that Liz Elmore (project assistant at Cromer museum) had created a blog on Olive Edis and her diaries.

The summer holidays had proved to be a good opportunity to engage with young people. The medieval madness event had run for the second year and was very well attended. Highlights included 'Shakespeare's soapbox' and a display of medieval fighting techniques. This had also enabled the testing of approaches to activities that could be developed to link with the Castle Keep project.

The head of operations and learning said that a detailed report on the discovery of part of a lost Rene Magritte painting, by staff of Norfolk Museums Service, would be brought to the next meeting. Members praised the due diligence shown by staff in uncovering this discovery and said that it was a great example of curatorial expertise being retained by the museums service.

It was reported that Jenni Williams, part of the learning team, had been engaging pro-actively with teachers around the new GCSE history syllabus and had been creating resources to be used at Key Stage 3 and GCSE level. The Edexcel syllabus (which was the most used in Norwich) asked teachers to explore a specific site and Jenni had contacted Edexcel and asked for Norwich Castle to be such a site. The head of operations and learning said that he was confident that visits from secondary schools would increase as a result of this.

Members discussed the use of Norwich Castle by the registrars for conducting civil ceremonies. They noted that this had also led to increased secondary spend in the museum shop and café.

The museums service was taking part in a 'mystery shopping' scheme organised by SHARE museums east. It was being run at Norwich Castle this year and some interesting feedback had been received. The digital officer was monitoring social media sites, such as Trip Advisor, and co-ordinating responses to enquiries received this way. The head of operations and learning said that social media responses held high priority and there was a robust mechanism for picking up comments and questions at an early stage.

There had been some correspondence with a gentleman who had recently visited the Anglo-Saxon and Viking gallery. He said that although he had a pleasant visit to the castle, he had concerns around one of the display boards. (A copy of the board was tabled at the meeting). The board depicted a woman with her face painted in a representation of the Union Jack. He felt that it was inappropriate to be displayed on the wall of a public building as St Patrick's Cross had not been included. As the gentleman was not satisfied with the responses he had received from the museums service so far, the head of operations and learning asked the committee for their views on whether the board should be taken down. Members discussed the board and commented that it was an abstraction of the flag that the lady had chosen to

paint on her face. They agreed that the board should be left for now but if the display were to change, it could be reviewed.

Members were updated on the progress of the Keep Project and were told that permission had been given to go ahead with the bid for funding. The deadline for this was October 2017.

Visitor figures were circulated to members and it was reported that the Heritage Open Days saw good visitor numbers. As there was no Easter bank holiday in the 2016-17 financial year, along with the warm weather, meant that the visitor figures could be slightly less than the previous year. A member commented on the large increase in visitor numbers to the Time and Tide museum. The head of operations and learning said that this was due to the great exhibitions on offer this year including one from the Victoria and Albert museum. The learning team in Yarmouth had also adapted one of their school sessions to link in with this exhibition.

The head of operations and learning introduced Jen Hooker, one of the teaching museums trainees, who updated the committee on the work she had been doing and her experiences as a trainee.

Jen said that she was one of six trainees across the region and was specialising in business development. She said that the programme was a way to gain both experience and understanding through a structured programme that included sessions with conservationists, learning experts and marketing exhibitions. In her yearlong traineeship, she was looking mainly at income generation. She had been working with the larger and smaller museum sites to gain an overview of the business and had researched areas such as visitor services, social media, marketing and the learning team.

She had been working on several projects including contact lists for exhibitions, product lines for retail and cross-site marketing opportunities.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) note the Norwich Museums briefing for the period June to August 2016 to February 2016,
- 2) thank Jen Hooker for her presentation on her experience as a teaching museums trainee,
- 3) ask the head of operations and learning to invite Dr John Davis to the next meeting to update members on the Keep Project,
- 4) record the committee's thanks to all museums staff who worked on the exciting discovery of the Rene Magritte painting; and
- 5) to leave the display board in the Anglo-Saxon and Viking gallery but to review it if the display were to change.

5. Norfolk Contemporary Art Society

Brenda Ferris, chair of the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society (NCAS) the report to update members on the activities of the society. She said that preparations for the exhibition on sixty years of NCAS were nearing completion. She thanked the staff at Norwich Castle who had helped to put the exhibition together and also thanked the East Anglian Arts Fund for their involvement.

A piece from the exhibition would be on tour in the city and there was a full inventory on the NCAS website which included all works around the city and not just those in the castle galleries.

Members would be able to take a tour of the exhibition after the next meeting of the Norwich Area Museums committee.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CHAIR

Norwich Area Museums Committee 13 December 2016

Norwich Museums' briefing for period August to December 2016

A. Exhibitions at Norwich Castle

A1. *British Art Show 8* (24 June – 4 Sept 2016)

British Art Show 8, one of the most prestigious contemporary art exhibitions in the country, was for the first time in its history exhibited in East Anglia during the summer. Hosted by Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery and Norwich University of the Arts and, *British Art Show 8* opened to the public on 24 June 2016, with three venues across the City of Norwich. Norwich was one of only four UK venues for this show and was the closest location to London.

Part of Hayward Touring's comprehensive exhibition programme, designed to showcase and celebrate the country's leading role in the international art scene, *The British Art Show* is a five-yearly exhibition. For its eighth incarnation 42 established and emerging contemporary artists are represented and the show features more than 100 works – many of which were commissioned or made especially for the exhibition.



Detail of *Diagrams of Love: Marriage of Eyes*, 2015

© Linder Sterling/Dovecot Studios Ltd. 2015

Courtesy the artist, Stuart Shave/Modern Art and Dovecot Studios Ltd.

Norwich was the third venue of *British Art Show 8*'s tour and curators Anna Colin and Lydia Yee, together with curators from both Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery and Norwich University of the Arts, devised a special presentation for the City. This, together with works, which had been developed over the run of the exhibition tour, plus totally new additions, made the Norwich showing unique and distinct from previous versions in Leeds and Edinburgh.

All the artists were selected based on their work and significant contribution to the British and international art scene over the past five years.

The evaluation for the show has now been completed and the key findings are very interesting. The headlines include the statistic that 90,456 people engaged with the exhibition directly and that the marketing campaign reached more than 1 million people, including social media outputs. In terms of visitors to the exhibition, 33% had postcodes which were outside of Norfolk, which shows that the exhibition had appeal to a wide variety of audiences beyond the County.

A2. Colman Gallery temporary displays (until March 2017)

A display of drawings and prints by the artist Claughton Pellew (1890-1966) is currently on show in the Colman Project Space, exploring the harmony of country life on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the artist's death.

A selection of works by the priest, artist and antiquarian Edward Thomas Daniell (1840-1842) is also currently on show in the Colman Watercolour Gallery, featuring watercolours from his travels across Europe and the Middle East.

A3. *Sixty years On – Highlights from Norwich Castle's Collection* (Timothy Gurney Gallery from 24 September 2017)

This exhibition showcases the modern and contemporary art acquired over the last 60 years with the support of the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society. The show includes a range of works by artists including Prunella Clough, Graham Sutherland, Keith Vaughan and Frances Kearney.

A4. The Battle of the Somme and the Norfolk Regiment

Four battalions of the Norfolk Regiment fought in this bloody battle between 1 July and 13 November 1916. Opened in July, this is the third of a series of Rotunda displays commemorating the centenary of the First World War.

A5. *Fisherman and Kings: The Photography of Olive Edis* (8 Oct – 22 Jan 2017)

This our current exhibition celebrates the pioneering and important work of Olive Edis, a Norfolk photographer based in Sheringham whose unique and arresting images, often immortalising local people, place her at the forefront of modern photography. This show is curated by Alistair Murphy, the Curator at Cromer Museum who is an expert on the life and work of Olive Edis.

The Norwich exhibition of her work complements the HLF funded project at Cromer Museum that will transform access to the work of this influential female photographer. A catalogue has also been produced to complement the show.



'Belcher' Johnson & autochrome self-portrait images from the NMS Olive Edis collection

Forthcoming exhibitions at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery.

Small Stories: At Home in a Dolls' House (4 Mar – 25 June 2017)

Selected as one of only two UK regional venues, NCM will host this international touring exhibition from the V&A Museum of Childhood. Showcasing a stunning collection of twelve of their best dolls' houses, this exhibition will attract families and doll's house enthusiasts from across Norfolk and beyond.



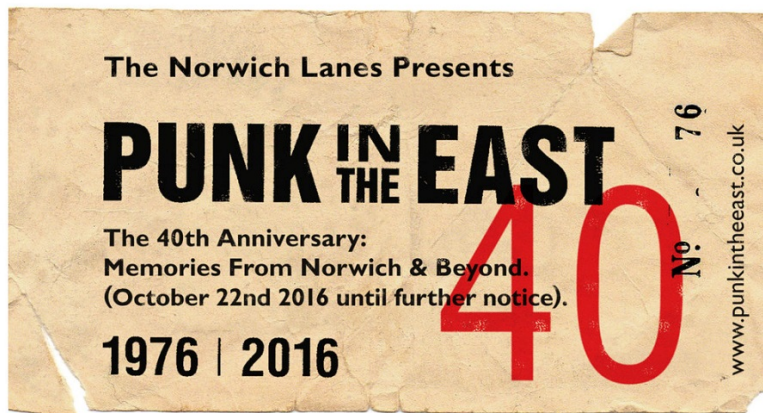
Kaleidoscope House
Laurie Simmons, Peter Wheelwright and Bozart, USA, 2001
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Nelson Exhibition: 29th July – 1st October 2017.

Norwich Castle will be hosting an exhibition dedicated to Norfolk's greatest hero, Horatio Nelson, in summer 2017. We are yet to confirm a title for the exhibition, however, it will feature many of our own collections as well as significant external loans from Royal Museums Greenwich (the National Maritime Museum) and other local, regional and national organisations. As Nelson was both a prominent local figure and a national hero, we expect this exhibition to be very popular.

A6. Exhibitions at the Museum of Norwich: Punk in the East 22nd October – 28th January 2017.

An exhibition celebrating 40 years of punk heritage and influence in Norwich and beyond, told through stories, photos and punk memorabilia.



B. Events

B1. British Art Show 8 (BAS8) Takeover Days

To celebrate the arrival of BAS8 in Norwich, members of the Young Norfolk Arts team joined forces with students from Norwich University of the Arts and the Sainsbury Centre Young Associates group to produce two special takeover events. The event at Norwich Castle on Monday 21 and Tuesday 22 November was a considerable success, attracting many visitors.

B2. Talking Textiles

These monthly talks for adults took place at the Norwich Castle Study Centre in Shirehall. Each talk was illustrated with objects from the important costume and textile collection. Subjects included *Dress Fancy* exploring party wear, and *Life's a Beach* considering seaside and nautical fashion.

Curatorial update

C1. Major Loans

A major group of fourteen objects were sent out on loan for the prestigious exhibition *The Celts*, previously at the British Museum and the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh until 25 September 2016. The items included a stunning drinking horn-terminal in the form of a bovine head with flaring nostrils, which shows incredible design and attention to detail.



C2. Art Department Research

Curators Francesca Vanke and Giorgia Bottinelli are currently researching a major loan exhibition about Rembrandt scheduled for autumn 2017. The theme of this show is *Lightening the Darkness* – and, focusing chiefly on Norwich Castle's magnificent but little-known collection of over 90 of Rembrandt's etchings, will explore the artist's physical and metaphorical uses of light and shadow, used to such stunning effect in his works in both print, painting and drawing. Francesca Vanke is also working with the Yale Center for British Art on an internationally important loan show for 2018, based around the painting of *The Paston Treasure*. The exhibition will bring together as many pieces from the Paston's extensive collections of gold and silver as can be located, together with a dazzling array of paintings, musical instruments, jewels, and other objects from the seventeenth century.



(L) Rembrandt van Rijn *Self-portrait with Saskia*, 1636 Etching, copyright Norwich Castle Museum

(R) Nautilus shell and silver-gilt cup, copyright Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

C3. Strangers' Hall

Curatorial work has continued to focus on the assessment and identification of the extensive doll's house furniture as part of preparations for the *Small Stories* exhibition of dolls' houses from the V&A which Norwich Castle Museum will be hosting 4 March – 25 June 2017. The 18th century dolls' house Norwich Baby House is being conserved and redisplayed as part of the programme for the exhibition as a whole, to form the highlight of the 'Small Stories at Strangers' element, which will also offer a display opportunity for star items from this significant collection and provide a service-wide trail for dolls' houses on display across the County.

D. Other Developments

D1. Norwich Registrars' Weddings

Since the commencement of registry office weddings at Norwich Castle on the 1st of April 2016, we have seen an increasing number of ceremonies take place. So far this financial year over 500 ceremonies have been completed within the Benefactors' Room.



The Benefactors' Room dressed for a wedding

D2. Strangers' Hall Weddings

Strangers' Hall has seen a healthy number of ceremonies take place, with eight weddings having been delivered in 2016. A review of wedding provision at Strangers' Hall is currently underway.

D3. Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project update

1. Following permission to start, which was obtained on 14 July 2016, the Project Team have officially entered the Development Phase of the project. The work being undertaken during this period will form the basis of the second-round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, which is expected to be submitted in late 2017/early 2018.
2. The following important meetings have been held since the last AMC report:
 - The second Academic Advisory Board meeting was held on 16 September 2016
 - The second Project Board meeting was held on 12 October 2016
 - The second HLF Monitor/Mentor meeting was held on 21 October 2016
3. Following a European tender process, Artelia Projects UK Ltd were appointed to provide project and cost management services for the Development and Delivery phases of the project in November 2016. The evaluation panel consisted of members of the NMS Senior Management Team and Norfolk County Council Corporate Property Team, and approval to appoint was granted by the Project Board. An inception meeting with

the Project Team has been scheduled for 14 December 2016 and the contract will officially commence on 9 January 2017.

4. Regular communication is being held between curatorial and project teams at NMS and the British Museum in order to develop concepts for the *British Museum Partnership Gallery of the Medieval Period* within the Keep. An important and creative full-day meeting was held with the Head of National Programmes, Project Curators of Late Medieval Europe and Loans Administration Team at the British Museum and NMS Project Team on 24 November 2016. The meeting was focussed around working in collaboration on the new displays, including digital initiatives, but also saw significant progress made towards developing working practices.
5. A new member of staff, Dickon Whitewood, was successfully appointed as Research Assistant on 28 November 2016. This 12-month HLF-funded post will focus on gathering archival material for Development-Phase work, as well as researching the townscape of medieval Norwich.
6. A consultation session was held on 5 September 2016 with The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, which resulted in favourable responses to the design proposals for the Castle Keep and entrance hall. The Project Team is awaiting written feedback.

E. Visitor Numbers

Total visitor figures for the Norwich Museums were 148,586 for the period 1 April 2016 until 31 October 2016, compared to 152,204 for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 October 2015. This represents a 2% decrease overall. Given the fact that the Easter holidays were split over two financial years and also the very hot summer, the year-to-date performance is encouraging.

A detailed analysis of school visits will be tabled at the meeting.

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