

**NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL**

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK**

**KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**Notes of a Meeting of the above Committee held on  
Monday 14 March 2011 at 2.15 pm  
In the Zuckergum Room, Bishops Lynn House,  
Tuesday Market Place, King's Lynn**

**PRESENT:**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Councillor Mrs E A Nockolds<br>(Chairman)       | - | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk   |
| Councillor Mrs S Smeaton                        | - | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk<br><i>(arrived at 2.30 pm)</i>          |
| Councillor A Tyler                              | - | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk<br><i>(left the meeting at 3.35 pm)</i> |
| Mr T Humphreys                                  | - | Tourism Manager, Borough Council of King's<br>Lynn and West Norfolk                   |
| Mrs W Vincent                                   | - | Democratic Services Officer, Borough Council<br>of King's Lynn and West Norfolk       |
| County Councillor M Chenery<br>of Horsburgh     | - | Norfolk County Council  |
| County Councillor M Langwade                    | - | Norfolk County Council  |
| County Councillor A J Wright<br>(Vice-Chairman) | - | Norfolk County Council  |
| Dr R Hanley                                     | - | Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service   |
| Mr D Gurney                                     | - | NCC, Historic Environment Service<br><i>(left the meeting at 3.35 pm)</i>             |
| Mr J Pitman                                     | - | NMAS, Western Area Learning Manager<br><i>(left the meeting at 3.50 pm)</i>           |

The Chairman announced that order of the Agenda would be amended as follows:  
Item 6, 5, David Gurney would then give a presentation, followed by item 7.

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillors Mrs J Murphy and R Searle, County Councillors B Long and S Dunn and Mr B Howling – Chairman, Friends of the Museum.

**2 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **3 MATTERS ARISING**

There were none.

### **4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **5 PRESENTATION/UPDATE ON FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES DELIVERED THROUGH KING'S LYNN MUSEUMS**

Jan Pitman, Western Area Learning Manager gave a presentation on the formal and informal learning activities delivered through King's Lynn Museum.

Members were informed following the closure of the Town House Museum, the service operated by the Museums Service would be delivered in a different way, but would involve elements including object handling, craft activities, literacy and a led session. The Community Outreach Worker had been focussing on early years, providing a range of activities for pre-school children and their families.

The Western Area Learning Manager highlighted the following:

- A monthly Mini Explorers Club continued to meet at the Lynn Museum, targeted at under 5's, their carers and families.
- The Learning Officer had continued to deliver a varied programme of events to local schools. The popular 'All the Fun of the Fair' schools event ran at the Lynn Museum during the Mart in February 2011.
- The Community Outreach Officer continued to deliver programmes for young people categorised as NEET. Additional funding had been obtained through the College of West Anglia (COWA) to support further NEET programmes in King's Lynn. The film produced by NEET young people to support the Memories of Lynn exhibition was currently on show at the Lynn Museum.
- The King's Lynn Museums Youth Forum was currently working on a film project exploring different approaches to the interpretation of crime and punishment displays in the Town Hall.
- The Community Outreach Worker would develop a learning offer once the new refurbished Town Hall Complex was available for use.

Following the presentation, Members were invited to comment/ask questions, a summary of which is set out below:

- The Committee expressed their appreciation of the work the Community Outreach Worker was undertaking with young people and highlighted the importance how it had helped them to obtain specific skills as well as gaining confidence.

- The College of West Anglia was working with the Community Outreach Worker to deliver a specific NEET programme which would be accredited by the appropriate awarding body.
- The Museums Service would continue to look, and where appropriate develop skills for the future for young people.
- Sadness was expressed at the closure of the Town House Museums, but Members understood the reasoning for this and looked forward to the Museums Service delivering a programme of events, albeit in a different way.

The Chairman thanked the Western Area Learning Manager for his interesting and informative presentation.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **6 REPORT OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER**

### **King's Lynn Museums Report – January to February 2011**

The Western Area Manager presented his report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums for the period January to February 2011:

(i) Free Admission Period

The Lynn Museum was now in its six month free admission period, which extended from October to March.

(ii) Memories of King's Lynn: King's Lynn since the 60's

The current temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum was Memories of Lynn: King's Lynn since the 60s and would be on display from 21 January to 18 June 2011. The exhibition featured Lynn people sharing their experience of the changes to the town since the 1960s. The display had been developed by NMAS Renaissance-funded Growing Communities Project Officer, working in partnership with the Borough Council's Growth Point team. The exhibition was opened by Councillor Nockolds at a well-attended celebration event on 21 January. Flyers publicising the event were tabled by the Western Area Manager and the Committee was invited to take copies following the meeting. The Museums Events Programme for 2011 was also tabled.

(iii) Community Outreach Officer

A programme of events was organised by the Community Outreach Officer for the February half term holiday at the Lynn Museum. The activities included a family archaeology day and a dramatic performance based on the life of Boudicca.

(iv) Other Museum Developments

The packing up of collections and displays at the Town House Museum was complete following the closure of the museum to the public on 31 October 2010. Staff had worked extremely hard to pack up the collections and displays on schedule. The display cases and the 50's room display had been relocated to the Bridewell Museum in Norwich. NMAS was being provided with alternative storage at Aickmans Yard/White Barn and office accommodation by the Borough Council. The Committee was advised that the keys had been formally handed over to the Borough Council on Friday 11 March.

NMAS continued to liaise with the Borough Council regarding potential involvement within a re-developed Town Hall complex.

After a delay, work had now commenced on replacing parts of the flat roof covering of the Lynn Museum reception, following problems with water ingress. It was anticipated that the works would extend for around four weeks. During this period it is intended that the site would remain open to visitors, with a temporary entrance being utilised at the west (tower) end of the museum, although it this provided limited access for wheelchair users. It was highlighted that some services would be restricted during this period. Visitors could access the main gallery and the Seahenge display, but there were currently no retail sales available.

(v) Friends of King's Lynn Museums

The Western Area Manager reported that he had attended a meeting with the Friends earlier that day. The Friends continued to offer a varied programme for its members including lunchtime talks and trips, as well as supporting a long-term conservation programme for parts of the fine art collections.

(vi) Partnership Projects

King's Lynn Museums continued to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership as part of the NMAS role as a lead partner for the East of England Hub for 'Renaissance in the Regions'.

Members were advised that changed funding priorities by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council for the Renaissance in the Regions programme in 2011-12 meant that regional projects such as Fenland would no longer be supported with Renaissance funding. Transition funding had been agreed to provide cash match funding and project officer support for the current Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 2 bid being prepared by the Fenland Partnership. The HLF funding bid provided the partnership with a potential alternative source of project funding.

The current travelling exhibition organised by the Fenland Partnership was 'Fenland Stories', which explored both traditional and modern

Fenland tales and stories. The exhibition was touring the Fens and had recently been on display in Peterborough and at St Neots. The exhibition was currently on show at Ayscoughfee Hall in Spalding. Fenland Stories would be on display at the Lynn Museum from 1 July to 31 August 2011.

A stage two HLF Heritage Grant application was currently being prepared for the next Fenland Partnership project 'Fenland Lives and Land, following a successful Stage 1 pass from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The application would be submitted to HLF during June and a decision was anticipated in September 2011.

(vii) Learning and Outreach

The Western Area Manager informed the Committee that this section of the report would be covered by Jan Pitman, during his presentation which would provide Members with an overview of the formal and informal activities delivered through King's Lynn Museums.

(viii) Visitor Numbers

The Western Area Manager tabled the visitor figures and highlighted that these remained positive, although the Museum was closed for a period from April to 29 May 2010. The figures were in line with those for 2008/2009 and added that there were over 2,500 visitors during February 2011.

The Chairman commented that it was extremely good news to hear the attendance figures were rising and that the work with schools and outreach events had possibly assisted with encouraging more people to visit the Museum. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that there was a limited marketing budget and joint working with the Borough Council had also helped to raise awareness of the events on offer at the Lynn Museum.

The Chairman further commented that she had received positive feedback back on the Memories of Lynn exhibition and that visitors had been very impressed with the exhibition which described King's Lynn since the 60s. She also added that tenders had been received and opened for the works to be undertaken at the Town Hall to enable the Registrars to take up occupation in time for a wedding to be held on 1 June. The Western Area Manager explained that professional staff had been given temporary accommodation at King's Court, Chapel Street and would be provided with a new office on the first floor of the former Town House Museum.

Councillor Tyler explained that he had spoken with Michael Dennis at the Green Quay who had confirmed that the Green Quay could accommodate storage of items or a display/exhibition for the Lynn Museum.

In response to questions regarding lottery funding, the Western Area Manager explained that the amount of lottery funding available was on the increase due to more tickets being purchased.

Following further questions, the Western Area Manager reported that a couple of volunteers had assisted experienced staff with the pack up of collections, but due to the tight timescales involved, there was no time to train other volunteers.

The Chairman thanked the Western Area Manager for his detailed update report.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **7 UPDATE ON HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND EXCAVATIONS AND SURVEYS IN WEST NORFOLK IN 2009**

Mr D Gurney, Historic Environment Manager (County Archaeologist) Environment from Norfolk County Council provided the Committee with an update on the historic environment and excavations and surveys in West Norfolk in 2009 (a copy was tabled), which included the following:

- The changes within the staffing structure resulting from a service review process, and the benefits of one integrated team (the Historic Environment Service) based at Gressenhall.
- New guidance published in 2010 (PPS5) for the historic environment.
- The importance of pre-application discussion to enable the developers and planning officers to flag up any issues at an early stage in the planning process. This service is offered free of charge.
- National developments – English Heritage and National Heritage Protection Plan.
- Number of planning applications processed in West Norfolk.
- Local News – update on the Gaywood Valley project (SURF)

### **Excavations and Surveys in West Norfolk 2009**

The annual report was tabled which comprised summaries of significant archaeological excavations, fieldwork and surveys carried out in Norfolk during 2009 as set out below:

- Breckland Society Warrens Project – An illustrated report can be accessed on the Breckland Society's website ([www.brecsoc.org.uk](http://www.brecsoc.org.uk)).
- King's Lynn, Austin Street, Former Dairy Depot – The only clear evidence of occupation on the site comprised the remains of part of an insubstantial timber structure of unknown function and form that probably dated back to the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- King's Lynn, Boal Street – An evaluation for King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council which encompassed part of the precinct of the Carmelite Friary.
- King's Lynn, South Gates Park – a group of decorated clay pipes and an elephant-headed figural bowl found.
- North Runcton, Land off Hardwick Roundabout.
- Titchwell – A World War II Armoured Fighting Vehicle Training Range and training site were recorded.
- Walpole – Excavation in advance of an extension to an electricity substation investigated a possible medieval saltern identified by evaluation in 2008.
- West Dereham.
- The King's Lynn Boal Quay to Wisbech Road Public Transport Route – Brief Assessment.

Following the presentation, Members were invited to comment/ask questions, a summary of which is set out below:

- Norfolk's Coastal Heritage Project – significance of church recognised and importance of recording Happisburgh's historic environment acknowledged.
- Archive Centre holds records of banks in Thetford Forest. Thetford Forest presents an opportunity for guided tours.
- The location of the middle Saxon pottery discovered at Gaywood.
- Gaywood Valley Project (SURF) event on 8 May 2011. The Historic Environment Manager explained that the Historic Environment Service would not be involved, but had provided some photos for interpretation boards.
- Excavation works carried out on Brownfield sites prior to the commencement of development –generally speaking on brownfield sites there would be minimal findings or all had been destroyed.

The Chairman thanked the Historic Environment Manager for his interesting and detailed presentation.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **8 REPORT OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Tourism Manager presented a report which updated Members of the Committee on tourism marketing and the operation of the tourism and

heritage facilities operated by the Borough Council during the period January to March 2011.

(i) West Norfolk Marketing Campaign 2011

The marketing campaign to promote West Norfolk and generate requests for the West Norfolk Holiday Guide was progressing well.

A total of 19,551 direct enquiries had been generated through the advertising, direct mail and on-line advertising campaign.

The East Anglia seaside campaign had been delayed, but the National Tourist Information Centre distribution had been underway since early January with 20,000 copies allocated for distribution throughout the year.

A further 5,300 brochures were allocated for distribution at rail stations and key motorway/trunk road service stations and interchange points.

A total of 16,000 copies had been allocated for exhibitions and distribution through local Tourist information centres and outlets. The total distribution was targeted at 100,000 copies.

(ii) Promotion to Day Visitors

The publication, Where To Go and What To Do in West Norfolk was published in February and being widely distributed throughout Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, South Lincolnshire, West Suffolk, and key attractions and Tourist information Centres throughout the East of England. A total of 200,000 copies of the guide were being distributed.

(iii) King's Lynn Heritage Marketing.

The publication Discover King's Lynn was currently in production for publication at the end of March and distribution by early April. The discount voucher scheme would again be run in conjunction with the publication. Six sites would be included in the discount scheme, Lynn Museum, True's Yard Fishing Heritage Museum, The Green Quay, Tales of the Old Gaol House, The Custom House Maritime exhibition, Red Mount Chapel/South Gate.

(iv) Hunstanton Mini Guide and Downham Market Mini Guide

Both the Downham Market mini guide and the Hunstanton mini guide were in production for 2011 and distributed prior to the Easter holidays. Both publications were aimed at ensuring that visitors to the towns themselves as well as people staying in neighbouring areas were aware of the full range of attractions and facilities on offer in each town.

(v) Tourist Information Centres (TIC's)



Visitor throughput at both Hunstanton and King's Lynn Tourist Information Centres for the months of January and February had been above the levels for the same period in 2010. This would partly reflect the severe winter weather experienced in early 2010.

During April the Custom House would be launching a special new exhibition to celebrate West Norfolk's connections with the royal family, featuring photographs, commemorative china, objects from Wolferton station, magazines and other ephemera, the exhibition would include quizzes and activities for the family and tell the story of the royal family and Sandringham House. The exhibition which complemented the permanent exhibition of maritime and customs history in King's Lynn would open on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April and run until Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July. The opening of the special exhibition coincided with the introduction of admission charges to the Custom House exhibitions, the charges being adults £1.00, Children 50p, school groups free.

(vi) Tales of The Old Gaol House

Following the introduction of seasonal closure of the Gaol House, the main Gaol House attraction would re-open on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April and be open on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through to Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October. Year round access to the King's Lynn archive on Fridays had been maintained.

(vii) Red Mount Chapel and South Gate

Planning for public access to Red Mount and South Gate on regular open days throughout the summer period was underway and being co-ordinated by the Walks Park Manager. It is hoped to open both sites on most Wednesdays and Saturdays from mid April to mid September and on Sundays during July and August. These arrangements were again only possible through the commitment and dedication of volunteer guides at the sites. The joint ticket arrangement would again be in place for 2011.

(viii) The Hanse

A series of events were again being planned in King's Lynn to coincide with International Hanse day on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011. Events to include a treasure hunt for families with children, taking them on a trail from the historic Custom House through the town towards True's Yard Fishing Heritage Museum. Children successfully completing the treasure hunt would be offered free admission to the museum.

Two special guided walks exploring Hanseatic landmarks in the town would take place at 11.00 and 14.00, starting at the Custom House and ending at the Hanse House. Also at the Custom House people would have another opportunity to learn about Hanseatic trade at an exhibition created by Norfolk Record Office.

In the early evening a special musical concert would be held at All Saints Church and present a programme of music with a 'Hanseatic' theme

(ix) King's Lynn Town Guide Guided Walks

The publicity leaflet for the 2011 programme of guided walks provided by the King's Lynn Town Guides was currently in production. The programme of around 90 public walks, would include regular afternoon walks on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays throughout the period 3<sup>rd</sup> May - 29<sup>th</sup> October. Monday evening walks would be available in June and July. A series of special festival walks during the King's Lynn Festival were included. Privately booked tours and specialist walks could also be booked through the town guides.

New for 2011, guided walk ticket sales would take place through the Tourist Information Centre.

(x) Events

The interactive events guide featured on [www.visitwestnorfolk.com](http://www.visitwestnorfolk.com) continued to be developed and include increasing numbers of events. Event organisers were encouraged to use the on-line event submission form featured on the events and what's on page.

(xi) Ambassadors Programme

A total of 685 people had now attended the Borough Council run West Norfolk Ambassadors programme, the most recent course being run on 9<sup>th</sup> March . Further courses set for 11th May, 15th June, 21st September, 19th October and 16th November.

In response to questions from the Chairman regarding promoting the Museum during the Hanse weekend, the Tourism Manager explained that the Museum could be incorporated within the publicity material.

Following a further question from the Chairman regarding the Museum advertising events on the interactive events guide, the Western Area Manager undertook to ask the web editors to do so.

In response to questions regarding guided walks on a Sunday, the Tourism Manager explained that the Town Guides had trialled Sunday walks several years ago, but there was little take up and therefore not considered feasible.

The Chairman thanked the Tourism Manager for his informative and detailed report.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Area Museums Committee would take place on Monday 13 June 2011 at 2.15pm in the Committee Suite, Borough Council Offices, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

**If any Member is unable to attend meetings of the Committee, please could they forward apologies to the Democratic Services Officer well in advance of the meeting.**

**The Meeting closed at 3.55 pm**