

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

**Minutes from the Meeting of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area
Museums Committee held on Monday, 15th September, 2025 at 2.00 pm in
the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn
PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT:

Borough Councillors

Councillors Bland, Bubb (Chair), Lintern, Rose (sub) and de Whalley

County Councillors

Councillors Bambridge and Chenery of Horsbrugh

Officers

Oliver Bone – Lynn Museum

Robin Hanley – Norfolk Museums Service

Hannah Jackson – Norfolk Museums Service (observing)

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED: Councillor Rose who was a substitute for Councillor Kemp was appointed as Vice Chair for the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor Kemp, Councillors Kybird and Ward, Norfolk Joint Museums Committee and Lindsey Bavin, Manager of True's Yard Museum.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING

The Chair, Councillor Bubb queried the Committee's membership and the Democratic Services Officer clarified that Councillor Kemp was a Borough Councillor representative for the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee but was appointed Vice Chair of the

Committee due to the absence of Norfolk County Council nominees at the last meeting held on 16th June 2025.

5 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

6 **REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF MUSEUMS**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The Assistant Head of Museums welcomed Hannah Jackson back as Operations Manager for the Norfolk Museums Service (Western area), overseeing Gressenhall, King's Lynn and Thetford after a secondment to the Norwich Castle redevelopment project.

The Curator of the Lynn Museum introduced the report on the King's Lynn Museum activities in the period from June to July 2025. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following areas of the report:

- 1) Exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum
 - 1.1 Current Exhibition May the Toys Be with You
 - 1.2 Previous Exhibition *Woof: A Celebration of Dogs*
 - 1.3 Forthcoming Exhibition: *"Unboxed: Discovering Lynn's Collections"* (working title)
 - 1.4 Family events
 - 1.5 Family Trails
 - 1.6 Mini Museum
 - 1.7 Coffee Mornings

The Curator of the Lynn Museum invited questions from the Committee in relation to those areas of the report, as summarised below.

County Councillor Bambridge suggested involving Sixth Form students from King Edward VII School to assist with cataloguing. The Curator of the Lynn Museum commented that they had taken on two work experience students from the College of West Anglia and confirmed he would raise this with Jan Summerfield who was working on a new programme of volunteering.

Councillor de Whalley asked about challenges in completing the remaining 13,500 records and the Curator of the Lynn Museum explained there was some data cleaning needed and added there were challenges because of missing or disposed items, gaps in historical records and duplication in the museum catalogue system.

The Chair, Councillor Bubb suggested that a leaflet on the history of the Lynn Museum building would be useful. The Curator of the Lynn Museum explained there was a Henry Baines oil painting of the former Chapel in the Lynn Museum. He added there was also an introductory panel in the reception area and audio guides had been updated. The Curator of the Lynn Museum suggested they could have someone provide a talk as part of the Talks Programme.

The Committee's attention was drawn further to the following areas of the report:

- 2) Newman Legacy project
- 3) Other Museums developments
 - 3.1 Publicity and promotion
 - 3.2 NMS Teaching Museum Trainees
 - 3.3 Retail offer at Lynn Museum
 - 3.4 Object Photography
 - 3.5 Volunteers
 - 3.7 Finds Identification and Recording Day

The Curator of the Lynn Museum invited questions from the Committee in relation to those areas of the report, as summarised below.

The Chair, Councillor Bubb asked about sales and the Curator of the Lynn Museum reported they were doing very well, with Star Wars themed material being particularly popular.

Councillor de Whalley congratulated officers for their work on improving the sales. Councillor de Whalley raised a question around publicity feedback and the Curator of the Lynn Museum suggested they would review marketing efforts and provide an update at the next meeting of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee.

The Chair, Councillor Bubb asked how visitors were informed about the feedback form. The Curator of the Lynn Museum explained details were provided in the exhibition area with printed forms and a QR code which linked to a form online. He added he would check with the front of house supervisor to see if this was an area they could improve on.

The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted to the Committee that they had secured full accreditation for all Norfolk Museums Service sites, including the Lynn Museum and advised an update would be provided at the next meeting of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee.

The Committee's attention was drawn further to the following areas of the report:

- 4) Borough Council partnership working

The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted that he had asked Elizabeth Joisce to provide written updates of work carried out for future meetings of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee.

The Assistant Head of Museums invited questions from the Committee in relation to that area of the report, as summarised below.

In response to a question from the Chair, Councillor Bubb, the Assistant Head of Museums explained the first block of artworks from the town collection would be displayed in the Leader's office at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and added they were looking at other opportunities to get paintings into public locations subject to conservation security.

In response to questions from Councillor de Whalley, the Assistant Head of Museums explained that the Guildhall was a Borough Council led project, and they would make the decisions on the project and plans for the piano whilst the Norfolk Museums Service could assist with archaeological interpretation.

The Committee's attention was drawn further to the following areas of the report:

5) Learning & Outreach

Councillor Lintern asked on average how many school visits they got in a year. The Assistant Head of Museums confirmed it averaged between two to three thousand per year at the Lynn Museum. He reported that they were reviewing their visitor data collection and that there was a significant rise in home educated children with new programmes introduced at Norwich and Gressenhall.

In response to a question from the Chair, Councillor Bubb, the Assistant Head of Museums explained Norfolk schools always got free admission to any Norfolk Museums Service site; however they got charged for additional services beyond that.

The Assistant Head of Museums provided an update on the Kick the Dust project. He highlighted they were due to publish their new youth engagement strategy and confirmed members of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee would receive a copy of the strategy.

In response to a question from County Councillor Horsbrugh, the Assistant Head of Museums explained they had robust safeguarding procedures in place and enhanced training for their project workers when faced with challenging behaviours from young people. He added that they had close relationships with partnerships.

The visitor figures were circulated to the Committee at the meeting and were noted. A copy of the visitor figures is attached to the minutes.

The Curator of the Lynn Museum highlighted that Lynn Museums' figures were a little down on the year to date compared with last years figures but reassured the Committee they were well up on previous years.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report.

7

TRUE'S YARD REPORT

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

County Councillor Bambridge referred to the upcoming exhibition in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Great Gale of 1875 and commented that they had requested the loan of a model and thanked Robin Hanley and Oliver Bone for the loan.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report.

8

STORIES OF LYNN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE VISITOR FIGURES

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The visitor figures for the period June to August 2025 were noted. A copy of the visitor figures is attached to the minutes.

The Chair, Councillor Bubb referred to the pontoon enquiries and asked whether they turned into bookings. The Democratic Services Officer confirmed she would get further information around the pontoon enquiries and circulate a response to the Committee after the meeting.

9

UPDATES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The Chair, Councillor Bubb commented that he had raised a question at a recent Borough Council Briefing Session around how they were thinking of funding County wide organisations such as libraries and museums and explained he did not get a clear answer and asked Committee Members if they had received any information.

County Councillor Horsbrugh commented that the Norfolk Records Committee had voted that it stay as one and not divide.

Councillor de Whalley commented that they should know the decision in March 2026.

The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted that in the last set of draft minutes from the Norfolk Joint Museums Committee meeting held on 25th July 2025, discussions took place around Local Government Reorganisation and that there was a preference stated that the Museums Service for Norfolk continues as a single entity.

Councillor Lintern commented that her understanding was that the service would remain the same.

Councillor de Whalley proposed that the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee endorse the recommendations which were put forward at the Norfolk Joint Museums Committee on 25th July 2025 for the service to remain as a joint partnership across Norfolk. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Rose and the Committee unanimously agreed.

10 **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

The following item was identified to include on the next Agenda:

- Review on marketing plans

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee was scheduled to take place on 12th January 2026 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 3.23 pm



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

15 September 2025

Item No.

KING'S LYNN MUSEUMS REPORT

Report by the Assistant Head of Museums

This report provides information on King's Lynn Museum activities in the period from June – July 2025

1 Exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum

1.1 Current exhibition

May the Toys Be with You

11 July 2025 - 31 May 2026



Marketing design for the current Star Wars themed exhibition at Lynn Museum.

The current exhibition at Lynn Museum, which opened in July, is *May the Toys be with You*. It showcases one of the UK's finest collections of vintage Star Wars toys and original cinema posters, from 1977-1985. It is a celebration of the now highly collectable vintage toy line and of the iconic design work and art of the Star Wars movies. This exhibition opened at Lynn Museum on 11 July and will run until 31 May next year. The exhibition is aimed at developing audiences and is an opportunity to showcase aspects of the Lynn Museum collections including toys and games.

Feedback from visitors suggests the exhibition has attracted a higher proportion of first-time visitors than usual.



Filming at Lynn Museum for an ITV news piece presented by David Whiteley

The exhibition has generated some helpful publicity. Below are links to features about the Star Wars themed exhibition:

[Facebook](#) (includes the Anglia ITV news report)

[Star Wars devotee brings collection to Lynn Museum - BBC News](#)

[Star Wars toy collection goes on show at Lynn Museum | Eastern Daily Press](#)



Original toys from the first *Star Wars* films, part of a collection on display at Lynn Museum

1.2 Previous Exhibition *Woof: A Celebration of Dogs* Tuesday 1 October 2024 – Sunday 29 June 2025.



Woof: A Celebration of Dogs exhibition opened at Lynn Museum on Tuesday 1 October last year and ran until late June. This show was curated in-house drawing upon natural history, archaeology, art and social history collections. The majority of the items exhibited are from the Lynn Museum reserve

collection, supplemented with internal loans from NMS sites at Gressenhall, Norwich Castle and the Norfolk Costume and Textile collections, national collections, and from private individuals. The Tate Gallery loaned three artworks for the exhibition including pieces by David Hockney and Sir Edwin Landseer. The Kennel Club lent 'England Expects' a painting by Maud Earl of two Toy Bulldogs, an extinct breed.

1.3 Forthcoming Exhibition: “*Unboxed: Discovering Lynn’s Collections*” (working title)

The next exhibition at Lynn Museum will focus on the breadth of the King’s Lynn collections. On show will be examples of archaeology, natural history, geology, fine art, costume and textiles, social history and prints and drawings from the tens of thousands of items collected since the museum collections were first established in 1844. The display will provide a showcase for the collections-based Newman project and will be a chance to share items not normally on display such as light sensitive watercolours and costume.

1.4 Family events

The museum continues to offer events and regular family trails during holiday periods. On the 31 July, the first of the summer holiday activity days for families was a Star Wars event which saw a total of 170 participants, with 69 children.

1.5 Family Trails

Trails are provided at the museum for children and families to enjoy an exploration of the museum. The *Lightsabres* trail which ran from 23 July – 3 August was enjoyed by 187 visitors.

1.6 Mini Museum

Lynn Museum continues to provide regular activities for our youngest visitors through the monthly mini museum programme. Activities are delivered by the museum’s learning team. These have included:

- ‘*Hairy Maclary*’ on 19 June with an audience of 12 children and 25 participants in total.
- ‘*Star Wars*’ on 17 July with an audience of 6 children and 12 participants in total

1.7 Coffee Mornings

The monthly themed coffee mornings continue to be offered at Lynn Museum, normally attended by about 15 – 30 people. During the reporting period there have been two coffee morning with themes of ‘*Beeswax Candles*’ and ‘*Tin Can Droids*’.

1.8 Talks Programme

The Museum normally receive audiences of around 20-30 people for the Friday afternoon talks.

- ‘*Making Droids and Star Wars props*’ (25/07/2025) with Tom Powell which received an audience of 17.

1.9 Workshop

The Museum held an Ancient Egyptian Mummification workshop with Mark Taylor, with a total of 19 participants.

1.10 Forthcoming events

Forthcoming events for Lynn Museum may be seen here: [What's on at Lynn Museum - Lynn Museum - Norfolk Museums Service](#)

2 Newman Legacy project

As previously reported, the Lynn Museum has benefited from a legacy given specifically for the museum's use provided by the late Eric and Rita Newman. The Newmans were siblings who had retired to Congham near King's Lynn with interests in local history and helping children learn. The museum service is very grateful for the Newmans' generosity.

Newman Assistant Curator Jan Summerfield and Newman NMS Teaching Museum Trainee Rosalyn McLean (2025-2026) have been working on the cataloguing and documenting of material in the museum stores, as part of a planned programme of collections management work supported by the Newman legacy. Work has included the geology collections and the audit of this material is nearly complete.

3 Other Museum developments

3.1 Publicity and promotion

The Lynn Museum continues to develop its social media presence, with Twitter and Facebook and now Instagram accounts being actively used and maintained by staff. The museum's X (Twitter), Facebook and Instagram accounts may be seen here:

[Lynn Museum \(@Lynn_Museum\) / X \(twitter.com\)](#)

[Facebook](#)

[King's Lynn Museum on Instagram • Photos and videos](#)

As well as digital delivery, the museum has maintained strong links with local media outlets including the *Lynn News*. Staff continue to contribute to a fortnightly *Picture This* column, with a focus on local drawings, engravings and paintings.

A variety of films linked to Lynn Museum are available on the museum's YouTube Channel, here: [Lynn Museum - YouTube](#)

A number of online exhibitions are available through the Google Arts and Culture platform: [Lynn Museum, King's Lynn, United Kingdom — Google Arts & Culture](#)

3.2 NMS Teaching Museum Trainees

One year-long paid traineeships are offered as part of the Norfolk Museums Service Teaching Museum scheme, principally funded through the NMS Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation programme. For 2025-26 we

have Rosalyn Maclean who has settled in well and is enjoying the hands-on aspect of her traineeship.

3.3 Retail offer at Lynn Museum

The museum team continues to develop the retail offer at Lynn Museum working with the NMS Retail Manager Hat Johnson. A recent project has been to develop a range of cards and other merchandise using designs from the Taylors seed shop business of King's Lynn.

An event was staged at the museum to present the Taylor brothers with a selection of the new merchandise as a thank you for their support of the museums service.



Cllr Tony Bubb, Chair of Area Museums Committee, with Bob and Jim Taylor and Newman Curator, Dayna Woolbright for the launch of the Taylor merchandise, for sale at Lynn Museum and Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse.

3.4 Object Photography

Adding images to the museum's online catalogue continues to be a priority and staff at Lynn Museum will be spending a third day in September working with photographer David Kirkham to take new pictures of items on display in the main gallery at the museum. These images will be shared through the Norfolk Collections website, social media, museum website and in other ways as part of the work to engage with the public with collections knowledge.



Model of shipyard at South Gate, by King's Lynn-born Thomas Baines, a recent photograph taken of items on display at Lynn Museum.

The Norfolk Museums collections site may be seen here:

[Norfolk Museums Collections - Museums Collections - Norfolk Museums Service](#)

3.5 Volunteers

Four collections volunteers have now completed a 12-week programme to scan paper collections and add information and images to the MODES collections database supervised by NMS staff. The volunteers met in the museum offices at the Town Hall on Wednesday mornings from January to April. A group of work-experience volunteers met over the summer and there are plans to involve a group of collections volunteers in the autumn.

3.6 Baines Publication

The Museum team continues to work with Dr Michael Stevenson on a project about King's Lynn-born Thomas Baines. Dr Stevenson is creating a complete record of the artist's work for publication. The online catalogue of Baines pictures exists thanks to the work of the Lynn Museum volunteers who have scanned the collection of drawings and other art work.

3.7 Finds Identification and Recording Day

Lynn Museum continues to offer finds identification and recording days in partnership with Norfolk County Council's Finds Identification and Recording Service. The next day is planned for October. These days offer a valuable chance for the NCC Finds team to connect with finders of archaeological material. Significant material can then be recorded for the county database.

Dr Phil Hughes, Team Leader – Finds Identification and Recording reports: *"I'm thrilled that these events are getting some attention and have proven to be a great success so far!*

In terms of finds, there's a few cases that have been through the Treasure process from the three events that we've run which we can now share:

<https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1176780> A Medieval gold finger ring with intact gemstone

<https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1183920> A Medieval silver annular brooch with decorative knops in a very good state of preservation and my personal

favourite: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1176209>



Gilded medieval ear scoop identified and recorded at a Lynn Museum finds event

Away from Treasure, I was very pleased with this commemorative denarius of Marcus Aurelius <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1190980>.

From the days so far, we have taken in 257 individual metal, flint, individual potsherds and Treasure cases in addition to an assemblage of pottery

containing some circa 400 sherds. Of that, 14 sherds were Late Saxon Thetford Ware in an area that has previously seen some test pitting, which is very pleasing. <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/1186093>

We've taken in objects from 23 individual finders, of which 16 were previously unknown to us, which means we can advocate for responsible detecting when we run the events. A real contribution of these days is that they help ensure we reach finders living in and finding objects from West Norfolk. As the data recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme are imported into the Norfolk Historic Environment Record, it means that we minimise locational biases based on our service provision and enhance the county's archaeological record."

4 Borough Council partnership working

The delivery of NMS services in King's Lynn & West Norfolk continues to operate under the terms of the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Borough Council. Under an extension to this agreement, NMS continues to provide curatorial and conservation advice, support and an enquiry service for those Borough collections currently held in the Town Hall including fine art and Civic Regalia.

NMS staff continue to support Borough Council colleagues with the development and delivery of relevant cultural and heritage projects across the Borough, including ongoing support for Towns Fund projects including the Guildhall project. A number of NMS staff support the ongoing work of the Guildhall project team and NMS is also represented on the Guildhall Project Board.



Medieval floor uncovered at St George's Guildhall.

Newman Curator, Dayna Woolbright, has contributed to the work on the St George's Guildhall project's Interpretation Strategy and to various events and exhibitions, working with Jane Hamilton Learning and Engagement Officer at the Guildhall Team. Dayna has produced a series of interpretation panels to inform visitors about the history of the site. Panels included information about the Guild chapel, piscina, floor and sites links to theatre as well as directional signage. The floor is available for viewing until 14 September (Heritage Open Day).

Norfolk Museums Service has also been supporting the resourcing and delivery of school events at the Guildhall including a half day workshop focusing on the archaeology found at the Guildhall working with the Guildhall Education Officer. NMS continues to support the activity plan and are currently assisting with the summer programme.

In late July NMS arranged for the first decant of collections from the St George's Guildhall. This involved moving the 300 theatre seats from the auditorium, and historic items to storage rooms at Hunstanton. The move took place over two days. In early August NMS supported the removal of the 1920s Steinway piano from St. George's Guildhall, undertaken with piano moving specialists. The process involved using a spider crane to take it out of the barn doors on the first floor. The piano will remain in safe storage for the duration of the redevelopment project.

Steinway piano being removed from St George's Guildhall using a 'spider crane' as part of the decant of the building.



Stories of Lynn

Norfolk Museums Service continues to support the Borough Council with the delivery of the NLHF-funded Stories of Lynn project focussed on King's Lynn Town Hall. NMS manages the Stories of Lynn Learning & Engagement Officer post, which is co-funded by the Borough Council and the NLHF Kick the Dust: Norfolk project. Elizabeth Joice, the postholder has now returned from maternity leave.

The exhibition space at Stories of Lynn currently has the *Surviving the Railway* exhibition marking the 80th anniversary of VJ Day. King's Lynn-based staff worked with Kate Thaxton, Curator of the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum and Sam Wiggin, NMS Teaching Museum Trainee on this display, which was formally opened by HRH The Duke of Gloucester in March.

For further information and photographs please follow this link:

[His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester visits new exhibition in King's Lynn | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk](#)



Too Late for the Ferry Robert Walker Macbeth (1848–1910)
King's Lynn Museums.

The Museums Service is currently supporting plans to place on public display more artworks from the town collection. There will be four works going on display in the Borough Council offices at King's Court including *Too Late for the Ferry* by artist Robert Walker Macbeth (1848–1910). An additional three paintings will be displayed in the Town Hall, with more to follow.

The Lynn Museum's free admission period runs from 1 October until the end of March 2025. This free admission period is provided under the terms of the Service Level Agreement between the Borough Council and NMS.

The Museums Service continues to offer the Norfolk Museums Pass which offers free admission all 10 Norfolk Museums locations for a whole year.

5 Learning & Outreach

School visits

Lynn Museum continues to offer a range of school workshops run flexibly to accommodate teachers' needs. Typical sessions include the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Romans and Iceni, Bronze Age and Seahenge, Stone Age, the Second World War, Ancient Egyptians, and Homes Long Ago.

School sessions normally follow a pattern of a carousel of different activities with children learning in a variety of styles. Delivery of sessions is normally undertaken by a mix of museum staff and freelance costumed interpreters.

The following link for teachers explains what is on offer at Lynn Museum for pupils at Key Stage 2.

[Key stage 2 education at Lynn Museum - Norfolk Museums](#)

Lynn Museum learning staff continue to work closely with Stories of Lynn in the running of joint school workshops on topics such as Maritime Life, Lord Nelson, Captain Vancouver, Crime and Punishment, Frederick Savage and the Lynn Mart, the Great Fire of London and Floods and Flooding.



Children learning about maritime history at Lynn Museum

6 Kick the Dust update

Following the successful conclusion of the National Lottery Heritage Fund funded 'Kick the Dust' project, Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) secured additional funding through an Arts Council England NPO Uplift award for the period 2023-27. This funding is 'place' focused targeting young people in Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Thetford, in partnership with NLIS and organisations working with vulnerable young people aged 13-25 years. 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.

During 2023-26 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 this exciting programme of activity strengthening partnership working between museum and library staff, increasing levels of cultural engagement by young people in a sustained way, through the successful 'Kick the Dust' approach to youth engagement that uses the three-stage progression model of '*Player-Shaper-Leader*'. The programme is aimed at those in the three priority places aged 16-25 years, with opportunities for 13–16yr olds to engage as part of the progression framework.

The key aims of the new 'Kick the Dust' project continue to be 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 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;
- to measure impact on young people's skills, confidence and mental health and wellbeing through a strong and robust evaluation framework.

Young people 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. Feedback from young people shows that they value the skills they develop as part of the project with the top 5 skills being cited as: problem solving, digital, communication, team working and creativity.

Participation numbers:

Since the start of the ACE funded “Kick the Dust” project (June 2023) there has been:

- 5,157 interventions
- 1,505 individual young people
- 3,017 hours of quality activity.
- 97.7% of the activities were face to face, the other sessions being offered online with young people in the principal target areas.

Participation between October 2018 and August 2025:

- 6,031 young people engaged in 18,911 interventions
- 10,056 hours of high-quality activities delivered across Norfolk
- 89% of all activity designed and led by young people
- Youth Board established for 18-25 yr olds with 12 Youth Ambassadors operating at strategic level

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

- 18% of activity was at Player level (to introduce new young people to the project)
- 61% at Shaper level (longer term project with young people determining the content)
- 21% at Leader level (long term engagement – young people leading projects, acting at governance level, mentoring staff)
- 82% of all activity involves young people in leading and designing projects

Breakdown of activity taking place in each area:

- 22% (187 opportunities) in Kings Lynn, (including Gressenhall),
- 26% (217 opportunities) in Thetford
- 20% (169 opportunities) in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer)
- 23% (193 opportunities) in Norwich
- 10% (83 opportunities) outside of area and 6 other opportunities for our online work experience programme targeted at Thetford and Kings Lynn young people.
- 70 volunteering opportunities have been provided, with 3 young people taking on the role of Project Assistant and 12 as a Young Ambassador.
- Of all delivery, 81% involves young people being part of a long-term group, providing them with a deeper understanding of heritage and allowing them to explore their identity, develop their skills and confidence and embed themselves more in their local communities, a key aim of ACE.

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, using the free pass which forms part of the 'Kick the Dust' offer.

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 project progresses and needs are identified. Three of the team have undertaken Arts Award training to add additional value to the programme enabling young people who have limited experience of gaining a qualification in arts to achieve.

Our offer to support young people around the important theme of mental health and wellbeing is on-going and is now measured through the evaluation framework using data from the young people's feedback forms as well as narrative evaluation the results of which form part of this report. Working with colleagues in NCC Public Health and NCC Performance and Governance teams we have been able to interrogate the data around impact on mental wellbeing and match this to the interviews with the young people engaged in the narrative evaluation programme. The data shows that 31% of individual young people who have taken part in 'Kick the Dust' identify as having a mental health issue showing the need for this programme, although this continues to slowly decrease as young people engage more with the programme. A further 9% identify as having a physical disability which requires additional support for them to access the programme. Through a systematic approach to evaluation, in partnership with Norfolk Library and Information Service, the team can demonstrate the impact on mental health on those taking part and the young people can monitor their progress through the programme in relation to skills, confidence and mental health.

Target audiences: (some young people fall into more than one category) as of 12/08/25

- FE/HE – 34%
- YMCA clients – 10%
- Secondary schools – 31%
- Young people with mental health issues – 30%
- SEND – 10%
- Outside of mainstream education – 27%
- NEET – 27%
- Looked after children and adopted living those at home - 2%
- Care Leavers – 2%
- Young Carers – 2%
- New arrivals and refugees – 4%
- Pregnant young mums and teenage parents – 0%
- Other groups – 24%
- YOT/ at risk of offending 1%
- Mental health 31%

In terms of how young people find out about 'Kick the Dust', the 'Kick the Dust' website is being used effectively with 14% of young people finding out about the project through the updated web pages (['Kick the Dust' - Norfolk](#)

[Museums](#)) and 17% through social media posts; 14% through a family member or friend, 30% coming via one of our partner organisations and 22% having already taken part in a previous 'Kick the Dust' project. As more young people join having taken part in a previous 'Kick the Dust' project this is impacting on questions relating to knowledge and understanding of heritage and job roles within NMS with 64% stating that they are aware of different job roles in NMS ahead of starting a new project although on reflection following their engagement this rises to 89%.

As young people move through 'Kick the Dust' the impacts on their confidence and mental health and wellbeing increases. 11% of all young people have been part of 'Kick the Dust' since May 2023, 9% for 6 months to a year, 29% for 3-6 months and 51% under 3 months.

Impacts on mental health and well being

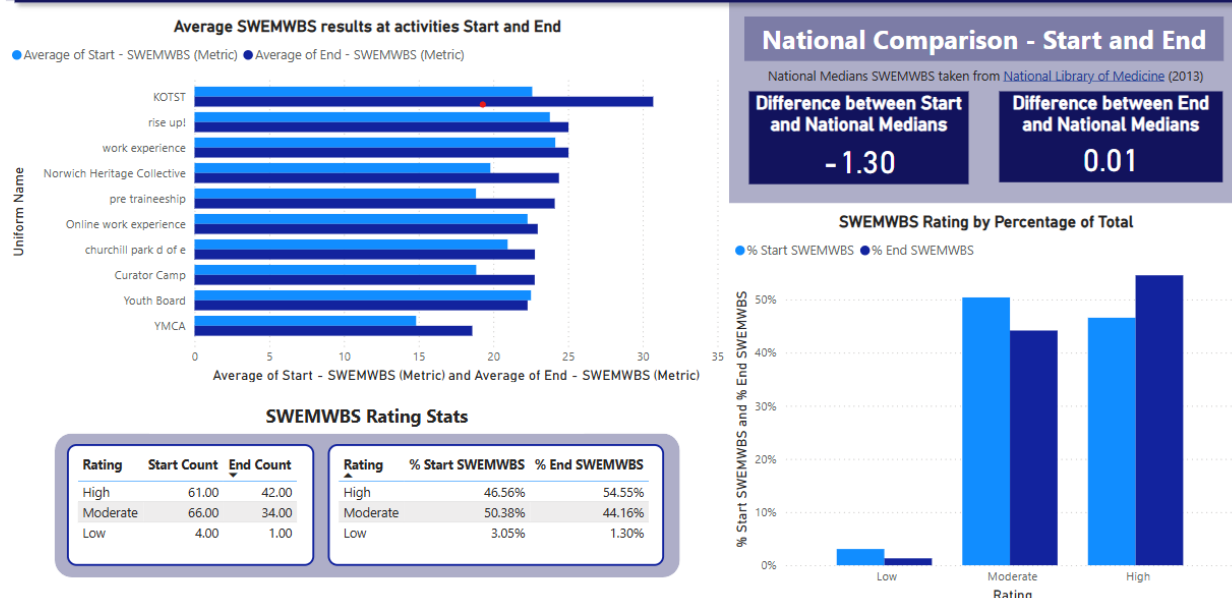
The new young people's feedback form includes the 78 positively worded items from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being scale for assessing a populations' mental well-being.

From the Young People feedback forms, following their involvement in 'Kick the Dust', 84% strongly agreed that this had had a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing. An additional question has been added to identify young people with neurodivergent tendencies and is showing that since July 2025 50% of young people engaged in 'Kick the Dust' identify as neurodivergent which is significant when designing new activity in terms of additional barriers these young people may face.

The following graph highlights the impact on young people's mental health and wellbeing using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) from the responses given by the young people between June 2023 and March 2025 who completed Part 1 and Part 2 of the young people feedback forms. Part 1 is completed at the start of the programme and Part 2 at the end, following a one-to-one session with the Project Worker. Using a Dashboard, we can track progress and although this relates to a smaller number than those engaging in the programme, it provides a good benchmark for future delivery.

Graph 1 shows the difference between Norfolk young people at the start and end of their engagement against the National Average (2013 research). At start our young people were -1.30 BELOW the National Average and at end they are +0.01 ABOVE the National average. This is based on 208 responses between September 2023 and March 2025.

Kick the Dust - Data Summary



The data shows more young people are in HIGH mental health bracket at end than at the start of their engagement which correlates to the data from the narrative evaluation with 85% stating that 'Kick the Dust' is having a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

Additional data shows that 70% of all activity is having a positive impact on young people's mental health and that activities at Shaper level, where young people meet weekly and over a long period of time, give the most impact.

From the additional questions asked of the young people, the programme continues to meet their needs and is helping them see themselves in a museum or heritage setting. 95% state the programme had gone above their expectations and 100% state they felt welcomed and respected by staff and volunteers.

The following percentages are for those strongly agreeing or agreeing with each statement. Unless stated otherwise, the remaining percentage for each question answered fell into the 'neither agreed nor disagreed' response for each statement.

- 94% of all young people strongly agreed that the museum was a safe space for young people like themselves who were struggling.
- 86% strongly agreed they were given a voice that was listened to (11% said they were but only some of the time).
- 81% strongly agreed that they understood heritage better than they had done before taking part
- 80% strongly agreed that following their engagement heritage was more relevant
- 69% strongly agreed that heritage represented young people like themselves.
- 89% stated they now had a greater understanding of museums and the job roles available with 81% strongly agreeing that they felt there were jobs for them in the sector (only 3% disagreed).

- 86% strongly agreed that the skills they had acquired would be useful to them in the future (2% disagreed)
- 79% strongly agreed they felt more connected to their local community than previously, which is one of the aims of the project (2% disagreed)
- 54% agreed that their involvement had helped them to explore and feel more connected to their own identity and heritage (7% disagreed);
- 82% stated they were now more likely to volunteer (5% disagreed).

Summary

Initially funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) from 2018, 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.

Kick the Dust was awarded and Arts Council England NPO Uplift from April 2023 to March 2027. This is 'place' focused funding - targeting young people in the levelling up areas Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Thetford.

Additionally we have been given cross-cutting funding from Public Health for 2025-26 period.

We operate across Norfolk, with a team of four staff, working alongside museum professionals to support the development of the museum offer with young people at the centre.

The programme is delivered in partnership with Norfolk Library and Information Service, YMCA and organisations working with vulnerable young people.

Activities include event management, designing displays and exhibitions & producing digital content. Not a one-off project it's a way of working which has brought huge benefits to our organisation - produced institutional change.

'Kick the Dust' has established a three stage *Player-Shaper-Leader* progression model, which offers a pathway and builds cultural engagement in a sustained way:

Player - lighter touch engagements - projects, work placements & taster activities.

Shaper – where they influence the way the museum interacts with its audiences through engagement in longer-term project groups.

Leader - Young Ambassadors on the strategic board, represent the views of other young people or lead their own projects supported by the team.

All of this links to FLOURISH - Norfolk County Council ambition to be a county where all children and young people can flourish

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.

Strong partnerships with Norfolk County Council teams, YMCA and many external partners that have been developed through 'Kick the Dust' and provide a strong base on which to build, bringing new young people into museum and library spaces helping us to engage with a wide range of young people who face a variety of barriers to participation.

Working with colleagues in NCC Public Health & Performance and Governance teams we have developed a systematic approach to collecting and interrogating data around the impact of KTD on mental wellbeing. Mental Wellbeing is measured through an evaluation framework, using data from

young people's feedback forms and narrative evaluation. Interview questions were designed with young people, and they can monitor their own progress in relation to skills, confidence & mental health.

We support young people to develop transferable **work-related skills including digital tech skills** with the aim of supporting more working age young people into employment, training or further learning; participants have said:

NHC1 - I've decided that I'm going to go into teaching...I'll mention this on PGCE applications in terms of working as a group. I want to be a history teacher so it's quite good knowing information on how other people can get into this. And I hopefully will go into it later, but for now, I want to do the teaching side of things.

'The main thing I've worked on has been communication as well as teamwork. That has definitely improved for me, and it's always been one of those things that has never really been my strong suit up until now' - 'In terms of in terms of working collaboratively... I mean the whole project is about being able to both take orders from other people, but also listen to the ideas from those same people. And well.. it's not that my communication skills are bad. But it's more that, well with being autistic, it can be a struggle to be able to communicate' - Time Turners participant, Kings Lynn.

'I'd say my favourite thing that I've done so far has been the one where we had to record a small video...it allowed me to use my skills in an effective way which in certain parts of my life has not necessarily been easy to do' – 'and in terms of specialist skills, I mean really liking... especially visual and audio media, it definitely allowed me to lean into those strengths a bit more'. – 'I've never been like been recorded with a camera before, like a proper professional like film, I've not done that before. I feel like that's greatly benefited me' Time Turners participant2

Young people have emphasised the fun side of learning **new creative skills & gaining cultural experiences** alongside their friends old and new:

'It's a really fun thing outside of schoolwork and stuff to do on a weekend and, yeah, see friends and it's just a really fun thing to do.' - Member of National Saturday Club at Time and Tide Museum.

'I just wanted to meet other young people who had similar interests and do something creative where I could still learn as well'. - 'I know on a Wednesday afternoon I'm going to do something fun, so it kind of gives me something that's not maybe uni related or work related, you know, anything else, to focus on' - Norwich Heritage Collective member.

'Getting a behind the scenes look at how the exhibition was curated and we went a few days before it opened, so they were putting up the work and that was really cool, talking to the curator at Norwich Castle as well.' - Norwich Heritage Collective member.

KTD projects, trips and visits have enabled participants to appreciate their own **local history and participate in development projects:**

'I'll tell you the main thing I've learnt is the Hanseatic League. I had no idea about it and until we started our current project. And it really opened my eyes to just how essential local trade has been throughout mainly the early medieval era'. Time Turners member, Kings Lynn.

'We got to do stuff about the seafront and we got to go inside the Winter Gardens as part of the lottery thing. And we got to go in there and talk about some of the stuff that we wanted to put in' - YMCA client (Great Yarmouth Heritage Collective)

Co delivery with Norfolk Information and library Service (NLIS) and other partners has enabled possibilities and facilitated access to their different sites, collections and archives.

'Last week we went to the Forum, to the library, and we had a session where we could handle objects in the Queer Norfolk Collection...it was a really great opportunity that I might not have thought about getting if I hadn't joined the collective'. Norwich Heritage Collective member.

Through Kick the Dust groups, participants are **signposted to opportunities**, such as training, jobs, volunteering & work experience within the service and beyond e.g. through the Museums Development South-East (MDSE) network: *'I'm shadowing a session with the learning team with Key Stage 2, like an Ancient Egyptians session where the schools will come in next Friday. And I'm really excited myself just to see what they learn or what happens in those kinds of sessions.'* Norwich Heritage Collective member.

Participants **personal development** remains at the heart of what we do: (National Saturday Club) *'Instead of it being like, full on, like, you have to, you have to, you have to, it's like you can do.'* – *'It's a place where I come to get away from the stress of studying, really. I know I'm not going to be thinking about anything like that when I'm here, so it's quite relaxing'.*

'I'm from Norfolk and I live at home, but last year I took a break from uni. I took a year out and I found that quite isolating...I just felt quite stuck for a bit with how to meet people my age and so I thought I'd give it a go and see...going to the Heritage Collective first was like a slowly kind of getting myself back into learning, but also socialising with people my age.' - NHC2 *'Just being able to sit, communicate and knowing that your feelings are validated, that's a skill that I've learned very, very well'. – 'Coming to Kick the Dust is therapy. I'm able to come in, talk about whatever, go home and then be like, okay, well, now I'm so excited for next week'. YMCA client (Great Yarmouth Heritage Collective)*

7. Visitor figures

Visitor figures for the period will be circulated at the meeting

8. Recommendations:

That the Area Museums Committee notes the report

Report Contact:

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NORFOLK MUSEUM SERVICE
Visitors by Museum and County Total

			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	2023-24	13,471	9,922	10,889	12,996	15,391	10,647	11,597	7,256	6,079	6,031	8,570	10,031	62,263	122,480	
		2024-25	8,942	9,907	7,932	11,031	13,015	11,590	12,883	9,042	7,742	10,504	15,214	10,972	50,827	128,774	
		2025-26	11,818	11,485	10,126	12,535	34,552								80,516	80,516	
	Norwich Castle Study Centre (Shirehall)	2023-24	100	53	136	9	61	76	63	79	178	58	150	118	478	1,159	
		2024-25	119	213	130	161	32	21	57	19	33	0	0	7	655	792	
		2025-26	0	0	0	11	0								11	11	
	Museum of Norwich	2023-24	1,589	1,376	1,241	2,004	2,059	2,381	1,824	1,329	821	1,244	1,707	1,863	8,331	19,500	
		2024-25	1,666	1,603	1,754	1,837	1,983	2,055	1,820	1,359	1,144	986	1,273	1,192	8,843	18,672	
		2025-26	1,377	1,059	766	2,088	964								6,254	6,254	
	Strangers Hall	2023-24	468	522	453	1,189	1,699	962	850	770	470	0	387	1,093	4,327	8,659	
		2024-25	484	785	705	766	626	1,122	719	749	846	5	432	1,202	3,366	8,441	
		2025-26	703	663	855	1,442	1,101								4,764	4,764	
E A S T	Tolhouse Museum	2023-24	475	196	207	346	1,145	1,104	367	15	0	199	53	82	2,369	4,189	
		2024-25	420	474	66	317	980	986	285	37	20	51	65	62	2,252	3,758	
		2025-26	436	278	111	308	916								2,049	2,049	
	Elizabethan House Museum	2023-24	1,156	1,017	881	1,338	1,622	1,817	1,237	79	98	0	3	170	6,014	9,418	
		2024-25	1,163	1,422	1,095	1,102	1,326	1,788	953	98	0	0	0	9	6,108	8,956	
		2025-26	831	957	903	1,445	1,500								5,636	5,636	
	Time and Tide	2023-24	2,451	2,235	2,508	3,083	3,350	3,701	2,502	2,053	1,773	1,498	1,907	2,582	13,627	29,643	
		2024-25	2,774	3,024	2,973	2,767	2,799	2,944	2,228	1,704	1,181	1,276	1,686	1,981	14,337	27,337	
		2025-26	1,699	2,228	2,417	2,873	2,290								11,507	11,507	
	Cromer Museum	2023-24	1,046	1,223	1,357	1,426	2,163	1,436	1,230	0	0	189	643	262	7,215	10,975	
		2024-25	1,266	1,524	1,574	1,788	1,804	1,513	1,050	161	34	142	114	198	7,956	11,168	
		2025-26	1,398	1,499	1,575	1,780	1,772								8,024	8,024	
W E S T	Lynn Museum	2023-24	1,358	1,171	1,445	1,446	1,887	1,774	2,228	2,228	1,944	2,162	3,481	2,757	7,307	23,881	
		2024-25	1,564	1,586	1,446	1,937	2,462	1,938	2,598	2,248	1,193	1,369	2,492	1,921	8,995	22,754	
		2025-26	1,356	1,494	1,449	2,299	2,176								8,774	8,774	
	Ancient House Museum	2023-24	650	635	686	1,466	676	959	693	832	721	730	1,066	929	4,113	10,043	
		2024-25	798	922	1,380	1,524	971	590	876	1,077	573	589	478	676	5,595	10,454	
		2025-26	632	887	783	1,282	646								4,230	4,230	
	Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse	2023-24	5,840	4,363	7,648	4,788	6,653	5,768	5,408	1,585	1,245	206	646	5,760	29,292	49,910	
		2024-25	5,744	5,831	9,679	5,496	6,273	5,931	5,269	1,989	733	204	841	5,329	33,023	53,319	
		2025-26	6,545	5,591	6,451	4,872	6,439								29,898	29,898	
	Norfolk Exhibition Programmes incl. King's Lynn Town Hall SLA	2023-24	263	883	568	130	360	1,395	523	274	204	30	228	159	2,204	5,017	
		2024-25	0	281	362	376	56	12	18	338	167	104	338	164	1,075	2,216	
		2025-26	260	254	575	215	85								1,389	1,389	
		2022-23	28,873	23,598	28,009	29,954	37,106	32,019	28,522	16,500	13,533	12,347	18,847	25,806	147,540	295,114	
		2023-24	24,940	27,572	29,096	29,097	32,327	30,490	28,756	18,821	13,666	15,230	22,933	23,713	143,032	296,641	
		2025-26	27,055	26,395	26,011	31,150	52,441								163,052	163,052	
		TARGET															



TRUE'S YARD FISHERFOLK MUSEUM REPORT

Report by Museum Curator

September 2025

1. Temporary exhibitions and events at True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum

1.1 Exhibition Programme.

So far we have hosted 4 temporary exhibitions: Community Art, Discover Hanse, The History of the Timber Trade in King's Lynn and Art in the Yard.

Coming up

- Opening 1st November: An exhibition in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Great Gale of 1875.
- Christmas Tree Decorations throughout History

1.2 Summer Art Exhibition

Once again this summer art exhibition has been a success and in no small part to the team of volunteer stewards and the artists connected to the Museum who produced some incredible work.

We are in the process of organising some art workshops for the autumn.

1.3 True's Talks

Our autumn programme will launch on 25th September and will run to 13th November. 8 talks all by local speakers. Subjects include medical care in WW1, Art and the Industrial Revolution, how museum exhibitions have evolved over time and more. All talks will take place on Thursdays between 1pm and 2pm. They remain free to attend and are being streamed online via Zoom, which can be booked via the Museum's TicketTailor page.

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/thenorthendtrust>

1.4 Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture 13th November at King's Lynn Town Hall.

The 11th Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture will be on the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Great Gale of 1875 (150 years) in which the Scottish fishing fleet off East Anglia lost 5 boats and Lynn citizens were involved in the retrieval and burial of eight Fife fishermen. With Council support we are currently reconnecting with the fishing communities in eastern Scotland.

1.5 A Victorian Experience: North End Guided Walks Programme

We relaunched our rebranded North End Guided Walks in June as 'A Victorian Experience' and we now have an online booking system for our walks. Tours on

Wednesday and Friday 13:00-14:30. Take up has improved from the previous year but we are still looking to develop this walks further. One avenue is incorporating local performers as with much of the Old North End and we are currently holding meetings to discuss this possibility.

Other Museum Developments

2. Events

5th September Dr Anderson's fundraising Garden Party

14th September Heritage Open Day

From 25th Sept True's Talks autumn series

October

18th October Fish 'N' Chips (FOTY)

October half term Halloween Children's Activities

November

4th November TYFM Dinner at Duke's Head Hotel in memory of Sailors and Fisherfolk

13th Nov Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture at King's Lynn Town Hall

29th November Ghost Hunt

3. Fundraisers

3.1 The Mayor's Charity of the Year

We are grateful to the Former Mayor Cllr Paul Bland for his support and selecting us alongside the King's Lynn Sea Cadets his 2024/25 as his chosen charities. Having now received the funds raised we are planning to put them to good use. One project is extending our timeline as it currently ends in 2012. With so much happening 2013-2025 we are looking for suggestions for major historical events nationally, in King's Lynn and the North End.

3.2 Friends of True's Yard

We are most fortunate to have an active and supportive Friends group. They have recently helped the Museum with funds towards emergency electrical repairs and a new coffee machine.

4. Partnerships

4.1 Hardwick Road Cemetery

Our staff and volunteers have stepped up to help the Friends of Hardwick Road Cemetery from dissolving and we're working on more collaborative activities between the two sites including the 150th anniversary of the Great Gale.

5. Learning and Outreach

5.1. Activities

Summer Holiday Activity Days

Previously, like many museums we utilised a drop in model for our activity days but after feedback we decided to change tactics. The majority of attendees were arriving at the same

times resulting in families having to wait for activities to be available. To combat this we decided have capped bookable spaces for our morning and afternoon sessions. We have had excellent feedback so far for this new system as children were able to get more of a qualitative experience and it had less of a conveyer belt feel. We've also changed up our content with archaeology, Japanese art, cave art, LEGO and games.

5.2 Oral History Project- Capturing Memories

Our Oral History Committee is hard at work capturing new oral histories and so far 20 new stories have been recorded (last report 19) but the focus has been largely on cataloguing and organising the existing collection into the same format.

5.3 Social Media

Currently the Museum's Facebook page has 2.5k followers; Instagram 496 Followers (last report 475). Our TikTok has 272 followers (202 last report). We are slowly making the transition from Twitter to Blue Sky.

6 Visitor Numbers

Visitor Numbers for the year 24/25: 11,701.

7 Resource Implications

Grants

Mayor's Charity 2024/2025

8 Recommendations

That the Area Committee note the report.

Originator of report:
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Stories of Lynn and Tourist Information Centre Visitor Figures

Stories of Lynn

Month	Total entries	Cumulative	Schools
Jun-25	549	1909	266
Jul-25	754	2663	183
Aug-25	1017	3680	0

Tourist Information Centre

Month	In Person Enquiry	Telephone Enquiry	Email Enquiry	Overseas Visitors	Pontoon Enquiry	Accommodation Enquiry	Tourism Pack sent out
Jun-25	1152	191	33	3	17	2	16
Jul-25	1346	146	26	2	33	2	14
Aug-25	1284	154	24	34	41	3	14