

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, 16th March, 2026 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), de Whalley and Kemp (Vice Chair)

County Councillors

Councillors Bambridge and Chenery of Horsburgh

Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members

Councillor Kybird – Norfolk Joint Museums Committee
Councillor Ward – Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Officers

Robin Hanley – Assistant Head of Museums, Norfolk Museums Service
Elizabeth Joice – Learning and Engagement Officer, Norfolk Museums Service
Hannah Jackson – Operations Manager, Norfolk Museums Service

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor Lintern, Oliver Bone, Curator of the Lynn Museum and Lindsey Bavin, Manager of True's Yard Museum.

2 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th January 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF MUSEUMS

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

The Operations Manager, Assistant Head of Museums and Learning and Engagement Officer presented the report on the King's Lynn Museum activities in the period from January to February 2026. 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 Forthcoming Exhibition: "*Unboxed: Discovering Lynn's Collections*" (working title)
 - 1.3 Family events
 - 1.4 Family Trails
 - 1.5 Mini Museum

County Councillor Chenery of Horsbrugh referred to the farmyard-themed event in the monthly Mini Museum programme and asked whether it explored modern or traditional farmyards. The Operations Manager explained that, as the session was designed for children under five, the focus was on experiences with farmyard animals rather than farmyard mechanics.

Councillor de Whalley referred to the forthcoming "Unboxed: Discovering Lynn's Collections" exhibition and asked whether any complementary online or social media content would accompany it. The Operations Manager confirmed that digital content, including social media and the collections website, would support the exhibition.

County Councillor Bambridge referred to the forthcoming "Unboxed: Discovering Lynn's Collections" exhibition and asked if there would be any sort of subject theming. The Operations Manager reported that the final list was being drawn up which would help inform how the exhibition design all comes together.

The Chair commented that staff at the new King's Lynn library would welcome displaying items from the forthcoming "Unboxed: Discovering Lynn's Collections" exhibition. The Chair also asked whether children were charged for visiting the Lynn Museum. The Assistant Head of Museums confirmed there was a general admission charge for children and clarified that the museum offered free admission from October to March, that under fours were always free, and that free admission for households on means tested benefits would be introduced in April.

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

- 1.6 Coffee Mornings**
- 1.7 Talks Programme**
- 1.8 Workshops**
- 1.9 Forthcoming events**

Councillor Kybird asked whether the Savage Brothers were the same family associated with a department store in Thetford. The Assistant Head of Museums commented that a family connection was possible and added that the Savages' link with King's Lynn was through steam engineering.

Councillor Ward referred to the Lynn Museum event held for National Lottery Open Week and asked for attendance figures. The Operations Manager advised that she did not have the exact numbers to hand but reported a significant increase in uptake across the service, with Gressenhall receiving more than 1,700 visitors over its two free-admission days.

Councillor Kemp referred to the Natural Paints and Pigments Workshop and asked if Woad face painting was featured in the workshop. The Operations Manager advised she would check and commented that this was something which could be incorporated.

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

- 2) Newman Legacy project**
- 3) Other Museum developments**
 - 3.1 Publicity and promotion**
 - 3.2 Norfolk Museums Pass**

In response to a question from Councillor Ward, the Assistant Head of Museums explained that they had not previously offered free general admission to College of West Anglia students, but they were open to exploring this further.

The Chair asked if there was any scope in getting the Exploring the Victorian grills series onto YouTube. The Operations Manager confirmed it already appeared on YouTube.

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

- 3.3 NMS Teaching Museum Trainees**
- 3.6 Finds Identification and Recording Day**

In response to a question from the Chair, the Operations Manager confirmed she would check the date of the next Finds Identification and Recording Day and provide the information after the meeting.

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

4) Borough Council partnership working
4.1 Stories of Lynn – Events & Exhibitions

In response to a question from County Councillor Chenery of Horsburgh, the Assistant Head of Museums advised that Newman Curator Jan Summerfield could provide members with a summary of the information held on the King John Cup and confirmed this would be shared after the meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor de Whalley, the Learning and Engagement Officer explained the planned Civil War exhibition would incorporate research from local archaeological digs and aimed to present history in an engaging way for younger audiences.

In response to questions from Councillor Kemp, the Learning and Engagement Officer explained that a new early-years programme, Tiny Time Turners, was due to launch in May for children aged 0–5 and their carers, with outreach planned to local nurseries and home-educating families. The Learning and Engagement Officer added that bi-monthly home-education visits were being arranged with set pricing, and discussions were ongoing about improving accessibility for all families.

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

5) Learning & Outreach
5.1 School visits – Lynn Museum
5.2 School visits – Stories of Lynn
5.3 Kick the Dust – Activity in King's Lynn
6) Kick the Dust Norfolk – countywide programme update

Councillor Ward asked whether there was a measure for new entrants to the Kick the Dust programme. The Assistant Head of Museums stated that no target for intake was currently in place and added that much of their recruitment came through existing groups.

The Chair suggested the Youth Climate Change Action Group be invited to come along to do something on Heritage Day.

In response to a question from Councillor Kemp, the Learning and Engagement Officer explained the Kick the Dust programme and associated youth groups actively include young people with SEND, with 52% of participants identifying as neurodivergent.

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 Operations Manager reported it had been another strong year for the Lynn Museum and that they were on track with figures seen in previous years.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report.

6 **TRUE'S YARD REPORT**

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

County Councillor Bambridge presented the report in the absence of the Museum Curator at True's Yard. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

County Councillor Bambridge reported on operational challenges which included staffing shortages, reliance on volunteers and the impact of weather on visitor numbers whilst also highlighting upcoming events and ongoing efforts to maintain and promote the museum.

The Chair asked whether the part-time staff were paid or volunteers, and it was confirmed that they were paid.

In response to a question from Councillor de Whalley, the Assistant Head of Museums explained that there were administrative complexities around joint ticketing or discounted offers between the Lynn Museum, Stories of Lynn and True's Yard, but confirmed they were always open to collaborative marketing and discount promotions.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report.

7 **STORIES OF LYNN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE VISITOR FIGURES**

The visitor figures for the period December to February 2026 were noted. A copy of the visitor figures is attached to the minutes.

8 **UPDATES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

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

The Committee noted discussions on local government reorganisation and devolution were on hold until after the elections with decisions expected to be communicated to the relevant councils in due course.

9 **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

There were none identified at the meeting.

10 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2026/2027**

RESOLVED: The schedule of meetings for 2026/2027 were agreed and noted.

Councillor Ward proposed the Committee visit the new exhibition “Unboxed: Discovering Lynn’s Collections” at the Lynn Museum before their next meeting.

It was agreed that the Committee would visit the “Unboxed: Discovering Lynn’s Collections” Exhibition prior to a future meeting.

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 8th June 2026 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King’s Lynn.

The meeting closed at 3.21 pm



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

16 March 2026 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 January – February 2026

1 Exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum

1.1 Current exhibition

May the Toys Be with You

11 July 2025 - 31 May 2026



The current exhibition at Lynn Museum, which opened on 11 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 will run until 31 May 2026. 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 is attracting a higher proportion of first-time visitors.

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](#)

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

The 2026-2027 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 displays will provide a showcase for the collections-based Newman project.

Planning for this exhibition continues. The concept behind the exhibition is to give the appearance of being in a museum store with objects in boxes – lids open. The exhibition will feature material that would not normally be displayed long term because of size, conservation requirements, light sensitivity or fragility.

Newman Curator Jan Summerfield has spent three days with Norfolk Museums Service colleagues from the Conservation Team reviewing the long object list of potential items for display and selecting material for the exhibition.

1.3 Family events

The museum continues to offer events and regular family trails during holiday periods.



Ancient Romans Family Event
At Lynn Museum

Thursday 19 February
10am-4pm

This February half-term, travel back in time to Britain in the age of the Roman Empire. Handle real historic artefacts, try some Roman food, and see if you have what it takes to succeed as a Centurion.

Admission is FREE, booking is recommended.

QR code: [QR code]

Logos: Lynn Museum, Norfolk Museums Service, Arts Council England, Heritage Fund

The poster features a man in Roman centurion attire, including a helmet and a dark tunic, standing next to a red shield with a yellow lightning bolt. The background is a light beige color with faint illustrations of Roman columns and architectural details.

February half term has seen a large number of family visitors to the museum, partly driven by the popular Mart fair in the Tuesday Market Place. The Romans event on 19 February was extremely successful, with families able to try different activities such as making armlets, designing mosaic floors, hearing about life in the Roman army and what retirement looked like for the soldiers settling locally. The highlight was undoubtedly tasting a Roman dish

of warm pickled cucumber made with olive oil, red wine vinegar and honey. The day was attended by 121 children and 261 people attended in total.

1.4 Family Trails

Trails continue to be provided to help children and families enjoy a structured exploration of the museum. A new trail is offered each week of the summer holidays, Christmas, Easter and during half-term breaks.

During the Christmas holidays, a *Star Wars* themed trail was offered, whilst it was all about 'Potty Romans' throughout February half term. As part of this trail, families were encouraged to collect all the pieces of broken Roman pot around the museum. The family trails have been very successful with a record number of prizes given out. Over the reporting period, 315 participants explored the museum using one of the trails.

1.5 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.

In the reporting period there was a January event on Colours, with 17 children and a total of 33 participants.

The next event on 19 March event will explore farmyards.



1.6 Coffee Mornings

The monthly themed coffee mornings continue to be offered at Lynn Museum, normally attended by approximately 15 to 30 people. During the reporting period there have been coffee mornings themed around the Second World War and Savages. For the two events there were a total of 50 attendees.

1.7 Talks Programme

The Museum normally receives audiences of around 20-30 people for the Friday afternoon talks. In January, *RAF Aerial Reconnaissance and Photography in World War 2* by Mark Taylor attracted 55 in attendance (with two sessions provided by popular demand). In February the talk explored *The Rise and Fall of Savage Brothers Ltd.* by Ron Feakes with 48 attending (again two sessions were arranged to enable all to attend).

AFTERNOON TALKS

AT LYNN MUSEUM

The Rise and Fall of Steam Power and Savage Brothers Ltd

Friday 27 February
2-3pm: SOLD OUT
3.30-4.30pm: SOLD OUT

Ron Feakes will discuss the work of Savages, the King's Lynn steam engine manufacturing business which was formed in 1850.



Tickets cost £2, or free for NMS Passholders. Booking is required.

01553 775001 / lynn.museum@norfolk.gov.uk

LYNN Norfolk Museums Service ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND Heritage Fund

A poster for the February Afternoon Talk at Lynn Museum.

1.8 Workshops

Lynn Museum ran a successful *Natural Paints and Pigments Workshop* in early February, created by Museum Learning Assistant Hayley Simmons. The 2-hour adult workshop was designed to teach people how to find and process colour pigments from the natural world, as people have done for thousands of years. The session had a particular focus on the red and white chalk from Hunstanton's iconic cliffs and Lynn Museum's own yellow Gault brick. The pigments were then made into paint by mixing them with egg white and yolk.

Feedback for the workshop included:

"It has given me the enthusiasm and skill to explore some pigment making for myself."

"I attend quite a lot of zoom and in person workshops and I have to say this one was exceptional."

"The final outcome of my endeavours, turning a piece of chalk into a paint similar to that used so long ago, was truly gratifying."

The workshop is the second in a series of workshops Hayley is creating to teach people heritage crafts and aid their survival for future generations. The other workshop was *Pewter Pilgrims*, inspired by the museum's extensive collection of Medieval pilgrim badges, teaches pewter casting from cuttlefish. It will be running again in May in collaboration with the King's Lynn Town Guides.





Natural paints explored in a recent workshop at Lynn Museum

1.9 Forthcoming events

Lynn Museum Guided Tour: An Introduction to Seahenge



Discover 'Seahenge', the remarkable 4,000-year-old timber circle, preserved beneath the Norfolk Coast until its excavation in 1998.

Saturday 7 March

11am-12pm & 2-3pm

Free to celebrate National Lottery Open Week.

Booking is required as spaces are limited.



lynn.museum@norfolk.gov.uk / 01553 775001



Poster advertising an event at Lynn Museum in support of the National Lottery Open Week, giving free admission for Lottery ticket holders.

Details of forthcoming events at Lynn Museum may be viewed 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 Newman's were siblings who had retired to Congham near King's Lynn with interests in local history and helping children learn. Norfolk Museums Service is very grateful for the Newmans' generosity.

Newman Curator Jan Summerfield and Newman NMS Teaching Museum Trainee (2025-2026) Rosalyn McLean 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 continues with the audit, with the Team focusing on the collections stored at Gressenhall, focussing on the shoe and ceramics collections in particular.

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](#)

Lynn Museum staff have produced a viral video on TikTok.

At the time of writing, the fourth instalment of their *Exploring the Victorian grills* series has received over 277,000 views on TikTok since it was posted on 10 January 2026, gaining attention worldwide and from a variety of ages. Visitors to the museum have commented on how much they have enjoyed the videos.

The series began last year when Learning Assistants Hayley and Emily wanted to explore what had been dropped down the Victorian grills that cover the old Baptist Chapel's heating system. Viewers loved the first video in the series and the two began to film the rest of their exploration through the museum's grills. To date the series has received over 338,000 views, which continues to climb each day.



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 Norfolk Museums Pass

Lynn Museum is participating in the Norfolk Museums Pass promotional campaign *Access all Eras* to encourage people to become members and enjoy a range of benefits including free admission to all ten of the Norfolk Museums Service museums.



Following the full reopening of Norwich Castle, a new campaign has been launched to promote the Museums Pass membership scheme across Norfolk.

The *Access all Eras* campaign is funded through the Arts Council England Museums Renewal Fund.

<https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/article/30735/Norfolk-Museums-Pass>

3.3 NMS Teaching Museum Trainees

One-year 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 Lynn Museum is hosting Rosalyn Maclean who has been learning about museum work and making a valuable contribution to the management and auditing of collections, design, photography and writing. It has been a busy period for Rosalyn, Newman Trainee, as she prepares to complete her year with us. She has had a number of job interviews proving that even in these difficult times the Traineeship provides valuable experience for getting that first role. Rosalyn has also been involved with the team at Gressenhall working on the new temporary exhibition *Jacket Women* and helping with the marketing and social media campaign for the new Norwich Castle exhibition *In Proximity*.

3.4 Retail offer at Lynn Museum

The museum team continues to develop the retail offer at Lynn Museum working with the NMS Retail Manager Harriet Johnson.

3.5 Volunteers

Volunteering opportunities continue to be offered at the museum. Current volunteer projects include a collections audit and improvements to collections documentation.

3.6 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. These days offer a valuable chance for the NCC Finds team to connect with finders of archaeological material.



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.

An Emmerich Twinning Badge has recently been accepted into the collection alongside the formal Badge of Office given to the Mayor.

A PhD student, and former Assistant Curator of the Rijksmuseum, visited Stories of Lynn to see the painting of the King John Cup by Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraten. She is researching van Roestraten and his patrons. The quality of the details of the King John Cup suggests the artist never actually saw the Cup but painted it from a similar cup or written description.

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. A number of NMS staff support the ongoing work of the Guildhall project team and NMS is also represented on the Guildhall Project Board. NMS Learning Manager Colin Stott has recently supported the recruitment of a new Learning and Engagement Officer for the Guildhall.

This is a quiet period curatorially while the building works begin in earnest at the Guildhall and all the enabling works are in progress. The scaffold has been going up, and the roof is about to be covered prior to the removal of the roof tiles.

The Guildhall project's Learning and Engagement Officer Kathy Hipperson produced a programme of events for February half term and has also been focusing on Shakespeare Week at the end of March. Plans are being finalised for Shakespeare's *Birthday Bash* in April.

Newman Curator (maternity cover), Jan Summerfield contributes to the work on the St George's Guildhall project Interpretation Strategy and to various events and exhibitions, working with the Guildhall's Learning and Engagement Officer and the wider Guildhall project team. One project Jan is leading on is the conservation of a portrait of James I, earmarked for display in the Guildhall.



The painting *Too late for the Ferry* by Robert Macbeth was installed in the Borough Council's offices at King's Court during the reporting period.

This followed glazing and preparation of the painting by Norfolk Museums Service technicians at Norwich Castle.

The Lynn Museum's free admission period runs from 1 October until the end of March 2026. This free admission period is provided under the terms of the Service Level Agreement between the Borough Council and NMS.

4.1 Stories of Lynn – Events & Exhibitions

Norfolk Museums Service continues to support the Borough Council with the delivery of learning activities at Stories of Lynn in King's Lynn Town Hall. NMS manages the Stories of Lynn Learning & Engagement Officer, Elizabeth Joice, whose post is co-funded by the Borough Council and the NMS Kick the Dust programme.

The temporary exhibition *Making the Rounds: Stories of Workhouse Nurses Told in Textiles* continues until the end of March. The following exhibition will be a temporary exhibit curated, designed and displayed by Time Turners, the King's Lynn-based group of Kick the Dust young people.

The museum continues to offer events and regular family trails during holiday periods. In the February half term on 17 February the *Bridgerton Ball* event was well received by those who attended and had very positive feedback. The Learning & Engagement Officer is planning to re-run this event later in the year.

Family trails are provided all year round for children and families to enjoy. The

January trail, *Hibernating History*, recorded 20 participants over the month. Forthcoming events include Easter Holiday activities featuring Tudor egg decorating and Victorian Easter cards, create your own red-nose themed decorations for Comic Relief and May Holiday activities including a museum event day exploring the King John's Treasure.

5 Learning & Outreach

5.1 School visits - Lynn Museum

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.

5.2 School visits – Stories of Lynn

Stories of Lynn continues to offer a variety of school workshops, making adaptations where required to meet the different needs of schools and teachers.

Popular sessions include: Victorian Law and Life, Crime and Punishment Through Time, First and Second World War and Local Historical Figures. School sessions contain a carousel of different activities related to the chosen topic and allow children to move around the museum and learn in different ways. Delivery of the sessions is usually undertaken by the Learning & Engagement Officer and freelance historical interpreters alongside experienced volunteers.

Lynn Museum and Stories of Lynn work closely together in the running of joint school visits; popular topics for joint visits include Tudors, Maritime Life, Captain Vancouver, Frederick Savage and the Great Fire of London.

Over January and February, 11 schools came to Stories of Lynn for an educational visit.

Stories of Lynn is preparing to trial the running of an EYFS/0-5 year old's group within the museum after the Easter holiday. Meeting monthly, the group will follow a programme of activities put together and delivered by the Learning &

Engagement Officer.

Home Education groups continue to come to the museum every other month for facilitated visits with the Learning & Engagement Officer and volunteers. The second session is fully booked and is on the topic of Floods and Flooding.

5.3 Kick the Dust – Activity in King’s Lynn

The long-standing Youth Heritage Collective in King’s Lynn called Time Turners continues to meet weekly and is currently researching, designing and curating a temporary exhibition for Stories of Lynn titled (provisionally) *Norfolk’s Role in the British Civil War*.

The Learning & Engagement Officer at Stories of Lynn and Kick the Dust project worker for the west continues to run popular work experience projects for a number of schools and colleges. In January, fashion students from the College of West Anglia began their six-week project creating and exhibiting historical costumes. In April, Year 10 work experience students from King’s Lynn Academy will start their two-week block, completing a project called *Museum of Me*. All work experience students get the opportunity to meet and learn from a variety of professionals within the culture and heritage sector and see how different agencies work alongside each other for common goals.

The Learning & Engagement Officer has joined the Norfolk Record Office’s *Change Minds* project; a unique heritage and creative wellbeing project engaging those living with mental health problems. Participants use archives to research and develop creative responses to the lives of asylum patients in the past, developing a deeper understanding of their own experience.

6 Kick the Dust Norfolk – countywide programme update

Following the successful conclusion of the National Lottery Heritage Fund funded Kick the Dust (KTD) project, Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) secured additional funding through an Arts Council England (ACE) 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. Young people participate in high quality cultural and heritage activities that develop their skills and potential and help prepare them for the workplace. The successful KTD approach to youth engagement uses a three-stage progression model of ‘*Player-Shaper-Leader*’.

During 2025-26 NMS is also receiving funding from Norfolk County Council (NCC) Public Health to support countywide KTD activities that focus on the mental health and wellbeing of Norfolk young people.

The key aims of the KTD programme 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

Participation between October 2018 and January 2026:

- 6,103 young people engaged in 19,546 interventions
- 10,338 hours of high-quality activities were delivered across Norfolk
- 82% of all activity designed and led by young people
- Youth Board for 18-25 yr olds with 14 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)
- 62% at Shaper level (longer term project with young people determining the content)
- 20% at Leader level (long term engagement – young people leading projects, acting at governance level, mentoring staff)
- 82% of all activity involves young people in leading and designing projects

Breakdown of activity taking place in each area:

- 22% (201 opportunities) in Kings Lynn, (including Gressenhall)
- 23% (220 opportunities) in Thetford
- 20% (188 opportunities) in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer)
- 25% (223 opportunities) in Norwich
- 10% (92 opportunities) outside of area and 6 other opportunities for our online work experience programme targeted at Thetford and Kings Lynn young people.
- 116 volunteering opportunities have been provided, with 4 young people taking on the role of Project Assistant and 12 as a Young Ambassador.

Of all delivery, **82%** 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 KTD offer.

Heritage Collectives

In recent months young people across the county have been busy, working alongside professionals, to develop 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.

Project Worker Emily Hopkins has settled into her new role and is leading the Norwich Heritage Collective and developing a new environmental programme which will engage young people with the NMS Environment Hub. This includes setting up pilot work experience/volunteering sessions for SEND students from The Bridge Trust at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse's Community Tree Nursery. Emily is also working with Lapwing Education - who support young people who have experienced trauma - to create visual stories about our museums. Emily has also been collaborating with Dr Leanne Melbourne – NMS Senior Curator of Climate Change and the Dynamic Coast, to set up three Natural History 'archive taster sessions' for KTD participants.

Norwich-based group Knights of the Sound Table are working on two new projects - the first is to make a social media publicity campaign for Norwich Castle Keep using their mascot Snap, and the second is to create imagined queer characters at Strangers' Hall in the 17th Century - with the aim of delivering tours on Norwich Pride 2026. They made a successful application to the KTD Delegated budget, which was approved by the Youth Ambassadors.

In Great Yarmouth four KTD groups from Great Yarmouth & Thetford came together to celebrate *History in the Making*. This was a Historic England funded project which explored techniques for positive self-expression and mental health in the Norfolk Record Office and NMS collections, specifically Lorina Bulwer's embroideries.

Thetford Heritage Collective have picked up the baton and are working on activities inspired by Lorina's address to Maharajah Duleep Singh. They will work with a south Asian practitioner to create textiles for the Festival of the Punjab.

The Youth Climate Action Group, based at East Norfolk Sixth Form, have been researching rare chalk streams and are preparing an exhibition for International Earth Day at Gressenhall in April.

National Saturday Club in Great Yarmouth are creating pieces for the Summer Show Exhibition at Somerset House in July. They are working with artist Matt Reeve to create miniature street scenes, inside shoeboxes, inspired by locations in Great Yarmouth.

In Kings Lynn, the Time Turners are creating a Civil War themed temporary exhibition that will be displayed at Stories of Lynn in March. Additionally, Fashion, Art & History students from the College of West Anglia will use their work experience at Stories of Lynn to create historical costumes for the learning team. Churchill Park are back and Learning & Engagement Officer

Lizzie Joice will visit for first session to set a brief and then follow up with 'check ups'.

Traineeships

We are in the process of setting up eight different KTD paid traineeships.

The Audrey Muriel Stratford Trust will support one young person per year over four years. Young people with complex needs in Kings Lynn will work with Learning and Archive officers at Stories of Lynn for 10hrs per week over a six-month period.

The Geoffrey Watling Charity will sponsor two traineeships of 10hrs per week for 10 weeks. Trainees will be based with the Norwich Learning Team.

KTD will fund a further two trainees working 10hrs per week for 10 weeks in Great Yarmouth. The first placement will be split between Time & Tide Museum (Exhibitions & Events) and Great Yarmouth Library and the second will be based with the learning team.

Youth Board

Long Term member Beth has secured a Trustee Role at Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon. We have three new Youth Board members bringing the total to fifteen, with ten currently active.

The group have suggested that members could become a 'champion' for other KTD groups. Youth Ambassadors have approved two delegated budget applications from Knights of the Sound Table in Norwich and the Youth Climate Action Group in Great Yarmouth. Youth Ambassadors will take part in new Natural History Archive Taster sessions with Dr Leanne Melbourne.

Work Experience

Norwich University Arts students have completed an eight-week pilot work experience programme, where they worked alongside senior museum curators, designers and learning staff and experienced freelance facilitator Holly Sandiford to plan and co deliver their own workshop series for KTD participants

KTD project managers have formed a new working group with colleagues across NMS to review our work experience offer and meet increasing demand and the changing requirements in schools and colleges. This includes a review of the KTD online work experience course which will form an integral part of the revised offer. KTD has been collaborating with Norfolk & Suffolk Careers Hub and FE colleges to respond to the changing nature of their work experience requirements.

A revised version of Online Work Experience will consist of four-week blocks, six times per year and will be facilitated by all KTD Project Workers. A different museum professional will join each week to introduce their role and to set a challenge, then they will re-join the session to review the outcome and give feedback.

KTD has been working with senior staff from the TEN group of colleges including Easton & City College Norwich. A placement at Gressenhall with Farm Manager Carl Warren is being developed.

Advocacy

The NMS 5-year Youth Engagement Strategy has been published and is ready for circulation. KTD is at the centre of the strategy and the Youth Board wrote the forward. The strategy builds on KTD work to date and sets out our vision and values for the next five years. It will also serve as a valuable advocacy tool. Project Coordinator Tricia Hall will present the strategy at the next NCC Youth Participation Meeting in February.

NMS Learning Manager Colin Stott and KTD Project Coordinator Tricia Hall attended a Broads Society networking meeting, with other organisations working in The Norfolk Broads, to explore funding opportunities. A KTD cohort visited The Wind Energy Museum to see how we might support them to increase their youth engagement.

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

- FE/HE – 34%
- YMCA clients – 10%
- Secondary schools – 31%
- Young people with mental health issues – 33%
- 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%

In terms of how young people find out about KTD, the website is being used effectively with 12% of young people finding out about the project through the updated web pages ([‘KTD’ - Norfolk Museums](#)) and 16% through social media posts; 17% through a family member or friend, 29% coming via one of our partner organisations and 24% having already taken part in a previous KTD project. As more young people join having taken part in a previous KTD project this is impacting on questions relating to knowledge and understanding of heritage and job roles within NMS with 67% 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 84%.

As young people move through KTD the impacts on their confidence and mental health and wellbeing increases. 17% of all young people have been part of KTD since May 2023, 16% for 6 months to a year, 23% for 3-6 months and 44% under 3 months.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our offer to support young people around the important theme of mental health and wellbeing is on-going and is 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 34% of individual young people who have taken part in KTD 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. 52% of KTD Participants identify as Neuro divergent. 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 talking part and the young people can monitor their progress through the programme in relation to skills, confidence and mental health.

The 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 KTD, **78% 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 51% of young people engaged in KTD identify as neurodivergent which is significant when designing new activity in terms of additional barriers these young people may face.

Additional data shows that 79% 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. **84%** 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.

- 91% of all young people strongly agreed that the museum was a safe space for young people like themselves who were struggling.
- 97% strongly agreed they were given a voice that was listened to (13% said they were but only some of the time);
- 77% strongly agreed that they understood heritage better than they had done before taking part
- 75% strongly agreed that following their engagement heritage was more relevant

- 64% strongly agreed that heritage represented young people like themselves;
- 84% stated they now had a greater understanding of museums and the job roles available with 76% strongly agreeing that they felt there were jobs for them in the sector (only 5% disagreed);
- 83% strongly agreed that the skills they had acquired would be useful to them in the future (2% disagreed);
- 74% strongly agreed they felt more connected to their local community than previously, which is one of the aims of the project (2% disagreed);
- 53% agreed that their involvement had helped them to explore and feel more connected to their own identity and heritage (12% disagreed);
- 73% stated they were now more likely to volunteer (8% disagreed).

Summary

KTD operates 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 is a way of working which has brought huge benefits to our organisation and produced institutional change.

KTD 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 KTD 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:

I was really nervous to start off with, I've had experience at my mum's school with younger kids but I was nervous of talking to people my own age, with authority, in a leader role. Actually, it was fine, I would want to do this (activity) so why wouldn't they? Seeing it in a different way, it's not school, not behaviour management, I learned how to be a different kind of leader which was refreshing, I enjoyed it.

(Norwich University of the Arts – Work Experience student)

'I really enjoyed sewing because I think it's a really good skill personally and I really enjoyed learning about all of the new techniques. I think it's really good because you can use it for so many things. I love fashion and want to go into fashion design and I think it's a really good skill to have.'

(History in the Making participant).

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.

(Norwich Heritage Collective)

'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.

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

'Standing with our ideas of what we wanted to do around learning about Lorina. We all agreed that we wanted to learn how to sew/different techniques and we actually got to have someone come in and teach us. It wasn't a case of 'here's a piece of paper with a pattern on it, now follow it', it was more the fact that we were taught step by step by someone who knew how to sew.'

'I now use those sewing skills because I wanted a pair of shorts, but I didn't own a pair of shorts. I cut up a pair of my leggings and actually just sewed them together, so it didn't fray away.'

(History in the Making participants)

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

The project has 'made me realise the history of the town. Knowing what it used to be like compared to what it is now. The town is now quite modern, and

we've lost that sense of history of what the town used to look like. Like the market stalls etc. Now knowing about people like Lorina Bulwer and what happened, we all have a new connection to it and that's pretty cool.'

'I found out there were museums here from doing this project'

'I found that I live really close to someone that she mentioned [in the embroideries] and thought that was pretty cool. It's a little bit more extra information and now when I show people around I can say 'Oh, did you know that someone called Lorina Bulwer wrote about this and used to visit these places'. It's a bit of extra trivia and that is really cool!'

(History in the Making participants).

'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.

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 KTD 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 wellbeing and personal development remains at the heart of what we do:

'I feel more confident because I feel like I could just turn up in my pyjamas to the session and you lot wouldn't care. I feel comfortable in the group.'

'I feel more confident solo travelling. It's quite terrifying. Even though we went in a group together, my friend was meeting their family in town after the session. I went home on the train by myself which was quite terrifying but I'm really glad I did it and I feel proud of myself'

'It's made me feel special and it's definitely made me feel more confident because I personally would never have been able to really get out there and speak to anybody, learn about sewing, learn new skills or make friends. Making friends is really hard for me so I think it was really brilliant because I've been given an opportunity to do all of that.'

We've 'taken the Lorina mentality and said 'no this is what I think, let's do it' and actually had fun and broken some chains off and gone 'here's my words, let's go for it'. I've learnt to be much more free with myself'

(History in the Making participants).

‘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 KTD 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:

Dr Robin Hanley

Assistant Head of Museums (Head of Service Delivery)

Shirehall, Market Avenue, Norwich NR1 3JQ

Tel: 01603 493663 e-mail: robin.hanley@norfolk.gov.uk

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	12,590	15,391	10,647	11,597	7,256	6,079	6,031	8,576	10,031	112,449	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	117,802	128,774
		2025-26	11,818	11,485	10,126	12,535	41,477	35,325	33,257	21,574	16,780	17,359	25,599		237,335	237,335
	Norwich Castle Study Centre (Shirehall)	2023-24	106	53	126	92	101	75	63	79	178	58	150	118	1,081	1,199
		2024-25	119	213	130	161	32	21	57	19	33	0	0	7	785	792
		2025-26	112	133	127	128	67	48	60	40	107	103	90		1,015	1,015
	Museum of Norwich	2023-24	1,589	1,378	1,241	2,064	2,059	2,381	1,824	1,329	821	1,244	1,707	1,863	17,637	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	17,480	18,672
		2025-26	1,377	1,059	766	2,088	967	1,634	1,443	1,125	820	923	1,305		13,507	13,507
Strangers Hall	2023-24	468	522	453	1,185	1,699	962	850	770	470	0	387	1,093	7,766	8,859	
	2024-25	484	785	705	766	626	1,122	719	749	846	5	432	1,202	7,239	8,441	
	2025-26	703	663	855	1,442	1,110	1,154	858	949	1,360	0	598		9,692	9,692	
E A S T	Tolhouse Museum	2023-24	475	196	207	346	1,145	1,104	367	15	0	199	53	82	4,054	4,189
		2024-25	420	474	66	312	980	986	285	37	20	51	65	62	3,631	3,758
		2025-26	436	278	111	308	890	553	172	32	97	0			2,877	2,877
	Elizabethan House Museum	2023-24	1,156	1,017	881	1,338	1,622	1,817	1,237	79	98	0	3	170	9,248	9,418
		2024-25	1,163	1,422	1,095	1,102	1,326	1,788	953	98	0	0	0	9	8,947	8,956
		2025-26	831	957	903	1,445	1,488	1,605	828	23	0	0	84		8,164	8,164
	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	27,061	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	25,356	27,337
		2025-26	1,699	2,228	2,417	2,873	2,246	3,183	3,271	2,646	1,490	2,933	3,716		28,702	28,702
	Cromer Museum	2023-24	1,046	1,223	1,357	1,426	2,163	1,436	1,230	0	0	189	643	262	10,713	10,975
		2024-25	1,266	1,524	1,574	1,788	1,804	1,513	1,050	161	34	142	114	198	10,856	11,168
		2025-26	1,398	1,499	1,575	1,780	1,789	1,552	1,062	25	0	76			10,756	10,756
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	21,124	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	20,833	22,754
		2025-26	1,356	1,494	1,449	2,299	2,080	1,992	2,498	1,931	1,578	1,629	2,520		20,826	20,826
	Ancient House Museum	2023-24	650	635	686	1,466	676	959	693	832	721	730	1,066	929	9,114	10,043
		2024-25	798	922	1,380	1,524	971	590	876	1,077	573	589	478	676	9,778	10,454
		2025-26	632	887	783	1,282	722	1,184	613	602	410	421	670		8,206	8,206
	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	44,150	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	47,990	53,319
		2025-26	6,545	5,591	6,451	4,872	6,565	5,733	6,390	1,635	871	65	893		45,611	45,611
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	4,858	5,017	
	2024-25	0	281	362	376	56	12	18	338	167	104	338	164	2,052	2,216	
	2025-26	260	254	575	215	85	70	301	106	81	230	531		2,708	2,708	
		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	269,308	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	272,928	296,641
		2025-26	27,167	26,528	26,138	31,267	59,486	54,033	50,753	30,688	23,594	23,739	36,006		389,399	389,399
		TARGET														



TRUE'S YARD FISHERFOLK MUSEUM REPORT

Report by Museum Curator

February 2026

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

1.1 Exhibition Programme.

Next Exhibition: TY35 *Mother Knows Best*: The Hidden Stories of Women of the North End. To celebrate the Museum's 35th Anniversary we will be shining a light on some of the lesser-known stories of the North End.

Summer Art Exhibition: Your Maritime Heritage

As it is an anniversary year, we're working hard to put on an extra special annual art exhibition. This will be opened on 3rd July by the Museum's Patron Sir Richard Jewson. There will be some exceptional pieces of maritime art from private collections so a rare opportunity for the public to see them. The exhibition will run across July and August.

1.2 True's Talks

Our Spring programme launched on 5th February and will conclude 26th March. Subjects include the latest discoveries in the roof of Oxburgh Hall, Art and the Industrial Revolution, how exhibitions have evolved over time and more. 8 talks in total all by local speakers very popular with audiences 40+ each talk. The Autumn series will launch in September 2026.

1.3 Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture

Planning for the 12th Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture is underway and further details will be released soon.

Other Museum Developments

2. Events

TY35

To celebrate the Museum being open for 35 years we will be holding a series of events spread across the week the Museum originally opened back in 1991.

24th March Tea Party for Northenders

25th March Open Day

27th Noon Exhibition Launch

27th Evening Sea Shanty Evening at Ferry Lane Social

31st March – Official Museum's Anniversary

3. Income Generation

3.1 Museum Fundraising

20th March Beach Café

17th June Midsummer Dinner (Bank House)

9th August Alison's Tea Party (Queen Street)

September

4th September Dr Anderson's Garden Party (King Street)

TBC November TYFM Sailors and Fisherfolk Dinner

3.2 Friends of True's Yard

We are most fortunate to have an active and supportive Friends group. Their events for the year are:

Friday 27th February 2026 Quiz at Ferry Lane Social Club

Saturday 18th April 2026 Pie and Mash

Saturday 30th May 2026 Fish and Chips

Saturday 25th July 2026 Hog Roast

Saturday 5th September 2026 Fish and Chips

Sunday 6th December 2026 Christmas Lunch

4. Partnerships

4.1 The Margery Kempe Trust

The Margery Kempe Trust have invited True's Yard to host a stop on their upcoming town-wide literary trails: The Book of You (Adults) and Scribbles the Scribe's Story Quest (Children). This project is part of the Love Your Market Town initiative, funded by Norfolk County Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. These self-directed literary trails aim to drive footfall back to King's Lynn high streets and celebrate our unique heritage as the birthplace of English life writing.

The Margery Kempe Trust are partnering with students from Anglia Ruskin University to co-design the booklet's copy. A student team from ARU will visit King's Lynn on February 23rd to gather inspiration for the prompts.

5. Learning and Outreach

5.1. Activities

Easter Activities

. We will once again be holding family fun days across the Easter Holidays as well as a trail around the Museum.

5.2 Oral History Project- Capturing Memories

Our Oral History Committee is hard at work. With some members of the recording team ill the focus has been on cataloguing and organising the existing collection into the same format and producing an up-to-date accessible inventory for access via our new reading room computer and eventually online. A spreadsheet has been created and now the new

server has arrived the oral histories can be added to Modes, which has not previously been possible due to limitations on disk space.

5.3 Social Media

Currently the Museum's Facebook page has 2.6k followers; Instagram 505 Followers (last report 475). Our TikTok has 295 followers (last report 202 followers).

5.4 Website

The creation of our new website has been a real community effort. Our Assistant Curator and also one of our youngest volunteers Keziah have put a lot of work into its creation. It is now live and we're really pleased with it.

8. Visitor Numbers

Visitor Numbers April-January 25/26: 9,008 Last year: 8,787

The summer saw a slight drop in visitors compared to the previous year but we were not alone in this. We were able to claw back some ground with our Christmas events programme funded by the Love Your Market Town Fund.

6 Resource Implications

Grants

St Margaret's and St Nicholas Parish Trust £500 for new fire extinguishers.

Love Your Market Town £1,320

Love Norfolk £3,000 towards training and equipment to improve our volunteering offer.

St Margaret's and St Nicholas Parish Trust £200 to help with pressure washing the Yard.

7 Recommendations

That the Committee notes the report.

Originator of report:
Lindsey Bavin
Museum Curator
True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum
Tel: 01553770479
e-mail: info@truesyard.co.uk

Stories of Lynn and Tourist Information Centre Visitor Figures

Stories of Lynn

Month	Total entries	Cumulative	Schools
Dec-25	212	7108	16
Jan-26	368	7476	150
Feb-26	579	8055	204

Tourist Information Centre

Month	In Person Enquiry	Telephone Enquiry	Email Enquiry	Overseas Visitors	Pontoon Enquiry	Accommodation Enquiry	Tourism Pack sent out
Dec-25	395	58	7	0	5	0	3
Jan-26	432	53	16	0	5	0	4
Feb-26	474	101	10	0	13	0	5

KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2026/2027

Reminder email to officers	Deadline for reports (5 pm)	Publication of Agenda	Date/Time of Meeting
11 th May 2026	28 th May 2026	29 th May 2026	8 th June 2026, 2.00pm Council Chamber, Town Hall, King's Lynn
17 th August 2026	3 rd September 2026	4 th September 2026	14 th September 2026, 2.00pm Council Chamber, Town Hall, King's Lynn
30 th November 2026	16 th December 2026	17 th December 2026	4 th January 2027, 2.00pm Council Chamber, Town Hall, King's Lynn
15 th February 2027	4 th March 2027	5 th March 2027	15 th March 2027, 2.00pm Council Chamber, Town Hall, King's Lynn