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

18 March 2024

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 December 2023 – February 2024

1. COVID-19 and Infection Control service update

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

- Ventilation
- Cleaning regimes
- Hand sanitisation

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

2 Exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum

2.1 *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* exhibition 24 November 2023 - 20 January 2024



The *Tiger Who Came to Tea* exhibition proved very popular with visitors over the Christmas period and has helped boost overall visitor numbers.

The exhibition is a touring exhibition supplemented by material from the museum collections. *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* celebrates the life and work of Judith Kerr, one of Britain's best known children's book author-illustrators.

Copies of Kerr's original artwork were displayed alongside notes and sketches. Children were also able to step into Sophie's kitchen to have tea with a life-size tiger.

2.2 Current Exhibition: *The Moon: Meet our Nearest Neighbour* 2 February – 15 September 2024

This touring exhibition explores earth's natural satellite – the moon. A key exhibit is a large moon model suspended above the exhibition, making use of the museum's high chapel ceilings. Also, as part of the exhibition visitors have the opportunity to touch a real piece of moon rock. Other artefacts include ephemera from the 1969 moon landing. These displays, together with an associated programme of events and activities has been supported by a grant of £10,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Funding for West Norfolk for arts cultural heritage and creative activities through the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk.



The Moon theme has informed our February event programming including the Mini Museum event, February half term events, and a well-attended afternoon talk.



Guests at the Moon exhibition opening event on 2 February 2024

This exhibition is proving very popular with visitors and has received excellent publicity including:

[Giant model Moon in major new exhibition at Lynn Museum | Eastern Daily Press \(edp24.co.uk\)](https://www.edp24.co.uk)

[Museum in King's Lynn launches new moon exhibition which is free until the end of March \(lynnnews.co.uk\)](https://www.lynnnews.co.uk)

2.3 Forthcoming Exhibition *Woof! A Celebration of Dogs*

opening Autumn 2024.

This will be a Lynn Museum-curated exhibition drawing upon natural history, archaeology, art and social history. The Tate Gallery has approved the loan of three artworks for the exhibition including a piece by David Hockney.

2.4 Family events

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

The Tiger Who Came to Tea event on 13 January attracted 351 participants.

The *Space Crafts Discovery Days* (family event days) in February Half Term proved very popular. A second day was added to the programme as the first had sold out. 396 visitors attended on Day 1 and 362 attended on Day 2.

2.5 Family Trails

Trails are provided at the museum for children and families to enjoy an exploration of the museum. Trails offered at the Lynn Museum in the reporting period have included:

27/12/23 - 03/01/24 *Horace Hide & Seek* counting trail (251 participants)
13/01/2024 - *Anyone for Tea* (Event Day) spelling trail (169 participants)
17/02/24 - 24/02/24 *Planet Match Matching* scratch art (684 participants)

2.6 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 included *Tiger, Mog and Friends* on 18 January (23 children, 43 total) and *Baby Bear Goes to Space* on 15 February (16 children, 34 total).

2.7 Coffee Mornings

The monthly themed coffee mornings continue to be offered at Lynn Museum. These offer a chance for people to enjoy the museum with an informal activity. The coffee mornings take place on the last Friday of the month. Topics have included spring terrariums, Bronze Age handling, basket weaving and medieval tiles. In this reporting period:

23/02/2024 Moon Galaxy Painting (on bookmarks) 27 participants.

2.8 Talks Programme



Talk by King's Lynn and District Astronomy Society about the moon

Recent talks at the museum have included:

19/01/2024 - *Tigers in the Wild* with Barbara Meyer

23/02/2024 - *The Moon, Our Next Door Neighbour* with Alan Gosling from Kings Lynn Astronomy Society

3 Newman Legacy project

The Lynn Museum has benefited from a legacy given specifically for the museum's use and 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. The museum service is very grateful for the Newman's generosity.

Newman Assistant Curator Jan Summerfield joined the team in February and Newman Teaching Museum Trainee Alice starts in April.

4 Other Museum developments

4.1 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](#)



Social media post by Professor Michael Lewis for the pilgrim badges documentation day in February, which will be leading to a new publication

NMS Learning Officer Melissa Hawker has continued her regular slot for Radio Norfolk to discuss local history and promote forthcoming events.

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](#)

4.2 NMS Teaching Museum Trainees

Recruitment is underway for the one year-long paid traineeships offered as part of the Norfolk Museums Service Teaching Museum scheme, principally funded through the NMS Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation programme. For 2024-25 there will be a Newman Teaching Museum Trainee, working on the Newman collections project at the museum. There will also be a Curatorial West Trainee working at both Thetford and Lynn Museums. Both trainees will start work in early April 2024.

4.3 Building Work at Lynn Museum

Following a period of structural monitoring of the Victorian chapel building, a programme of remedial works to the schoolroom building is taking place, involving the installation of tie rods at roof level. This work is planned for later spring 2024 in the Seahenge Gallery roof space. Staff are planning to keep the museum open for visitors during these works, although the Seahenge Gallery will be closed for safety reasons during this period. A reduced admission charge will be put in place to reflect the more limited visitor offer.

5 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 project across the Borough, including ongoing support for Towns Fund projects including the

Guildhall project. Newman Curator, Dayna Woolbright has contributed to the work on the St George's Guildhall project Interpretation Strategy and to various events and exhibitions, working with Jane Hamilton who has recently joined the Guildhall Team as Learning and Engagement Officer. The events have included a Christmas event held in December.

Other work has included curating an exhibition of watercolours for the Fermoy Gallery by CT Page. Christopher Page was Curator of Lynn Museum and Art Gallery from 1902 to 1931 and painted local scenes in watercolour.



Post about the CT Page exhibition at the Fermoy Gallery, curated, designed and installed by Norfolk Museums Service

The Lynn Museum free admission period started in October and runs until the end of March. This free admission period is provided under the terms of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Borough Council and NMS.

NMS 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. Recruitment has recently taken place for this post, which has been vacant for a number of months. The new postholder starts work in May.

NMS Newman Curator, Dayna Woolbright leads on supporting the Borough Council and Festival Office on collections management advice and support. Recent contributions have included advice on the safe use of the civic regalia, and delivery of temporary displays at Stories. An example is advice for the conservation of an historic mirror in the Town Hall and support for the acquisition of a painting of the Custom House by Walter Dexter.

6 Learning & Outreach

School visits

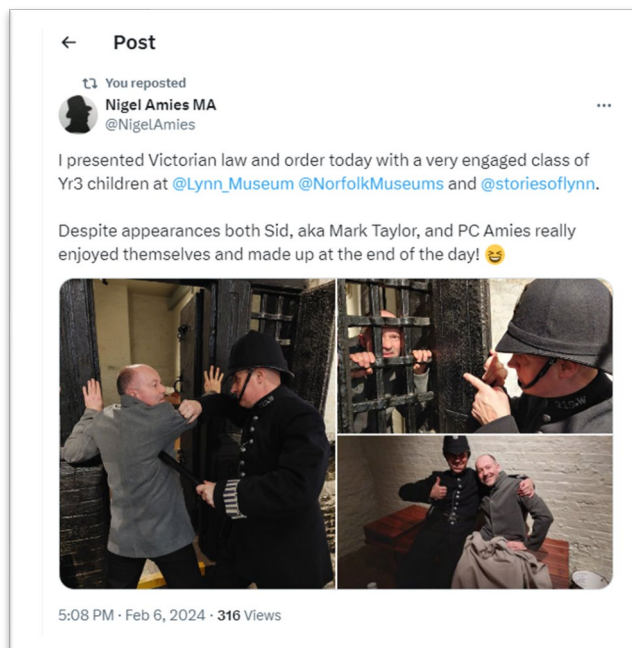
Lynn Museum continues to offer a range of school workshops run flexibly to accommodate teachers' needs. During this period topics have included Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Romans and Iceni, Bronze Age and Seahenge, Stone Age, the Second World War, Ancient Egyptians, and Homes Long Ago.

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.

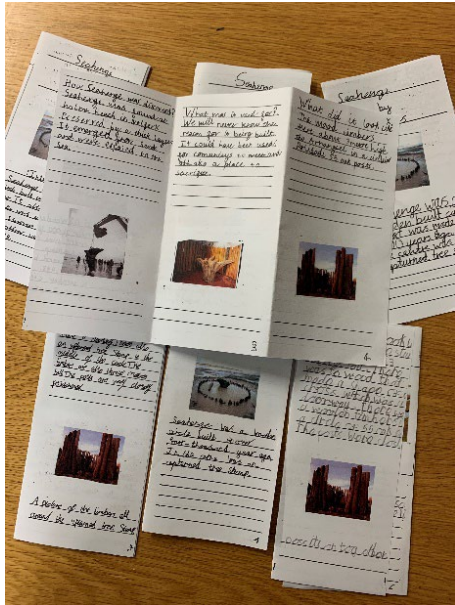
The following link for teachers explains what is on offer at Lynn Museum for pupils at Key Stage 2.

[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.



Post from one of our regular freelance learning team for a joint school session between Lynn Museum and Stories of Lynn



Seahenge leaflets created by children from Whitefriars School as part of a visit to Lynn Museum

7. Kick the Dust Norfolk – project update

Background

The first Kick the Dust project delivered by Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and ran from October 2018 to March 2023.

The target audience for Kick the Dust activity is young people aged 11-25, with a particular focus on young people aged 16-25 who do not normally engage with the heritage or consider it relevant to their lives. Priority participants are young people facing multiple challenges and barriers, including YMCA clients and other young people engaging with NCC and partner organisations specialist support services. Key project partners include YMCA Norfolk, Creative Collisions (Great Yarmouth) and NCC Children's Services, Libraries and Public Health.

Kick the Dust provides a progression pathway for young people, enabling them to use heritage to develop their confidence, skills and routes into employment using the *Player, Shaper, Leader* model.

For this original project, total participation numbers from October 2018 to March 2023 were 13,905 interventions, involving 4,527 individual young people taking part in 7,039 hours of quality activity, taking us beyond the initial project target of 8000 interventions. As the project developed, more young people took the lead in projects, shifting the percentage of activity at each of the 4 levels.

- 25% of all activity was at Player level
- 40% at Shaper level
- 35% at Leader level

- 86% of all activity in March 2023 involved young people in leading and designing projects, taking on the role of Young Ambassador and playing a leading part in the Youth Board.

Breakdown of activity taking place in each area from October 2018 to March 2023:

- 47% (1,449 opportunities) in the West (covering Kings Lynn, Thetford and Gressenhall),
- 27% (825 opportunities) in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer and Sheringham)
- 26% (771 opportunities) in Norwich
- 331 volunteering opportunities have been provided to 180 individual young people.

In total 420 staff took part in training, with 151 having taken up opportunities in lockdown. In addition, 45 young volunteers took part in training. Kick the Dust has supported 7 young people on its bursary traineeship programme, the last cohort finishing in May 2022, all of whom have secured permanent employment within the heritage sector. A further 6 young people completed the pre-traineeship programme. One Kick the Dust participant progressed onto the NMS Teaching Museum traineeship programme with 3 others applying for the role and being shortlisted. Two Young Ambassadors have progressed onto teacher training programmes. Our 7 Young Ambassadors have supported Institutional Change within NMS on the strategic Youth Board and Project Board. Staff from our Front of House (FOH) and Visitor Services teams have engaged in training such as mentoring and coaching, mental health first aid and creating autism friendly spaces which played a key role in supporting the new pre-traineeship pilot programme for YMCA clients and other vulnerable groups.

Current activity

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

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

NMS is partnering with Norfolk Library & Information Service (NLIS) to deliver this exciting programme of activity enabling us to strengthen partnership working between museum and library staff and increase levels of cultural engagement by young people in a sustained way, employing the successful Kick the Dust approach to youth engagement that uses the three-stage

progression model *Player-Shaper-Leader*. The programme will be aimed at those in the three priority places aged 16-25 years, with opportunities for 13–16 year olds to engage as part of the progression framework.

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

- develop transferable work-related skills with the aim of supporting more working age young people into employment, training or further learning;
- develop digital skills linked to creative industries to address the digital skills gap in heritage and cultural sectors;
- increase young people's creative skills and for young people to gain a range of new cultural experiences;
- encourage an appreciation of the history and culture of their local communities.

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

The following data is based on the start of this new project covering the period 1/5/23 to 30/1/24.

Number of interventions with young people:

Between 1/5/23 and 30/1/24 there have been 1,199 interventions involving 674 individual young people taking part in 1,193 hours of quality activity. 91% of the activities were face to face, the other sessions being offered online with young people in the principal target areas.

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

- 20% of activity was at Player level (to introduce new young people to the project)
- 58% at Shaper level (longer term project with young people determining the content)
- 22% at Leader level (long term engagement – young people leading projects, acting at governance level, mentoring staff)
- 80% of all activity involved young people in leading and designing projects

Breakdown of activity taking place in each area:

- 42% (91 opportunities) in the West (covering Kings Lynn, Gressenhall),
- 18% (40 opportunities) in Thetford
- 18% (40 opportunities) in the East (covering Great Yarmouth, Cromer)
- 21% (44 opportunities) in Norwich
- Four opportunities were offered to young people at alternative venues outside of Norfolk
- 42 volunteering opportunities have been provided, with three young people taking on the role of Digital Buddy and seven as Young Ambassador.

- Of all delivery, 84% 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. Free passes were issued to those beginning on the programme in June 2023. Data shows that passes are being used outside of the times the young people would attend a session in their home museum.

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. Social media training working with a specialist from Libraries has been embedded into team meetings which include three of our Young Ambassadors who are acting as Digital Buddies. Further opportunities are being planned for the Spring/summer terms to include SEND and Mental Health First Aid training. The team accessed the *'Childhood Adversity and Creating a Trauma Informed Environment'* on 31 October and *'I'm a teenager, get me in there'* training in January 2024 at Ely Museum (as part of the new *Your Heritage Your Future* National Lottery Heritage Fund funded project) which will inform future delivery.

Our offer to support young people around the important theme of mental health and wellbeing is on-going and this will be measured through the new evaluation framework using data from the young people's feedback forms as well as the new narrative evaluation which was rolled out from September 2023 to September 2024. At the end of the NLHF funded project in March 2023, 26% of young people identified as having a mental health issue. Up to 30/1/24 data shows that 47% of the individual young people who have taken part in the new programme of activity identify as having a mental health issue (although this is from a smaller number taking part) showing the need for this programme. Through a systematic approach to evaluation, in partnership with Libraries, the team will be able to demonstrate impact on mental health on those talking part and the young people will be able to monitor their progress through the programme in relation to skills, confidence and mental health. Narrative evaluation will further demonstrate impact.

NMS and NCC continue to work together through the 'Making Creative Futures' group, chaired by the Kick the Dust Project Coordinator, where members from across Children's Services identify ways to engage the hardest to reach and most vulnerable children and young people through a joint effort. The group continues to play a key part in the delivery of activity as part of the DfE funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) project through the Big Norfolk Fun programme ([Big Norfolk Holiday Fun - Active Norfolk](#)) and through our own contributions through our Kick the Dust offer. The focus is on mental health and wellbeing and has representation from the NCC Public Health

team. This group acts as the vehicle to share best practice, ideas and resources and its membership continues to grow.

Target audiences: (some young people fall into more than one category) as of 30/1/24

- FE/HE – 44%
- YMCA clients – 8%
- Secondary schools – 39%
- Young people with mental health issues – 47%
- SEND – 3%
- Outside of mainstream education – 25%
- NEET – 31%
- Looked after children and adopted living those at home - 0%
- Care Leavers – 1%
- Young Carers – 6%
- New arrivals and refugees – 6%
- Pregnant young mums and teenage parents – 1%

In terms of how young people are finding out about Kick the Dust, it is clear that the Kick the Dust website is being used effectively with 50% of young people finding out about the project through the updated web pages ([Kick the Dust - Norfolk Museums](#)); 17% coming via one of our partner organisations and 17% having already taken part in a Kick the Dust project in the past.

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 population's mental well-being. The Young Ambassadors worked alongside Norfolk Public health team to devise the questionnaire, and this will be used in addition to the other measures to show impact in this key area.

From the Young People feedback forms, following their involvement in Kick the Dust, 50% strongly agreed that this had had a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing with a further 50% agreeing that their involvement in Kick the Dust has helped them have more positive mental health.

From the additional questions asked of the young people taking part, the programme is meeting their needs and helping them see themselves in a museum or heritage setting.

- 100% of all young people strongly agreed that the museum was a safe space for young people like themselves who were struggling;
- 100% strongly agreed they were given a voice that was listened to;
- 63% strongly agreed that they understood heritage better than they had done before taking part with a further 25% agreeing;
- 63% strongly agreed that following their engagement heritage was more relevant with a further 25% agreeing. The same numbers stated that they felt heritage represented young people like themselves;

- 85% stated they now had a greater understanding of museums and the job roles available with 50% strongly agreeing that they could see themselves working in the sector;
- 63% strongly agreed that the skills they had acquired would be useful to them in the future with a further 38% agreeing;
- 43% strongly agreed they felt more connected to their local community than previously with a further 57% agreeing;
- 72% agreed that their involvement had helped them to explore and feel more connected to their own identity and heritage.

New funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund

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

Pilot paid traineeships and specialist training programmes are being delivered and evaluated as part of the development phase for this project. One pilot traineeship is based at True's Yard Museum in King's Lynn.

As part of this development phase, a group of young people from Norfolk who are NMS Kick the Dust Youth Board members, met recently with their counterparts in Leicester, as part of a structured weekend consultation event supported by NMS and YMCA Leicestershire project workers. More information is provided below.

YHYF Forum visit to Leicester

On 16 and 17 February 2024, representatives from the NMS Kick the Dust Youth Board and the YMCA's Midlands Youth Heritage Forum met up in Leicester for two days full of heritage visits and discussion. Amongst visits to some of Leicester's top heritage attractions, the group reviewed their involvement in the Your Heritage Your Future project and made key decisions about the project going forwards.

The trip was attended by four young people from the Norfolk Youth Board, three from the YMCA's Youth Heritage Forum, and the current trainee working at Leicester Museum & Art Gallery. Staff present included the Strategic Lead for the East Midlands, the Project Officer in East of England, YHYF's Evaluation Consultant and the Youth Mentor/Documentarian for the pilot phase.

The young people chose a collective name for their group going forwards working on the project: the YHYF Forum. They also:

- Provided feedback on the infographic drafts, choosing a final version they preferred.
- Took part in a workshop led by the Evaluation Consultant, making key decisions about how evaluation should look in the delivery phase and how to remove barriers to taking part in evaluation.
- Went on a tour of Leicester Museum, led by Nuura, the trainee, so that they could learn about the museum but also ask her questions about the traineeship and formulate their own ideas on how the traineeships could be adapted in the delivery phase.
- Prior to their visit but as part of YHYF, the NMS Youth Board gave feedback on flyers about the project to be handed out at the SHARE conference on 11 March.
- The YHYF Forum noted that ensuring definitions of heritage are broad is important, particularly for young people from global majority backgrounds.
- Identified that clear signposts for further work for young people after the traineeships will be important.
- Evaluation needs to consider and clearly communicate why data is being collected and what it is being used for, particularly for young people with complex needs.



The group's ideas on how to make evaluation more accessible and inclusive

Throughout the visit, it became apparent how important being part of a heritage youth board was to the young people's sense of identity. This was for a number of reasons, including:

- Increased confidence and self-esteem as a result of taking part in something new and, importantly, travelling to new places and being independent.
- Meeting other people in a space to share similarities but also learn about different viewpoints, stories and histories.
- Improved wellbeing through social interaction and being able to have fun as a group at heritage sites.

Quotes from participants:

"[I have gained] confidence...Chinese society is a bit competitive...I'm always comparing myself to other people and thinking that I'm not good enough. So, I think now I'm probably more confident with my language and my study, and feel braver to try something new."

"This completely takes me out of my comfort zone. I would never be like "I want to go to museums", or I'd never travel outside of my hometown, because I only did that with family, and I don't have contact with them...It has encouraged me to travel by coach and stuff like that. And that sort of opened

up my mind and brought down a wall, and also doing it now, like I could feel fully comfortable do by myself. And I think that's something that I didn't expect at all, which I again, will forever cherish."

"When I joined Kick the Dust, I got to work with people who really challenge my views of things...it's really interesting to have different perspectives to me and interesting stories and views of history and things like that. It's such a great life skill to have friends who are different from you and respect their opinions."

Being part of the group has also expanded horizons for the young people. It has given them the opportunity to explore new areas – this was particularly highlighted when all but one of the group visited the King Richard III centre in their free time, even though it was not a planned activity – and has also opened up new career possibilities for them and affirmed that the heritage sector is a space that they belong in.

"Another thing is I've also had something to look forward to. For as in for my future. It gives me that plan."

"It's helped me realise what I want to do in terms of a career because I did the online work experience with Kick the Dust back when I wasn't sure what I wanted to do and then I really enjoyed that. So, I decided to join the board from that. Just getting the chance to see...how the museum industry works really helped as well, to help me decide that was something I'm interested in. I don't think I would have done a Museum Studies course at Durham University without having done that, to be honest."

"It's definitely given me confidence and the ability to talk to people who are involved in museum services at a high level, and not feel too intimidated."

8. Visitor figures

Visitor figures for the period will be circulated at the meeting

9. 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