



TRUE'S YARD FISHERFOLK MUSEUM REPORT

Report by Museum Curator

September 2026

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

1.1 Exhibition Programme.

Previous Exhibitions: 1875 Scottish Fishing Disaster, King's Lynn and the Hanseatic League, Your Maritime Heritage Art Exhibition.

Current Exhibition: TY35 *Mother Knows Best*: The Hidden Stories of Women of the North End. Shining a light on some of the lesser-known stories of the North End.

Future Exhibitions:

November 2026– January 2027- Christmas Decorations through the Ages and Sponsored Christmas Trees until 15th December when the trees will be given freely to anyone who needs one.

February- 31st March 2027 - Artist Debra Shipley *Bowls in a Fragile World* - is a national, multi-year, multi-venue project. Every culture, all around the world make bowls from their local materials: clay, reeds, glass, metal. As an artist, Debra seeks to use eco-friendly material and as part of the project will be creating some True's Yard site specific bowls.

April- September 2027 – The Hidden History of the Yard Uncovered. Our Yard project has unlocked secrets about the Yard which have remained hidden for over a century.

1.2 True's Talks

The Autumn series will launch on 24th September 2026.

The booking list is filling up for the autumn series which commences on 24th September.

Date	Speaker	Title
24th Sep	Jeff Hoyle-	Greenland: Past, Present & Future.
1st Oct	David Savage-	'King's Lynn, Walsingham and the V&A: The Tale of Three Statues'
8th Oct	Tricia McCarron-	Beyond the Shadows: The Women who Shaped the North End
15th Oct	Dr. John Alban-	The Pastons and the Creation of a Heraldic Myth

22nd Oct Anthony Kirby- Railways of West Norfolk and the Fens

29th Oct Michael Gilbert- The Ottoman Empire of Sulieman the Magnificent (1520-1566)

5th Nov Dr. Paul Richards -Gustav Metzger:1926-2026... Revolutionary Artist and North End Hero

12th Nov Marsha Parker- The Orphaned Jewish Burial Ground: A Cemetery without a community– what happened next- 1846-present

1.3 Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture

Sadly, the Coroner's Assistant Matt Reeve has had to pull out. We are proceeding as planned with 19th November and are liaising with the backup speaker.

Other Museum Developments

2. Events

13th September Heritage Open Day

15th September 26th December Paint what you feel art classes

From 24th Sept True's Talks autumn series

10th October Titanic Tales by Don't Go into the Cellar

7th November Dragon Festival

19th November AGM

19th November Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture

21st November Fundraising Film Show

Christmas Event Plan

We have applied to the Love Your Market Town Fund. Events which are dependent on that fund are marked ✳

Launching in November A Christmas Carol themed Rat Trail

3rd November to 1st December Festive Yoga in the Smithy (Tuesday evenings 5:30pm-6:30pm) ✳

18th November- 2nd December Christmas Crafternoon wreath making, home-made gifts etc. (Wednesday mornings (1pm-3pm) ✳

27th November Evening Victorian Christmas Food Experience by Fascinating Food

2nd -5th December True's Yard Light Trail✳

4th December Christmas quiz

6th December Xmas Lunch (FOTY)

Christmas Fair✳

9th December Daytime Tastes of Christmas Past by Fascinating Food

TBC December Carol Service All Saints

3. Income Generation

3.1 TY1000

To celebrate the anniversary of the Museum opening we have relaunched the TY1000 club with the aim of raising £1,000 a month for the Museum. On 22nd May we held an event to raise awareness of the project.

3.2 Friends of True's Yard

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

Saturday 5th September 2026 Fish and Chips

Sunday 6th December 2026 Christmas Lunch

4. Partnerships

4.1 West Norfolk Wyrdfest 8th October-6th November 2026

A festival dedicated to the weird and wonderful history of West Norfolk. From exhibitions to talks, and from classic cinema to live performance. More information about the festival can be found here <https://www.westnorfolkwyrdfest.com/>

4.2 Dragon Festival

The Museum will once again be taking part in the Dragon Festival. At a organisers meeting it was discussed how there could be more diverse offering this year as attendee feedback suggested quite a few of the activities were similar.

The Museum will once again be doing a Dragon Trail, Dungeons and Dragons and dragon themed Punch and Judy.

5. Learning and Outreach

5.1. Activities

Summer Holidays Activities

This year by necessity we had to scale down a little our summer activities plan. Our Assistant Curator, Gaynor Western has had to step down in early June due to personal circumstances and in early July Deputy Manager Tyrone Walton had severe complications from surgery and will not be returning until October. For the summer, our Curator, Lindsey was the only staff member, but we received incredible support from our volunteers and trustee Lesley Short.



5.2 Oral History Project- Capturing Memories

Our Oral History Committee met on the 11th June, reviewing the work so far and what is needed to bring the project forward. We are seeking grant funding for a project assistant to drive the collection of oral histories to create an archive accessible by the public.

5.3 Social Media

Currently the Museum's Facebook page has 2.8k followers; Instagram 511 Followers (last report 475). Our TikTok has 295 followers (last report 202 followers).

5.4 Website

We've had the offer of free assistance from Grey Swan on how to further develop the new website.

5.5 Visitor Numbers

Visitor Numbers April 2025-March 2026- 11,001. We did experience a slight drop compared to the previous year but are already seeing improvement in our visitor numbers this year thanks to interest in our Yard project.

6 Resource Implications

6.1 The Yard Project Phase 1

The relocation of the fishing boat Activity (1904 built) in December 2025 after 34 years in situ reminded us of the full extent of the Yard. It was clear that part of the south boundary wall had become unsafe and its modern concrete surface no longer fit for purpose.

The Museum had no budget to upgrade and improve the Yard for safe public access, but sufficient funds were raised through generous donations and grants to start work by early June. The East and South boundary brick walls were repaired though the unsafe central section (south wall) was temporarily replaced by a fence. Bricks from this section have

been saved for use in the future when funds allow.

The next step was the removal of the badly damaged concrete surface to reveal more than had been anticipated. Not only did the historic cobbled Yard come to light almost in its entirety but the thresholds and foundations of the four lost cottages too.



We are grateful to West Norfolk & King's Lynn Archaeological Society (WNKLAS) for undertaking a site survey which will hopefully tell us more when their report is received.

The high significance of True's yard as a working-class heritage site has been bolstered by these works which constitute stage 1 of the Yard Project. No doubt that the Yard itself now conveys an even stronger sense of place and cultural legacy. This is an urban space in which Lynn's fisherfolk lived and worked – the sole survivor of numerous such Yards- herein “the soul” of the North End resided over centuries.

Work restarted on 17th August. The ancient cobbles in the Yard were reset, then the site of the four lost cottages was appropriately protected before the laying of the pavements to delineate these former homes with their thresholds.

Public access to the Yard is now possible and we are working on new displays for the Yard including a Victorian Wash Day exhibit and Privy.

6.2 Staffing

We have had staff shortages for large portions of this year due to severe illness.

As “Lindsey just never get ill” was not a viable contingency plan, the Trust have hired a temporary emergency relief Museum Manager, Amanda Goldsmith, for 2 days a week until the start of November.

6.3 Grants

- St Margaret’s and St Nicholas Parish Trust £500 for new fire extinguishers.
- 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.
- Audrey Stratford £4,050 for Yard works and creation of new Yard displays
- William Cleave £500 for Yard works.
- The Friends of True’s Yard £1500 for Yard works
- Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk £6,000 for Yard works

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