

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

**Notes of a Meeting of the above Committee held on
Monday 10 January 2011 at 2.15 pm
in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 and 3, Ground Floor, King's Court,
Chapel Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs E A Nockolds (Chairman)	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor Mrs S Smeaton	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor A Tyler	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Mr T Humphreys	- Tourism Manager, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
County Councillor M Chenery of Horsburgh	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor M Langwade	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor A J Wright (Vice-Chairman)	- Norfolk County Council
Dr R Hanley	- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor B Long, Mr M Dennis, Mr B Howling and Mr S Dunn.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 October 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5 REPORT OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER

King's Lynn Museums Report – October to December 2010

The Western Area Manager presented his report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums for the period October to December 2010:

(i) Free admission period

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

(ii) World War Two: Local Secrets and Stories Exhibition

The temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum, 'World War Two: Local Secrets and Stories' had run until 8 January 2011. The exhibition explored the subject of everyday life in Norfolk during the War as told by local people. The display featured a range of wartime collections and a film created by local NEET (not in education, employment or training) young people. The exhibition had now moved on to Gressenhall and the Ancient House Museum in Thetford. A range of complimentary family and school events had been delivered to support the display during its time at the Lynn Museum.

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

From 21 January to 18 June 2011 the exhibition at the Lynn Museum would be 'Memories of Lynn: King's Lynn since the 60s'. The exhibition had been developed by the NMAS Renaissance-funded Growing Communities Project Officer, who had been working with the Borough Council's Growth Point team. The exhibition followed a series of community reminiscence events in which residents were encouraged to share their memories and photographs of King's Lynn. The travelling exhibition, which was hosted at King's Court Council Offices and other Community Venues, attracted over 6,000 visitors. The exhibition would be officially launched at Lynn Museum on 21 January 2011 by Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Nockolds.

(iv) Other Museum Developments

The packing up of collections and displays at the Town House Museum was approaching completion following the closure of the museum on 31 October 2010. NMAS was currently liaising with the Borough Council regarding the provision of alternative storage and office accommodation.

It was hoped that all areas would be cleared by the end of February 2011 to allow the Registrars Service to move into the space.

NMAS continued to liaise with the Borough Council regarding potential involvement within a re-developed Town Hall complex. Discussions would inform the development of the 2011-2012 Service Level Agreement between NMAS and the Borough Council.

The scaffolding over the reception at the Lynn Museum remained and would do so until building works had been completed. The scaffolding served two purposes: in the short term it was protecting the roof from water ingress and in the medium term the scaffolding would be used to assist with the building works on the roof, which were to start in the next few months. Work would be carried out to the flat roof to strengthen the brick work and repair leaks to the glass panels on the roof.

Robin Hanley commented that the works would not alter the elevation of the Museum, but the restructure would be more solid and waterproof. Listed Building consent had been granted for the works.

Throughout the works it was proposed that access to the Museum would be maintained through the old entrance underneath the tower and it was intended that the museum would remain open during the works.

(v) Friends of King's Lynn Museums

The Friends were continuing to offer a varied programme for its members and membership levels remained strong. The Friends were continuing to support a long-term programme of painting conservation for King's Lynn oil paintings.

The Friends held their Annual General Meeting at the Lynn Museum on 11 October 2010 and elected Bryan Howling as their new chairman.

(vi) Partnership Projects

King's Lynn Museums continued to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership as part of the NMAS role as a lead partner for the East of England Hub for 'Renaissance in the Regions'. Twenty museums and heritage sites continued to be involved with the partnership.

The current travelling exhibition organised by the Fenland Partnership was 'Fenland Stories', which explored both traditional and modern Fenland tales and stories. The exhibition was touring the Fens and currently on show at Peterborough Library. The exhibition would end up at Lynn Museum in summer 2011. Over 13,000 people had visited the exhibition over the Fenland area so far.

A stage one Heritage Lottery Fund Grant application had recently been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the next Fenland Partnership project 'Fenland Lives and Land'. At a recent Heritage Lottery Fund Registration Committee the project had received stage one approval and development funding had been provided to allow a stage two application to be made.

The project would continue the relationship with independent museums in the Fens and Community Groups to create a touring exhibit. The funding would also help the Fens Partnership to be less reliant on Renaissance Funding which may not be forthcoming in the future.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of utilising European funding, Robin Hanley explained that this route had been explored, but the project did not fit in with the criteria and was limited geographically. He informed the group that European funding had been used for other projects such as the Norman Castles and Maritime project.

He explained that Norfolk County Council used 'Grant finder' software which tracked relevant funding opportunities.

The NMAS Renaissance funded Growing Communities Project Officer had recently been working with the Borough Council's Growth Point team to develop the 'Memories of Lynn' project. A touring exhibition had been created telling the story of the town's development since the 1960's. The exhibition was launched at King's Court Council Offices on 1 October 2010 and subsequently toured a range of community venues. Over 6,000 people saw the exhibition during the tour. An expanded version of the exhibition would be displayed at Lynn Museum from 21 January to 18 June 2011.

(vii) Learning and Outreach

A monthly 'Mini Explorers Club' had been established at Lynn Museum targeted at under fives, their carers and their families. Ten families were currently involved in the project which ran on a Monday morning. Sessions so far had included mini beasts, Roman pottery and Christmas.

In response to a question, Robin Hanley explained that families were identified through several schemes including Sure Start and other existing groups. The club had also been publicised and promoted.

The Learning Officer had continued to deliver a varied programme of events to local schools. The current schools programme included a special World War Two event to link in with the temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum, along with sessions on Invaders and Settlers, Romans and Iceni, Maritime Life, Fenland Life and Archaeology.

The closure of the Town House Museum had necessitated a re-scoping of the existing schools programme, which had resulted in the development of a new session for the Seahenge display at Lynn Museum.

The Children's History Club continued to meet every Thursday in term time at Lynn Museum. The activity was funded through the Gifted and Talented scheme and was aimed at KS2 children. The focus was on historical enquiry skills and local history.

In response to a query, Robin Hanley explained that the activities carried out were based on the displays in the Museum. The Children would look at the collections and then carry out activities to promote analytical thinking to stimulate and challenge. He informed the group that between eight and ten children were currently involved in the project. The group was informed that if a School had a child classed as Gifted and Talented, they would receive funding, and it was this funding that was used to sustain the History Club.

The Chairman requested that members of the group who were school governors try to promote this scheme and other schemes where appropriate.

The group requested that the Project Officer involved in this project, Jan Pitman, be invited to the Committee's next meeting to provide further information on current projects.

The Community Outreach Officer was continuing to deliver programmes for young people categorised as NEET. Funding had been obtained through the College of West Anglia to run a programme for young NEET people which would look at 'Women in History'. Robin Hanley commented that this was a good example of the programme gaining credibility, as they had been approached by the College of West Anglia to run the programme.

The Chairman commented on the success of these programmes and had seen how they had developed the young people's confidence.

The latest NEET project to finish linked into the 'Memories of Lynn' exhibition. Six young people between sixteen and eighteen years old took part in the project, with participants working towards a NCHE level 1 in Creative Craft using Digital Media. The students would be returning in February for a further accredited short course.

The Community Outreach Officer had established a Youth Forum with ten members drawn from previous NEET projects. The young people were assisting with the development of temporary exhibitions and working on object selection and display design.

The Youth Forum had been commissioned by 'The Mighty Creatives' through the Museums Libraries and Archives Council to develop a best practice toolkit to help museums engage with young people. Members of the Forum and the Community Outreach Officer were attending a MLA event at the British Library in February 2011 to promote their work.

In November 2010 the Community Outreach Officer had been invited to speak at the British Museum about her NEET work and her commissioning relationship with the College of West Anglia.

(viii) Visitor Numbers

Robin Hanley circulated visitor numbers for the Lynn Museum for the year to date. He highlighted that visitor figures were up on the previous year, despite the museum being closed throughout April 2010.

The total visitors to the Lynn Museum for the period April to December 2010 was 10,182.

The group thanked Robin Hanley for his informative report.

RESOLVED: (i) That the report be noted.
(ii) That Jan Pitman, Project Officer be invited to attend the next meeting on 14 March 2011 to provide further information on current projects.

6 SITE UPDATE REPORT

(a) Green Quay six monthly activity report for period ended 31 March 2010

In the absence of Mr M Dennis, Green Quay Manager, the Committee received a written activity report as set out below:

- (i) The Green Quay was now 9 months into its first financial year without any Borough Council or Norfolk County Council funding. It was hoped that the Green Quay would be able to survive the next three months, although it would be difficult. A programme of supper talks plus many other evening events, which members and the public supported very well, would hopefully bring in some extra income.
- (ii) The new table tops in the cafe, which told stories about the Wash, had proved successful with visitors.
- (iii) The recycling/charity area was proving popular and accounted for a very large proportion of the shop income.
- (iv) The top floor, although being used on a regular basis, was still available for meetings and conferences at very reasonable cost. Catering facilities could be offered to suit any event.
- (v) Plans were in place to revamp the exhibition area this year but with no financial support the work would be carried out on a very small scale.
- (vi) The Green Quay was still attracting up to 90,000 visitors a year and was often the only place open for visitors to find out what King's Lynn had to offer.

The Chairman commented that the report was positive and agreed that the meeting facilities on the top floor of the Green Quay were good. She requested that the group continue to promote the Green Quay.

Councillor Langwade suggested that perhaps the Green Quay could host some of the collections for which there was no space for at the Lynn Museum. Councillor Tyler agreed to investigate this with the Green Quay trustees.

Councillor Tyler informed those present that he wrote an entertainment column in the Lynn News and if any members of the group were aware of any events, which they felt should be publicised, to contact him.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the activity report be noted.
- (ii) That Councillor Tyler investigate if the Green Quay could host some of the collections for which there was no space to accommodate at Lynn Museum.

(b) True's Yard six monthly activity report

The Committee received the six monthly activity report from the Manager of True's Yard Museum.

- (i) It was noted that the visitor numbers were exceptionally high. The last financial year 2009/10 exceeded the 10,000 target for the first time since operation began.
- (ii) True's Yard had been entered in to the East of England Tourist Board awards for the best small visitor attraction category alongside 18 different attractions entered from 6 counties. True's Yard was a finalist and collected the award at a ceremony at Ickworth House.
- (iii) In October 2010, the True's Yard Museum Research Centre was officially launched. The Museum now had a large reading room, with spate library and archive space, as well as a computer suite and sound archive.
- (iv) Since the launch of the True's Yard Time Club, eight schools had become members.
- (v) From 1 September 2010, True's Yard had taken on 3 training posts as part of the Future Jobs fund.

The Chairman informed those present that investigations were ongoing to create a visitor trail which would join True's Yard to the Green Quay.

RESOLVED: That the six-month activity report be noted.

7 REPORT OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Tourism Manager presented a report which updated Members of the Committee on tourism marketing and the operation of the tourism and heritage facilities operated by the Borough Council during the period October – December 2010.

(i) West Norfolk Holiday Guide and advertising campaign 2010

Final 2010 figures for the promotional campaigns aimed at generating enquiries for the West Norfolk Holiday Guide were:

	Target	Final
Direct Requests through West Norfolk Campaign	46,000	45,888
Direct Requests through East Anglia Seaside Campaign	14,000	16,055

The total requests from the West Norfolk campaign compared to 38,000 requests generated in 2009 and was achieved through increased use of on line marketing to generate requests for the Holiday Guide.

(ii) West Norfolk Marketing Campaign 2011

The 2011 destination marketing campaign had been planned with enquiries already being generated. The target for delivery was around 46,000 direct requests for the holiday guide with an additional 13,000 requests to be generated through the seaside campaign. A total of 20,000 copies would be allocated for distribution to the national Tourist Information Centre network and 5,000 allocated for display and distribution at strategic transport interchange points and service stations leading to the area. A total of 16,000 copies would be allocated to exhibitions and distribution through local Tourist Information Centres and Outlets. Total distribution was targeted at 100,000 copies.

The 2011 West Norfolk Holiday Guide was printed in December 2010, with distribution commencing on 5 January 2011. The brochure featured new photography reflecting the main West Norfolk product themes. Production of Where to Go and What to Do in West Norfolk was underway and scheduled for publication in early February. New editions of Discover King's Lynn, Hunstanton mini guide and Downham Market mini guide would be published in March 2011.

(iii) Collaborative and Partnership Marketing

Marketing opportunities continued to be exploited and new opportunities sought. They would focus on opportunities where it was advantageous to promote aspects of West Norfolk's tourism product as part of a wider area or regional product.

A joint campaign with five other coastal destinations and East of England tourism was helping to raise the profile of East Anglia's high quality coastal product and provide a cost effective mechanism for generating brochure requests.

Marketing undertaken through the Norfolk Tourism Partnership would help to promote and raise the profile of Norfolk and would help to raise the profile of Norfolk by marketing Norfolk's key products through the Norfolk website.

Through the Norfolk Tourism Partnership work had been carried out to assess Opportunities and make recommendations on how Norfolk could capitalise on opportunities presented by the 2012 London Olympics. Work was now taking place to develop a prioritised implementation plan based on potential actions included in the recommendations.

Work would continue to take place to identify opportunities for more collaborative marketing for the north Norfolk coast product area.

(iv) Tourist Information Centres (TIC's)

Final year figures showed combined Tourist Information Centre throughput for Hunstanton and King's Lynn in 2010 was below the levels of 2009 but above the average over recent years. A total of 227,282 people visited the two centres in 2010 with 36,730 additional written, telephone and email enquiries.

The cold weather at the start and end of the year and the relatively poor weather in July and August represented months when figures were lower in 2010 than in 2009. This pattern was also reflected in the TIC service operated at Downham Market.

For the sixth consecutive year since the awards started, King's Lynn TIC was short listed as one of the three finalists for best TIC in the Tourism in Norfolk Awards and for the third time won the award.

A copy of the West Norfolk Guide for 2011 was circulated to those presents. The group commented that the Guide was well set out and contained good pictures.

(v) Ambassadors programme

Over 670 people had now attended the Ambassador programme. Six sessions had been arranged for 2011: 9th March, 11th May, 15th June, 21st September, 19th October and 16th November.

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

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8. SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES 2011

Monday 14 March 2011, 2.15 pm in the Committee Suite, Borough Council Offices, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

Monday 13 June 2011, 2.15 pm in the Committee Suite, Borough Council Offices, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

Monday 17 October 2011, 2.15 pm in the Committee Suite, Borough Council Offices, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Area Museums Committee would take place on Monday 14 March 2011 at 2.15pm in the Committee Suite, Borough Council Offices, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

The Chairman explained that hopefully the Outreach Officer, Jan Pitman would be able to attend the next meeting to provide the group with an update on activities.

An update report on the Whitefriars project would also be submitted to the next meeting.

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

The Meeting closed at 3.29pm