

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 11 June 2012 at 2.15 pm in the
Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs E A Nockolds	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor G McGuiness	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Wendy Vincent	- Democratic Services Officer, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
County Councillor B Long	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor R Rockcliffe	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor A J Wright	- Norfolk County Council
Oliver Bone	- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds welcomed Oliver Bone, Curator at the Lynn Museum to the meeting.

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs E Nockolds be appointed as Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That County Councillor A J Wright be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Back, A Tyler and Dr Robin Hanley.

4 MINUTES

The notes of the meeting held on 19 March 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

5 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed the Committee that the purchase of the Roman Pendant had received good media coverage.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

7 REPORT OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER

King's Lynn Museums Report – March to February 2012

The Curator presented the report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums for the period March to May 2012 as set out below:

(i) Temporary exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum

The Lynn Museum charging period runs from April to September. The free admission period runs from October to March. The Museum is open all year from Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am to 5pm.

The current temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum is on *Hard Times: Poverty in King's Lynn in the early 20th century*, which is on show at the Lynn Museum from 31 March 2012 to 19 January 2013. An A5 marketing flyer had been produced for this exhibition, with copies issued to Lynn residents via the *Citizen* free newspaper. There had been excellent media coverage of the exhibition. County Councillor A Wright attended the opening event.

The temporary exhibition *Re-home* ran at the Lynn Museum until the 10 March 2012. This partnership project with the King's Lynn Arts Centre Trust saw staff from Lynn Museum working with colleagues from the Arts Centre and Freebridge Community Housing to develop exhibitions across three sites in Lynn.

A small display of Royal gifts had been created in the reception area at Lynn Museum to mark the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The family event *Gifts Fit for a Queen* took place on 6 June, with participants given the chance to create their own royal gifts, inspired by the real thing.

A programme of occasional illustrated talks was taking place at Lynn Museums on Wednesday afternoons. The next scheduled talk was *Norfolk Workhouses* on 13 June. This would be presented by Steve Pope, the lead member of the Gressenhall Workhouse volunteer research team.

A programme of family events took place at Lynn Museum which involved the Museum Learning Assistants participating in their delivery. Future events included: *Archaeology Day* on 21 July when professional archaeologists would be meeting members of the public and would look at how Seahenge was conserved. Seahenge now formed part of the A Level Archaeological Curriculum, and a recent visit from the 6th Form at Dunstable had taken place. *Ancient Egypt* on 31 July, *Monster Mammoths and Deadly Dinosaurs* on 9 August and *In Sickness and Health* on 16 August.

(ii) Other Museum Developments

NMAS was continuing to support colleagues from the Borough Council with the development of a proposal and funding bid for a major project aimed at improving access to the Town Hall. NMAS had been assisting

with the consultation stage for this project, which included the establishment of an inclusive Consultative Forum. It was anticipated that a Round 1 Bid would be submitted by the end of 2012. NMAS would also be helping organise a family open day in the Town Hall on the afternoon of Saturday 21 July.

NMAS was continuing to provide curatorial advice, support and an enquiry service for those Borough collections currently held in the Town Hall including fine art and Civic Regalia. An example of the cards containing the information was circulated for the Committee to view. NMAS staff recently supported an extensive programme of revaluation for Town Hall collections.

The planning applications relating to the proposed modest alterations to the front glazed elevation of the Lynn Museum had now been approved and works tendered. Building works would take place in October 2012, following the end of the summer season and at the time when the museum moved into the free admission period.

Two television film crews had visited the Lynn Museum in recent months. BBC4 had been filming in the Seahenge Gallery for a programme on wood, whilst ITV had filmed the Sedgeford Hoard for a series exploring Treasure finds.

The large "Lumiwall" lightbox which formed a key part of the Seahenge display at Lynn Museum was being fitted with an energy-efficient LED lighting system on 11 June 2012. This followed maintenance issues with the previous fluorescent tube based system.

(iii) Friends of King's Lynn Museums

The Friends of King's Lynn Museums had appointed a new Secretary and were continuing to offer a varied programme for members including lunchtime talks, trips and an annual lecture. The Friends continued to support the afternoon talks programme offered at the Lynn Museum in 2012.

The Friends continued to support a long-term conservation programme for parts of the fine art collections and had recently provided funds to support the latest stage of this project. A painting conserved with Friends funding was featured in the current *Hard Times* exhibition at Lynn Museum.

It was noted that the Friends were providing assistance to fund the purchase of a gold Anglo-Saxon pendant (a copy of which was tabled).

(iv) Partnership Projects

King's Lynn Museums continued to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership. The development and delivery of the Heritage Lottery Fund-funded partnership project *Fenland Lives and Land* was now underway, with £358,000 awarded to the project over the next three years.

This *Fenland Lives and Land* project aimed to explore the complex relationship between Fenland people and their local landscape. The project would give local communities the chance to get involved in co-producing a range of exhibitions and would also support capacity building and skills development in partner museums. The project would see the development of five exhibitions exploring a range of landscape themes and using a variety of different media. The choice of exhibition themes had been informed by consultation with existing and potential community partners and the wider public. The exhibitions would tour museum partners and community venues and would be supported by programmes of formal and informal learning, delivered both on-site and as outreach.

(v) Learning and Outreach

The Learning Officer had been supporting the county-wide *Norfolk's American Connections* community exhibition project, which formed part of the Cultural Olympiad. The children had been exploring the following American connections: Thomas Paine, Lincoln Family, 19th Century Migration and the 'Friendly Invasion'. Pupils researched the topic using documents, objects and drama. They also analysed text and graphic panels in the museum and used the techniques they identified to create their own draft texts. The Learning Officer had also been working with Whitefriars Primary School Year 2 class on this project. These children spent three mornings at Lynn Museum exploring the life of Captain Vancouver, followed up by two days working at school. A touring pop-up exhibition would be visiting various venues in Norfolk over a period of 6 months. A copy of the draft programme was circulated and the Committee was invited to comment and suggest any amendments.

County Councillor Rockcliffe informed the Curator that a local firm in Setch manufactured temporary pop up exhibition panels and undertook to forward details.

The Learning Officer recently established a Tuesday afternoon History Club, which met after school for six weeks at Lynn Museum.

An event was being organised at the Lynn Museum to celebrate the Olympic Torch passing through the Town on 4 July 2012.

County Councillor Rockcliffe asked if cross-border links, such as the Harley Davison at Littleport had been considered for inclusion in exhibition projects. The Curator explained that the Harley Davison connection could possibly be linked into exhibitions.

In response to questions on the size of the print run and distribution, the Curator undertook to ascertain the information requested and circulate to the Committee.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that there was a significant distribution which included Tourist Information Centres, Libraries, Railway Stations, etc.

Recruitment was currently underway for a Youth Engagement Officer, funded as part of the successful NMAS to Arts Council England for Major Grant funding over the next three years. There would be a continued focus on developing programmes for young people including those categorised as NEET. Stuart Hall was continuing to support the meetings and the work of the King's Lynn Museums Youth Forum pending this appointment.

A monthly *Mini Explorers Club* continued to meet at the Lynn Museum, targeted at under 5's, their carers and families.

The Museums Learning Assistants at the Lynn Museum were continuing to support the delivery of informal learning programmes at Lynn Museum. The Museum Learning Assistants team had also supported a range of other learning events at the Lynn Museum including sessions for under 5's.

The Learning Officer had been liaising with BBC to ensure that relevant Lynn Museum events and activities were included in the publicity surrounding the *Great British Story* series.

A Social Media Strategy was being developed for the Museums Services which was one way to improve communication with a range of audiences.

In response to questions from the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds on the success of the Front of House Museums Assistants participating in the delivery of activities, the Curator advised that this had proved a beneficial initiative. Training programmes and a visit to Ely Museum to observe learning activities in practice had taken place.

County Councillor Long enquired if the Museums Service could expand the art guide (tabled) to include all the art collections on display within the Town Hall. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that previously there was a leaflet available, but the provision of a guide would be included as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund Bid. The Curator commented that this was a good point to raise and explained that to provide the information for the paintings displayed in the foyer next to the Registrar's Office had been the priority, but agreed that information was required for the remainder of the art collections.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that she was please to learn that more visitors had come to view the Seahenge display and that it would now receive further promotion through the A level Archaeology Curriculum. The Curator explained that the A Level Examination Board published a newsletter and Seahenge could be included.

In response to questions and comments from County Councillor Long on the Lumiwall Lightbox being fitted with an energy-efficient LED lighting system, the Curator advised that this would reduce the maintenance costs and different ranges of warmth were available in order to achieve a consistent colour temperature. The works were being completed later that day.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds asked if the local schools had been involved with the Norfolk's American Connections community exhibition project. In response, the Curator explained that all Museum activities were promoted to local schools. There were many opportunities for schools to view plans and screens located in libraries, which showed images of American GI's.

County Councillor Wright explained that his property was located near Sculthorpe Airbase and previously had been converted into flats. He had regularly corresponded with a Texan family for a number of years and had photographs from that era. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds suggested that this information should be forwarded to the Curator for recording purposes and potential use in future projects.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that the Committee had not benefitted from a Youth Representative recently and suggested that once the Youth Engagement Officer was appointed and in post, contact be made to advise on how to recruit a Youth Representative onto the Committee.

County Councillor Rockcliffe enquired if there was any scope to link to the Youth Advisory Board to assist in recruiting a Youth Representative. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds undertook to liaise with the relevant Borough Council officers.

(vi) Visitor numbers

The Curator reported the visitor numbers for the Lynn Museum as set out at Appendix 1.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that it was pleasing to note excellent visitor numbers at the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012. The Curator informed the Committee that the year 2011/2012 had been up on numbers from the previous year.

8 (a) Green Quay Six Monthly Activity Report for period ended 31 March 2012

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed the Committee that the Green Quay had played an important part during the Hanseatic celebrations and had hosted a dining event. A pirate's afternoon had also been organised and was fully booked.

AGREED: A report would be received at the next meeting.

(b) True's Yard Museum Six-Monthly Activity Report for period ended 31 March 2012

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds advised that Green Quay and True's Yard Museum had worked well together to produce the Maritime Trail.

AGREED: A report would be received at the next meeting.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 12 November at 2.15 pm in the Heritage Room, Town Hall.

The Meeting closed at 3.01 pm

APPENDIX 1

Lynn Museum Visitor Figures to end of May 2012

		April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Year to Date	TOTAL
Lynn Museum	2010/11	Closed	91	936	1,127	1,826	1,570	2,038	1,612	982	1,256	2,401	1,376	91	15,215
	2011/12	1,090	665	801	1,103	1,784	1,486	2,312	1,675	1,486	1,541	1,669	1,600	1,755	17,212
	2012/13	1,155	757											1,912	1,912