

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

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs E A Nockolds (Chairman)	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor M Back	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Tim Humphreys	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Wendy Vincent	- Democratic Services Officer, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
County Councillor M Chenery	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor B Long	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor M Langwade	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor R Rockcliffe	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor A J Wright	- Norfolk County Council
Mr S Hall	- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Dr R Hanley	- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Mr B Howling	- Friends of King's Lynn Museums

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Smeaton, A Tyler and V Trevelyan.

2 MINUTES

The notes of the meeting held on 11 June 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

County Councillor R Rockcliffe declared an interest as he was a Trustee of the Green Quay.

5 REPORT OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER

King's Lynn Museums Report – June to September 2012

The Western Area Manager presented the report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums for the period June to September 2012 as set out below:

(i) Temporary exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum

The current temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum was *Hard Times: Poverty in King's Lynn in the early 20th century*, which was on show at the Lynn Museum until 19 January 2013. The exhibition explored the challenges faced by poorer sections of Lynn's population in the Edwardian period.

The next temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum would be *Inspired Choice*, running from 29 January to 13 April 2013. The exhibition would feature selections of paintings from the King's Lynn Museums collections, selected by local groups including schools. The Committee would be invited to the opening event on 29 January 2013 from 4.00 to 5.00 pm, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds would be invited to perform the opening ceremony.

The *Mapping the Town* exhibition would run from 27 April 2013, telling the story of the town through maps, models, photographs and objects.

A programme of occasional illustrated talks continued to take place at Lynn Museum on Wednesday afternoons. Future talks would include The Natural History of West Norfolk.

A programme of family events took place at Lynn Museum during the school summer holidays. These included: Archaeology Day on 21 July, Ancient Egypt on 31 July, Monster Mammoths and Deadly Dinosaurs on 9 August and In Sickness and Health on 16 August.

The Lynn Museum opened free of charge on Sunday 9 September as part of the Heritage Open Day programme co-ordinated by the Civic Society. The opening was supported by traditional music and there were 330 participants. Although the number of visitors had decreased in 2012, the Museums Service were happy to continue to support future Heritage Open Days.

Initial planning was underway for a programme of exhibitions and events that would contribute to the commemoration of the 2014 centenary of the outbreak of World War One. It is expected that this would complement a programme of national and regional events. Part of the exhibition would explore the impact of early Zeppelin raids on King's Lynn.

(ii) Other Museum Developments

The Lynn Museum had achieved full Accreditation from the Arts Council England and continued to be recognised as an Accredited

Museum. Applying for Accreditation required staff to complete a detailed application form using the new standards and supplying evidence about management, access, services and collections care.

Alterations to the glazed front of the Lynn Museum reception were currently underway, with works including the installation of an improved automatic door. The Norfolk County Council Building Maintenance Fund would also be funding a programme of redecoration throughout the reception area.

A “refresh” of the main exhibition gallery at the Lynn Museum would be taking place over the winter, utilising funding from the Arts Council Major Partnership programme. This work would include the installation of some additional objects formerly displayed at the Town House Museum. There would also be improvements to the labelling and display of recent acquisitions including the Hillington phallus.

(iii) Friends of King’s Lynn Museums

The Friends continued to offer a varied programme for members including lunchtime talks, trips and an annual lecture. Mr Howling circulated details of the lecture of Prehistoric Norfolk, which would take place on 17 October at the Town Hall. Their AGM would take place at 12 pm on Monday 22 October.

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. The Friends had kindly paid for two oil paintings to be conserved, repaired, cleaned and reframed.

(iv) Partnership Projects

The Lynn Museum charging period ran from April to September. The free admission period would run from October to March. The free admission period was provided under the terms of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Borough Council and NMAS, with part of the SLA funding contribution covering lost ticket income during the free admission period.

The operation of NMAS in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk continued to be managed under the terms of the 2012/13 SLA with the Borough Council. Under an extension to the original agreement, NMAS continued 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.

NMAS was continuing to support colleagues from the Borough Council with the development of a proposal and HLF funding bid for a major project aimed at improving access of the Town Hall. A bid would be submitted at the end of November 2012.

NMAS was continuing to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership. Stuart Hall, Project Officer provided a verbal update, a summary of which is set out below.

The Committee was advised that the Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service continued to support smaller regional museums through the Greater Fens Museums Partnership. It was organised into clusters of museums, community groups and local organisations all working together to create five co-produced exhibitions. The project would create sustainable partnerships at a local level and would work towards establishing itself as an exemplar model of how to embed local heritage, local choice and learning into a project that supported a number of social agendas.

It was highlighted that all five exhibition clusters listed below had held their first meeting and each exhibition had been allocated £20,000 to develop:

- The 'Early History of Fen Communities'.
- The 'Tales of Fen People'.
- The 'River Marsh and Mere.'
- Shops, Pubs and Trades.
- 'Living on Land and Water.'

The project was working with a whole range of very diverse groups. Equally, plans were being put in place to work with local unemployed adults through the development of transferrable employment skills and the gaining of accreditation.

Mr Howling commented on the Living on Land and Water exhibition where the idea was to explore a journey of a Fenland Barggee, he stated that the Barggees were often referred to as Lighters. Mr Howling also informed the Committee that Lord Alford's journey in 1774 and a survey undertaken by William Dugdale in 1557 proved interesting reading. In response, Stuart Hall, Project Officer explained that he was aware of the term "Lighter" and often referred to a male travelling alone. A map would be available which would have sensory hotspots embedded into it that could be pressed to trigger information to be displayed on a nearby audio-visual unit.

In response to a question from County Councillor Chenery regarding the opening of the exhibitions, the Project Officer advised that the opening event to include all five exhibitions would hopefully take place at St Nicholas Chapel in King's Lynn.

Following questions, from the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds regarding use of the exhibition materials once the exhibitions had finished, the Project Officer advised that a mix of materials to support the exhibitions had been used and some could be transported by van and others dismantled and put into the back of a car.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds referred to the county-wide Norfolk's American Connections community exhibition project and the events associated with it. The Western Area Manager explained that there was an event scheduled for 20 October at the Lynn Museum.

(v) Learning and Outreach

In June Lynn Museum was approached by the Audrey Stratford Trust who wanted to work with NMAS on a project with local school children as part of the Trust's aims to promote education and the history of Lynn. The Trust had now allocated £2,000 to fund visits to the museum by local schools wishing to explore Lynn History. Over the next year NMAS would be working with about 400 school children.

NMAS was also running the first Arts Award After School Club part funded by Audrey Stratford Trust funding, working with Whitefriars School KS2 pupils to explore the fine art collections at Lynn. All pupils who attended the club would be offered a recognised qualification award through the scheme.

A new Youth Engagement Officer had been appointed. The post was funded as part of the successful NMAS bid to Arts Council England for Major Grant funding over the period 2012-15.

(vi) Visitor numbers

The visitor numbers were tabled. It was noted that the figures were 12% down during the same period in 2011. However, it was highlighted that there had been a decrease over the summer months, which had reflected the national trend and could have been related to the Olympics and Jubilee celebrations.

County Councillor Long referred to paragraph 2.1 of the report and asked if achieving Accreditation from the Arts Council for England would help to attract additional funding. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that a great deal of work had been undertaken to achieve the Accreditation and that the Lynn Museum was the first to achieve the Accreditation within the Museums Service. It was therefore anticipated that this would assist in obtaining external funding in the future.

In response to questions from County Councillor Long on the alterations to the front doors and the problems previously encountered by groups of youths congregating, the Western Area Manager explained that significant benefits had been achieved with the alterations to the front of the Museum and the issue of youths and anti-social behaviour had disappeared, as the Police had treated it as a priority issue and the addition of CCTV had also helped.

In response to a comment made by County Councillor Langwade regarding the wording in paragraph 1.7, the Western Area Manager advised that staff were mindful of the sensitivity of language used to promote such exhibitions and events.

Following questions from County Councillor Chenery on the Sarah Ingleby and Guido Schmitt paintings, the Western Area Manager explained that Tim Thorpe, Curator at the Lynn Museum would have the information requested and would ask him to forward the information direct to County Councillor Chenery.

Councillor Back referred to paragraph 4.2 and the Service Level Agreement, he asked for more detailed information relating to the £5,000 management fee. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that he did not have the information to hand, but would present a report to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds thanked the Western Area Manager and the Project Officer for their interesting and informative reports. In particular, the Chairman thanked the Western Area Manager for the work he had undertaken towards the proposals for the funding of the HLF bid for the Town Hall.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds thanked the Friends for the valuable work they carried out within the Museum.

RESOLVED: (1) That the newly appointed Youth Engagement Officer be invited to attend the next meeting.

(2) The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds on behalf of the Committee to write a letter of congratulations to staff on achieving full Accreditation from the Arts Council, England.

(3) The Western Area Manager to present a report on the details of the Service Level Agreement at the next meeting.

6 REPORT OF THE TOURISM MANAGER, BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

The Tourism Manager presented a report which updated members on tourism marketing undertaken by the Borough Council during the period March – September 2013.

Website and on-line Marketing

The Tourism Manager provided a demonstration of the site key features of the Website that went live on 18 July 2012.

Two workshop sessions were organised on 6 July where delegates were given an overview of the new site and in depth training session from Guest Link on using the new guest link services for on-line availability, booking and detail updates. Prior to going live, links to the site were also distributed amongst a test group who were asked to undertake a series of tasks to verify the structure and functionality of the site.

Site Statistics

User statistics to the site were now being produced on a monthly basis, providing information on overall site visits, home page visits, visits to the most popular pages and external referrers. This would also provide information on the total number of page views for accommodation property pages, events and attractions. Because the previous visitor section was an integral part of the Borough Council site, direct comparison with previous usage was difficult,

however front page visits to the new site were already around 80% higher than to the front page of the visitor section on the previous site.

Marketing and Social Media

Since the go live date a Google adwords campaign had been running to generate visits to key parts of the site using a wide variety of different search terms.

A twitter account was running to attract visitors to the site. Recent tweets had included items such as Heritage Open Day, the Hunstanton 10k beach run and success in the Anglia in Bloom competition.

The Tourism Team were working with the course leader and students from the travel and tourism course at the College of West Anglia on a project to identify opportunities and best methods for using social media to promote West Norfolk.

Update on West Norfolk Destination Marketing Campaign

West Norfolk Holiday Guide

The brochure distribution was still underway. The final distribution breakdown for the holiday guide was expected to be:

- 52,500 enquiries generated through the main on and off line advertising campaigns.
- 6,000 enquiries expected through general enquiries and requests generated from 3 party websites.
- 18,000 copies distributed through the national TIC network.
- 7,000 at prime regional sites.
- 11,500 copies distributed through local West Norfolk Tourist Information Centres and at exhibitions/events.

Where to Go and What to Do in West Norfolk

The finished format for 2012 was changed, making it more economic to produce and having improved durability, 20,000 copies were produced and distribution had taken place throughout a catchment area of approximately 75 minutes drive time to West Norfolk.

Discover King's Lynn

An increased print run of 110,000 copies were produced and all would have been distributed by the end of the autumn. The King's Lynn discount voucher scheme had proceeded well. The number of people using the vouchers to take advantage of the offers in 2012 would be higher than in 2011. Through to 30th September, 1276 people had used the vouchers compared with around 800 in 2011.

Hunstanton and Downham Market Mini Guides

Update versions of these guides were printed and distributed. A reprint of the Hunstanton Trail guide was necessary.

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

- Proposals for 2013 West Norfolk Main Destination Promotion.
- Tourist Information Centres.
- Other Heritage Marketing - King's Lynn Town Guides, King's Lynn Maritime Trail, King's Lynn Pedestrian Signposting, Welcome and Orientation Information Signs, Heritage Open Day, The Hanse, The Town Hall.

In response to questions from County Councillor Chenery on the Google search – West Norfolk, the Tourism Manager explained that whilst work had currently focused on 'West Norfolk' search term, further work would be carried out to raise its profile under 'Norfolk' search terms.

In response to questions from County Councillor Long on requesting a brochure, the Tourism Manager confirmed that the brochure request function generated a had copy brochure request, but the Travel and information section also included PDF download facilities for all the West Norfolk brochures.

In response to questions from County Councillor Chenery on the Hanse connections, the Tourism Manager explained that the current cities involved in the Hanse League were available on the Website and undertook to include the Website link with the Minutes of today's meeting (<http://www.hanse.org/de/>).

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds thanked the Tourism Manager for the demonstration of the Tourism Website and report.

7 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2013

The Schedule of Meetings for 2013 were agreed as follows:

25 February 2013
13 May 2013
14 October 2013

The Meeting closed at 3.48 pm