

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 27 October 2014 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 (Chairman)
Councillor M Back	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor A Tyler	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor A J Wright	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor Mrs A Wright	- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
County Councillor M Chenery	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor D Collis	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor H Humphrey	- Norfolk County Council (Vice-Chairman)
County Councillor J Perkins	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor J Ward	- Chairman of Joint Museums Committee
Dr R Hanley	- Norfolk Museums Service
Wendy Vincent	- Democratic Services Officer, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

1 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 36 – RECORDING OR BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED: In order to comply with Statutory Instrument 2014 no 2095, The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2011, Standing Order 36 is suspended for the duration of the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor S Agnew, Councillor J Bracey, Lindsey Bavin and Mr S Miller.

3 MINUTES

The notes of the meeting held on 2 June 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING

County Councillor H Humphrey referred to page 7, paragraph 3 and queried whether the reference to the monthly Planning Committee meeting should read "County Council Planning Committee". In response, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that if the King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Area Museums Committee coincided with any other meetings, then the representative could either join meeting later than the scheduled start time or arrange for a substitute.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

6 REPORT OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER

King's Lynn Museums Report – May to September 2014

The Western Area Manager presented the report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums for the period May to September 2014 as set out below:

(i) Temporary Exhibitions and Events at Lynn Museum

The major temporary exhibition for 2014 was *1914-2014: King's Lynn and the First World War*. This exhibition opened on 9 August 2014 and would run until 6 June 2015. Marking the centenary of the outbreak of the Great War, the exhibition explored the town's experience, including damage caused by Zeppelin raids, the Home Front and the role that local businesses played in the war effort. The exhibition featured a broad range of collections including costume, ephemera and Zeppelin fragments.

A small travelling version of this World War One exhibition had been created and was being loaned to a number of community venues including Hanse House and schools and other community venues in Upwell and Emneth.

The next major exhibition at Lynn Museum would explore the life and work of Frederick Savage. This exhibition would open in July 2015 and would tell the story of King's Lynn's iconic creator of merry-go-rounds – including a close look at the art, craft and design of the fairground.

Lynn Museum supported the nationwide Heritage Open Day programme organised by the King's Lynn Civic Society on Sunday 14 September, offering free admission. There were 757 visitors during the day (400 visitors in 2013).

An enhanced programme of informal family learning events continued to be offered at the Lynn Museum. The family events taking place during the summer holidays were promoted through a *Summer Holidays Events* colour flyer distributed to all local schools prior to the end of the summer term. Recent 'drop-in' events have included:

- *The Wild Fens* – 24 May – 36 participants
- *Pirates Ahoy!* – 27 May – 129 participants
- *Ancient Egyptians* – 29 July – 170 participants
- *Let's Play – Toys & Games* – 5 August – 95 participants
- *Monster Mammoths* – 12 August – 201 participants
- *1914: Lynn Goes to War* – 19 August – 92 participants
- *Rediscover the Romans* – 26 August – 91 participants
- *Brilliant Bronze Age* – 2 September – 66 participants.

During the school summer holidays the Lynn Museum ran a *Summer Time Trails* programme comprising eight free themed gallery discovery trails including *Hidden Egyptians*, *Dinosaur Detectives* and *Remembering World War One*. Families that completed six trails were invited to attend a Tea Party on 20 September. Over the course of the summer 646 visitors took part in the trails, with 26 attending the Tea Party celebration.

The Lynn Museum hosted a Macmillan Coffee Morning on 26 September 2014, with 39 participants. Future coffee morning style events would focus on exploring different aspects of the collections.

(ii) Other Museum Developments

The refresh of the main exhibition gallery at the Lynn Museum was largely complete, utilising funding from the ACE Major Partner Museum programme. The refresh had seen the displays enhanced with additional collections, including recent acquisitions and material from the former Town House Museum including Civil War collections and medieval pilgrim badges. The improvements had been designed and delivered by the NMS in-house design and technical team.

The Lynn Museum continued to develop its social media presence, with Twitter and Facebook accounts maintained by staff. To the end of August the Lynn Museum had 131 Facebook and 729 Twitter followers.

A team of nine collection volunteers continued to meet on a weekly basis in the NMS offices at Queen Street, supervised by Teaching Museum Trainee. Volunteers had continued with a programme of work involving the scanning and cataloguing of the print collections. Nearly one thousand prints by local artist Henry Baines had now been scanned and given enhanced catalogue entries. The team would next begin scanning the Walter Dexter print collection.

(iii) Friends of King's Lynn Museums

The Friends 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 being offered at the Lynn Museum during 2014.

The Friends were continuing to fund a programme of fine art conservation, with the latest two paintings about to undergo specialist conservation work. The Friends had also supported the purchase of a number of significant archaeological finds reported under the Treasure Act, including the recent acquisition of a Bronze Age "founders hoard" found near Docking.

The Friends Annual General Meeting took place on Monday 13 October 2014 at Lynn Museum and Bryan Howling was elected as Chairman.

(iv) Partnerships

The Lynn Museum free admission period ran from October to March. The free admission period was provided under the terms of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Borough Council and NMS.

NMS continued to support the Borough Council with the delivery of the HLF-funded *Stories of Lynn* project focussed on the Town Hall. As well as being part of the Project Steering Group and Project Board, NMS continued to lead on the development and delivery of the project Activity Plan and the development of exhibition designs and site interpretation.

The delivery of NMS services in King's Lynn and West Norfolk continued to operate under the terms of the 2014-15 SLA with the Borough Council. Under an extension to this agreement, NMS 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.

NMS staff supported the *Georgian Lynn and the Brilliant Burney Family* exhibition at the Custom House which opened on 6 June. Learning Officer Melissa Hawker also supported the Burney festival by giving a talk at the Lynn Museum on 18 June on the subject of Fanny Burney and the 18th century novel.

NMS continued to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership through the development and delivery of the Heritage Lottery Fund-funded partnership project *Fenland Lives and Land*. The five exhibitions were co-produced by "clusters" of museums and community groups and were now touring a range of community venues across the Fens, including the Lynn Museum. The project team delivered a major programme of family activities at partner museum sites during the school summer holidays.

(v) Learning and Outreach

The Lynn Museum continued to host a 12 month Teaching Museum traineeship through the NMS *Teaching Museum* programme, funded by ACE as part of the 2012-15 Major Partner Museum ACE business plan. Current trainee Emily Shepperson was working as Curatorial Assistant for King's Lynn and Thetford. Amongst a range of other activities, Emily had helped co-ordinate the summer trails programme, supervise collections, volunteers and schedule displays in the museum reception area.

Lynn Museum had continued to work with local schools to deliver a broad range of formal learning sessions. Following recent changes to the history National Curriculum, Lynn Museum was seeing an encouraging increase in bookings for the recently piloted Seahenge sessions for Keystages1 and 2.

School programmes exploring local heroes such as Frederick Savage had included sessions offering the *Discover* level Arts Award in a day. The Toys and Games session continued to be popular with local schools, despite the changes to the National Curriculum.

NMS was continuing to deliver a broad programme of youth engagement activities, funded as part of the ACE Major Partner Business Plan 2012-15. The programme focused on development projects and engagement opportunities for young people.

(vi) Visitor Numbers

The visitor numbers by Museum and County total were tabled. It was noted that all Norfolk Museums had been included setting out the previous two years for comparison.

The Western Area Manager reported that the visitor numbers for the Lynn Museum was up on last year which was thought to be due to the improvements to the school holiday programme which included offers to local families. It was anticipated that by the end of the year, total visitor figures would be around 16,000. The Western Area Manager commented that the overall trend was progressing in the right direction and it was important to retain the high quality of exhibitions and to keep developing the school holiday programme.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that it was important to keep the younger age group interested in museum activities and thanked the Western Area Manager for retaining the excellent standard of events at the Lynn Museum.

In response to questions from Councillor Chenery regarding the involvement of schools within the Borough, the Western Area Manager explained that the Museums Service worked with all local schools. However, he highlighted that the main users of the Lynn Museums were schools within walking distance.

Councillor Chenery asked if others schools such as Wells, Fakenham and Litcham could be included within the work carried out by the Museums Service. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that the Museums Service welcomed schools from any part of Norfolk and beyond. The Sea Henge display had attracted pupils from outside of Norfolk.

County Councillor Humphrey commented that the Frederick Savage exhibition in July 2015 would be interesting to children who would be aware of the carousel rides. The engineering patterns and other designs would also create interest and consideration would be required on how to present the information in an understandable format.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed the Committee that five circular benches had been commissioned through a local company depicting the Frederick Savage design which would be installed on the Tuesday Market Place.

The Western Area Manager advised that there was a working Savages carousel at Bressingham. Members were also reminded that previously the Committee had undertaken a tour of Aickman's Yard where items relating to Savages fairground rides had been viewed.

In response to questions from Councillor Tyler regarding the National Curriculum, particularly relating to Key Stage 1 and 2, the Western Area

Manager outlined the changes and explained that historically the core subjects for Key Stage 1 and 2 had included the Victorians, Romans, Tudors, etc, but now children attending a primary school studied up to the period of 1066. He therefore added that the Tudor and Victorian activities no longer formed a significant element of study within primary schools which had presented a significant challenge to the Museums Service in that the programmed offered to schools had to be revised.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Wright relating to requests for Victorian Wash Day sessions, the Western Area Manager explained that time and travel costs could be barriers to schools making visits to the Lynn Museum, however, some schools were still interested in attending Victorian sessions following the changes made to the National Curriculum.

Following further questions from Councillor Mrs Wright regarding Key Stage 1 and 2, the Western Area Manager explained that this category of pupils studied the history period up to 1066, which included Romans, Anglo Saxons, Vikings and the Norman Conquest.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that the Museums Services worked closely with schools. Flyers and email communications were sent out on a regular basis to schools reminding pupils of the activities arranged by the Museums Service. Officers within the Museums Service would liaise with schools when developing a new programme.

The Western Area Manager suggested that the Learning Officer be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the National Curriculum and the resulting learning programme changes for the Museums Service.

Councillor Tyler asked what services were provided for GCSE and A Level students. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that some museums like Gressenhall could cater for secondary schools. In the past, the Lynn Museum had hosted students studying for A level Archaeology who had visited the Sea Henge Gallery.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed the Committee that the Lynn Museum had supported the Heritage Open Day and there had been a significant increase in the number of visitors. The Lynn Museum would continue to support the Heritage Open Day in 2015 and would offer an enhanced level of activity.

County Councillor Ward commented on the feedback relating to twitter and social media and added that often when celebrities who had re-tweeted, there had been an increase in the number of followers. The Western Area Manager advised that there was a Digital Development Officer in Norwich who was developing social media followers.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed those present that "twitter" had been used to advertise themed coffee mornings which had been well attended.

Councillor A Wright enquired what the Town House Museum space was now being used for. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that the Registrars Service now occupied the Ground Floor and other areas of the

former Town House Museum. The Museums Office occupied accommodation on the first floor.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds enquired when the Bronze Age “founders hoard” would be displayed. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that the items would be shortly on display in a new case located in the Reception Area of the Lynn Museum. In the longer term, the Bronze Age collection would be located in a display case within the Sea Henge Gallery.

County Councillor D J Collis asked what the total current membership was for the Friends of King’s Lynn Museums. In response, the Western Area Manager commented that that the membership varied, but currently was in the region of between 70 – 80 people.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds referred to the cataloguing process and asked if postcards could be sold relating to the Baines and Dexter collections. In response, the Western Area Manager advised that all objects would be entered onto the database which would form the catalogue and be published and available to view on line. A new look website had been created by the Norfolk Museums Service which offered a search facility and members of the public could purchase high quality prints. The Western Area Manager explained that there was very little income from the sale of postcards so was therefore not deemed a viable item to sell.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds reminded the Committee that the Lynn Museum free admission period ran from October to March. The free admission period was provided under the terms of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Borough Council and Norfolk Museums Service.

The Western Area Manager informed the Committee that a recent meeting had been held with the Lynn News, who had agreed to publish articles relating to different collections on a fortnightly basis. This arrangement would provide a good platform to promote the Lynn Museum.

Councillor Chenery referred to the BBC filming which would include the John King Cup. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that an interpretation of the King John Cup would be incorporated within the improvement works scheduled for the Town Hall. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds added that the BBC were filming for a documentary programme and would include the Tuesday Market Place and the Town Hall.

Councillor Tyler made reference to paragraph 4.4 and the development of plans for enhanced interpretation at the South Gate and asked what the plans were to improve the presentation of the South Gate. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that the South Gate was open on Heritage Day and on a limited basis which depended upon volunteers to staff the building. The volunteers also provided a service for the Red Mount Chapel. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds advised that a recent meeting had been held with the volunteers and they had expressed an interest in developing ideas to increase the number of visitors. The Western Area Manager explained that a modest HLF bid was being considered following liaison with the volunteers.

In response to questions from Councillor Tyler regarding the Georgian Lynn and the Burney Family exhibition at The Custom House, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds undertook to obtain the visitor numbers and reply direct to Councillor Tyler.

The Western Area Manager explained that an approach had been made to the Lynn Museum to display collections at the South Gates. However, there was concern relating to the environment in that it would be damp and not secure. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds advised that a number of new ideas for improved interpretation were currently being explored.

The Western Area Manager tabled an invitation to the Fen Youth Film Fest 2014 on the evening and afternoon of 18 November. The Committee had already been emailed the invitation. Any Member wishing to attend should reply to stuart.hall@norfolk.gov.uk. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that she hoped that the Committee would attend the Fen Youth Film Fest 2014.

Councillor Mrs Wright asked if all schools were invited to attend the Fen Youth Film Fest. The Western Area Manager explained that it was not a general invitation to all schools, but only to those schools who had been involved in the production of the films, but undertook to check the invitation list. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that Stuart Hall worked with schools particularly in rural areas of the Fens.

In response to questions from County Councillor Humphrey regarding travelling artefacts being loaned to schools to assist education and encourage visits to the Museum, the Western Area Manager explained that the Museums Service did have some collections that could be loaned to schools which included a significant number of hand held objects.

County Councillor Humphrey commented that it would be beneficial for the Museums Services to work in partnership with schools to develop a programme to assist with the changes in the National Curriculum. The Western Area Manager explained that the Museums Services carefully targeted marketing to help teachers deliver the changes in the National Curriculum.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds reminded the Committee that Members could gain free entry to the Museum if they showed their ID card.

RESOLVED: (1) The Area Museums Committee noted the report.

(2) The Learning Officer be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the National Curriculum and the programme changes for Lynn Museum and other Museums, as appropriate.

(3) The Committee be invited to undertake a tour of the Lynn Museum prior to the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee on 16 March.

7 REPORT FROM TRUE'S YARD

In the absence of the Manager of True's Yard, the Committee received the activity report which was noted.

In response to County Councillor Chenery regarding the archives, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that she was not aware of the age of the archives, but they mainly related to Seamen's minutes and suggested that County Councillor Chenery contact True's Yard direct.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Co-opted Youth Representative

In response to questions from Councillor Tyler regarding the Co-opted Youth Representative, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that it was often difficult for a youth representative to attend as often they were either at work or studying at college. However, it was recognised that there was a good Youth Forum in place.

AGREED: The Western Area Manager to remind the Youth Forum that a representative be invited to participate in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee and suggest that attendance could be made on a rota basis.

Lynn Museum – Opening Hours

County Councillor Ward commented that on arrival to King's Lynn today he was disappointed to learn that the Lynn Museum was closed. The Western Area Manager suggested that Members undertake a tour of the Museum prior to its next meeting which was agreed by the Committee.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 16 March 2015, 2.15 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street.

Members are invited to attend a tour of the Lynn Museum at 1.00 pm prior to the meeting at 2.15 pm.

The Meeting closed at 3.20 pm