



# AGENDA

**NOTE: In the case of non-members, this agenda is for information only**

- Committee - BRECKLAND AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**
- Date & Time - MONDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER, 2017 AT 11.00 AM**
- Venue - ANCIENT HOUSE MUSEUM, THETFORD**

**Persons attending the meeting are requested to turn off mobile telephones**

**Committee Members:**

**Breckland Council**

Councillor C. Bowes  
Mr H. E. J. Clarke (Chairman)  
Mr P. R. W. Darby  
Mr S.G. Bambridge  
Mr R.G. Kybird

**Co-optees**

Dr K Robinson  
Mr D. Blackburn

**Norfolk County Council**

Mr P.J. Duigan (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr F. Eagle  
Mr T. J. Jermy  
Mr W. R. J. Richmond  
Mr M. Kiddle-Morris

**Ex-Officio**

Mr D. Buck  
Mr J. Ward

Democratic Services  
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,  
Dereham Norfolk, NR19 1EE

Date: Monday, 20 November 2017

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
1. <b><u>MINUTES</u></b> To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2017.	3 - 7
2. <b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b> To receive apologies for absence.	
3. <b><u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b>	
4. <b><u>URGENT BUSINESS</u></b> To note whether the Chairman proposes to accept any item as urgent business, pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972.	
5. <b><u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</u></b> The duties to register, disclose and not to participate for the entire consideration of the matter, in respect of any matter in which a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. Members are also required to withdraw from the meeting room as stated in the Standing Orders of this Council.	
6. <b><u>ANCIENT HOUSE, MUSEUM OF THETFORD LIFE REPORT</u></b> Report by the Curator, Oliver Bone.	8 - 13
7. <b><u>GRESSENHALL FARM AND WORKHOUSE REPORT</u></b> Report by the Operations Manager (West), Hannah Jackson.	14 - 21
8. <b><u>NEXT MEETING</u></b> To agree a date and venue for the next meeting.	

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**BRECKLAND AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**Held on Wednesday, 19 July 2017 at 2.00 pm in  
Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse Museum, Fakenham Rd, Gressenhall, Beetley,  
Dereham NR20 4DR**

**PRESENT**

Councillor C Bowes

Mr H. E. J. Clarke (Chairman)

Mr P. R. W. Darby

Mr R.G. Kybird

Mr P.J. Duigan

Mr W. R. J. Richmond (Vice-Chairman)

**In Attendance**

Dr. Robin Hanley

Hannah Jackson

Samantha Johns

- Head of Operations and Learning
- Operations Manager - West
- Collections and development Manager
  
- Democratic Services Officer

**Action By**

**9/17 CHAIRMAN**

Resolved that Councillor Clarke be appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

**10/17 VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Resolved that Councillor P Duigan be appointed Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

**11/17 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2017 were confirmed as a correct record.

**12/17 APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from David Blackburn, Oliver Bone and Councillor Eagle (NCC).

**13/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)**

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Richmond on his appointment as Vice Chairman.

He thanked Gressenhall Museum staff for the comprehensive and informative tour of the Collections Gallery.

Action By

**14/17 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**15/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

**16/17 ANCIENT HOUSE, MUSEUM OF THETFORD LIFE REPORT**

Dr. Robin Hanley presented the report for the period March – June for Ancient House Museum Thetford.

- 1.1 Thetford Remembers 1914-1918. He advised on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 Ancient House would be involved with Thetford Town Councils evening beacon lighting event to mark the centenary of the Armistice.  
An exhibition was planned for Ancient House representing the peace and aftermath of the First World War and would contribute to Norwich Castle's event running from August 2018 to early 2019. He advised that Kate Thaxton, Curator, would bring together all local commemorative exhibitions.
- 1.3 The Story of Thetford Pulp Ware Exhibition. He advised the exhibition would end December 2017 and had been supported by Arts Council England (ACE).
- 2.1 He confirmed work was continuing to create a permanent gallery dedicated to Duleep Singh. Working with Essex Cultural Diversity whose focus was celebrating diversity, a Punjab festival was planned for July 2018. He advised funding schemes offered by Heritage Lottery and ACE were being investigated.
- 2.2 The new temporary exhibition, to open at Ancient House December 2017 was planned to be "Handmade". The display would cover different material with sections on textiles, ceramics, wood, metal and stone.
- 3.1 Holiday activities. An events flyer had been produced promoting activities during the school summer holidays. This flyer had been widely distributed and sent to local schools.
- 3.4 The current programme of learning opportunities for schools remains relevant and current to the needs of the schools in a demanding time with budget and curriculum changes. In total across the 10 museum sites there had been 50,000 school children visit. 2331 of these visited Ancient House. It was noted that elsewhere in the Country school visit numbers had decreased but had increased at Ancient House.
- 4.2 A column remained present monthly in the Thetford and Brandon Times newspaper. This highlighted the exhibitions and events at Ancient House and proved the venue was effective at being kept

**Action By**

in the public eye.

- 4.3 Social media. Ancient House currently had 2481 Twitter followers and 551 likes on Facebook. It was highlighted that both the History Club and the Teenage History Club raised awareness of the Museum through Social Media. He advised Melissa Hawker kept alert to local and national social media campaigns, "Kids in museums" take over days had been very effective in their use of social media to highlight the Museum.
- 5.2 The Museum remained part of the "Teaching Museum Programme". Trainees joined for 12 months on a paid scheme with a development programme. He advised trainees need no formal qualifications just an enthusiasm for museums and heritage. Sam Bellotti is the current trainee, with time being spent at both Lynn Museum and Ancient House. The previous trainee Imogen Clarke had now started a full time job at the Fan Museum.

Account funding – Over the last three years Norfolk Museum Services had received £4 million in funding through the Arts Council England's "Major Partner Museum" programme. He advised that from April 2018 this funding stream would come to an end, and an application had been made in February 2017 with the Arts council to be a "National Portfolio Organisation". Announcements were made in June, many museums applied and he was pleased to report that Norfolk Museum Services application had been approved. This meant funding of £4.8 million over 2018-2022 and covered the cost of temporary exhibitions.

As a service they had been successful in their application for a Heritage Funding, "Kick the Dust" was a long term project engaging with young people. They had managed to secure £750,000 to deliver the project over 4 years. They would work in partnership with YMCA and Creative Collisions Great Yarmouth.

Cllr Clark thanked Robin for the report. He queried how long the handmade exhibition would run for.  
RH advised they have one exhibition a year.

Cllr Clark asked what the dates were for filming and airing of "Antiques Road Trip" as it was reported they would be filming at Ancient House.

HJ advised there were no dates set but an initial discussion had taken place.

Cllr Clark requested that a transmission date be advised when known so panel members could watch it. He congratulated the team on their successful funding bids.

Cllr Darby queried if the First World War exhibition at Norwich Castle was confined to Norfolk Museums as he was aware Bishop Bonners Museum in Dereham had a good collection of pieces.

RH confirmed the focus was on Norfolk Museum sites but there

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was an opportunity to work with other museums.  
Cllr Darby also pointed out that Gressenhall Museum was a Prisoner of War camp for two years, 100 years ago.  
RH explained that the exhibition at Norwich Castle had links to Swanton Morley Barracks and looked at the difficulties faced by servicemen and their families in the First World and today.

Cllr Darby queried the reason for low visitor figures at Lynn Museum.  
RH explained that there had not been a drop in paid admissions but there had been a drop in family admissions and free admission days. He advised the Time and Tide museum had performed very well. There was a Titanic exhibition there currently and this had increased both the school visitor numbers and paid visitor admission numbers.

Cllr Ward queried how well the Teenage History Club was attended.

RH advised there was succession planning in place so History Club members could join the Teenage Club as the older members left. He confirmed there was a waiting list to join the History Club.

Cllr Kybird asked which umbrella the Saturday Science Club sat.  
RH advised there were currently no Saturday Science Clubs running within Norfolk Museum Service Sites although Saturday Art Clubs were held in Norwich and Great Yarmouth.

**17/17 GRESSENHALL FARM AND WORKHOUSE REPORT**

Hannah Jackson – Operations Manager West presented the report for Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse to members.

Cllr Clark noted that 137 visitors visited Gressenhall on the Lottery Players preview day that had stated it was their first visit, he queried whether the reason for their visit that day had been captured.  
HJ advised that the event had been free of charge to Lottery Players and had been picked up by the local press and social media. It was understood these visitors used the free entry as an opportunity to visit.

Cllr Richmond noted the marquee was in the ground and were people using it for wedding service and reception.  
HJ confirmed the most recent wedding used the Chapel only for their service. There were three more weddings booked for 2017 and they were all using the site for the service and reception. She advised they respond to the needs of each individual couple.  
Cllr Richmond asked who provided the catering.  
HJ confirmed the Mardlers Rest café on site was used for all catering needs.

Cllr Ward queried on the flyer it stated the only assistance dogs were permitted on site and was this a new rule.  
HJ confirmed it was in place prior to her employment and she

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understood the policy was driven by livestock issues.

Cllr Richmond advised that it would soon be the bi-centenary anniversary of the Suffragette movement and were there any events planned for this.

RH confirmed that it was being looked at for Norwich, the Shirehall had submitted a draft bid for Heritage funding however he would feedback the potential for an event at Gressenhall.

Cllr Clark queried if the recent Symphonic concert would run again in future years.

HJ advised there had been 270 visitors at the evening performance and would explore future opportunities.

RH commented that the logistics for holding the event were comprehensive and to replicate it at the same high standard would require additional funding.

Cllr Darby advised he attended the concert and had thoroughly enjoyed it.

**18/17 COLLECTIONS REVIEW AND RATIONALISATION PROGRAMME  
2015-18**

Samantha Johns – Collections and Development Manager presented the report.

Cllr Clark queried if the preferred option for the items listed was to transfer to another museum as opposed to disposal.

SJ confirmed if items couldn't be transferred the museum would retain them rather than dispose of them.

Cllr Ward queried if item 35 was an incorrect photograph.

SJ confirmed it was. The item is a clock and not a soda syphon as pictured, it was an incorrect image link.

Cllr Ward asked if the Museum service had a cigarette machine in the collection.

SJ advised there was no specific note confirming the service had one in the collection however the one listed did not fit with the collection policy and had no local connection.

SJ advised the items would be advertised through the Museum Journal. She suggested that at the next Breckland Area Museum Partnership meeting held at Gressenhall, members might wish to have a tour of the collection store to view the items and storage.

Resolved that the objects listed in the report be advertised for transfer or disposed of.

The meeting closed at 15:40

CHAIRMAN



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**BRECKLAND  
AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**27 November 2017      Item No.**

**ANCIENT HOUSE, MUSEUM OF THETFORD LIFE REPORT**

**Report by the Curator**

**This report provides information on activities at  
Ancient House, Museum of Thetford Life from July  
2017 to October 2017**

**1. Exhibitions and associated events**

**1.1 Pulp, Pin Trays Pails and Pots, the story of Thetford Pulp Ware**

The current main exhibition in the Museum's programme opened in December 2016, with a stakeholders opening event taking place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017. The display focuses on the story of Thetford Pulp Ware, a distinctive local industry.

Thetford Pulp Ware was made in the town's Pulp Works from 1879 until the 1950s. In many ways a green industry, it used power from the river to pulp up recycled materials such as old jute bags to make useful articles for the home, for shops and for industry. Decorated with a variety of colourful paint finishes, the products were lightweight, durable and waterproof. They were used for all sorts of purposes including washing-up bowls, baby baths and buckets.

During the Second World War Churchill's secret documents were brought under armed guard to Thetford's Pulp Mill. They were then transformed into items such as baby baths or fuel tanks for fighter planes. Also during the war, pulp ware was made into decoys to fool the enemy and the fake pulp soldiers became known as the Thetford Army.

From the start the company made safety helmets. There is a testimonial in an early catalogue from a man who unfortunately had a weight of half a hundredweight (50kg) dropped from four feet onto his head. Luckily he was wearing a pulp ware helmet and although the helmet had to be forcibly removed the man lived to tell the tale. The company made helmets right through the last century and after a change of names from the Patent Pulp Manufacturing Company Ltd. the company continues business in Thetford as



Centurion Safety Products. The Museum has been in touch with Centurion during the production of the exhibition and has arranged with permission for a new line of postcards on sale in the museum shop.

This exhibition will run through until 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017. Exhibitions at Ancient House are funded by Arts Council England as part of their funding support given to Norfolk Museums Service as a Major Partner Museum.

### **1.2 *Flint Rocks!* Exhibition and Breaking New Ground**

Museum staff continue to work with the Breaking New Ground project and have contributed plans for inclusion in a new landscape partnership bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, with a focus on the 'Wet Brecks' including the rivers of the area and riverine settlements such as Thetford. The Museum Curator is also part of the curatorial board for the Journal of Breckland Studies whose second publication is planned for 2018.

### **1.3 *Thetford Remember 1914 – 1918***

#### **Commemorative events**

Following the Museum's delivery of a town-wide programme of commemorative events focussed on the anniversaries of 1914, 1915 and 1916, the Ancient House Museum will be contributing to the Town Council's plans for *Battle's Over* a nation-wide evening beacon event to mark the centenary of the Armistice on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2018 with a display of the knitted Field of Poppies exhibit with one poppy representing each of the Thetford's fallen. The Museum is also involved in early plans for an event in the summer of 2019 to mark the peace and aftermath of the First World War. A major Armistice exhibition at Norwich Castle in late 2018 is planned to cover Norfolk's experience of the First World War and the Armistice. The Ancient House will be lending material for this.

## **2 Forthcoming Displays**

### **2.1 *Handmade* Exhibition**

Work is underway on producing the new temporary exhibition at Ancient House, this time focussing on the craftsmanship of artefacts in the museum collections. The display will cover different materials with sections on textiles, ceramics, wood, metal and stone. Objects on display will include a wooden nurse and child doll from the 1840s, an intricate and colourful patchwork quilt, prehistoric flint tools, a mantrap once used on the Kilverstone estate near Thetford and a 17<sup>th</sup> century acoustic jar which was once built into a wall at the former Central Hotel on the Thetford Market Place. The exhibition will open to the public on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017 when the Museum will also be offering Free Admission as part of a Thank You event for Lottery ticket holders.

### **2.2. Duleep Singh Gallery Feasibility**

Feasibility work continues for making a new display in one of the upstairs exhibition rooms at Ancient House to make more of the unusual connections between the Museum and the Maharajah Duleep Singh and his family, especially his son Prince Frederick Duleep Singh. A number of private

donations have been received towards this project. A recent gift of a portrait of the Maharajah is planned to be included in the displays. The Museum plans to submit a bid to the HLF later in 2018 to cover the costs of the permanent display project.

The Museum is also working on plans for a partnership project to create a Punjab themed arts and culture Festival, to take place in the town in July 2018 year in association with Indi Sandhu and Giles Waterfield from the Essex Cultural Diversity Partnership who are planning a bid for funding to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This festival will provide an opportunity for further consultation on the display plans.

### **.2.3 Adjustment to the Thomas Paine display**

Museum staff will be updating the Thomas Paine display case in the Ancient House to incorporate the Droits de L'Homme (Rights of Man) book which was presented to the Museum in February.

## **3 Learning with Adults, Children and Young People**

### **3.1 Activities for children and Families**

The Museum continues to offer a varied programme of holiday activities for members of the public, including craft events and trails. A 2017 events flier was used to promote the Museum to children and families during the school holidays. In addition the museum's after school History Club, Teenage History Club and monthly Museum Club continue to be offered.

The Museum's Teenage History Club received a grant of £200 towards their activities from the Thetford Mayor's Office, allocated by outgoing Mayor Terry Jermy.

The museum is in regular contact with national campaign group Kids in Museums who also support the 'Takeover' events in museums. Ancient House undertook another *Twitter Takeover* event and Kids in Museums used a quote from a Thetford young person in their campaign: *'The best thing about today and when we have 'taken over' before is knowing that we are being trusted by the museum. 'Cos I know the museum staff are happy that I will do a good job it gives me confidence to do things which I am nervous or scared about. Then when I do the thing I realise I am quite good at it and the museum is right to trust me.'*

Two of the Thetford teenagers, Bethan and Emilia undertook their work experience at Ancient House and in July wrote a piece for the museums 'A History of Thetford in 100 artefacts' series for the Thetford and Brandon Times.

The Teenage History Club had requested a project to find out about people in the past who were not heterosexual. This links with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality. As part of their investigation they have visited curators at Norwich, and a visit to the Victoria & Albert Museum in

London is planned in November. This project may form part of a future bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's *Young Roots* strand to include a 3 month-long exhibition at Ancient House Museum.

The younger age-group History Club meets each Wednesday after school. Club members have been working on their Arts Awards inspired by the planning for the forthcoming *Handmade* exhibition.

The Ancient House Museum continues to offer a popular programme of themed gallery discovery trails, with a new trail available for each week of the school holidays. Recent trails have included an *Eric the Archaeologist* trail, a *Tales from the Riverbank* trail and a *Halloween* trail.

### **3.2 Talks programme, in association with the Friends of the Museum**

A programme of illustrated talks continues to be offered at Ancient House Museum on Tuesday afternoons. Recent topics have included Thetford Pubs by David Osborne, 'The High Lodge project by Ann Mason, Dr Minns, and Britain's first Black Mayor by Richard Maguire. Attendances average 15-25 and a number of talks are often delivered by NMS staff.

### **3.3 Textile groups**

The Museum continues to hold *Knit and Knatter* sessions at the Museum. A spinning group also meets at the Museum on a regular basis and offers demonstrations to visitors. The knitting group are assisting with the forthcoming *Handmade* exhibition by making letters in textile to create a title for this section of the display. Examples of their work will also be on display and the knitted tricycle will form one of the changing window displays for the exhibition.

### **3.4 Schools**

The Museum continues to offer a wide range of learning opportunities for schools. Delivery of the sessions is typically through a combination of museum staff, experienced freelancers and volunteers. A tried and tested format is to offer a 'carousel' of activities around the building with groups of schoolchildren moving between the activities such as object handling, drama, craft and food.

## **4 Ancient House and the Media**

### **4.1 Antiques Road Trip**

The Museum was filmed for the BBC's *Antiques Road Trip* in August 2017, this time focussing on the story of Thomas Paine. Learning Officer Melissa Hawker was filmed with presenter Raj Bisram. This provided an excellent opportunity to show the recently acquired early French edition of the *Rights of Man* as part of this programme. We are waiting to hear from the production team about a transmission date. The previous occasion on which the Museum was featured in this programme resulted in additional people coming to visit.

#### **4.2 *Thetford in 100 Artefacts*, monthly column in *Thetford and Brandon Times***

Staff at the Ancient House continue with their project in partnership with the EDP's *Thetford and Brandon Times* to write a monthly column. Entitled *Thetford in a Hundred Artefacts*, recent pieces have included a miniature cannon, star pincushion and Thetford Cage model. The article provides an opportunity to highlight objects from the museum collections and to promote forthcoming museum events.

#### **4.3 Social media**

The Museum continues to develop its social media presence with Twitter and Facebook accounts. At time of writing, the Museum currently has 2,481 Twitter followers and 551 likes on Facebook.

The Museum joined other museums across the world for #MuseumWeek in June with posts about Stories, Food, Travel, Women, Heritage, Music and Sport, drawing upon the collections people and activities associated with the museum and the history of the area. Other social media events the Ancient House participated in included #internationalWomensDay and #DayofFacts. In the summer there will be another Teenage History Club twitter Takeover Day in association with Kids in Museums.

### **5 Other Museum Developments**

#### **5.1 Volunteers**

A small team of volunteers meet on a weekly basis in the Museum. Volunteers have continued with a programme of documentation work involving the photographing and cataloguing of some of the recent acquisitions. The team's work enhances and illustrates the museum catalogue available online through the museum service's collections website.

Volunteers also contribute to the Learning work through delivery of the Mini Museum Club for the under 5s, the delivery of sessions for schools and preparing resource boxes for learning activities.

#### **5.2 Friends of the Museum**

The Friends of the Museum continue to support the Museum through fundraising activities and through promoting the Museum across the town. The Friends committee visited Sutton Hoo in the summer paid for by a bequest to the Friends from former chair, John Rogers.

#### **5.3 Museum Trainee Scheme**

During 2017 - 2018, the Ancient House Museum is hosting a 12-month traineeship provided through the NMS *Teaching Museum* programme, funded as part of the NMS Arts Council England Major Partner Museum business plan. Our current Trainee is Sam Bellotti who has settled in very well and will be undertaking a range of museum work to gain experience for his future career.

#### **5.4 Staffing**

The Museum has recently appointed Kathryn Knock as a new Museum Learning Assistant.

#### **6 Visitor Numbers**

6.1 Up to date visitor figures will be circulated at the meeting.

#### **7 Resource implications**

- |     |                               |      |
|-----|-------------------------------|------|
| (a) | <u>Finance</u>                | None |
| (b) | <u>Property</u>               | None |
| (c) | <u>Staff</u>                  | None |
| (d) | <u>Information Technology</u> | None |

#### **8 Recommendations:**

That the Area Museums Committee notes the report

Originator of report:

Oliver Bone

Curator

Ancient House Museum of Thetford Life

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**BRECKLAND  
AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**27 November 2017                      Item No.**

**GRESSENHALL FARM AND WORKHOUSE REPORT**

**Report by the Operations Manager – West**

**This report provides information on activities at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse from July 2017 to October 2017.**

**1. Events and Activities**

- 1.1 Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse closed for the season on Sunday 29 October 2017. The museum will reopen from Monday 12 to Friday 16 February 2018, 10am to 4pm. The 2018 main season will commence on Sunday 11 March, after which the museum will be open daily 10am to 5pm.
- 1.2 Gressenhall continues to offer a broad programme of events based around the four operational models:
  - Special Event days – major events which require full event staffing and set up, including the use of large parking fields. For 2017, these were: *Spring Fair, Rock 'n' Roll at Gressenhall, Village at War* and *Apple Day*. A premium ticket price applies on these days to reflect the high level of activities taking place. Free admission continues to be provided to Norfolk Museums Pass holders.
  - Days with a Difference – smaller themed events such as *Mother's Day* and *Gressenhall Goes Wild*. These require smaller staffing complement and utilise core parking. They are aimed at attracting audiences of 500-800 visitors. Again, they are offered free to Norfolk Museums Pass holders.
  - Norfolk School Holiday activities – extra themed activities delivered each day of the Norfolk School holidays, with minimal increase in staffing. Free to Norfolk Museums Pass holders.
  - Ticketed Events – pre-booked and pre-paid events. For 2017, these included the murder mystery event *A Murder Most Novel*. These style of events, held outside of standard opening hours or of the main season, offer a reduced charge to Norfolk Museums Pass holders.

1.3 During the period covered by this report, these events have included:  
Special Event Days:

- *Village at War* (2,878 visitors over the two-day event)
- *Apple Day* (2,585 visitors)

Days with a Difference:

- *Story Festival* (419 visitors)
- *Heritage Open Day* – free admission (1,940 visitors)

Norfolk School Holiday Activities:

- Summer holidays – *Oh, What a Picture; Harness Up!; Workhouse Cluedo* (12,755 visitors)
- October Half Term – *Create!* (2,035 visitors)

In addition to these activities, the museum organised two special events to acknowledge its gratitude to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the financial support given to the *Voices from the Workhouse* project. *Workhouse After Dark* offered free admission to players of The National Lottery between 6pm and 8pm on Friday 27 and Saturday 28 October. A total of 761 visitors explored the museum by LED candlelight, tasted gruel, helped with the laundry and met costumed characters from the Workhouse.

- 1.4 Planning has already started on the 2018 events programme which is likely to follow a similar structure, with new event themes planned and some firm favourites returning such as *Horse Power* and a *Victorian Family Christmas*. Prior to the start of the new season, there will be a Preview Day aimed at Norfolk Pass Holders, Friends of Gressenhall and Players of The National Lottery on Saturday 10 March 2018. This will also be promoted to all groups, organisations and individuals who have helped to create and support the *Voices from the Workhouse* Project, and form a celebration of the end of this redevelopment.
- 1.5 These events continue to attract Norfolk Museums Pass holders and to act as a driver to further pass sales. By way of an example, at the *Apple Day* event, 44% of visitors were Norfolk Museums Pass holders. During the day, a further 27 Norfolk Museums Passes were sold.
- 1.6 The costs of delivering and marketing the Gressenhall event programme continues to be subsidised with funding from the Arts Council England (ACE) as part of the 2015-18 Major Partner Museum ACE business plan.
- 1.7 The Gressenhall events programme is promoted via a specific piece of print, as well as an increased programme of digital marketing including Facebook adverts and the museums own social media presence.

## 2. Other Museum Developments

- 2.1 Following the successful grant award of £1.47m (79%) from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the *Voices from the Workhouse* project, the redeveloped workhouse spaces were formally launched July 2016. A further marketing push was made at the start of the 2017 main season, with the creation and distribution of a specific piece of print. The second phase of this project is progressing, focusing on the first floor Collections Gallery. The gallery was opened as a 'work in progress' to visitors for May Half Term 2017, since which work has continued whilst remaining open. During the 2017-18 winter closure, the finishing touches will be made to the gallery including the completion of the display and labelling of the 2,000+ objects from the museum's rural life collections.
- 2.2 To help families to access the Collections Gallery, a number of *Gallery Challenges* have been created, aimed at Key Stage One and Two children. These encourage children to interpret and explore the objects in the gallery in new and exciting ways. Key Stage One cards encourage younger children to find items related to tradition tales: for example, they pretend to be the three pigs and need to find something made of straw, wood and a brick. Key Stage Two children are invited to find items to help fight off a zombie invasion, mend their intergalactic spaceship or prepare a meal for a hungry T-rex.
- 2.3 As part of the new Collections Gallery, a dedicated temporary exhibition space has been created to house an annual show. The 2017 exhibition *Rural Lives* included photographs of Norfolk people from the past and also from today through the work of contemporary photographer J. A. Mortram. The 2018 exhibition *Beer and Brewing - Norfolk's Rural Pubs* will open for the start of the new season. This will look at the changing roles of pubs and the relationships they have with their local communities. Family visitors will be able to play traditional pub games including the Norfolk favourite 'twizzler'. A plaster panel created by the artist John Moray-Smith will be one of the objects on display.
- 2.4 Building on the success of last year's *Collaborate* programme, which saw the museum working with a wide range of creative individuals and groups, *Collaborate 2017* was themed on Rural Lives, taking inspiration from the temporary exhibition as well as the wider displays in the Collections Gallery. The results, which included textile work, sculpture, paintings and poetry, were included within the Collections Gallery during October Half Term. More information can be found on the *Collaborate* blog <https://collaboratewithgressenhall.wordpress.com>
- 2.5 Partnership development of the digital offer at Gressenhall has continued, including the creation of new content for the Collections Gallery and Workhouse galleries on Ipad tablets available to visitors. University of East Anglia PIPs placements, three month internships



with science Ph.D. students, have led to the development of a range of digital tools for the interpretation of historical graffiti, medical and costume and textile collections. These have demonstrated the museum's ability to use the flexible content management system *Darwin* to constantly update and re-refresh the digital offer. The system enables the museum to add or remove activities before publishing the new version of the tablet tool for updating to our suite of iPads for visitor use. Following the successful integration of WiFi to key areas of the site and on-site testing, these will be formally launched for the 2018 season.

- 2.6 Gressenhall's Curator Dr Megan Dennis continues to develop links with the Digital Humanities Forum at Carleton College, Minnesota. This innovative liberal arts college have created a 3D virtual model of the workhouse as it was in 1779. New work on a joint museum and collage taught work-based module will take place in Spring Semester 2018. This will see Carleton students creating additional material for the Gressenhall tablet, and developing new digital material for display on the permanent projectors including an evolving 3D cartoon of the changing building from the House of Industry period to the present day, animated journeys through the virtual rooms and additional "play" pins for the *Darwin* tablet framework.
- 2.7 The use of cutting edge technology allowing visitors to 'meet' real people from the workhouse's history have been well received. However, for some visitors they have the potential to cause sensory overload. The Gressenhall team recognised the need to make adjustments for autistic visitors, and piloted a programme of "early bird" openings for families visiting with autistic children. A close partnership was formed with Autism Anglia, and Gressenhall formally signed the Autism Charter to show its commitment to being autism friendly. Training sessions were held for staff and volunteers, and a "visual story" was created and circulated to all families in advance. Three "early bird" openings were held during the Summer Holidays with adjustments made to the museum displays during this time. 41 people attended these events, with positive comments received from all participants. Further dates are now planned for 2018.
- 2.8 During recent years, the Norfolk Collections Centre has opened more frequently to support Gressenhall events and activities. This followed the reorganisation of these large object stores during the *Shine a Light* project funded by The Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund. During 2016 and 2017, the Norfolk Collections Centre was open to the public on 38 separate occasions, welcoming 1,074 visitors. A variety of events have been offered, including Behind the Scenes tours, themed tours (including printing and brewing), children's storytelling sessions, craft activities and trails during half-term holidays and West Runton Mammoth tours on the most recent Heritage Open Day. In 2017, chargeable events were introduced, that offer visitors additional extras. These include Behind the Scenes tours for private group bookings,

West Runton Mammoth tours, and an art class in a museum store. Open dates for 2018 have already been planned and more information can be found on the Norfolk Museums Service Collections Management Twitter feed Twitter account @NMSCollMan.

- 2.9 Maintaining and growing a strong Social Media presence remains a key priority for Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse and the site has four Social Media Champions to ensure the regular publishing of interesting content on Facebook and Twitter. All staff are encouraged to support this, supplying content and images. These Champions also respond to enquiries and reviews made via these channels, Trip Advisor and Google Reviews. At the end of October 2017 the museum had 3,766 Facebook likes and 5,142 Twitter followers. A Pinterest account has also been established with a wide range of boards including 'Weddings at Gressenhall'. An Instagram page has also been established and currently has 718 followers. Furthermore, Gressenhall continues to generate regular blogs about work taking place at the museum. The site has been awarded a Certificate of Excellence from the influential TripAdvisor website.

To connect with Gressenhall, please visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/GressenhallFW>

<https://twitter.com/GressenhallFW>

<https://www.pinterest.com/gressenhallfwh/>

[https://www.instagram.com/gressenhall\\_fw/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/gressenhall_fw/?hl=en)

<https://gressenhallfw.wordpress.com/>

[http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse](http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Gressenhall_Farm_and_Workhouse)

- 2.10 Gressenhall continues to develop a range of commercial activities as a means of generating income, including room and venue hire. Five weddings are already booked for the 2018 season, and negotiations are underway to work with an events management company to develop this offer further. The aim is to deliver a high quality offer whilst ensuring that such bookings do not detract from key museum activities.

### **3. Friends and Volunteers**

- 3.1 The Friends of Gressenhall AGM took place on 15 June 2017 at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse with bi-monthly Committee Meetings held at the museum.
- 3.2 The Friends of Gressenhall continue to support a range of activities across the site including significant levels of funding towards the upkeep of the Suffolk Punch horses. In recent months, the Friends have generously agreed to support a project to restore the Farmers' Foundry engine boiler (formerly part of the Bygones Collection at Holkham) back to working use. This is in addition to a grant of £19,788 from the Arts Council England Preservation of Industrial and Scientific Material PRISM fund. Work is currently underway to assess the level of work required to make the

engine fully operational. This engine was manufactured by the Farmer's Foundry Company, Great Ryburgh, just seven miles from Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. The portable steam engine was used to power a range of different processes including threshing work, corn-mills, centrifugal pumps, stone-crushers, dynamos, chaff-cutters, hay-balers and saw benches.

3.3 The Friends continue to operate the Gressenhall second hand bookshop, generating income for the Friends. Recruitment of a new team of active Bookshop volunteers has helped to ensure that new donations throughout the 2017 season were processed daily and the shelves tidied. Income from this shop continues to grow.

3.4 The Gressenhall Curator Dr Megan Dennis continues to co-ordinate, manage and develop the volunteer teams at Gressenhall. Around 120 volunteers are currently active on site, organised into a number of specialist teams. Volunteer hours are currently being recorded to provide HLF contribution in kind match funding for the *Voices from the Workhouse* project. Between January and September 2017, these volunteers gave over 7,700 hours of time on site to support the museum, with additional volunteers working from home on digitalisation projects.

3.5 We have continued to develop our commitment to community volunteering within the Collections Gallery, building on the popular family volunteering carried out last year. Community-chosen objects form part of the displays, with family volunteers selecting their favourite object for display and writing labels for them. We hope that these families will be able to join us to celebrate the launch of the new space in the special preview day at the start of the 2018 season.

## **4 Learning & Outreach**

4.1 The museum continues to be popular with school visits and over 10,500 children from across Norfolk and beyond visited in 2016-17. Bookings for the autumn have been strong and in line with previous years, which is positive given the additional budgetary pressures being felt by schools.

4.2 In August, the Gressenhall Learning Team were pleased to welcome members of the Norfolk Virtual School Sensory Support team (teachers, support assistants, rehabilitation officers, an educational audiologist, child psychotherapist, technical support officer and ICT specialist trainer) and pupils from pre-school to Year 4 and their families to Gressenhall for an exploration day. This proved extremely popular and nearly 60 families (275 people of all ages) attended. Working together, the museum organised a range of activities across the site for the families, as well as taking the opportunity to evaluate the new displays and galleries for those with sensory support needs. As a result, an action plan for improving accessibility for these visitors has been created.

4.3 The format of the event for the Norfolk Virtual School Sensory Support Team mirrors that delivered in partnership with the Norfolk Fostering and Adoption Services. The Gressenhall Learning Team are currently exploring options to use this model to create a new special day aimed at young people, exploring issues surrounding mental health.

4.4 Gressenhall continues to be registered with NCC as a Care Farm. The site is currently offering funded work-based placements to a number of adults with learning difficulties.

## **5 Visitor numbers**

5.1 Visitor figures for the period will be circulated at the meeting.

## **6 Resource implications**

### **(a) Finance**

Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse receives funding to support core operations and activities from Norfolk County Council. A number of activities are financed as part of funding to Norfolk Museums Service from Arts Council England as a Major Partner Museum under the terms of the current 2015-18 Business Plan. Project activities are funded from a range of external sources including the Heritage Lottery Fund. The source of these funds are detailed within the report. The above report includes no additional or unfunded financial implications.

### **(b) Property**

Unless specified, the above activities relate to the Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse and Norfolk Collections Centre site. The above report includes no additional implications relating to property.

### **(c) Staff**

The team at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse are supported by a wider team of colleagues within Norfolk Museums Service. Some current posts are funded by external project funding. The above report includes no additional implications relating to staffing and personnel resources.

### **(d) Information Technology**

Digital operations at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse are supported by Norfolk County Council's IMT department. Social media is delivered by the Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse team. The above report includes no additional implications relating to Information Technology.

## **7 Recommendations:**

7.1 That the Area Museums Committee notes the report

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