
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

BRECKLAND AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

**Held on Monday, 8 October 2018 at 10.30 am in
Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum, Fakenham Road, Gressenhall, Beetley,
Dereham, NR20 4DR**

PRESENT

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| Councillor C. Bowes | Mr R.G. Kybird |
| Mr R. F. W. Brame | Mr P.J. Duigan (Vice-Chairman) |
| Mr H. E. J. Clarke (Chairman) | Mr F. Eagle |
| Mr P. R. W. Darby | Mr W. R. J. Richmond |

Also Present

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| Keith Robinson | Friends of Ancient House Museum |
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In Attendance

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| Hannah Jackson | - Operations Manager West |
| Dr. Robin Hanley | - Assistant Head of Museums |
| Leanne Neave | - Democratic Services Officer |

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17/18 CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor Kybird be appointed as Chairman for the ensuing year.

18/18 VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor Duigan be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

19/18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May were confirmed as an accurate record.

20/18 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillors Jermy and Kiddle-Morris and Mr Oliver Bone.

21/18 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Keith Robinson the Chairman of Friends of Ancient House Museum.

It was confirmed that the presentation from SHARE Museum East

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would take place at a future meeting.

The Chairman passed his congratulations to the team for their successful funding bid for Norwich Castle. Dr Robin Hanley, Assistant Head of Museums, Norfolk Museum Service confirmed the Round 2 Heritage Lottery Fund funding application had been successful. The match funding was also in place. Work would commence in the Keep after May 2019 with the reopening anticipated for Summer 2020. He reminded Members the museum would remain open to the public during the redevelopment.

22/18 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

23/18 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

24/18 GRESSENHALL FARM AND WORKHOUSE REPORT

Hannah Jackson Operations Manager and Dr Robin Hanley presented the report for Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Report.

The highlights were:

Major Event days Retro Revival had seen 1500 visitors. The Village at War event had taken place on August bank holiday and Apple Day would be on October 14th. There had been several smaller events, "Days with a Difference", Futuristic Farming had looked at farming historically and what it would be like in the future. Fathers day "beer and brewing" had complemented the temporary exhibition and the Story Festival day had featured Strange Fascination Theatre Company who performed "Journey to the Centre of the Earth", these events had attracted fewer visitors than in previous years. The Horse Power day had proved popular still with 800 visitors and the Heritage open day, which offered free admission saw 2500 visitors.

Throughout the school holidays different themes had been offered which gave visitors the opportunity to explore the site and use the areas in a different way.

The short courses, "willow garden sculptures" and "print making" had both sold out and it was hoped that the forthcoming "apple tree pruning" and "needle felting" would be as popular.

Museum developments – The "Voices from the Workhouse" project would complete in December. The last new space, The Collections Gallery, reopened in March 2018. The tablet tool had been formally launched, this gave visitors another way of exploring the site, it had activities, games and resources on them. The developments had come in under budget and following negotiations with the National Lottery Fund the money would be used to improve the Transport Gallery over the winter. Additional resources had also been added to the Collections Gallery.

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Temporary exhibition – “beer and brewing” celebrating Norfolk pubs. It was noted that temporary exhibitions were not only a great way of engaging with different visitors it had provide the theme for this years “Collaborate” exhibition which opened in September and inspired several groups to create their own response in the form of wall hangings, prints, digital interventions and the re creation of a panel.

Norfolk Collections Centre – this had opened to visitors on a number of days throughout the season and had offered the opportunity to attend a West Runton Mammoth tour.

Commercial activity – work was continuing with the Norfolk Events Company to further develop the offer of Gressenhall as a Wedding Venue. It was noted that five weddings had been held at the Museum this season.

Friends and volunteers – The Chairman requested that the Chairman of Friends of Gressenhall be written to making the offer for a member to be a co-optee on the Breckland Area Museums Committee.

School visitors. 2017-18 saw total numbers for schools across the service hitting record levels, around 50,000 school children. Gressenhall had over 10,500 children from school. That trend is continuing across the service.

With the deletion of Victorian, Tudors and Stewards from the curriculum Gressenhall had introduced the Neolithic sessions and these had proved popular.

Members were advised that a signed agreement with UEA for educational sites had been made and students were given free access to museum.

Members were advised that work with colleagues within Norfolk County Council to support work around wellbeing, fostering and adoption was ongoing. Held wellbeing event focussing on mental health of young people. Following the event YMCA gave training to staff on mental health in young people. The annual family fun day in association with Norfolk County Council adoptions services saw nearly 600 adopted family members on site.

Work was continuing with Norfolk County Council virtual school sensory support team. Support was offered to children who faced many challenges, some with visual and hearing impairments. It was suggested that Jan Pitman could attend a meeting at Gressenhall and give a presentation on learning and packages available.

Visitor numbers

September saw visitor numbers increased from the previous year. Figures had been impacted by a wet Easter and a humid summer which did impact numbers. September had regained some normality.

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25/18 ANCIENT HOUSE MUSEUM THETFORD REPORT

Hannah Jackson Operations Manager and Dr Robin Hanley presented the report for Ancient House Museum, Thetford.

The highlights were:

Duleep Singh special exhibition opened in July as part of the festival of Thetford and Punjab. Work was continuing on ideas of how to make more of Duleep Singh connections, Siekh communities were being engaged with and ideas from visitors were being collected to help inform future projects.

The new temporary exhibition "Pride of the People" had opened.

The knit and knatter group have created items for the town council, knitted poppies will be used at the Guildhall, one poppy for each of Thetford's fallen. Tank drivers masks had be loaned to Norwich Castle for their display.

Current display was Pride of the People, a project co created by the Teenage History Club. It looked at local LGBTQ history and linked into the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality

Councillor Brame gave his thanks to the History Club for taking the subject and presenting it.

Learning - The History Club for younger children were actively engaged in Punjab festival. They also ran the takeover tour on 21st July. A mini museum club was offered for the under 5's. Work was being done to develop early years sessions, either for groups, childminders or families with under 5's.

Nagawa Japan – A party from Nagawa visited Thetford visiting most sites in Thetford, the group stayed with people from the teenage history club.

Media – Members were reminded of the ongoing partnership with Thetford and Brandon Times. There had been lots of coverage throughout the festival from local media and coverage on the Sikh TV channel.

Museum development – volunteers were going through the collections to see if everything was in the right place. Photos and images of material had been taken which would enhance the catalogue. Some background work had also been undertaken to get items for exhibition.

Members were advised that the Prince Frederick collections were split between the museum and the library, the latter also held a collection of uncatalogued prints from his collections. Prince Frederick had visited lots of the large houses around Norfolk and Suffolk and produced two volumes of portraits of country houses. A unique third copy had also been produced which was held in Thetford, whilst the

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National Gallery would like to display it Prince Fredericks instructions were that it must remain in Thetford.

Keith Robinson advised regular meetings were held to look at how the membership of the Friends could be extended.

The Chairman advised a long term wish was to gather a collection of Thetford minted coins.

Teaching museum training scheme was now in its sixth year, current trainee was Samantha Parker who joined in April for 12 months at Ancient House and Lynn Museum.

Visitor numbers it was noted that numbers had been very good in July due to festival, however numbers had also been good in August and September.

26/18 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was agreed for 4th March at 10.30am at Ancient House Museum Thetford.

It would include the presentation from SHARE.

Members were reminded they could ask for items to be included on the agenda.

The meeting closed at 11.50am

CHAIRMAN