



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

Museum Management Working Group

- Date:** Wednesday, 11th March, 2020
Time: 6.00 pm
Venue: Committee Room - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
- Chairman:** Councillor G Sell
Members: Councillors N Gregory, P Lavelle and B Light

AGENDA PART 1

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**
To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** 4 - 7
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3 Museum Society Chairman's report** 8
To consider the Museum Society Chairman's report.
- 4 Museum Curator's Quarterly Report Q3 October-December 2019** 9 - 24
To consider the Museum Curator's Quarterly Report.
- 5 Documentation Policy** 25 - 33
To consider the Documentation Policy.
- 6 Development Project and Forward Plan** 34 - 54

To receive a verbal update on the Development Project and to receive the Interim Forward Plan.

7 Any other items which the Chairman considers to be urgent

To receive any items that the Chairman considers to be urgent

8 Date & time of next meeting.

To consider the date and time of the next meeting.

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

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Agenda Item 2

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at COMMITTEE ROOM - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillor G Sell (Chair)
Councillors B Light

Officers in attendance: A Mawson (Democratic Services Officer), A Webb (Director - Finance and Corporate Services) and C Wingfield (Curator - Saffron Walden Museum)

Also Present: K Eden, R Priestley, P Walker and T Watson (Museum Society)

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gregory.

2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

3 **MUSEUM SOCIETY CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Museum Society Chairman presented his report.

4 **Q2 MUSEUM QUARTERLY REPORT JULY-SEPT 2019**

The Curator presented her report for the July to September quarter, and highlighted the following areas;

- The recruitment of new casual museum assistants.
- The continued and valued contribution that the volunteers make to the museum.
- The recent fire risk assessment report, the outcome of which was good and two out of the three minor recommendations have been completed.
- Rundown of the buildings and site works; shire hill store gully clearance and maintenance.

The Curator also spoke of a gold Anglo-Saxon signet ring (known as the North-west Essex ring, museum accession no. 2014.1) that had been requested for loan to an exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich from 25 July to 18 October 2020. The Museum Society Board

agreed to this request on 29 October 2019. The exhibition was titled; 'Nara to Norvic: Arrivals and Beliefs at the Extremities of the Silk Roads, AD 500-1000'.

The hoop of the ring was decorated with bird and interlace patterns in moulded low relief, with other motifs the shoulders, either side of the rectangular bezel. The bezel was engraved with a figure holding a cross-headed staff in one hand and a bird of prey on the other wrist; there was a larger bird of prey above him. The ring appeared to reference both Germanic / pagan and late Roman / Christian symbolism and dated from the period of Sutton Hoo and the emergence of regional kingdoms in England under Anglo-Saxon leadership, and the gradual adoption of Christianity. It was a unique object and was likely to have belonged to a king or at least a person wielding significant power.

The Curator said that the 'Take away the walls' exhibition had resulted in new partnerships for the museum.

The Curator went through the visitors' figures for the quarter and advised that the Museum was very close to the notional target of 3,600 and only fell slightly short with 3,387 users for the quarter. It was also noted that the cumulative figure was still above the target for the year.

The Curator went on to highlight the upcoming events.

Councillor Light expressed her gratitude to the volunteers.

The Curator said that she would email them and pass on the appreciation.

In response to a Member question the Museum Society Chairman said that there would be a Christmas Party that the volunteers would also be invited to.

Councillor Sell asked the Curator about the figures as he pointed out that last September's figures were better.

In response the Curator said that each year is different and that the overall figures for the year were not a concern.

5 COLLECTIONS CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY

The Curator presented the Collections Care and Conservation Policy 2020-2025.

The policy covered both preventative conservation, to minimise damage to or deterioration of collections, and remedial conservations, to stabilise or improve the condition of collections.

The Chairman of the Museum Society advised that they had approved the policy that morning.

In response to a Member question the Curator said that there were a number of approaches which identified which items were in need of conservation and the priority in which they were processed.

The Curator assured the Members that due to the recent moving of items from Newport to Shire Hill that a current inventory of items and their conditions had been done and that she was confident of the stable environment at Shire Hill. The Curator added that they ensured that vulnerable items were kept close monitored.

6 **ACCESS POLICY STATEMENT**

The Curator presented the Access Policy 2020-2025.

The Working Group discussed various access issues;

- An access audit was being carried out by an external specialist using feedback from local groups.
- An access statement would be available on the website following the audit.
- Mobility scooters posed a problem however wheelchair access was possible and the museum had two wheelchairs which were available for members of the public to borrow.
- It was possible for self-propelled wheelchair users to get around the majority of the museum.
- Signage is being tackled to be clearer.
- 'Talking tiles' are being utilised for audio descriptions.
- Redesign is being considered to aid flow and access around the museum.

The Chairman of the Museum Society advised that they had approved the policy that morning.

7 **UPDATE ON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENTS (RESILIENT HERITAGE PROJECT FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND)**

The Curator said that a start had been made on the project with the consultants. They had met with the Museum team including all the volunteers. A paper is scheduled for the end of November and an additional meeting on the 14th November including a tour of the Shire Hill store.

There would be a list of options available by Christmas, and there would be another meeting in January. The next step would be audience testing and then a final list of costed options by June/July.

The working group discussed ideas on increasing the visibility of the Museum, for example;

- Signage at Swan Meadow car park.
- Heritage Trail inclusion.
- Interactive map.

- Local signage.

8 **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT**

None

9 **DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING.**

The next meetings will need to link with the Cabinet meetings. The next two dates were suggested in preferential order:

- 1) Wednesday 22 January 6-7pm
- 2) Wednesday 29 January 6-7pm

Meeting Close 7pm

Agenda Item 3

Museum Management Working Group Meeting to be agreed Museum Society Chairman's Report

During the last two months we have been involved in meetings related to the current consultations for the re-development of the Museum. The interim report is over eighty pages long with two appendices. The Societies Development Committee and Board have discussed this fully in preparation for a meeting with the consultants on the 10th February. There are numerous options suggested which we have discussed and have identified those which we feel are the most realistic. Further details will be available at the re-arranged MMWG meeting.

The preview of the current exhibition "From Death Masks to Diaries" was held on the 15th November and we were pleased that some Councillors were able to join us. There was the usual support from members and a number of visitors. The annual Xmas party held on the 9th December was a great success and a relief from the election process! We had the usual excellent quiz arranged by Paul Salvidge and a profitable draw organised by Peter Walker. We were again well supported by members despite the weather.

The monthly talks programme continued in November with an excellent talk by Councillor Paul Fairhurst on "The Battle of Rorke's Drift. We discovered from questions at the end that a number of those present have been to Rorke's Drift and were grateful for the view of the Battle from the viewpoint of the Zulu's. January we were entertained by Peter Layzell with The Essex Regiment during World War One. This was so well attended we had to get out more chairs before the talk could begin. Our thanks to Paul Salvidge and his committee for these excellent talks.

Tony Watson

1 Museum Management and Staff

1.1 Management

Accreditation

The revision of the Museum's Access Policy and Conservation & Care of Collections Policy was completed and both policies were approved by the Museum Society Board and through MMWG, by Cabinet in November for Accreditation. Work continues on accompanying plans (which are working documents, not requiring formal approval) and on a revised Documentation Policy, which will need to be considered by the Museum Society Board and MMWG in January.

Forward Plan: NHLF Resilient Heritage project

Our consultants and Fourth Street (Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study) and Julia Holberry Associates (Audience Development) met with the Project Steering Group and staff on 21 October for the 'Project Start-up' day, which included a site tour, a meeting with the Project Steering group and an afternoon workshop with a group representative of all staff and volunteer teams. A further round of site tours and small group meetings took place on 14 November involving members of the Fourth Street team, curatorial staff and Council officers. Julia Holberry Associates ran a series of meetings with local stakeholders in November, in liaison with Fourth Street and emerging options for consideration.

Because of the large amount of data and ideas to assimilate, it was agreed in mid-December that the first options report would be circulated promptly in New Year, to allow time for all of Fourth Street's team to make full input; a report of work in progress was provided for the Curator and senior Project Team members as confirmation of work done. This enabled a schedule of meetings to be set up for January 2020 to consider the forthcoming Options report, starting with Museum Development Committee (effectively the Project Steering group) on 14th January, continuing with Museum Society Board and MMWG on 21st and 22nd January respectively and finally, a Project Steering group meeting with Fourth Street on either Monday 3^{rs} or Monday 10th February (tbc).

Other Management issues

Internal Audit have been conducting an audit of the Museum Service; a report is expected in the New Year.

The Curator and Collections Officer took part in a web conference with the Collections Trust and representatives of several other museums. This was part of the Collections Trust's research on setting up an aggregator website for collections, which would help with sharing collections data for research and provide museums with better options for making their collections available on-line to the general public.

There was one breach of GDPR (General Data Protection regulations) when the Curator inadvertently sent an email to 'All Volunteers' without 'blind copying' the email group list; this would have allowed volunteers to view each other's email addresses. This was reported to the Council's GDPR Compliance Officer who decided it was not a serious breach, however an apology was issued to volunteers and it was used to remind everyone about protocols and checks.

1.2 Staff, Volunteers and Work Experience

Staff

Two new museum assistants (Francesco Maione and Victoria Mansfield) have now joined the team on the casuals' rota to help support the museum at weekends and for additional events.

Access to Work support for Sarah Kenyon, Natural Sciences Officer, was reviewed and the funding for a Support Worker to assist her has been increased from 4.5 to 6 hours per week. Fiona Turnbull, one of the Museum Assistants who has been covering the role in the interim, is going to be the dedicated Support Worker. She will be employed by agency HRGO Recruitment Ltd.

Volunteers

We were very sorry to learn that both Peter Stribling and Gillian Ram died unexpectedly over the Christmas period. Peter had been helping out at Shirehill with archaeological projects and Gillian gave a friendly welcome to our visitors on Thursday mornings; both had been with the Museum for a couple of years. We send our condolences to their families; they will both be sadly missed.

Welcome Desk Volunteers

We extend a warm welcome to our new Welcome Desk volunteer, Jane Hook and extend our grateful thanks to all our volunteers who manned the Welcome Desk over the festive period, including Bruce Tice (Museum Assistant) and family for their traditional Boxing Day shift. Special thanks to June Baker for her help inducting our new recruit and dressing the part for Museums at Night.

Collections Volunteers

This month we said goodbye to Human History volunteers Lillie Weston and Charles Welham who have left to pursue further education and employment opportunities and thank them for their volunteering. We welcomed Dominic Davey who will be working on backlog documentation relating to the geology collections at Shirehill.

Volunteers	Estimated Hours
Collections volunteers	
Hamish McIlwrick - inventory of the photograph collection (4hrs p. week)	48
Ian adding accession register entries to Excel spreadsheet & begun work on SWMS minutes (6 hrs per week)	72
Len Pole adding detail to Modes records for World Cultures collection (3 hrs per wk)	36
Jane and David Laing inventorying the Document Archive (3 hours per week x 2 people)	72
Lillie Weston – social media research (4 hrs per week)	12
Charles Welham – inventorying the ceramic store collections (4 hrs per week)	48
Archaeology volunteers Joanne Pegrum, Peter Morrissey, Peter Stribling	21
Natural Sciences volunteers	
Heather Douglas updating location records in Modes Complete	20
Tony Morton, Ken Rivett, Mike Rowley, Margaret Rufus, Heather and Paul Salvidge checking that the November full width cut of special roadside verges was completed correctly and reporting	10

missing or damaged marker posts and plaques.	
Richard Priestly, Peter Morrissey and Joanne Pegrum assisting with de-install of <i>Take Away the Walls</i> exhibition.	13.5
Cali Holberry and Dominic Davey working on backlog documentation and cleaning of the geology collection at Shirehill.	12
Wildlife Garden Volunteers	
Issa Cochran and Ann Bannister carried out watering and light maintenance duties.	5
Learning & Outreach Volunteers	
Jane Evans, Chris Phillips, Jeanette Fulcher, Ann Banister and Sue Cockerell helped to deliver a very full program of activities and events plus additional support for planning and making of materials.	110
Exhibition Change	
Ron Lowe, Peter Morrissey, Richard Priestley and Joanne Pegrum provided vital support in exhibition change.	53
Jane and David Laing carried out further work on Diary's for exhibition	20
Admin volunteers	
Mary Adams provides invaluable support with the financial administration	56
Welcome Desk volunteers	
The Welcome Desk volunteers are the 'Face of the Museum', providing friendly welcome for visitors; selling tickets and merchandise, and providing information about the Museum. <i>*Winter Closing</i> Tues-Fri (10am-4.30*pm, 6.5 hours, 4 days per week) and Sun / Bank Holiday (2-4.30pm, 2.5 hours) {(13 x (6.5x4) + (13 x 2.5) + (1 x 2.5) + 6.5 – 17 hours Festive Closures}	362.5
June Baker: induction training for new recruit (JH, 9 hours) and Museums at Night (3 hours)	12
Total hours contributed by all volunteers for this quarter Equivalent to 27 weeks of full-time work	983

1.3 Training and Seminars Attended

Date	Course and Staff
30, 31 Oct, 3 Dec	Institute of Leadership & Management level 5 course, plus 1 study day and 1 TOIL day for completing assignment, SMT cohort, UDC Offices – Carolyn Wingfield, Curator (course runs till April 2020)
2-4 Oct	Museums Association Conference & Exhibition 2019, Brighton: 'Sustainable and Ethical Museums in a Globalised World. James Lumbar, Natural Sciences Officer
10 Oct	Procurement card training. Jenny Oxley, Wendy-Jo Atter and Charlotte Pratt
18 Nov	<u>SHARE Museums East of England Conference, North Hertfordshire Museum, Guest Speakers, Break-out sessions and Networking. Jenny Oxley</u>
04, 11, 18 & 25 Nov	IOSH Management Health and Safety course at UDC Offices, London Road. Attended by Stefan Shambrook, Security & Premises Officer

1.4 Health & Safety

An incident occurred on 17 December when a visitor suffered a sudden and painful failure of a knee and leg while walking upstairs between mezzanine levels; no actual accident (e.g. trip) or external factors were involved. Staff assisted the visitor and the young adult (with special needs) in her care, until assistance arrived. No ambulance was available within 8 hours to move the visitor, who was eventually able to get into a stair lift, supported by staff and then into a wheelchair on the ground floor level. She was taken to A&E by a relative.

2 Buildings and Site

2.1 Security

A security inspection for Accreditation was made on 11 December by Stephen Armson-Smith, Heritage Crime Prevention Lead for Essex Police. His assessment of the Museum indicated a number of small measures which could be undertaken to tighten security, though there were no major shortcomings identified. These recommendations will now be addressed by the Security & Premises Officer with Saffron Security, budgets permitting. There were no specific recommendations for the Shire Hill store.

2.2 Museum

External works

Scaffolding was re-erected at the back of the Museum in October to replace the felt on an area of flat roof. The work is still outstanding.

Internal work

The Museum was one of a sample of museums with 'listed assets' (i.e. historic buildings) asked to complete a questionnaire for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council and National Lottery heritage Fund. This research into the causes, scale and effects of maintenance and repair issues in English museums was in response to the recommendations of the 2017 Mendoza *Review of Museums*. The questionnaire was completed at short notice in December by the Curator and Corporate Property Surveyor; we wait to see if the results lead to more funds becoming available to museums for capital repairs and improvements.

2.3 Shire Hill Store

No incidents other than an interruption to the water supply to the Depot site one Monday morning, caused by workmen accidentally severing a main at the weekend; supplies were quickly restored.

2.4 Grounds and Castle Site

The Castle now boasts an internal gravel floor, new lockable wrought iron gates and external spotlighting controlled by time-switch. Some further turf laying to the surrounding grounds and other minor work is planned for the spring. After an official opening ceremony, the Castle gates will be opened on a daily basis by Museum staff.

2.5 Battle Ditches

The Heritage Development Group project, in which the Curator has been participating, is nearing completion. Text and graphics for two site interpretation panels were finalised in December and an announcement from Saffron Walden Town Council on the unveiling of the panels is anticipated in January.

3 Collections and Research

3.1 Acquisitions and Disposals

Acquisitions this quarter have included: 24 (Archaeology: 10; Human History: 14; Natural Sciences: 0; Learning:)

- An additional van-load of archaeological finds and documents from Oxford Archaeology, representing the remainder of material from Framework Archaeology's projects Stansted Airport (finds which could not be fitted on previous van-loads, and small sites which had been overlooked for previous depositions)
- Deposition of a number of small archaeological archives from evaluations in Uttlesford district, by Pre-Construct Archaeology
- Work has continued on sorting, listing and boxing finds from Access Cambridge Archaeology's community projects (test pits) in Manuden, Wendens Ambo and Hallingbury.
- Acquisition of 50 scrapbooks of historical newspaper cuttings and associated photographs from the Saffron Reporter and Dunmow Broadcast, indexed which will help greatly with responding to local history enquiries.
- Late Victorian / Edwardian mourning garments from Newport.
- Photographs and archival material re. Saffron Walden Football Club, local bus and railway services.

3.2 Documentation

Backlog / updates	New Acquisitions	Backlog (existing collections not previously catalogued on Modes)	Edits and Updates to existing records
Human history collections <i>(local & social history, decorative & fine art, costume & textile, world cultures)</i>	14	200 (photos, document archive, ceramics)	300 (photos, document archive, ceramics, world cultures collections)
Archaeology	0		0
Natural Sciences	0	0	359
Total			

3.3 Loans In

- One loan-in was returned from the archaeology treasure display: a complete silver, gild and niello Anglo-Saxon strap-end was returned to the landowner for display in his private collection. Its place has been taken by part of a very similar strap-end, from the same area, and previously donated by the finder and landowner.
- Five items on loan in were returned to Essex Field Club following the close of the Take Away the Walls exhibition. We are very grateful to EFC for their generous loan of an impressive mounted red kite

specimen, a mounted collared dove specimen, and study skins of a Natterer's bat, Daubenton's bat and Barbastelle bat.

- Saffron Players theatre group have loaned documents, photographs, costumes and stage props for the duration of their *Your Stories* display in the Museum from August 2019 until Jan 2020.
- Ongoing work on resolving and renewing historic loan agreements. A long-term loan from the Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, Cambridge was renewed: finds from R C Neville's excavations at the Roman villa in Wendens Ambo, on display in the archaeology gallery.

3.4 Loans Out

- Continuation of the loan out to Colchester and Ipswich Museums of treasure finds for their *Adorn* exhibition, running at Colchester Castle into early 2020.
- The mace on display in the Museum's local history gallery went out for ceremonial duties for Remembrance Day in November.
- Ongoing work on resolving and renewing historic loan agreements
- A loan of the North-West Essex Anglo-Saxon ring was agreed for exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for July-October 2020

3.5 Object Identification and Enquiries

Object identifications this quarter: 11 (Archaeology: 2; Human History: 5 ; Natural Sciences: 4)

- Melanesian wooden staff (liaised with Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology)
- Hoverfly (*Volucella Zonaria*)
- Flint fossil Sponge
- Fossil *Gryphaea* shell
- Flint Nodule (not a fossil bone)
- Tin of assorted metal detectorist finds
- Section of metal "snake" ornament, Art deco style
- Domestic items collected by children from the moat at Stambourne Hall
- Animal paw brooch
- Coin from Littlebury Green Road.
- Bracelet, scenes from Don Quixote by Cervantes

Collections Enquiries this quarter: 68 (Archaeology: 11 ; Human History : 45 ; Natural Sciences: 12)

topics included:

- Second World War collections including the Roll of Honour
- Photograph collection – local views of Saffron Walden and surrounding villages (comparison by Gibson library volunteers, with their own photograph collections and those held at SW Library).
- Saffron Walden Pageant 1910
- Ancient Sumerian research (school topic)
- 15th century carved woodwork
- Helder wedge early aboriginal collections and natural history specimens

- Rowley Hill Farm, Little Walden Road: human history and natural sciences objects. It is now Saffron Grange vineyard and winery. Their website shows the museum woolly mammoth tusk and links to the museum website.
- Special roadside verges biological records.
- Birds: Fieldfare, Brazilian birds.
- Molluscs: Oyster shells.
- Image of George Nathan Maynard.

3.6 Research

Research visits this quarter: 11 (3 Archaeology + 5 Human History + 3 Natural Sciences)

Topics included:

- Medieval decorated floor tiles
- Sites and archaeological finds along the route of the Roman road between Braughing and Great Chesterford
- Artist Kabir Hussain has visited the Museum three times this quarter as part of research to prepare a joint exhibition at the Museum of original artwork and items from the Museum's existing collection.
- Henry Winstanley prints of Audley End for future book publication
- Cuming Collection, Southwark Museum visit regarding ongoing loan of items for display in the world cultures gallery
- 400th Anniversary of the Mayflower research project – Wampum in UK collections.
- Two separate visits from past members of Saffron Sound Barbershop group to view recent acquisitions (following these visits and interest on social media, these new acquisitions from last quarter may become a future *Your Stories* display)

3.7 Collections Insurance project

Contact was made in December with the Museum Collections Valuation Trust and with James Glennie, Art & Antiques Appraisals, who has recently resumed work. AXA have now wound up the MCVT but the £5,000 grant allocated for our insurance review has been paid to the Museum Society, who will use it to reimburse the Council when Mr Glennie has completed the report. This is expected in 2020, but it is not clear yet whether this will be in the current financial year or 2020/21.

4 Displays and Visitor Services

4.1 Permanent Galleries

Gallery improvements ongoing – sections of local history gallery cleaned and repainted. Objects in local history gallery on open display were conservation cleaned by Jenny in late November.

4.2 Temporary Exhibitions

Object of the Month featured:

- October – pinned butterflies showing local butterflies and those which are locally extinct (James)
- November – medieval gold reliquary pendant from Farnham (Carolyn)

**SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM
CURATOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT Q3 2019/20**

October – December 2019

- December – Christmas themed doll's house furniture from Arkesden (Jenny)

Curiosity Corner (Charlotte):

- October: Bones
- November: Bones
- December: Crystals

Your Stories: (Jenny):

Saffron Players display will run until January 2020. A competition to win a set of family tickets for their Panto was held on Facebook in December to help promote the display. A new Your Stories display by the local branch of the WW1 themed textile project "Sawdust Hearts" will open in late January and run until June 2020.

Special Exhibition):

- The current exhibition *Death Masks to Diaries – The Many Faces of Portraiture* continues until 22nd March (Charlotte)
- *All Fired Up* – exhibition on local and regional fire-fighting history with Essex Fire Museum (Grays), part of Essex County Fire & Rescue Service will run from 4th April-11th July.

4.3 Visitor Services and Income

	Public		Schools incl. adults		Total	
	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018
October	950	1026	107	61	1057	1087
November	691	461	37	111	728	572
December	549	410	0	0	549	410
Total	2190	1897	144	172	2334	2069

Shop

	2019	2018
October	396.69	468.94
November	431.66	246.17
December	244.42	253.37
Total £	1072.77	968.48

Tickets

	2019	2018
October	1055	1164.20
November	853	596.50
December	640.50	496.50
Total £	2548.50	2257.20

Donations

	2019	2018
October	61.46	47.48
November	0	28.84
December	53.73	25.40
Total £	115.19	101.72

Donations

Monies donated during November were left in the donations box to encourage further donations during the month of December. The box was emptied at the end of December and total figure accurately reflects monies donated for this quarter.

Shop

Saffron Walden Museum took part in Museum Shop Sunday on 1 December, an international event celebrating the unique shops and products which play a vital role in helping arts, culture and heritage attractions to survive and thrive. Visitors had the chance to meet former curator and author, Len Pole; they asked him questions and purchased signed copies of his book, *Worlds of Man*.

New Product: Jigsaws

This quarter we launched our new product, a Wentworth Jigsaw Puzzle, inspired by our British Butterfly Collection. These puzzles have 'Whimsy' pieces (2 x butterflies, and 3 x flowers) and irregular shaped pieces.

Shop Showcase:

- October: Halloween/Museums at Night - Witches Cats, Museum Branded Torches and Slime
- November: Remembrance - Victor Heroes Book and other war related shop products
- December: Alternative Christmas gifts - Annual Season Ticket Gift Cards and Museum Jigsaws

Income from Learning & Outreach Services

Schools Sessions & outreach	Activities & Events	School Loan & Reminiscence Boxes
St Lawrence School - Egypt	Spooky Forest Mobile £66	Local History event- WW2
Katherine Semar – Toys and Games	Ghost in a Jar £88.50	St Mary's School SW Vikings
Bentfield School – Stone Age	Museum at Night 167.40	Toys and Games Kathrine Semar
	Trefoil guild print workshop £58.50	Rickling Primary school Egypt (loan extension)
	Perfect portraits 20th and 21 st	Linton Heights – Greek – (loan extension)
£360	£380.5	£84

4.4 Publicity, Marketing, Social Media and New Website

The Museum has a publicity strategy, which includes planned paid for and free advertising.

Publicity and Marketing:

Publication	Advert	Date
East of England GROUP visitor guide	Generic Museum Advert	2019 edition
East of England Visitor guide	Generic Museum Advert	2019 edition
SW Town Council Official Guide and Map	Generic Museum Advert and page of editorial	2019 edition
www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk	Editorial and hyperlinks to Museum Website	2019 edition
Eastlife Magazine	Social Media adverts for Museum Shop Sunday	November
Newport News		

Published Articles (in print and on-line)

Date	Publication	Subject	Additional Information	Photo
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SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM

CURATOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT Q3 2019/20

October – December 2019

01.10.2019	Walden Flyer	October Edition - Object of the Month and Museum update	Monthly free editorial	Y
11.10.2019	Walden Local	Museum Society Talk – Graffiti in Churches		N
16.10.2019	Walden Local	Castle development & collapsed boundary wall	Letters page	N
16.10.2019	Walden Local	Volunteers encourage residents to visit	Letters page	N
16.10.2019	Saffron Walden Reporter	October Half-Term activities		Y
24.10.2019	Saffron Walden Reporter	October Half-Term activities & Halloween themed Museum at Night		Y
27.10.2019	Saffron Walden Reporter	Museum Market Stall - finger casting portrait project – Death Masks to Diaries exhibition	Volunteer Mary pictured with Charlotte	Y
1.11.2019	Walden Flyer	November edition - New Exhibition: Death Masks to Diaries ; Object of the Month and Museum update	Monthly free editorial	Y
06.11.2019	Walden Local	Museum Shop Sunday – Len Pole		Y
27.11.2019	Walden Local	Museum Shop Sunday – Len Pole		Y
01.12.2019	Walden Flyer	December edition - Object of the Month and Museum update	Monthly free editorial	Y
December Edition	Newport News	House of Correction – Newport Gaol	Bi-annual free editorial (December & April).	Y

Exhibition and Events listings

Exhibition and Events are advertised on many 'What's On' listings (in print and online) including:

- Saffron Walden TIC
- Bishops Stortford TIC
- Saffron Walden Flyer Online
- BBC History magazine exhibition listing and article for "From death masks to diaries"
- Net Mums
- Salad Days
- Where Can We Go
- EastLife
- The Listing, Royston
- Facebook (Saffron Walden events)

Social Media and Email Newsletter

Twitter	Followers: 2,088
Facebook	Followers: 1,306
Instagram	Followers : 665
Email Newsletter	Followers: 1,122

Saffron Walden Museum Website – Statistics for this quarter

	Visits	Unique Visitors
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October	3,216	2,480
November	4,234	3,067
December	4,117	2,603
TOTAL for Q3	11,567	8,150

Visits: the number of visits made by all visitors. (This could be described as the number of "sessions", implying the possibility of multiple pages per visit and multiple visits per unique visitor).

Unique Visitor: the number of persons or computers (hosts) that have made at least 1 hit on 1 page of the website during the current period. If a user makes several visits during this period, it is counted only once. Visitors are tracked by IP address, so if multiple users are accessing the website from the same IP (such as a home or office network), they will be counted as a single unique visitor.

Trip Advisor and Facebook

On Trip Advisor, the Museum ranks Number 2 out of 17 things to do in Saffron Walden on this Travel and Tourism review website, of the 139 reviews, 71% rate us as 'Excellent'. On Facebook there are 23 reviews, the Museum has been Recommended by 147 people and is rated at 5 Star.

5 Education, Events and Outreach

5.1 Education

Loan and Reminiscence boxes:

Box	Borrowers	Purpose	Users		
			Children	Adults	Total
Reminiscence 1950s	Saffron Walden Dementia Café (carried over from last quarter)	Reminiscence		14	14
Local History	SWCH (carried over from last quarter)	Teaching + open evening	300	4 + 500 at opening evening	804
Victorians	Debden School (carried over from last quarter)	Teaching	28	3	31
Prehistory	All saints school (carried over from last quarter)	Teaching	30	2	32
WW2	The Laings -	Local history event		100	100
Vikings	St Mary's School SW	Teaching	30	3	33
Toys and Games	Kathrine Semar	Teaching	63	3	66
Egypt	Rickling Primary School	Teaching + assembly	130	10	140
Greek	Linton Heights	Teaching	29	3	33
		Totals	610	642	1252

Analysis of use of Learning Services and Pupil Numbers

	Children	Adults
No. learning in sessions taught by Learning Officer in Museum (3 sessions)	81	11
No. in independent visits to Museum	39	6
Nos. reached in visits to schools, care homes or other venues by Learning Officer	63	8
Nos. benefiting from loan and reminiscence boxes (details in table above)	610	642
Total users of Museum Learning Services: 1,460	793	667

5.2 Events on-site (in Museum and grounds and at Shire Hill Store)

Date	Event	Visitors
Oct	Print Workshop for Trefoil Guild	11
30 Oct	Spooky Forest Mobile	90
31 Oct	Ghost in a Jar	116
1 Nov	Wildflower seed sowing	3
1 Nov	Museum at Night	160
15 Nov	Private View "From Death Masks to Diaries"	48
1 Dec	Include Museum Shop Sunday	34
9 Dec	Museum Society Christmas Party	73
20 + 21 Dec	Fabulous Festivities craft activities Xmas wreaths and Victorian photos)	14
	Total visitors for on-site activities and events	549

5.3 Outreach (Museum activities, talks and lectures at other venues)

The Museum is one of the locations featured in an independent Saffron Walden Treasure Hunt (proceeds to the Mayor's charities).

Date	Event	No. Attending
3 Oct	Finger casting at the Museum for "From Death Masks to Diaries" Oxley (Appeal for participants on social media)	10
8 Oct	Finger casting for "From Death Masks to Diaries" at SW Market, Charlotte Pratt and Jenny Oxley (40 people engaged through discussion – death mask taken to display)	40
	Finger Casting with the "Together in Sound Cast", Charlotte Pratt and Jenny Oxley (in liaison with Saffron Hall)	20
16 Oct	Finger casting at Faireycroft house with young writers group , Charlotte Pratt	15
	Total	85

5.4 Other Museums and Local Groups: support and liaison (Uttlesford)

Museum staff have attended meetings, site visits, undertaken work or given advice to:

- Heritage Development Group, 2 committee meetings, 1 site meeting and assisting with text and comments on design of Battle Ditches interpretation panels, Carolyn Wingfield
- Dunmow Museum Committee, 14 October, Carolyn Wingfield
- Fry Art Gallery, Carolyn Wingfield
- Searcher Metal Detecting Club I evening meeting attended, 4 November, Carolyn Wingfield
- Essex Field Club at Museum for Wildlife at Night survey, 1 November. James Lumbard.
- Gibson Library – Research for Fire Brigade exhibition (April-July 2020) and re-launch of Gibson Library, Jenny Oxley
- Essex Record Office (SW Library, ERO access point) – Research for Fire Brigade exhibition (April-July 2020) Jenny Oxley
- Local History Recorders and Historical Journal - Research and planning for Fire Brigade exhibition (April-July 2020) Jenny Oxley
- Essex 2020 – Uttlesford Hub - STEM exhibition and related events (July –Oct 2020) Jenny Oxley
- Saffron Walden TIC – town merchandising and event PR (Wendy-Jo Atter & Charlotte Pratt)
- Audience Development project (NLHF Resilient Heritage) Julia Holberry meetings with local stakeholder groups
- Special Roadside Verges project – 1 meeting, 2019 annual reports, missing posts and plaques, checking November verge cut, 2 planning application responses, Sarah Kenyon, James Lumbard

5.5 Meetings, Support and Involvement in professional and other organisations outside Uttlesford

Museum staff have attended meetings, site visits, undertaken work or given advice to:

- Museums Essex – members meeting, Chelmsford Museum, 6 December, Carolyn Wingfield
- MEE (Museums East of England / SHARE) Meeting at Sudbury and seminar on the Creative Case for Diversity, 15 October, Carolyn Wingfield
- SHARE Museums East of England Conference at North Hertfordshire Museum, Guest speakers and networking with regional museum colleagues, 18th November, Jenny Oxley
- Museum Mentor two volunteer run museums, one in Bedfordshire and one in Hertfordshire, Jenny Oxley
- Essex Fire Museum – Research and planning for Fire Brigade exhibition (April-July 2020) Jenny Oxley
- Essex County Fire & Rescue Service - Research and planning for Fire Brigade exhibition (April-July 2020) Jenny Oxley
- Cambridge Science Centre - STEM exhibition and related events (July –Oct 2020) Jenny Oxley & Charlotte Pratt
- Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome near Maldon, Essex – CEO visited us and offered to assist with

Museum Development project.

- Collections Trust (CT) – in December Carolyn and Jenny took part in a phone conference with CT and other museums regarding digitising collections and providing access to them online, exploring the idea of a national collections aggregator system.

Local Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator PI 49	Q3 Actual	Q3 Target	Annual (Cumulative)	Annual Target 2019-20
Users of the Museum Service	3,750	3,000	11,366	13,200

Notes on Performance Indicators

Users are all those engaging with the Museum Service in person or through other media, and include:

- those visiting the Museum site and Museum outdoor events on site (visitors, table 4.3)
- those attending off-site events or benefitting from outreach services (e.g. learning and reminiscence work in schools and care homes; pupils using school loan boxes in the classroom; audience for a talk, store tour or other off-site activity by Museum staff)
- those using the Museum service 'remotely' (enquiries, research and services by phone, email and post)

This definition of Users excludes website visits and social media followers, but these figures are reported separately in 4.4 above as a measure of the Museum's on-line profile

Comments on this quarter's figures:

User figures exceeded the target by 25%, mainly due to continuing demand for schools loan and reminiscence boxes. Outreach activities (finger casting of the Death Masks to Diaries exhibition) also extended the Museum's audiences to new participants.

Main Museum activities and items to note for Q4 2019-20 Jan – March 2020

1 Museum Management and Staff

- NLHF Resilient Heritage Project – reports from the consultants Fourth Street due in January for project steering group. Further audience development work (Julia Holberry) and consultation to undertake.
- Museum Accreditation: review and revision of collections policies, plans and procedures ongoing
- Internal Audit report due

2 Buildings and Site

- Completion of the Castle works
- Follow-up remedial work resulting from a comprehensive hard wiring check
- Natural History store ceiling repair , requiring removal of collections from store in Museum
- Replacement of flat roof felting at back of Museum
- Review and revision of policies, plans and procedures for Accreditation

3 Collections and Research

- Digitisation and collections online research and planning
- Ongoing documentation of collections (Modes)

4 Displays and Visitor Services

- Website improvements (with Tony Morton, Museum Society)
- Exploring online ticket selling (Art Tickets)
- Completion of Visitor Insight East (VIE) surveys (by end of January) with SHARE Museums East of England to feed into the Audience Development Study (NLHF Resilient Heritage project)

Temporary Exhibitions:

- ***From Death Masks to Diaries*** – *The Many Faces of Portraiture* continues until 22 March (Charlotte)
- ***All Fired Up*** – *Exhibition research and planning for exhibition with Essex Fire Museum (Grays), part of Essex County Fire & Rescue Service on the history of local and regional fire-fighting (4 April-11 July). Planning meeting at SW Museum, 21 Jan; Exhibition Changeover for two weeks 2 March-3 April (Jenny)*
- ***STE(A)M 2020*** – exhibition research and building local and regional links for exhibition this quarter in advance of the exhibition July-October 2020.

Object of the Month will feature:

- **January:** Nautilus shell (Sarah)
- **February:** Snowy Owl, link to Harry Potter Book Day (James)
- **March:** Medieval decorated tiles (Carolyn)

Curiosity Corner (Charlotte) will feature:

- **January:** Crystals (ongoing from December)
- **February:** Owls/Harry Potter
- **March:** Hares

***Your Stories* (Jenny)**

- A new Your Stories display by the WW1 themed textile project "Sawdust Hearts" will open in late January and run until June 2020, with an associated event held in May.

5 Education, Events and Outreach

January

Loan boxes

- Heather Mount: Fossils
- St Marys: Romans
- Rickling: Romans

Activities

- Birthday party trail (2 January)
- Uttlesford STEM Essex 2020 Hub meeting (9 January)
- Art Club
- Minis
- Toddler STEM

February

- Heritage School visit Museum

Activities

- Photography workshop (7 February)
- SW Snapshots (collections explorer session) (15 February)
- Cambridge Chinese Centre – Saffron Walden Familiarisation visit – TBC (27 February)
- Toddler STEM
- February Half-Term activities: Mask Making, Clay Head, Dastardly Disguises
- Minis
- Art club

March

School Visits

- St Mary's SW Mini Museums
- J Hull - Local History 60 pupils (tbc)

Activities

- Creative Writing (7 March)
- Saffron Walden Rocks (craft activity linked to Facebook group) (14 March)
- Museum Society Talk (linked to Your Stories - Sawdust Hearts)
- Art Club
- Minis
- Toddler STEM



SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM

**Uttlesford District Council &
Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd**



DOCUMENTATION POLICY 2020-2025

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5. Accessibility and Future Developments	8

Name of museum: *Saffron Walden Museum*

Name of governing body:

Uttlesford District Council & Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd

Date on which this policy was approved by Museum Management Working Group for recommendation to Cabinet:

February 2020

Date on which this policy was approved by Cabinet of Uttlesford District Council:

April 2020

Policy review procedure:

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review:

July 2025

1

Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1** The Documentation Policy describes how the Museum provides useful and usable information about the collections and their contexts, to the support the Museum Service's aim, which is

To give people inspiration and a sense of place in Uttlesford district / north-west Essex, through exploration of our wide-ranging collections and the histories they represent

In particular, the Documentation Policy describes the standards and initiatives needed to advance the key purpose of the Museum's 2020–25 Forward Plan:

To increase people's engagement with the Museum collections and the Museum and Castle site as a 'heritage hub' for North-West Essex and beyond, through development of the Museum building, displays, activities and site interpretation

in order to contribute to the Museum's long-term sustainability and development through increased use, income and public support.

- 1.2** The Documentation Policy describes how the Museum will

- Maintain accountability for its collections, including items on loan
- Follow the Spectrum primary documentation procedures, as set out in the Museum's documentation Manual
- Maintain the physical and digital security of all collections data, for the long-term
- Provide and develop access to the collections and associated data in appropriate ways to meet the needs of the Museum's users, in-house, local, regional, national and world-wide

- 1.3** During the last five years (2014-2019) care of the collections has been significantly improved by the provision of a new purpose-built off-site store and the transfer of about 70% of the collections to this facility, from other buildings formerly used for storage, as well as the Museum. Consequently resources (staff, volunteers, operating budgets) have been focused on packing and moving collections and setting up the new store. Latterly, attention has turned to auditing new storage locations and taking in the backlog of archaeological archives awaiting deposition, plus recent donations and bequests. It is now essential to focus on documentation and digitisation of the collections, in support of the following:

- Basic accountability and management for all collections
- Improve efficiency and effective use of staff time in dealing with research enquiries, collections management, displays and all collections-based activities

- Enable staff and volunteers to identify key exhibits and develop new narratives for redisplay of the Museum, and to develop the display briefs which will be required within the time-frame of this policy (2020-25) subject to the Forward Plan proceeding as anticipated
- Develop new audiences and increase the engagement of existing audiences, by making collections more readily available through digital channels
- As part of the Museum's development, helping to identify and introduce new income streams (e.g. learning and outreach, publications, shop merchandise) which will be facilitated by improved digital access to and imaging of collections

2

Accountability

- 2.1** The Documentation Policy operates within the ethical and legal framework defined by the Museums Association *Code of Ethics*, General Data Protection Regulations and Freedom of Information, and any additional legislation relevant to the storage of data and information
- 2.2** Saffron Walden Museum records and maintains information that allows us to identify and locate all objects and specimens in our collections, including objects or specimens which are on loan to the Museum and objects which are loaned by the Museum to other venues
- 2.3** The Museum recognises its accountability for the collections and documentation to its community of stakeholders and users, including but not restricted to.
- Its governing authority Uttlesford District Council, which is responsible for operating the museum service, and Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd which is legal owner of the collections
 - Owners of items on loan to the Museum and borrowers of items loaned out by the Museum
 - All those engaged in work on the collections, whether as staff, volunteers, researchers, students, and other cultural, scientific and educational institutions
 - All those who enquire about or interact with the collections and stories they represent, whether in person or remotely through all forms of media including digital. The world cultures collection in particular has a potentially worldwide community of users from many cultures and first nations
- 2.4** The Museum's documentation procedures follow the appropriate Spectrum standards, as set out below, as far as possible. Where information is limited due to historical circumstances and cannot be retrieved (e.g. because information on older collections was not recorded at the time to modern standards, or was lost) the limitations of the available information will be stated and acknowledged.

3

Standards and Procedures

- 3.1** The Museum strives towards best practice for collections documentation as set out in the Spectrum standard, and adopts the Spectrum primary documentation procedures in its Documentation Procedural Manual (2020-25), in order to maintain at least the minimum level of documentation for all objects and specimens for which the Museum is legally responsible:
- Object Entry
 - Acquisition and accessioning
 - Location and Movement Control
 - Inventory
 - Cataloguing
 - Object Exit
 - Loans In (borrowing objects)
 - Loans Out (lending objects)
 - Documentation planning
- 3.2** The Museum's Documentation Plan (2020-25) sets out the current state of documentation across the Museum's collection and a schedule of resources required to address historic backlogs in some areas, to bring all collections up to the Spectrum minimum standard, and other highly desirable improvements.
- 3.3** It is Museum policy to develop and maintain a computer database catalogue of all its collections using dedicated software which supports the Spectrum standard. Currently the Museum uses Modes Complete.
- 3.4** Due to the size and history of the collections and redirection of resources in recent years into the store move, backlogs exist in some collections (notably archaeology and geology) of objects and specimens currently uncatalogued on the computer database, although paper/card records and/or lists in other formats (e.g. Excel spreadsheets) exist for the majority of these. The Museum will pursue a policy of prioritising backlog collections to be digitised on Modes Complete to the minimum Spectrum inventory level, and identifying the additional resources necessary to achieve this.
- 3.5** Priorities for the Modes Complete database 2020-25 are summarised below, subject to external funding and / or volunteer support for some projects:
- 3.5.1 Archaeology
- update inventory of all site and project archives
 - update inventory of exhibits on display

- create more detailed catalogue record of Treasure Act acquisitions
- inventory of all small finds and archaeological objects, in tandem with transfer to new low-humidity store off-site (project with fixed-term contract funded by archaeological archive deposition grants)
- audit and improve documentation of all human remains (discrete project subject to funding and specialist support)

3.5.2 Geology

- Continuing work on documentation of geology displays and collections in store (seeking project funding), to include updating inventory of exhibits on display and digitisation

3.5.3 Natural History

- Acquisitions: Documentation and digitisation of new acquisitions and small natural sciences backlog
- Non-Flowering Plant collections: documentation on Modes
- Birds' Eggs and Insects: name collections - document species present in cabinet drawers or boxes
- Natural History Photographic Archive: continued documentation and digitisation of images relevant to Uttlesford

3.5.4 Social History

- Prints, watercolours and drawings, archival documents and photographs: documentation and digitisation
- Costume and Textiles: audit, documentation and digitisation with potential move to new storage area within the Museum

3.5.5 Coins

- Detailed catalogue records of key items required for new displays

3.5.6 Decorative Arts

- Ceramics store: documentation and digitisation

3.5.7 World Cultures

- Audit, documentation, digitisation of Cuming Museum loan

3.5.8 Handling and Education Collections (separate collection)

- Continue basic documentation on computer

The Museum maintains security of data and original by the following means:

- 4.1** Accession registers and associated historic registers and lists of collections are kept in fire-proof storage units in a secure area and access to the storage location is controlled by staff. Data safes are used at the Shirehill store for storage of documentation submitted on CDs and other digital media (e.g. images and reports from archaeological excavation archives).
- 4.2** Digital copies of registers are maintained to meet security and access needs. This minimises physical risks due to handling, permits multiple access at both the Museum and off-site store, and enables copies of entries to be provided for research. Digital copies have been made of all registers covering collections acquired 1832 – 1903, and transcriptions have been made on Excel spreadsheets for all registers from 1897 to date, to aid searching. The Spreadsheets will be updated annually with recent entries and in future options for digitising the sequence of 20th century registers will be explored. Existing microfilm copies of 19th and 20th century registers will be retained in secure storage off-site as an additional back-up copy.
- 4.3** Back-ups of all collections data held on computer, including the Modes Complete database and digital copies of registers, are automatically made daily by the Council's IT section. All data and programmes are held on servers at Uttlesford District Council and not on hard-drives in the Museum. Any future proposals to develop or change IT provision at the Museum will be made in consultation with the Council's IT section and take into account the necessity of maintaining secure backed-up of data.
- 4.4** The Museum must ensure that digital data will not become obsolete or inaccessible through software going out-of-date. For common programmes in daily use, migration to new software platforms is handled by the Council's IT section. The periodic review of the Documentation Policy provides an opportunity to consider whether the collections database software remains sufficient for the Museum's needs and supports Spectrum and Accreditation requirements. The Museum intends to continue using Modes Complete for the duration of this Policy, while keeping aware of developments in museum documentation. Archaeological contractors depositing archives with the Museum are required to deposit a digital copy with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) to ensure general public access and long-term migration of data to new platforms as necessary (*Archaeological Archives in Essex - Guidelines for preparation and deposition*, Museum Essex 2015).
- 4.5** The Museums will work with the Council's IT section to plan future storage capacity for digital data on the collections. Improvements to digital records and

the need to invest in quality digital imaging will impact on the data storage capacity required.

- 4.6** Access to collections data on computer is restricted to Museum staff and specific collections volunteers who have access through the volunteers' log-in. Volunteers recruited for work on collections documentation and computers complete the Council's on-line module and questionnaire on data security, in addition to normal recruitment safeguards (references; interview; signed agreement, confidentiality agreement and privacy statement).. Log-in books are kept to record volunteers' computer sessions. Access to and ability to edit the Modes Complete database is subject to further password-controlled access.
- 4.7** All other paper documentation (e.g. catalogue cards, historical files) are kept in stores and curatorial offices which are locked when unstaffed, and access is permitted only under supervision of the relevant member of staff.

5

Accessibility and Future Developments

- 5.1** Access to information on the collections is currently provided as follows:
- 5.1.1 In the Museum, through displays with labels, hand-lists and general narrative panels. A brief written introduction to the Museum and its collections is available in a range of languages for visitors from other countries and ethnic groups (analysis of visitor figures 2017-18 indicated that about 6% of visitors came from outside the UK)
 - 5.1.2 On-line, the Museum's website provided an overview of the collections. Information on *object of the month* is provided through social media and blogs which are accessible through the website.
 - 5.1.3 In local publications: articles about, or featuring, Museum collections regularly appear in local publications (e.g. general interest and local history journals), written either by Museum staff or by local researchers using the Museum's collections
 - 5.1.4 Outreach activities; workshops and lectures provided by staff on request or as part of the Museum's activity programme.
- 5.2** In 2020-25 we will develop access to collections information in accordance with the proposals set out in its Forward Plan, drawing on the Audience Development Study and Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study (Resilient Heritage project to be completed in 2020). The principle elements will be:
- 5.2.1 Produce a new revised short guide to the Museum and collections, to be available in printed form on the Museum and on-line from the Museum's website. Review the provision of a summary guide in other languages in

the light of the 2020 audience development study and commission new translations as appropriate.

- 5.2.2 Improve the range and quality of information on the Modes Complete database as set out in the Documentation Plan and summarised in 3.5 above for prioritised collections.
- 5.2.3 Improve the capture and quality of digital images of collections by setting up digitisation stations at the Museum and Shirehill store with appropriate photographic and scanning equipment (subject to resources, changes to use of space in the Museum and funding bids for the development project). It has been policy for some time to take record shots of new acquisitions as part of the cataloguing process, but the Museum now needs to invest in digital imaging to improve visual access for users, and develop access through the internet, publications, marketing and learning activities.
- 5.2.4 Training for staff and volunteers should be included as appropriate, to improve all-round digital photography skills, and links with local skilled photographers and organisations such as Saffron Walden Camera Club.
- 5.2.5 Explore the most cost-efficient way to offer on-line access to the Museum's collections. It is the Museum's intention to make its collections available on-line. This is being pursued with organisations such as the Collections Trust, in the context of sector-wide initiatives which may prove a better way of resourcing and achieving on-line searching..
- 5.2.6 As part of the Museum's redevelopment, develop plans for new galleries and outreach which will use digital media to enhance and extend users' engagement with the collections. Development of displays and briefs will consider the needs of different users for various levels and types and information, and preferred delivery methods (e.g. written, pictorial, spoken, in-person guided tours; digital devices or printed).
- 5.2.7 Advance our understanding of how digitisation and digital services will enable the Museum to engage future audience and improve its marketing. This requires opportunities for staff and volunteers to attend relevant museum sector meetings and obtain feedback from users of digital media (especially, though not exclusively, younger age groups) to keep abreast of developments in this field and achievable ways of implementing improvements.

Agenda Item 6



Saffron Walden Museum



Museum Service Interim Forward Plan 2020-21

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Due for Review in December 2020 on completion of Resilient Heritage project, which will inform a full Forward Plan for 2021-25



Name of museum: *Saffron Walden Museum*

Name of governing body:

Uttlesford District Council & Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd

Date on which this policy was approved by Museum Management Working Group for recommendation to Cabinet:

11 March 2020

Date on which this policy was approved by Cabinet of Uttlesford District Council:

April 2020

Policy review procedure:

The Interim Forward Plan will be reviewed on completion of the Museum's Resilient Heritage project in December 2020 in the light of reports received for development of the Museum building, displays and services. At this stage a full Forward Plan for 2021-2025 will be produced.

The Forward Plan will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review:

April 2025

Introduction

During 2020 Saffron Walden Museum is undergoing a thorough review through a Resilient Heritage grant from the National Lottery heritage Fund (NLHF). The outcome of this project by the end of 2020 will be a Development Plan for the Museum and a fund-raising strategy to resource it. These will enable a fully-developed Forward Plan 2021-25 to be produced at the end of 2020, co-ordinating the development plans with main elements of other plans, chiefly the Documentation Policy & Plan and the Collections Care & Conservation Policy & Plan, which will need to support re-display of the collections and development of a new activity programme in an extended and re-displayed Museum.

The Interim Forward Plan 2020-21 outlines the Museum's current position and statement of intent, for Accreditation Review which falls in 2020 before the resilient heritage project and full forward Plan can be completed.

Executive Summary

1. Saffron Walden Museum is the accredited public museum service for Uttlesford District, north-west Essex. It is operated by Uttlesford District Council under the terms of a lease and a management agreement with Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd (charity 1123209) which owns the buildings on the Museum Street site and the collections.
2. Stage 1 of the previous Forward Plan (2013-18) has been completed as far as improvements to collections care are concerned: the new purpose-built store at Shirehill, Saffron Walden now houses upwards of 100,000 objects and specimens of local archaeology, social history, natural history and geology with much improved facilities for staff, volunteers, visiting researchers and small group visits.
3. Also from Stage 1, digitising the collections and updating the Museum's collections database remains a priority especially for the growing archaeology collections and also for geology and some elements of social history. Lack of curatorial staff time to dedicate to this work and restrictions on staff leaving the Museum to work at the store during the week need to be addressed with the support of external funding. Documentation and digitisation projects would also offer the opportunity to explore on-line searching of collections, and research story -lines which can be told with collections in outreach and new displays.
4. The leasing of the former Museum Schoolroom building (currently to the Fry Art Gallery) is providing an income of £16,000 per year to stabilise the museum budget. The Museum building lacks dedicated space for learning and activities, which restricts its offer to schools and the public, and for meetings, potentially another source of income generation and community engagement.
5. The Museum building and its site in grounds next to Walden Castle (Norman keep) are ripe for improvement to increase public engagement with the heritage and museum collections, and ensure the long-term future of the Museum (and also the Castle ruins) through greater income-generation. Income could be improved in an extended and refurbished Museum building through such means as a better shop; hiring out a proposed new learning & activity room and a new special exhibitions gallery. The right combination of facilities, heritage interpretation and activities on the site could boost its potential as a 'heritage hub' for Saffron Walden, north-west Essex and beyond.

6. The Museum galleries are due for re-display and a general review and renewal of décor, use of spaces (storage, office and work areas) and services is needed. This would also help to improve energy-efficiency and environmental control. Visitor numbers have been gradually declining although the range and quality of the collections, and potential for the historic site, should be capable of attracting more people and generating more income for the sustainability of the Museum.
7. Pursuing a development project while maintaining a full service with a small team of staff (6 FTEs) presents a challenge if a basic service is to be maintained while undertaking improvements. The Museum Society already contributes towards costs, principally those relating to collections, and as a charity provides a means of fund-raising. Assisting the Society to increase its fund-raising ability and community links is integral to any development plan for the Museum
8. The Museum can enhance people's 'sense of place' and community identity in Uttlesford and its activities can contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan and to community health and well-being. It can also help draw visitors to the area and contribute to the general economy of the town and district.
9. The Interim Forward Plan outlines addresses this through 6 key aims, built around a succession of applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other funding providers:
 - (1) Preparing for Transformation – NLHF project 2019-20
 - (2) Stage 1 application for NLHF Heritage Grant –development phase
 - (3) Stage 2 applications for NLHF Heritage Grant – delivery phaseApplications to other funding providers will also be made. Parallel to these, work to improve digitisation of and access to the collections needs to be undertaken, and archaeological work in advance of development of the museum building will be required to fulfil planning and SMC obligations and improve interpretation of the Castle.
10. The Key Aims are:
 1. Complete NLHF Resilient Heritage project to scope Museum Development plans and produce a long-term Forward Plan by end of 2020. Work with consultants for Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study and Audience Development Study in 2020.
 2. Assess staffing capacity for documentation & digitisation of collections and for delivery of the Museum Development project, and potential external funding for any additional hours or posts (fixed term) required. 2020-21
 3. Work with the Museum Society on a fund-raising strategy for the Museum Development plans. Plan in autumn 2020 and action in 2021
 4. Pursue plans to develop the Museum and site as a 'heritage hub'. From 2021 onwards subject to fund-raising and consents from planning and Historic England
 5. Introduce EPOS till with card payment facility for the Welcome Desk, and on-line booking for activities and events. 2020
 6. Improve knowledge and interpretation of the Castle site and its use by visitors and the local community. From 2020 onwards

11. The principle resources required will be:

1. Freeing of professional staff time to pursue developments and funding applications, especially the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). This may include project-funded fixed-term staff to ensure all the necessary work on digitisation and preparation of the collections takes place to enable display briefs for the galleries and interactives to be produced.
2. Support required from other sections and senior officers of the Council.
3. Time and support required from the directors and officers of Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd who are all volunteers.
4. Matching funding from the Museum Society for capital developments (funds raised from sale of the curator's house).
5. External Funding. Significant grants will need to be obtained, principally, but not exclusively, from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Other grants and donations will be needed, using the Museum Society's charitable status.
6. Support-in-kind could be sought from local businesses, e.g. for donation of materials for construction work.

These resources will be quantified for each stage as the Forward Plan is developed and revised.

1 Statement of Purpose

The Museum Service's aim as the public museum service for Uttlesford district is

To give people inspiration and a sense of place in Uttlesford district / north-west Essex, through exploration of our wide-ranging collections and the histories they represent

The key purpose of the 2020 – 2021 Interim Forward Plan is

To plan a development project to increase people's engagement with the Museum collections and the Museum and Castle site as a 'heritage hub' for NW Essex and beyond, through development of the Museum building, displays, activities and site interpretation, in order to contribute to the Museum's long-term sustainability and development through increased use, income and public support.

2 A Brief History of the Museum and a Review of the Previous Forward Plan

2.1 Brief History of the Museum

a) Origins

The Museum was founded by Saffron Walden Natural History Society and opened in 1835 in the Museum building, which is among the earliest purpose-built local museums and is a grade II listed building. It belongs to the earliest generation of local museums and from the beginning its collections reflected the wide-ranging ambitions of its original trustees and benefactors to 'bring the world to Walden' and showcase the diversity of the natural and human world, as well as collections of local origin from north-west Essex and the surrounding region. The collections were curated by Society members until the appointment of the first salaried curator in 1880.

b) Collections

Today, the Museum has a dual focus in its collections: to present the human history and natural environment of north-west Essex (Uttlesford district) and to present important specific non-local collections which are a legacy of its founders' vision – principally world cultures, ceramics & glass and Egyptology, and some significant non-local and non-British specimens in the natural science collections. The collections are estimated at over 170,000 objects and specimens minimum; the archaeology collections are increasing extensively due to planning and development in the district.

c) Site and Buildings

The site on which the Museum is located is a scheduled ancient monument, being the former bailey area of Walden Castle, of which the ruined Norman keep survives nearby. The Museum stands on a strip of land along the north side of the site which is owned by Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd but leased to Uttlesford District Council. The Castle and surrounding grass area are owned and managed separately by Uttlesford District Council. The tennis courts opposite the Museum are on land owned by Audley End Estate but leased to the Castle Hill Tennis Club.

The **Castle keep**, constructed around 1140, has recently benefitted from an extensive conservation programme funded by the Council and Historic England. The keep will be accessible to the public again, for the first time in several decades from the summer of 2020. The Museum and Castle site sits within the conservation area of Saffron Walden's historic town centre.

Other buildings on site which belong to the Museum are the single-storey **Museum Street Schoolroom** building by the gateway onto Museum Street, and a Workshop in a small fenced yard north of the Castle. The former Museum Schoolroom, which used to house a conservation laboratory, small teaching and meeting room and a storeroom for collections, has been leased out commercially since 2016 to provide income for the Museum budget. It is currently leased to the Fry Art Gallery Society and known as Fry Art Gallery Too, The **Museum Workshop** is an old prefabricated garage used for storing tools, paints and materials; showcases for temporary exhibitions and two chest freezers for conservation and natural history deadstock. This building is becoming dilapidated and with the adjoining fenced compound (former oil tank compound) and self-sown sycamore trees, this area is an eyesore since the Castle and its surrounds have been cleared and improved..

As with many museums, the collections outgrew the storage space available in the Museum building many decades ago, the problem exacerbated in recent times by the growth in the volume of archaeological finds and records from planning and development. For many years the Museum used the Town Hall attics and the stable block at Audley End House for storage of collections, including horse-drawn vehicles. In the early 1990s these premises had to be vacated, so a small unit at the Council's Newport Depot was fitted out as an interim storage facility. Four horse-drawn vehicles were stored for many years at a farm in Hempstead by a member of the Museum Society, because they could not be accommodated at the Museum or in the Newport store.

In 2008, the museum was awarded a major grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to construct a resource centre on a site off the Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden to store collections in a building which would also provide for a measure of public access and improve facilities and opportunities for working on the collections, as well as additional staff to run digitisation and outreach projects. When multiple complications with the site led to this project being abandoned, the Museum Society and Council were nevertheless able to retain enough of the monies raised to eventually provide a new purpose-built store on the Council's Depot site at Shirehill, Saffron Walden. Meanwhile, rationalisation of the horse-drawn vehicle collection (most of which had no Uttlesford connection) removed the need for additional off-site storage in barns.

The **Shirehill Store**, as the new off-site store is known, was completed in July 2014, fitted out in 2014-15 and the collections from the Newport store together with some social history and natural history from the museum and former Schoolroom, were packed and moved between late 2015 and early 2017. The new store occupies land leased by Uttlesford District Council to Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd for 999 years; the Museum Society owns the building, and it is leased to Uttlesford District Council to operate as part of the Museum service, thus putting all the museum buildings under the same lease agreement between the Museum Society and Council. Most importantly, it provides a quality storage facility with improved access and care for the collections and a greatly improved working environment for staff, volunteers and all who come by appointment to use the collections.

d) Governance

Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd is the direct successor of Saffron Walden Natural History Society and is a registered charity. It owns the Museum buildings and the collections, and ran the Museum Service with the aid of various grants until the 1970s when the newly-formed Uttlesford District Council took over responsibility for running the Museum Service, with the buildings and collections on lease to the Council. Under the current management agreement for the Service, the Council is responsible for providing staff and revenue budgets, while the Society uses its charitable status to help raise funds for capital projects, and applies interest from invested funds to purchases and other special projects for the collections.

In recent years, with public service budgets under pressure, the Museum service has sustained some cuts, including loss of its in-house conservation laboratory and conservator. For a time, visitor and learning services had to be combined into one post and then from October 2015 to September 2017 there was no Learning Officer in post, resulting in loss of visitors and income. The Museum Society supplemented its financial support for several years as an interim measure, before the Schoolroom could be leased out to provide a new income stream. The core staff team has now been stabilised with a part-time Admin Officer (16 hours per week), 4 full-time professional posts (Curator, Collections Officer (Human History); Natural Sciences Officer; Learning & Outreach Officer) and Security Officer (4 days per week). For Weekend and Bank Holiday staffing there are two permanent Visitor Services Assistant posts and a small team of casual-contract Museum Assistants, supplemented on Saturdays by a rota for curatorial staff. There are approximately 60 volunteers, operating the Welcome Desk and helping with collections and administrative tasks, and with learning activities and events.

Other ways of increasing income are under constant scrutiny, however within the restrictions imposed by the current buildings and resources, only modest progress can be made without some fundamental investment and changes. In particular there is a need to install an EPOS till and card payment at the Welcome Desk (operated by a rota of volunteers) and introduce card payments, with online booking option for bookable activities and events.

2.2 Review of Previous Forward Plan 2013 - 2018

The Museum Service Forward Plan 2013 – 2018 sought to address issues restricting service capacity and use in 2 stages:

Review of 2013 – 2018 Key Aims

The two-stage plan was the framework for realising six key aims:

1. [Improve and rationalise the storage of collections off-site and in the Museum, through the construction of a new off-site store and a revised collections policy.](#) The new store at Shirehill is now in operation and collections have been moved in. The collections development policy was to be reviewed in 2019.
2. [Improve management, accessibility and display of collections by developing the collections database.](#) While some progress has been made with the social history and natural history collections, much work remains to be done digitising the collections and editing

existing records. The critical factor is lack of curatorial staff-time to undertake this work and run more extensive documentation projects with volunteers. The lack of a dedicated curatorial post for archaeology is an issue, and the geological collections require specialist identification and description for documentation to be effective.

3. **Extend and reorganise the Museum building to improve its displays and facilities for visitors, staff and volunteers, researchers and visiting groups (school and other).**
In 2015-17 the Curator and members of the Museum Society Board attended various seminars run by SHARE on fund-raising, making major grant applications and capital projects. The Museum Society Chairman and Curator held a series of informal meetings with representatives of other heritage and community organisations in Saffron Walden, to make them aware of long-term plans for the Museum and to explore any scope for partnership or support. Discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund opened in October 2017 to seek guidance on potential grant applications. This culminated in an application to the National Lottery heritage Fund in early 2019 under the Resilient Heritage programme and an award of a grant of £51,200 for a £61,200 project (with £10,000 from Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd) to scope options for development, undertake an audience development study and produce a feasibility study on the preferred option to develop the museum and increase its long-term resilience. Consultants Fourth Street (Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study) and Julia Holberry Associates (Audience Development study) were appointed in September 2019 and their work is scheduled to finish in summer 2020. This will be followed by a phase of work with the Museum Society and a funding researcher to prepare a fund-raising strategy, the project to finish in December 2020.
4. **Improve interpretation and use of the Museum and Castle site.**
The analysis and report on the geophysical survey of the Museum and Castle site, undertaken in 2012 by Dr Tim Dennis and Ralph Potter, has been completed with a grant from the Essex Heritage Trust. The archaeological mitigation strategy resulting from this work (ECC Place Services) is now completed and forms an important part of submissions to Historic England (HE) and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).

Meanwhile, conservation of the Castle, funded by the Council and Historic England, is due for completion in 2020 when the ruins of the keep will open for public access. This presents new opportunities for heritage interpretation and community use of the site, and also for income generation. Meanwhile Museum staff have participated in the Saffron Walden Heritage Development Group's project to interpret and promote another medieval monument, the so-called 'Battle Ditches' and this work is to be followed up in 2020 with public activities to raise awareness of the town's medieval heritage including the Castle.

5. **Maximise community involvement through appropriate opportunities to contribute to the Museum Service.**
Community participation has been encouraged as part of the Museum's special exhibitions programme (e.g. *Uttlesford – A Community of Collectors*) and the new Community Case, funded by the Museum Society, which provides local people and societies with a showcase (Saffron Walden Cricket Club anniversary display, Saffron Walden Football Club). The Museum's new website and social media reach an increasing audience on-line. Services to schools were re-established after a 2-

year gap in learning provision when a new Learning & Outreach Officer was appointed in September 2017, but because the Schoolroom's teaching space has been lost, the size of groups visiting the Museum for taught sessions has to be restricted. The Learning & Outreach Officer now undertakes visits to schools and care homes, and has revised and extended the Schools Loan boxes which are proving very popular with schools which cannot visit for logistical and financial reasons.

6. **Develop a marketing policy for the Museum and site as a local amenity and heritage destination to local and wider audiences, to increase community use and income**
The establishment of a part-time Admin & Front-of-House Officer post, permanent since 2016, has helped to establish and extend regular publicity for the museum programme, but with a budget of only £2,000 p.a. More extensive, strategic and ambitious marketing will require an increased budget, and more staff resource. Visitor information and consultation has previously been low-key with very little staff-time available to effectively analyse and make use of data. Participation in a Visitor Insight East project (SHARE) in 2019 has provided a data and analysis of a sample of around 300 visitors, and this will be supplemented in 2020 by the Audience Development Study commissioned from Julia Holberry Associates, which will include views on potential visitors as well as actual visitors and stakeholders.

3 Analysis of the Environment

This section summarises the main challenges and opportunities facing the Museum Service.

3.1 A Brief Appraisal of the Museum Service (SWOT)

Strengths

- Collections: range, size and quality exceptional for a district museum service, as highlighted by consultants (Resilient Heritage project)
- New purpose-built off-site store at Shirehill, Saffron Walden has improved care of and access to collections, and deposition of archaeological archives has resumed
- Heritage amenity: Museum building grade II listed, historic interest as an early purpose-built museum (constructed 1834)
- Castle site: ruined keep conserved and accessible, potential for more archaeological discoveries and interpretation of site history (geophysical survey results) and green space for outdoor activities
- 'Family friendly' museum with learning opportunities, especially through sessions for schools and family activities, VAQAS accredited
- Community links: volunteers, community partnership exhibitions, local support
- Museum website and social media have increased virtual visits and engagement with the Museum on-line
- Support of Museum Society and District Council, providing a mix of public and charitable funding
- Accredited Status under the government's national Accreditation Scheme for public museums and galleries. This confirms that the Museum adheres to a minimum standard in all aspects of its service. It is necessary or desirable for obtaining grant-aid and public confidence. The Museum's Accredited status is due for review in 2020

Weaknesses

- Visitor figures declining gradually in recent years from around 14,000 to 16,000 for several years, falling with increasing pressure on staff (no education officer in post for 2 years 2015-17, coinciding with move to new off-site store). General trend has been downward: 12,816 in 2017/18 and 11,132 in 2018/19,
- Site is uphill from the town centre, vehicular access via one-way streets, drive poorly lit after dark and in winter – this does not attract casual footfall.
- Museum galleries are ageing and need comprehensive re-display, with clear visitor route, new ways of telling stories and engaging visitors, and space to include the recent history of the district
- Special exhibitions gallery is small and awkwardly situated between the foyer and ground floor Great Hall gallery, making it impossible to close off while exhibitions are changed; exhibitions could be more ambitious in a better space.
- Museum building has multiple problems behind-the-scenes: cramped storage, offices and work spaces, ageing décor and equipment
- Museum needs to improve its energy-efficiency and control of the internal environment for people and collections, with a rationalisation and modernisation of heating, electrical services and plumbing, and 'green' agenda
- Lack of dedicated teaching, activity and meeting space restricts all sorts of activities and income-generating services, including school visits
- Lack of modern visitor facilities (proper shop, refreshments, WCs)
- Lack of card payment facility is impacting on income and visitors, as some visitors do not carry cash and uptake of tickets for bookable events is poor because there has been no on-line booking option.
- Small Staff resource: core team of 4 f/t posts (one of which is job-shaded, Natural Sciences Officer) with p/t Admin & Front-of-House Officer and Security & Premises Officer, all have to juggle multiple roles.
- Pressure on curatorial posts to cover all collections, deal with documentation backlogs and undertake major gallery redisplays while maintaining special exhibitions programme and other services
- Lack of staff and financial resources to dedicate to long-term marketing strategy
- Looking to the future, with pressures on public funding, the museum needs to diversify and increase its income streams to survive and grow.

Opportunities

- The Museum and Castle site has potential for promotion as a heritage amenity with improved public access to the Castle and interpretation, hiring opportunities and events, providing more visitors and income-generation to maintain the Castle and Museum.
- The Shirehill store and wi-fi provide opportunities for additional staff, volunteers and others to work on the collections, adding records to the database and researching new displays
- Museum Society's charitable status and capital funds (from sale of the former Curator's House) provide a good foundation for capital development of the Museum
- Scope for making applications to National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and other funding organisations for improvements
- Extension of the Museum building to the east would be possible and also improve an untidy area (old oil tank compound and workshop, overgrown sycamore trees).

- Update and extend permanent displays and special exhibitions, attracting more visits
- Re-establishment of Learning & Outreach Officer post (September 2017) allows the Museum to encourage schools and all forms of learning
- Development in the district increases the need and opportunities for outreach to new and established communities in the district, especially in areas further from Saffron Walden and new communities arising from the implementation of the Local Plan

Threats

- Increasing competition for people's attention from other cultural and heritage attractions and services in the locality, region and on-line
- Continuing pressures on public funding for local authority services (Council)
- Increase in museum development trusts and other charities all looking for volunteers and new sources of funding (Museum Society)
- Stability of Museum staffing essential to manage a large development project successfully, and may need to be supplemented with project-funded staffing to deliver a successful development project
- Maintenance of historic Museum building, especially with problems of damp, energy costs and accessibility to some areas

4 Consultation and Analysis

4.1 Visitor figures in recent years dropped from around 14,000 – 16,000 per year, with fluctuations, to 12,816 in 2017/18 and 11,132 in 2018/19. Variations on numbers visiting are due to a range of factors, but periods when no learning officer has been in post e.g. Nov 2015 – Sept 2017) are linked to drops in visitor numbers especially school visits. According to data from our 2019 Visitor Insight East survey (SHARE initiative) about 55% of visitors came from within 0-9 miles of the Museum (Saffron Walden and immediate area) and a further 17% were from 10-19 miles away. The Museum scored highly in meeting visitors' expectations. The Audience Development Study due to be completed in the summer of 2020 (NLHF Resilient Heritage project) will provide a wider ranging and in-depth analysis of actual and potential audiences, and factors which influence their engagement with the Museum.

4.2 In 2017 the Museum Society Chairman and Curator held informal meetings with local heritage and community groups, including the Castle Hill Tennis Club, Fry Art Gallery, Saffron Walden Initiative and Town Library Society, to open a dialogue about the Museum's potential development and any opportunities for partnership working or mutual support. These and representatives from other local 'stakeholder' organisations participated in consultations for the Audience Development Study (Julia Holberry Associates) in November 2019.

4.3 In 2017 a Heritage Development Forum for Saffron Walden was initiated to bring representatives of different heritage interests within the town together for liaison and joint working. This Forum is still in its early stages as a community organisation, but present another channel through which ideas can be communicated.

4.4 Uttlesford District Council's Local Plan (in progress, 2020) will be important for the Museum's future plans. New developments have the potential to bring in new audiences.

The Museum will need to take account of changes in the district's population and the most effective way to reach both traditional and new communities. An in-depth audience development study should help to address these wider issues.

5 Key Aims

1. **Complete NLHF Resilient Heritage project to scope Museum Development plans and produce a long-term Forward Plan by end of 2020.** Work with consultants for Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study and Audience Development Study in progress 2020.
2. **Assess staffing capacity for documentation & digitisation of collections and for delivery of the Museum Development project, and potential external funding for any additional hours or posts (fixed term) required.** The projects identified in the Documentation Policy and Plan 2020-25 and Collections Care & Conservation Policy & Plan 2020-25 will be assessed in conjunction with the staffing resource needed for the development project (to be identified with consultants as part of Resilient Heritage project, 2020)
3. **Work with the Museum Society on a fund-raising strategy** for capital developments and other projects. This will be final phase of Resilient Heritage project in late 2020, with appointment of a fund-raising researcher to assist the Museum Society.
4. **Pursue plans to develop the Museum and site as a 'heritage hub'**, with particular regard to improving audiences and their engagement with the heritage and the long-term sustainability of the museum service through enhanced services, facilities and new income streams. This will include: re-display the galleries and provide a new learning & activities room; a new special exhibitions gallery and a larger reception area with shop, will be critical elements. Dependent on outcome of resilient Heritage project and fund-raising from 2021 onwards
5. **Increase income and accounting for transactions and stock-taking, by introducing an EPOS till with card payment facility and on-line booking for activities and events**, to capture income from visitors or would-be visitors who do not carry cash. Museum activities and events will be bookable through the free on-line service provided by the Art Fund from spring 2020 onwards.
6. **Improve knowledge and interpretation of the Castle site and its use by visitors and the local community** through archaeological investigation with community involvement (subject to planning and SMC conditions) and contribute to promotion of site as an outdoor venue, to help the Council maintain the Castle keep and ground in excellent condition.

6 Objectives and additional resources for each Key Aim

Museum budgets for the period of this Interim Forward Plan:

2019/20	Direct expenditure	£253, 510	Net direct total	£214,580
2020/21	not available but at this stage anticipated to continue at similar level			

Source: Uttlesford District Council Budget Book 2019/20

https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/9048/2019-20-Budget-Book/pdf/Budget_Book_2019-20_1.pdf?m=637184049308800000

Additional resources refers to resources (budgets, staff time, volunteers and expertise) which cannot be met within the Museum's budget and current staff resource, and will require external funding or help-in-kind.

Key Aim 1 Complete NLHF Resilient Heritage project to scope Museum Development plans and produce a long-term Forward Plan by end of 2020

Objectives

- 1.1 Completion of Audience Development Study to provide evidence-based approach to planning development of Museum to increase audiences and income.
- 1.2 Completion of Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study with outline of costs and resources needed for selected development option

Additional Resources

£61,200 project costs met by NLHF grant of £51,200 (50% received in 2019, 50% to be drawn down by January 2021) and £10,000 matching funding from Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd.

Key Aim 2 Assess staffing capacity for documentation & digitisation of collections and for delivery of the Museum Development project, and potential external funding for any additional hours or posts (fixed term) required

- 2.1 With consultants, assess staff resource needed to deliver the Museum Development Plan arising out of the Resilient Heritage project, and subsequent staff resource needed to operate the extended and redisplayed Museum.
- 2.2 Plan priorities and targets for curatorial staff for 2020/21 onwards, co-ordinating needs of documentation & digitisation, collections care and Museum Development Plan, and identifying any shortfalls in staff resource to address priorities especially for re-display.
- 2.3 Identify additional resources from external sources needed to achieve targets

Additional resources

Assessing staffing capacity needed for delivering the Museum Development project and subsequent operation of the Museum will be dealt with as part of the Resilient Heritage project (NLHF grant) during 2020. Any short-term additional staff required to deliver the Development project and digitisation of collections for display briefs, will need to be financed by external project funding.

Geology priority documentation 2020/21 (specimens on display) is being funded by Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd (£1,800 grant for additional hours for one of the p/t Natural Sciences Officers).

Deposition grants accrued from archaeological contractors depositing finds and records with the Museum will be used to fund a fixed-term contract in 2021 for transfer of metal and other 'small finds' from the Museum to Shirehill store with audit and basic documentation of that collection.

Recruitment of suitable volunteers to assist staff will continue where possible, however this is restricted by lack of staff time to work in stores and supervise volunteers.

Key Aim 3 Work with the Museum Society on a fund-raising strategy

Objectives

- 3.1 Completion of Fund-Raising Strategy with Museum Society and fund-raising researcher by end of 2020
- 3.2 Shortlist produced of grant-aiding organisations, foundation and charitable trusts who could be approached for funding
- 3.3 Fund-raising Advocacy document produced for Museum Development project

Additional Resources

Included in Resilient Heritage project (as Key Aim 1 above: NLHF and Museum Society funding).

Key Aim 4 Pursue plans to develop the Museum and site as a 'heritage hub'

- 4.1 Produce revised Forward Plan for 2021-25 from the results of the Resilient Heritage studies, setting out the business case for the selected development option.
- 4.2 Plan and undertake any further public consultation required.
- 4.3 Open discussions with NLHF and other potential funders willing to receive applications.
- 4.4 Apply for Heritage Development grant for developing project (stage 1) in 2021

Additional resources

The application for a Stage 1 Heritage Development grant and other fund-raising work will need to be completed within existing resources, therefore staff time may need to be freed from other service activities to concentrate on grant applications and fund-raising. This could potentially affect some of the activity, event and outreach programme, and therefore service user figures, in the short-term in order to achieve greater long-term gains.

Additional budget will need to be identified in 2021 (from the Museum Society and/or Council) for necessary work towards the Stage 1 NLHF grant application:

- Topographical survey (digital 3D plan) of Museum building and Castle site (pre-requisite for architects and highly desirable for archaeological works)
- Architect to prepare RIBA Stage 1 plan of proposed extension and alterations

These costs could not be included in the Resilient Heritage project but will have to be met to prepare the application for a Stage 1 Development Grant.

Key Aim 5 Introduce EPOS till with card payment facility for the Welcome Desk, and on-line booking for activities and events

- 5.1 Set-up on-line booking for events and activities with the Art Fund (free service for museums and galleries) allowing people to book Museum workshops and events on-line and pay by card (live by April 2020)
- 5.2 Set up EPOS till and train Welcome Desk volunteers in Admin & Front-of-House Officer's office, before transferring EPOS till to Welcome Desk and going live, in 2020-21.
- 5.3 When EPOS till is working satisfactorily, introduce card reader for card payments at the Welcome Desk.
- 5.4 Develop use of EPOS till for stock-taking
(5.2-4 also recommended by Internal Audit Report 2020)

Additional Resources

Admin & Front-of-House Officer needs support of volunteer (identified) and other Council staff to achieve this as she has very few hours per week to allocate to this project. Under discussion for best solution, 2020.

Key Aim 6 Improve knowledge and interpretation of the Castle site and its use by visitors and the local community

- 6.1 Museum to manage bookings on behalf of Council for use of Castle and surrounding grass area for community and private events (2020 trial year)
- 6.2 Work with Heritage Development Group to produce a leaflet (printed and on-line) in 2020 about medieval Saffron Walden, highlighting the Castle and other surviving medieval buildings and features.
- 6.3 Discuss feasibility of archaeological excavation project on the Castle site with NLHF and Historic England (HE), following on from the geophysical survey and archaeological strategy for the site. Aims would be (1) work in mitigation of consents for Museum extension (2) research key features to extend knowledge and interpretation of Castle's history and (3) provide opportunity for community involvement in uncovering local heritage.

Additional Resources

This would require external funding, possibly a small community project grant from NLHF and/or other sources. Clarification with NLHF and HE would be needed about timing for this project in relation to the main development plan and applications for planning and Scheduled Monument consents.

7 Phased Plan for Achieving Objectives

2020-21

Aim / Objective		Phased Actions	Lead Person	Resources needed	Estimated Additional Cost £	End Date	Risk Assessment	Performance Measurement
1	1.1 and 1.2	Audience Development Study (Julia Holberry Associates)	JO	NLHF grant obtained	19,950	June 2020	Low – on target	Completion of report acc. to brief
		Options Appraisal & Feasibility Study (Fourth Street)	CW	NHLF grant obtained	30,000	June 2020	Low – on target	Completion of report acc. to brief
2	2.1	Identify staff resources needed to development project	CW	Included in above			High risk to development project if we do not have appropriate staff resource to deliver the project	Completion of report acc. to brief
2	2.2 Documentation & Digitisation and Collections Care priorities and targets to be set with staff through U-Perform March/April 2020 and in light of development plans	Collections Care and Documentation targets – Archaeology	CW	Staff time and volunteer support		By Mach 2021	High risk if not undertaken to meeting min. management standards for collections High risk to re-display of galleries if accurate digital information on collections is not available	Meeting targets on time and with sufficient quality and accuracy of information (as far as records permit)
		Archaeology metal work and small finds project – transfer and inventory of finds to Shirehill, and setting up low-humidity store at Shirehill with dehumidifier	CW	Fixed-term archaeology post to be funded by deposition grants Dehumidifier costs may need some Museum budget or Museum Society assistance with cost	Tbc (will be within funds available)	Set up and start by March 2021 (continues in 2021/22)	As above	Appointment of person with archaeological and IT expertise

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		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Human History (social history, decorative arts, world cultures)	JO	Staff time and volunteer support			As above	
		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Geology	JL	Museum Society funding agreed for additional hours to complete documentation of displays	1,800 from Museum Society	By Dec 2020	Low – funding secured	Completion on time according to project proposal
		Geology care of collections – elimination of potential hazard posed by asbestos-containing mineral specimens	JL, SK	KADEC to seal or dispose of asbestos minerals safely (specimens currently identified and isolated pending further work)	tbc	By March 2021	Low long-term health risk if handled without H&S measures being taken	Minerals containing asbestos to be sealed and labelled as H&S precaution Specimens without data to be disposed of safely by KADEC
		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Natural History	SK, JL	Staff time and volunteer support			Risks to collections management and development project as above	
		Documentation targets – Education & Loan Boxes	CP	Staff time and volunteer support			Medium risk to efficient operation of Learning Services if not undertaken	
3	3.1	Fund-raising Strategy with Museum Society	CW, JO	NLHF grant	4,500		High risk to development project if fund-raising not in place	
	3.2							
	3.3							
		Shortlist of potential funding organisations	Fund-raising researcher	NLHF grant	Incl in above		High risk to development project if fund-raising not in place	
		Advocacy document for fund-raising for development project	Staff and Mus Soc with fund-raising researcher	NLHF grant	Incl in above		High risk to development project if fund-raising not in place	
4	4.1	Produce revised Forward	CW and	Staff time (based on			Low risk of not	Completion of full

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	4.2	Plan for 2021-25	team	Fourth Street report)			completing on time	Forward Plan on time
	4.3	Any further public consultation needed	CW, JO and team	Staff time			Medium risk of we do not present evidence fo all consultation needed to funders	
		Approach NLHF and other potential funders	CW, JO, Mus Soc	Staff time			High risk of we do not engage enough support to make development project viable	Sufficient potential funding identified to proceed with applications
5	5.1	On-line booking for activities and events via Art Fund website	JO	Staff time	Free service	Live from April 2020	Low Art Fund well-established and used by other museums Council checks undertaken	Increased uptake in bookable events, leading to increase in income and community engagement (likely to be small steps in first year as it becomes established)
	5.2, 5.4	EPOS Till, sales and stock-taking functions	WA	Staff time and Volunteer support Additional Council support or casual staff hours may be needed (Audit Report 2020 has highlighted lack of staff time as issue). Stock-taking may be a later phase, to be discussed with Audit	Possible small additional staff costs to help set up	Set up and train volunteers early 2020-21 Go live at Desk later in 2020-21	Medium risk of not achieving consistency of use with large team of volunteers Medium risk of disruption to staff work because some volunteers will need regular assistance	Achieving set-up and training of volunteers in agreed time-scale Achieving improvements to recording of ticket and souvenir sales and stock-taking
	5.3	Card Reader for taking card payments at Welcome Desk	WA	Staff time and Volunteer support		Set-up and train volunteers once Till is established	High risk of losing visitors and income of we do not introduce this facility Medium risks with Volunteers as above for Till	Achieving set-up of card payments by end of 2020-21 Some increase of income from souvenir and ticket sales
6	6.1	Castle bookings – trial year	CW	Information from Council on terms &	-	Ongoing from spring	Low risk of clashes of use with	Workable system in place and trialled by

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				conditions and opening of Castle to public in 2020		2020	Museum events if not monitored Low risk of inappropriate or unauthorised use of site if not monitored	end of 2020, feedback to Council by Nov 2020 for consideration in Fees & Charges for Castle site hire 2021
6	6.2	Medieval Walden leaflet with Heritage Development Group (printed and on-line)	CW	Staff time Costs covered by grant obtained by Heritage Development Group	N/A	By summer 2020	Medium risk of insufficient staff time to deliver (additional to Museum service priorities) Low risk to effective promotion of medieval town and Castle if leaflet is not produced	Leaflet produced in summer 2020 Quality, accuracy and relevance of information for general public consumption

2021-22

Aim / Objective		Phased Actions	Lead Person	Resources needed	Estimated Additional Cost £	End Date	Risk Assessment	Performance Measurement
4	4.4	Prepare and submit application NLHF Stage 1 Heritage Development grant, and any other funding applications at this first stage	CW, JO	Staff time, with some Museum Society and Council officer input Additional funds for RIBA Stage 1 plan and topographical survey of Museum and Castle grounds	Tbc Possibly £5,000 - 10,000?	2021 (as early in year as feasible)	Medium risk of not having time to complete work for application quickly Medium risk of not getting Stage 1 pass from NLHF immediately	Submitting application within reasonable time scale Success of applications in raising funds for development stage
6	6.3	Pursue feasibility and timing of archaeological project on Castle site with HE and NLHF	CW	Staff time	-	2021 (as early in year as feasible)	High risk of developments not going ahead if archaeological mitigation work not undertaken Medium risk of loss	Produce costed plan for archaeological work and identify funding sources

							of opportunities for community engagement and improving heritage interpretation	
2	2.3 Documentation & Digitisation and Collections Care priorities and targets to be set with staff through U-Perform March/April 2021 and in light of development plans	Collections Care and Documentation targets – Archaeology	CW	Staff time and volunteer support		By March 2022	Risks to collections management and development project as above	
		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Human History (social history, decorative arts, world cultures)	JO	Staff time and volunteer support		By March 2022	Risks to collections management and development project as above	
		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Geology	JL	Staff time and volunteer support		By March 2022	Risks to collections management and development project as above	
		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Natural History	SK, JL	Staff time and volunteer support		By March 2022	Risks to collections management and development project as above	
		Collections Care and Documentation targets – Education & Loan Boxes	CP	Staff time and volunteer support		By March 2022	Risks to collections management and development project as above	

8 Review of Interim Forward Plan

This Interim Forward Plan will be reviewed and extended by the end of 2020 to become a full Forward Plan 2021-25. This will focus on the development plan for the Museum which is expected to be undertaken within that period.

The Forward Plan will be due for review again in 2025.