

1 Museum Management and Staff

1.1 Management

Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

On Wednesday 18 March the Museum closed to the public for the indefinite future as part of the emergency measures to control Covid-19 (coronavirus). Core staff continue to work in the building, at the store or at home, and a summary of continuing Museum work and on-line activity during this period are to be found at the end of this report. Protecting volunteers and staff, especially the most vulnerable, has been a priority.

Accreditation

The Documentation Policy and interim Forward Plan have been recommended for Cabinet's approval by MMWG, which completes the cycle of main policy documents to be reviewed for Accreditation. Staff continue to work on remaining additional plan documents for in-house use (Documentation Plan, Emergency Plan for salvaging collections). Meanwhile, the expected invitation for Accreditation Review from the Arts Council did not arrive in January and it has now been announced that the Accreditation timetable is 'on hold' for the rest of the year..

Forward Plan: NHLF Resilient Heritage project

The draft Options report was received from Fourth Street in early January and immediate feedback was relayed to Fourth Street. A workshop with the consultants, Museum Development Committee and curatorial staff was held on Monday 10 February, with a presentation from Julia Holberry Associates on the results of initial consultations with stakeholders. The last phase of the consultants' work can be completed and conveyed remotely through email and on-line meetings, except for remaining elements of public consultation for the Audience Development Study, including the market stall booked for May, which will have to await the lifting of restrictions. There is no urgency with our project timetable at this stage and it is likely that the NLHF will grant extensions where needed.

Other matters

A draft report from Internal Audit has been received for discussion and feedback as soon as circumstances permit.

1.2 Staff, Volunteers and Work Experience

Staff

Jamie Milne stepped down from his permanent Visitor Service Assistant (VSA) role in February, but will continue to be on our casual rota of weekend staff. Francesco Maione one of our existing casual staff is due to sign a contract later this year to take on the permanent Visitor Services Assistant role covering alternate weekend hours and bank holidays.

Volunteers

We were very sorry to learn that our Welcome Desk Volunteer, Mary Knight, passed away in March. Mary was our longest serving volunteer, having supported us for over 40 years. We send our condolences to her family; she will be sadly missed.

**SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM
CURATOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT**

Q4 2019/20

January – March 2020

Volunteers	Est Hours
Collections volunteers	
Hamish McIlwrick - inventory of the photograph collection (4hrs p. week)	48
Ian adding accession register entries to Excel spreadsheet & summarising SWMS minutes (6 hrs per week) <i>- now switched to Natural History records</i>	50
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
Archaeology volunteers Joanne Pegrum, Peter Morrissey	6
Natural Sciences volunteers	
Heather Douglas updating location records in Modes Complete	4
Gerald Lucy assisting with identification of specimens	1
Liaison over special roadside verges Tony Morton, Ken Rivett, Heather and Paul Salvidge	2
Cali Holberry and Dominic Davey assisting with cleaning and documentation of stored geology collection.	23.5
Richard Priestly, Peter Morrissey, Paul Salvidge and Heather Salvidge assisting with removal of taxidermy specimens to facilitate maintenance in SWM Natural Sciences Store	26
Wildlife Garden Volunteers	
Issa Cochran and Ann Bannister had carried out regular watering and light maintenance duties.	2
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.	53
Exhibition change	
Ron Lowe, Peter Morrissey, Richard Priestly and Joanne Pegrum provided vital support in exhibition change.	53
Admin volunteers	
Mary Adams provides invaluable support with the financial administration	55
June Baker assists with the Welcome Desk paperwork, Volunteer shift rota and manages the Lost Property	15.25
Welcome Desk volunteers	
The Welcome Desk volunteers are the 'Face of the Museum', providing a friendly welcome for visitors; selling tickets and merchandise, and providing information about the Museum. Last shift was 17 March.	322.5
Total hours contributed by all volunteers for this quarter Equivalent to 20.4 weeks of full-time work	769.25

1.3 Training and Seminars Attended

Date	Course and Staff
7 Jan	SHARE Museums East: Working with Volunteers – Good Beginnings (Front of House Officer and Welcome Desk Volunteer, JB)
9 Jan	Fire marshal training for all staff, arranged by the Council
13 Jan	ILM management course, Council Offices, Curator
Jan-Feb	UDC Anti-Terrorism training – some staff attended, March session cancelled by Covid 19

11 Feb	ILM management course, Council Offices, Curator
5 Mar	Culture 24 - Digital Storytelling, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (Collections Officer, Human History)
12 Mar	SHARE - De-colonising Collections, Horniman Museum, London (Collections Officer, Human History)
2 March	Natural Science Collections: The Basics, Cambridge Museum of Zoology (Learning Officer – self-funded and in own time)

1.4 Health & Safety

Annual PAT testing of all electrical appliances in the Museum, Shire Hill and the workshop was undertaken in February. In addition, an annual three-hour test of the emergency lighting and the replacement of all out of date fire extinguishers was completed in March. Following on from the statutory five-yearly fixed wiring survey completed in late 2019, work to update the RCDs to modern standards has been scheduled for early April.

2 Buildings and Site**2.1 Security**

As a result of an Essex Police security inspection last December, quotations have been received from Saffron Security for certain upgrades and additions to the present system. These recommendations are desirable rather than essential and will remain on hold whilst Covid 19 restrictions remain.

A Key Holding service, Arena Security Ltd, has now been appointed to assist with out-of-hours alarm call-outs. They will be the Monitoring companies' first point of contact for both intruder and fire alarm activation for the Museum and Shirehill store. For false alarms, they would secure the building and leave a report on site, but in the case of a genuine emergency they would of course, call the police/fire services as well as relevant staff.

2.2 Museum Building**External works**

The small area of flat, felt covered roof at the rear of the building has now been completely replaced. This was the final outstanding item from the comprehensive exterior restoration programme of 2019. It is expected that the remaining scaffolding will be dismantled and removed from site in the near future.

The very heavy rains during February resulted in some water intrusion in the bay window/shutter area. Staff trained in working at heights for the roof safe-access system, cleared debris from the hoppers at each corner of this area and no further problems have been encountered.

Internal work

A new Hearing Loop system was installed mid- March, covering the Desk, Exhibition room and Great Hall as previously. It functions on a combination of wireless and fixed wiring and worked well on test. Most of the cost has been funded by a grant from the museum Society, including contributions from the Saffron Walden Round Table, the Gibson Walden Fund and a private donation, for which the Museum is very grateful. This also fulfils a recommendation in our last VAQAS report.

Building work to seal up gaps in the Museum Natural Sciences Store to reduce insect pests took place in February.

The second phase of work in March had to be cancelled due to the Covid 19 restrictions.

New clearer signage has been installed throughout the Museum to make navigating the building easier for the public. This has included modifying the titles of galleries (e.g. 'Early History' instead of 'Ages of Man'). Portraits have been re-displayed in the Ceramics gallery (see 4.1 below).

2.3 Shire Hill Store

Routine cleaning of the Natural Sciences store has taken place, including cleaning out the mobile shelving tracks. The dehumidifier has been malfunctioning and reducing the Relative Humidity to unacceptably low levels which could dry out the collections. Engineers from Munters and Marsden are investigating this problem. As a result of the five year hard wiring test last year, minor upgrades to the electrics have just been completed.

2.4 Grounds and Castle Site

Final work on the new iron gates to the entrance of the Castle were completed at the end of January. The combination of a very wet winter and regular visits by contractors in heavily laden vans left the ground between the edge of the Museum car park and the Castle, in a very poor state. The area has been extensively re-turfed and vehicular access has been banned until the new grass takes root.

The Museum now handles bookings for independent events on the Castle site, but unfortunately these have been postponed on Council instructions due to Covid 19.

3 Collections and Research

In early March, Kadec treated the Museum's collection of gas masks to make the asbestos in them safe. This follows their previous review of the Museum's entire collections regarding the presence and management of asbestos. An assessment is to be made next regarding how best to treat/manage the presence of asbestos in the Museum's mineral collections at the Shire Hill store and also those on display in the Museum.

Numerous shelves of specimens and cabinets of collections were moved within the Natural Sciences Store, and out to the Inorganics Store, to provide space for builders to access gaps in the ceiling, walls and floor and seal them up to reduce insect pest entry to the store. Some specimens had been damaged by moth and beetle larvae. Conservation work is ongoing to treat, clean and document specimens and clean the store.

3.1 Acquisitions and Disposals

Acquisitions this quarter have included:

- Tudor silver-gilt hair pin, Hatfield Heath (acquired through the Treasure Act) now collected from the British Museum and on display in the Great Hall gallery
- Deposition of archive backlog from Archaeological Solutions, 9 March (43 sites, mostly small projects with no finds) and accession numbers allocated for 22 new archaeological projects, to be deposited eventually
- UDC site plans and elevation drawings previously stored at the Council's Newport Depot for archiving.
- Placard from a student-led climate change strike and march to the Council offices
- Local history photographs

3.3 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>	67	500 (photo audit cataloguing completed – next stage digitisation, continuing to audit and catalogue archive document and book collections at Shire Hill)	800 (ditto)
Archaeology	0	31	0
Natural Sciences	0	0	215 geology collection
Total	67	531	1015

3.4 Loans In

- Textile Items for Sawdust Hearts temporary exhibition
- Items for *All Fired Up* Exhibition from local collector (cancelled 2 weeks before exhibition changeover).

3.5 Loans Out

- Loan of treasure finds returned from Colchester Castle's *Adorn* exhibition
- Long-term loan returned to us by the Fitzwilliam Museum (was Object of the Month for April) - Drawing by Gaspare Diziani, *Adoration of the Shepherds*.

3.6 Object Identification and Enquiries

Object identifications this quarter: 6 (Archaeology: 2 ; Human History : 3 ; Natural Sciences: 1)

- Chinese urn
- Metal detectorist finds
- Post-Medieval social history items found in local moat
- Jurassic fossils in stone with recent surface texture from burrowing worm

Collections Enquiries this quarter: 57 (Archaeology: 9 ; Human History: 37; Natural Sciences: 11)

topics included:

- Liepmann Textile (linked to V&A collection)
- Brewery history
- Local clock-makers
- 18th century maps
- Early 19th Century local social history
- Saffron cultivation
- Victorian hand and machine sewing
- Plain sewing samplers (Norfolk Museums)
- Bark-cloth collections (UK-collections study)
- Aboriginal weapons
- Saffron Walden Pageant 1910

- Midgeley plates (on display in the ceramic gallery)
- Death Masks (Museum Research Assistant, Royal College of Music)
- Early circulating libraries (Gibson Library)
- Henry Winstanley & the Eddystone Lighthouse
- Hedgehog-related customs and beliefs
- Potter Alan Foxley (ceramics collection)
- Cinema nostalgia – with Saffron Screen
- Historic photographs of Catons Lane and Little Walden Road
- Birds: Blue Tit for drawing and Passenger Pigeons
- Special roadside verges biological records
- Volitive pots from Sparta, donated by HJW Tillyard in the 1960s

3.7 Research

Research visits this quarter: 5 (Human History: 4 + Natural Sciences: 1)

Topics included:

- Community archaeology projects – how to record test pits (Arkesden resident)
- Pargetting tools (preserving local building tradition)
- Textile researcher (for Gibson Library talk)
- Researchers working with the Gibson Library, viewed the photograph collection regarding their upcoming book publication, "*Lost Scenes of Walden*"
- Cambridge Chinese Centre Conference viewed Chinese textiles and cultural items
- Artist Kabir Hussain for exhibition research

4 Displays and Visitor Services

4.1 Permanent Galleries

Following on from the repainting and water damage repairs to the Ceramics gallery in 2019, the large oil paintings of Thomas Wolfe's wife and an unknown lady of the 17th Century were rehung in January. Additionally, the portrait of Thomas Wolfe has also been hung in the same area. Volunteers from the Fry Art Gallery helped with the install work, along with Museum staff and volunteers.

4.2 Temporary Exhibitions

Object of the Month featured:

- January: Nautilus shell
- February: Snowy Owl (to link with Harry Potter Book event)
- March: Medieval decorated tiles

Curiosity Corner :

- January: Crystals
- February: Fantastic Beasts
- March: Hares

Your Stories:

The new co-curated display *Sawdust Hearts*, linked to occupational therapy and war remembrance, opened in January and was intended to run until July 2020.

Special Exhibition:

- *Death Masks to Diaries* continues to remain in place, as the Museum is currently closed due to the Covid-19 situation.
- *All Fired Up* co-curated with Essex Fire Museum was due to open on Saturday 4 April, but the changeover was cancelled with two weeks to go due to the current situation and the exhibition has now been postponed until April 2021.
- Work has begun on preparing the next exhibition, STEAM 2020 which is linked to the Essex STEAM festival. Because of the uncertainty over Covid 19 restrictions and their effect on the Museum's programme for the rest of the year, contingency plans are being made for an alternative exhibition which can be installed quickly if STEAM has to be postponed or cannot be installed in time for re-opening to the public. In either event, research and preparation will not be wasted as it will be used for blog pots and other activities.

4.3 Visitor Services

	Public		Schools incl. adults		Total	
	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019
January	752	726	0	35	752	761
February	1,188	934	28	29	1,216	963
March	299*	739	152	68	451	807
Total	2,239	2,399	180	132	2,419	2,531

* the Museum closed to the public on 18 March 2020 as part of the emergency measures to control Covid-19).

Income

Shop

	2020	2019
January	218.61	326.82
February	427.20	525.37
March	130.74	244.07
Total £	776.55	1,096.26

Tickets

	2020	2019
January	782.25	903.75
February	1385.25	1,186.00
March	463.75	1,013.25
Total £	2,631.25	3,103.00

Donations

	2020	2019
January	2	39.23
February	136.56	32.03
March	39.59	43.42
Total £	178.15	114.68

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Donations

For comparison purposes, the figure recorded in February 2019 was for the period mid February to mid March. The figure recorded in February 2020 was for the period January to February, it also included a donation from an attendee on the Museum Photography course who was so impressed that they gave a donation in addition to paying the fee for the event.

The figure recorded in March 2019 included £21.22 being monies donated into the 'Post Box' in the Local History gallery; which is only emptied once per year. In 2020 the Post Box donations totalled £9.19. The figure for March also includes a donation from a gentleman renewing his annual season ticket.

Shop

The differences in shop and ticket sales figures for the month of March, compared with the same period in 2019, reflects the fact that on Wednesday 18 March 2020 the Museum closed to the public as part of the emergency measures to control Covid-19 (coronavirus).

Learning & Outreach Services Income

	Schools Sessions & outreach	Activities & Events	School Loan & Reminiscence Boxes
	Feb 28 Heritage School £48	Jan Art Club £35	Heather Mount, Fossils
	March 3, St Mary's SW Mini Museums 26 pupils £78	Jan Mini's £10	St Marys SW, Romans
	March 11, Saint Giles School Egypt 29 pupils, £87	Jan Toddler Stem £28	Rickling Romans
	March 11, Cubs visit Egypt £78	Feb Photography workshop £170	home school, Vikings
	March 12, Saffron Walden Brownie Pack, Romans £78	Feb Toddler stem £6	Radwinter, Ancient Greece 12 week loan
	March 18, Brownies £78, Cancelled Covid 19	Mask Making £94.50	Hillmead Primary School, Saxons
	March 20, Wethersfield Greece + WW2 £144, Cancelled Covid 19	Clay Head £121.50 50p don	Farnham, Romans
	March 26, Katherine Semar, Local History 60 pupils - £180 – Cancelled Covid 19	Dastardly Disguises £45.50	
	Home school art club taster session £48	Feb Minis £12	
		Feb Art Club £40	
		March Toddler stem £18	
		March Minis Cancelled short staffed	

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		Art Club No attendees - Covid 19	
Total £ 1,093.50	£ 369.00 (would have been £819 approx.)	£ 580.50	£ 144.00

4.4 Publicity, Marketing, Social Media and New Website

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

- East of England GROUP visitor guide
- East of England Visitor guide
- SW Town Council Official Guide and Map and www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk
- Eastlife Magazine

Published Articles (in print and on-line)

Date	Publication	Subject	Additional Information	Photo
8 Jan	Walden Local	SWMS monthly talk re. Essex Regiment WW1		Y
16 Jan	SW Reporter	Toddler STEAM – regular event		Y
5 Feb	Walden Local	Gibson Portrait event (worked with SWM) & SWMS monthly talk re. Painter		Y
6 Feb	SW Reporter	February Half Term advert		Y
12 Feb	Walden Local	Creative Writing Workshop (with Saffron Walden Arts Trust)		Y
13 Feb	SW Reporter	Heritage Development Group – Official launch of Battle Ditch Panels	Front page photo & inside paper	Y
26 Feb	Walden Local	Clay Heads at the Museum (Half-Term activity) – linked to <i>Death Masks to Diaries</i> Exhibition		Y
4 March	Walden Local	"Admiring a Chinese robe at Saffron Walden Museum...." – Cambridge Sustainable Tourism Conference (Cambridge Chinese Centre) – visit to Saffron Walden including Museum		Y
4 March	Walden Local	Listing: Monthly museum Society talk (Sawdust Hearts- link to exhibition) & STEM science event		Y
5 March	SW Reporter	Cambridge Sustainable Tourism Conference (Cambridge Chinese Centre) – visit to Saffron Walden including Museum	Picture in the temporary exhibition gallery - (2-page spread)	Y
18 March	Walden Local	Front page – Covid-19 closures (precautionary measures)		Y
Jan / Feb / March	SW Flyer	Monthly Column – including latest events, object of the month		

SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM

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January – March 2020

editions				
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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
- Net Mums
- Salad Days
- EastLife
- The Listing, Royston

Social Media and Email Newsletter

Twitter	Followers: 2111
Facebook	Followers: 1347
Instagram	Followers : 747
Email Newsletter	Followers: 1500
Explore with SWM blog	Page Visits: 302

Saffron Walden Museum Website – Statistics for this quarter

	Visits	Unique Visitors
January	4,218	3,591
February	4,645	3,678
March	5,173	2,132
TOTAL for Q4	14,036	9,401

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

The Museum ranks number 2 out of 18 things to do in Saffron Walden on this travel and tourism review website and, of the 139 reviews, 70% rate the Museum as 'Excellent'.

5 Education, Events and Outreach

5.1 Education

Loan and Reminiscence boxes: no. of Users

Box	Borrowers	Purpose	Users		
			Children	Adults	Total
Fossils	Heather Mount Primary school	Curriculum enrichment	60	2	62
Romans	St Marys Saffron Walden	Curriculum enrichment	Not yet returned		
Romans	Rickling Primary school	Curriculum enrichment + parents evening	29	21	50
Vikings	Home school	Curriculum enrichment	1	2	3
Ancient	Radwinter primary school	Curriculum enrichment	30	3	33

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Greece					
Saxons	Hillmead Primary School,	Curriculum enrichment	62	4	66
Romans	Farnham	Curriculum enrichment + parents evening	20	43	63
		Totals	202	75	277

Analysis of use of Learning Services and Pupil Numbers

Service	Children	Adults
Loan Boxes	202	75
Taught sessions in the Museum (some visits cancelled due to Covid 19)	112 (Would have been 234)	31
Outreach visit	0	0
Self-guided visit to Museum	31	6
Total users of Museum Learning Services	345	112

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

Date	Event	Visitors
14 Jan	Toddler STEAM	14
28 Jan	Museum Minis	5
28 Jan	Grown Ups Art Club	7
7 Feb	Photography Workshop	5
10 Feb	NLHF Project Steering Group	
11 Feb	Toddler STEAM	3
15 Feb	Saffron Walden Snapshots	Cancelled due to staff illness
19 Feb	Feb Half-Term: Mask Making	63
20 Feb	Feb Half-Term: Clay Heads	81
21 Feb	Feb Half-Term: Dastardly Disguises	30
25 Feb	Museum Minis	6
25 Feb	Grown Ups Art Club	8
26 Feb	Cambridge Sustainable Tourism Conference – Saffron Walden visit	15
10 Mar	Toddler STEAM	9
6 Mar	Creative Writing Workshop	12
14 Mar	Saffron Walden Rocks (Pebble painting)	8
17 Mar	Museum Minis	Cancelled – short-staffed
17 Mar	Grown Up Art Club	No Attendees
Public events then cancelled due to Covid-19 precautions		
	Total	266

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

Date	Event	Visitors
30 Jan	Launch of Battle Ditch Interpretation panels (Heritage Development Forum)	50
23 Feb	19 th century portrait event at Gibson Library (linked to Death Masks to Diaries exhibition)	50
21 Mar	Pageants Day (English Folk Dance and Song Society)– prepared material for the Gibson Library attending	Cancelled
	Total	100

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

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

- Ashdon Museum advice on photograph conservation and storage
- Great Dunmow Museum – liaised regarding *All Fired Up* Exhibition., and 1 committee meeting
- Saffron Walden Fire Station – liaised regarding *All Fired Up* Exhibition.
- Untangled Threads textile group – co-curated *Your Stories* Sawdust Hearts display.
- Local History Recorders and Historical Journal – liaise re. human history research enquiries, *All Fired Up Exhibition* and publicity
- Gibson Library – provide collections information for their event about 19th century portraiture Sat 22 and Sun 23 February; *All Fired Up* preparation and Pageant 1910 event.
- Saffron Walden TIC – CV Walden project
- Saffron Walden Community Shed made tray for interactive for *All Fired Up* Exhibition
- Heritage Development Group, 1 meeting, supplied text for Battle Ditches panel and advice on tenders for production of panel (SWTC NLHF-funded project), Curator
- Special Roadside Verges project – UTT45 Ridgeon’s site mitigation, UTT46 Audley End verge damage, checking replacement of missing posts, producing 2019 annual reports, site list for March 2020 cut, 7 planning application responses (Natural Sciences Officer, S Kenyon)
- Together in Sound , 10 Jan – Learning Officer met with Thomas & Rachel to discuss future projects
- Saffron Walden Arts Trust, 16 Jan – Learning Officer, meeting with Sarah Turpin to discuss the creative writing workshop
- Saffron Walden Camera Club, 30 Jan – Learning Officer meeting re. for photography workshop
- Home school art club sessions, 5 Feb – Learning Officer meeting with Carrie Webb to discuss

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

- SHARE Annual Collections Conference, Cambridge, 30 January, Curator
- Museums Essex AGM, Braintree, 6 March, Curator
- Museums Association regional meeting, Norwich Castle. 6 September, Curator
- Collections Officer (Human History) mentors two volunteer run museums, one in Hertfordshire and one in Bedfordshire
- Essex Fire Museum & Essex County Fire & Rescue Service regarding co-curating *All Fired Up* Exhibition – site visit at SWM on 21 January
- SHARE Natural History Network meeting at Norwich Castle on 3 March. James Lumbard, Natural Sciences Officer.
- Dress & Textile Specialist network and Social History Curator’s Group – online participation in forums and social media discussions, Collections Officer (Human History)

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- Museums Essex, successful application for phase 2 of *Snapping the Stiletto* project –working with the Museum of Power, Maldon Museum in the Park, Southend Museums' Service and a broad range of community partners.
- Cambridge Chinese Centre regarding the 2020 Cambridge Sustainable Tourism Conference
- Essex Record Office, All Fired Up Exhibition preparation
- Essex 2020 – liaising to publicise and prepare exhibition and events STEAM 2020

Local Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator PI 49	Q4 Actual	Q4 Target	Annual (Cumulative)	Annual Target 2019-20
Users of the Museum Service	2,858	3,200	14,224	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 figure:

Users are 11% under target due to the Museum's closure from Wednesday 18 March on account of Covid 19 restrictions. In practice, the last day when the public visited the Museum was Sunday 15 March (closed Monday, and no visitors on Tuesday 17 March). Growing concerns over Covid 19 also led to the cancellation of school visits before 18 March. The very popular programme of activities at February half-term and introduction of new sessions for adults and toddlers have helped to maintain good performance up to the closure.

Comment on annual figure 2019/20:

Users are 8% over target for the year, despite closure from mid-March 2020. Events, activities and learning services have all contributed to this, despite the restrictions imposed by the lack of space in the museum for teaching and activities.

Museum service Q1 April – June 2020

For the immediate future the Museum remains closed to the public due to restrictions necessary to control the spread of coronavirus (Covid 19). While some staff continue to work either at home or at the Shirehill store, a minimal staff presence will be retained at the Museum to care for the collections, building and equipment as necessary and undertake work which has to be carried out on site.

During this time, these are some of the activities Museum staff will be engaged in:

On-Line activities

We are stepping up our on-line public engagement through website, blog, social media and the Museum's e-Newsletter. Features to be rolled out include:

New blog <https://exploresaffronwaldenmuseum.blogspot.com/>

The blog will enable us to easily develop online learning resources, craft activities, exhibitions online etc.

Art Tickets system for online credit card payments for event bookings has now been approved, and can be established online in the run up to re-opening. Subject to Art Fund staff operating as usual.

Email enquiries

Research enquiries from members of the public and academic researchers continue. We continue to respond to requests for articles for local publications.

Museum Development

Continuing project with Fourth Street and Julia Holberry Associates by email.

Online survey has been introduced and is being shared widely to elicit more responses, with paid-for A/B testing being introduced.

We anticipate the conclusion of the Visitor Insight East project once the isolation rules are relaxed which will help to further inform the audience development work.

Accreditation Review

Arts Council England have just announced that there will be a year's extension on Accreditation, due to the current situation. Behind the scenes we continue to update the museum's policies and procedures.

Collections and Stores work

- Natural History store, Museum. Many of the mounted bird skins were decanted ready for renovation work to the store. A programme of conservation and cataloguing will begin while the Museum is closed.
- Natural Sciences store, Shirehill ongoing cleaning and environmental monitoring
- Geology Gallery. A project to research and update the documentation for items on display in the Geology gallery will begin while the Museum is closed to the public.
- Other collections work including education loans and handling collections
- Grant applications for treasure acquisition

- Regular monitoring of stores and galleries for environment and pests
- Documentation and digitisation. Cataloguing collections from previous hand-lists (in preparation for continuing physical collections audits once the Museum is accessible again) – document archive and firearms collection.

Buildings and equipment

Essential contractors' work continues, completion of 5-yearly hard-wire testing at Museum

Galleries and displays

Special exhibition programme on hold: *All Fired Up!* Rescheduled with Essex Fire Service Museum for April 2021. Researching and preparing for future temporary exhibitions including STEAM 2020 and alternative quick-to-install exhibition, depending on the timing and nature of the exit from Covid 19 restrictions. Opportunity to smarten up some areas and interactives and make small improvements to displays once lockdown period is relaxed.

Museum Shop

- The annual stock take will be conducted whilst the Museum is closed to the public.
- Work will progress on setting up the till (initially in the back office) and establishing a training programme for staff and volunteers.

Exit Strategy for Covid 19

We are considering the implications for the Museum when restrictions are eventually lifted and action plan to be put in place before we can re-open to the public. Work on this will continue.