



Saffron Walden Museum



Museum Service Forward Plan 2018 - 2023

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Approved by Museum Management Working Group [date]

Due for Review in [date]

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 leaving the Museum to work at the store throughout the week need to be addressed through external funding. Such a project 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 around £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.
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 of the Museum (and also the Castle ruins) through greater income-generation. Income could be improved in an extended and refurbished Museum building through 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.
7. Pursuing a development project while maintaining a full service with a small team of staff (just over 5 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 community health and well-being. It can also help draw visitors to the area and contribute to the general economic well-being of the town and district.
9. The Forward Plan addresses this through 7 key aims in 3 stages, built around a succession of applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund (and other funding providers)
(1) Preparing for Transformation – Resilient Heritage application and work 2018-19
(2) Heritage Hub – Stage 1 application for Heritage Grant –development phase

(3) Heritage Hub – Stage 2 application for Heritage Grant – delivery phase

Parallel to these, work to improve digitisation of and access to the collections needs to be undertaken, and archaeological work in advance of Heritage Hub – Stage 2 will be required to fulfil planning and SMC obligations and improve interpretation of the Castle.

10. The Key Aims are:

1. Stabilise Staffing to enable services and development plans to proceed effectively
2. Introduce EPOS Till and Card Payment to support income generation
3. Start process of in-depth consultations and feasibility studies to plan developments
4. Address the backlog of collections cataloguing and digitisation
5. Work with the Museum Society on a fund-raising strategy
6. Develop the Museum and site as a 'heritage hub'
7. Improve Knowledge and Interpretation of the Castle Site

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 includes a project-funded 2-year curatorial post to undertake digitisation work on the archaeology and other collections, and free the Curator from some of the routine work on archaeological collections and services to concentrate more on management and developments.
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 Heritage Lottery 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 2018 – 2023 Forward Plan is

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 (2006 – 2011)

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. These collections are estimated at over 155,000 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 autumn of 2018. 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) with a team of casual-contract staff and many volunteers.

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.

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 in off-site storage 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 is to be reviewed in late 2018 for Accreditation.

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 a particular issue, and the geological collections also 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).** Preliminary work has begun and an opening discussion with the Heritage Lottery Fund was held in October 2017 to seek guidance on what grant applications might be made. Meanwhile the Curator and members of the Museum Society Board have attended various seminars run by SHARE on fund-raising, making major grant applications and capital projects. The Museum Society Chairman and Curator have 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.
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 will be an important part of submissions to Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Meanwhile, conservation of the Castle, funded by the Council and Historic England, is due for completion in 2018 and will open the keep to public access. This presents new opportunities for heritage interpretation and community use of the site, and also for income generation.

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 is also offering to make visits to schools, and more marketing to Uttlesford schools is planned in 2018 to encourage use of this service by schools in remoter parts of the district which have not visited, or cannot do so.
6. **Develop a marketing policy for the Museum and site as a local amenity and heritage destination to local and wider audiences, to increase use, income and community well-being.** The establishment of a part-time Admin Officer post, permanent since 2016, has helped to establish and extend regular publicity for museum programme. More extensive, strategic and ambitious marketing will require an increased budget, more staff-time from the Curator and Admin Officer. Visitor information and consultation also remains low-key with very little staff-time available to effectively analyse and make use of data.

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
- 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
- New 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 late 2018

Weaknesses

- Visitor figures static around 14,000 to 16,00 for some years
- 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 or help with evening events
- Museum galleries are ageing and need comprehensive re-display, with new ways of telling stories and engaging visitors and more space needed 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
- Lack of dedicated teaching, activity and meeting space is a chronic problem which restricts all sorts of activities and income-generating services, especially school visits
- Lack of modern visitor facilities (shop, refreshments, WCs)

- Lack of card payment facility is beginning to impact a little on income and visitors, as some visitors do not carry cash and are unable or unwilling to walk down to a cashpoint on the town centre and uphill back to the Museum
- Staff stretched: core team of 4 f/t with p/t Admin Officer and Security & Premises Officer, all have to juggle multiple roles. Staff changes in early 2018 (1 f/t post becoming job-shared and 1 f/t post vacant from mid-May, to be recruited) will make it difficult to proceed with any development plans until a new team is fully settled in.
- Insufficient curatorial posts to cover all collections or to undertake major gallery redisplays while maintaining special exhibitions programme and other services; lack of a dedicated archaeological post is a particular issue with the documentation backlogs and rapid increase in collections and information due to planning & development
- Over-reliance on casuals contract staffing for weekends, bank holidays and other times when additional support is needed. The availability of casual staff for any set date cannot be guaranteed or enforced, and this is affecting the Museum's ability to open on some bank holidays (e.g. Easter Sunday and Monday 2018) and meet obligations for booked events, as well as taking up significant curatorial staff time to rota and train a large casuals' team.
- 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 projects
- Scope for making applications to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) 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
- 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 have remained at around 14,000 – 16,000 per year, with fluctuations. 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 basic visitor data captured by volunteers at the Welcome Desk, about 35 % of visitors come from Saffron Walden and the immediate area; other parts of Essex and the East of England account for another 35% and the remainder of visitors are divided more-or-less equally between visitors from other areas of the UK and visitors from overseas. More use might be made of this basic data to inform marketing but there is insufficient staff time to devote to in-depth analysis. There is need for more wide-ranging and independent research into actual and potential audiences for the Museum, and to identify barriers to visiting, before the Museum can embark on development plans. This is therefore high on our list of Key Aims.

4.2 In 2017 the Museum Society Chairman and Curator held informal meetings with local heritage and community groups, including the Castel 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.

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 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. **Stabilise staffing:** key appointments in 2018 (Natural Sciences jobshare and Collections Officer / Human History) and resolve weekend / bank holiday staffing issues by implementing two permanent weekend and bank holiday Visitor Assistant posts to work alongside the casual-contract team of Museum Assistants.
2. **Introduce EPOS till with card payment facility** for the Welcome Desk, to capture income from visitors or would-be visitors who do not carry cash (on-line payment and booking for events as a longer-term goal)
3. **Start process of in-depth consultations and feasibility studies** underway to inform and enable further forward planning, subject to securing external funding (discussions with HLF have identified a Resilient Heritage Grant could fund this work)
4. **Address the backlog of collections work especially cataloguing and digitisation** at Shirehill, and continue to encourage deposition of archaeological archives so that key objects and information can be incorporated into new displays and outreach programmes, and on-line access to collections can be developed. This requires a project-funded f/t additional curatorial post for 2 years with an archaeological specialisation but capable of supervising digitisation projects with volunteers across all human history and natural science collections generally, and to be based at Shirehill Store. This will require external funding (potentially HLF Our Heritage grant)
5. **Work with the Museum Society on a fund-raising strategy** for capital developments and other projects.
6. **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. Re-display of some galleries and provision of a new learning & activities room; a new special exhibitions gallery and a larger reception area with shop, will be critical elements. (This will require substantial external funding, potentially from a HLF Heritage Grant and other sources, and including funds held by the Museum Society from sale of the Curator's House)
7. **Improve knowledge and interpretation of the Castle site** (bailey of Walden Castle, origins of medieval town) 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 Specific Objectives for each Key Aim

Key Aim 1 Stabilise staffing

- 1.1 Establish jobshare for Natural Sciences Office post and induct new member of staff (probation period April – September 2018)
- 1.2 Recruit to vacancy for Collections Officer (Human History) summer 2018, aim to recruit new member of staff to start in September 2018
Both the above are a pre-requisite before the Museum can proceed effectively with development plans.
- 1.3 Establish and Recruit 2 permanent Visitor Services Assistants on permanent contracts for weekends and bank holidays, to work alongside the current team of casual-contract assistants. This will bring the Museum into line with other similar local authority museum services in the region, increase the certainty of being able to open on bank holidays and weekends, and improve the Museum's ability to commit to events and bookings where extra staff are required.

Key Aim 2 Introduce EPOS Till and Card Payment to support income generation

- 2.1 With the Council's Finance and IT departments, identify a suitable EPOS system which can be used by the large team of Desk Volunteers, and temporary assistance to help train and support volunteers until new till procedures are embedded.
- 2.2 Include card payment as an option at the Welcome Desk for admission tickets and souvenir sales.
- 2.3 Investigate and cost further potential uses e.g. on-line payment for event and activity bookings, to be integrated at a suitable stage in future Museum developments when resources and staffing permit.

Key Aim 3 Start process of in-depth consultations and feasibility studies

- 3.1 Apply for funding (HLF Resilient Heritage grant) in 2018 for external consultants to provide:
 - a. Audience Development Study including assessment of actual and potential users, actual and perceived barriers to engaging with the Museum Service and scope for increasing the breadth and number of visitors / users and the quality of their engagement with the Museum Service. Subsequent development work will take its cue from the result.
 - b. Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal for the Museum and site, including business planning and income generation options, heritage interpretation and architect's design for best option to extend and improve the Museum building, with outline proposals for gallery re-displays.

Key Aim 4 Address the backlog of collections cataloguing and digitisation

- 4.1 Develop and run a pilot project to test the potential of, and users' response to, on-line searching of collections, in conjunction with the Modes Users Association (providers of Modes Complete database software for museum collections) and the

Council's IT section. This will provide information to support bids for funding. It will require a web designer to design the interface page for on-line searching.

- 4.2 Establish demand and potential audiences for outreach activities using collections to tell 'stories of NW Essex' – providing a sense of place and sparking curiosity about the human and natural environment of the district. This will also provide information on potential themes for re-display of galleries and provide information to support bids for funding.
- 4.3 Apply for funding (HLF Our Heritage and possibly other sources) to run a two-year digitisation and access to collections project, 'Stories of North-West Essex'. This will cover costs of one additional member of curatorial staff for 2 years, to work at the Shirehill store and maximise opportunities there for volunteers, work experience students, interns and specialists to assist with the digitisation programme. Outcomes will be to address the backlog of uncatalogued and undigitised collections (especially, but not exclusively archaeology), improve access to collections and enable curatorial staff to use the collections and digitised records to produce display briefs for new galleries.

Key Aim 5 Work with the Museum Society on a fund-raising strategy

- 5.1 Apply for funding HLF Resilient Heritage) in 2018 for a short-term fund-raising assistant to research foundations and trusts to which the Museum Society could apply for grants towards Museum developments.
- 5.2 Apply for funding HLF Resilient Heritage) in 2018 for a fund-raising mentor to help the Museum Society, working with Museum staff, to produce a fund-raising strategy for the Museum developments envisaged in this Forward Plan and for the long-term future, to enhance the sustainability of the Museum Service. The Museum Society will separately look to recruit commercial / fund-raising expertise to the Board to complement the professional experience of other directors.

Key Aim 6 Develop the Museum and site as a 'heritage hub'

- 6.1 Dependent on the results of research and feasibility studies in Key Aim 3, raise funding for capital works and activities to extend and improve the Museum and develop the site as a 'heritage hub' for NW Essex and beyond. The emphasis will be on broadening and increasing public engagement with the heritage (collections, Museum and Castle site) and through that, increasing income and sustainability. A two-stage HLF Heritage Grant has been identified as the principle source of funding but will need supplementing with matching funding from other sources and the Museum Society.
- 6.2 The project will consist of a Development Phase (Stage 1) which is envisaged as lasting approximately one year (although up to 2 years are allowed under current HLF rules) and a Delivery Phase (Stage 2) which may last longer.

Objectives under this key aim will be further developed as Key Aims 3 and 4 are implemented.

Key Aim 7 Improve knowledge and interpretation of the Castle site

- 7.1 Using the results of the geophysical survey undertaken on the Castle site, and depending on feasibility studies and costings from Key Aim 3, carry out archaeological investigations on the Museum and Castle site. This will be partly to fulfil planning and Scheduled Monument Consent conditions for any extension to the Museum and associated groundworks, and partly to investigate features of interest which could add significantly to our understanding of the history and evolution of the Castle site and hence the history of Saffron Walden itself. The work will be professionally led but should incorporate opportunities for local people to participate in uncovering their local heritage. Potential funding sources are HLF Our Heritage or part of the larger Heritage Grant application. Smaller supplementary grants may be sought from local and regional heritage sources.
- 7.2 Information from this will be used to enhance interpretation of the site's history through a range of means such as display panels, digital media and publications.

Objectives under this key aim will be further developed as Key Aims 3 and 4 are implemented

7 Phased Plan for Achieving Objectives

1 Resilient Heritage 2018-19 applications and work programme

Development (Project enquiry, application and assessment by HLF) April – October 2018

Delivery of work December 2018 - December 2019

To undertake the research and consultancy work needed on

- Audience development
- Feasibility and options appraisal (including architect's design to RIBA Stage 1)
- Heritage interpretation and other surveys
- Business planning and financial sustainability

in order to develop an appropriate, costed plan for improving the Museum which enables 2

2 Heritage Grant – developing the Museum and site as a ‘heritage hub’

- Stage 1 – development phase - January 2020 – June 2021
- Stage 2 – delivery phase - June 2021 - 2023

Parallel to this:

3 Our Heritage Grant – access to collections

October 2018 – June 2021

- To develop digitisation of the collections as the key to improving access and use
- Staff – greater ability to manage and use collections to tell stories of NW Essex and develop Museum activity programmes
- Researchers – improved access to information on collections
- General Public – on-line searching and great engagement through outreach activities and displays

4 Our Heritage Grant – archaeological community project

October 2019 – October 2020

- To undertake archaeological work in mitigation of planning and scheduled monument consent (SMC) conditions,
- To investigate areas and features of particular potential, identified by the geophysical survey 2012)
- To provide an opportunity for community involvement in discovering more about the castle site and Saffron Walden' medieval origins

Schematic Representation of Projects with Heritage Lottery Applications

Development phase (project enquiry, application and assessment by HLF) is shown in paler shade
 Delivery of project in darker shade, assuming successful outcome for application (which cannot be guaranteed)



