Inspiring pride in Norfolk’s heritage through 10 award-winning museums
A message from Steve

Lines of Sight
“In August 1992, when the dog days were drawing to an end, I set off to walk the county of Suffolk.”
And with these words, the great writer and academic W.G. Sebald begins his seminal book The Rings of Saturn, which is the source of our latest exhibition, Lines of Sight: W.G. Sebald’s East Anglia.

The exhibition, in the Timothy Gurney Gallery at Norwich Castle, is a fantastic example of our ever-growing partnership with the University of East Anglia. Thanks to everyone who has worked on this great show, with especial congratulations to the two curators, Dr Nick Warr of UEA and Dr Rosy Gray.

In other news, our Kick the Dust Norfolk project continues to go from strength to strength. This ground-breaking National Lottery Heritage Fund supported youth development programme is delivering great results across the county and, with invaluable support from our evaluators Claire Adler and Anna Salaman, we’re working hard to ensure that the project delivers transformational change in how we work with young people now and into the future.

And finally, we’re delighted to be working closely with the brilliant Norfolk and Norwich Festival. NMS has supported the development of a number of Festival surprises including Joe Moran’s ‘Singular’, a performance piece at Norwich Castle, and artist Will Teather’s amazing ‘Globes’ which you can find examples of at both Norwich Castle and the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell.

Steve Miller
Assistant Director (Culture & Heritage), Head of Norfolk Museums Service

60 Second Newsletter

Pushed for time? The 60 Second Newsletter is for you! Here are some of the key headlines with internal links if you want to read more.

Latest News highlights
There’s a focus on staff this month as we get to meet the new Teaching Museum trainees. Further first impressions from two of the trainees, Tom Beese and George Baines, are included in their departmental updates.

In our regular volunteers pages you can meet two of our long-standing volunteers who give their time at the Norwich Castle Study Centre and Ancient House Museum, and find out about lots of volunteering opportunities across the Service, including for Volunteers’ Week.

Some fantastic stats around involvement by young people headline this month’s Kick the Dust news, with a range of examples showing how different museums and different NMS departments are working with the Kick the Dust team to deliver opportunities for engagement to the county’s young people. These range from co-curation at the Museum of Norwich, queering the collections with the Ancient House Museum Teenage History Club and an ‘Oceans of Waste’ environmental project at Time and Tide.

Norwich highlights
The newly-opened Lines of Sight is a truly unique exhibition for
lovers of literature and the East Anglian landscape. Presentation of previously unseen archive photographs means that you can follow in W. G. Sebald’s footsteps around Suffolk and Norfolk, discovering the lost and overlooked along the way.

Visitors to the Castle can now enjoy a refurbished café area and toilets thanks to a significant grant from the FCC Communities Foundation. The new look furniture and greenery, together with much improved toilet facilities means a warmer welcome for all the Castle’s visitors.

The Castle’s art galleries too have been upgraded, with essential works carried out offering the opportunity to redecorate and reinterpret the Victorian and English Country House galleries.

The removal from the Castle Keep of all collections and interpretive elements has resulted in a ‘clear-view’ Keep which reveals afresh the architectural majesty of this iconic space. The Collections Management and Design & Technical teams share their experience of working on this complex and important project. The unique opportunity to see the Keep in this state is being actively promoted to visitors with a new tour developed and activities planned for over the summer.

At the Museum of Norwich the arrival of a group of brewers from Rouen for Norwich’s City of Ale event was a cause for celebration. The intrepid team from France brought their new beer, Amitie, into Norwich by boat dressed as Vikings! The beer was sampled at a tasting event at the Museum of Norwich. This kicks off a summer of events to mark the 50th anniversary of the twinning of Norwich with Rouen which will include a new exhibition at MoN, Norwich in ‘59.

**Western Area Highlights**

At Gressenhall you can catch up on their half term plans, plus meet the gorgeous Casper—Gressenhall’s newest member of staff! He’s a Suffolk Punch horse who has joined the team of four other Suffolk Punches who work on the farm.

As well as hearing more about the Teenage History Club’s LGBTQ tours at Gressenhall and Lynn, there’s also news of Ancient House’s latest collaboration with the Essex Cultural Diversity Project on a £36,800 National Heritage Lottery Funded project exploring the life and achievements of Princess Sophia Duleep Singh and a Festival of Norfolk and Punjab this summer.

Lynn Museum’s visitor figures are receiving a boost from the display of items from the Snettisham Treasure, on loan from the British Museum. Visitors have included a Mr Wylie whose wife was the widow of Tom Rout who had found the ‘Great Torc’ in the 1950s. This visit attracted media attention, further boosting interest. This follows on from the display of the Pentney Brooches at Lynn Museum last year, also loaned by the BM, and is one more aspect of our Service-wide partnership with them.

**Eastern Area Highlights**

Cromer Museum opened a month early on 1 March and has been busy every since. Catch up with their plans for events right across the spring and summer which include event days, talks and their popular historical walks series.

In Great Yarmouth Time and Tide has had a busy spring opening their new **Medieval Medicine** exhibition which has been created by the Jorvik group. As the first venue on the exhibition’s tour, the Time and Tide team have worked closely with the Jorvik curators on the installation and design of the show which uses five historical characters to guide visitors through the bizarre sometimes gruesome world of medieval medicine—a Physician, Barber Surgeon, Cunning Woman, Religious Figure and an Apothecary. The show is a careful balance between fun, family-friendly interactives and a serious look at disease and death during the Middle Ages.

The **Making Waves Together** project which aims to promote cultural heritage across both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, is entering its final year. This collaboration is funded by Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of its Great Places programme. This month we hear about the work Time and Tide has been doing with the Lowestoft Maritime Museum to develop its resources for schools, and a special teachers event to preview the new resources which attracted 35 secondary school teachers.
Our new Teaching Museum trainees have been here just over a month, if you haven’t met them yet in person I hope you do so soon. In the meantime here’s a short introduction to each of them so you know who to look out for. I’ve also put together a sheet of charming ‘profile pics’ which you’ll find here if you’d like to print one off and stick it up in your department!

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**Wednesday Batchelor, Collections Management Trainee**

I have a passion for Natural History, specifically zoology and palaeobiology, and I am looking forward to building on my current skills, whilst acquiring new ones and broadening my museum knowledge, with the aim of developing a successful career in the industry. The traineeship has been really exciting so far, with lots to learn and lots of opportunities; every day has been something different.

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**Emma Price, Learning and Youth Engagement Trainee—Eastern Area**

Hello, I’m Emma – this year’s Learning and Youth Engagement Trainee. I was previously an English teacher but could not resist this unique opportunity to use my experience within a museum context. I am looking forward to working with a range of young people across the East.

No two days are the same alongside my fantastic colleagues at Time and Tide. So far, I have created a bloody Barber Surgeon’s costume for our Medieval Medicine sessions; assisted with Arts Awards; helped a beach-clean with a local school; and observed a variety of amazing learning sessions. There are so many fantastic opportunities to get involved with!

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**George Baines, Learning Trainee, Norwich Castle**

Hi my name is George Baines, I am the learning trainee based at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery. I will be working alongside the visitor programme team as well as the learning team.

I spent the last three years studying history at Goldsmiths University of London and made the most of the huge array of museums, galleries and heritage sights that the capital had to offer. This traineeship is a great chance to gain vital first-hand experience within the museum and heritage sector. I am looking forward to working for NMS during such an exciting period as well as taking part in the hugely successful Knight Club.

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**Tom Beese, Museum Development Trainee**

After spending what seemed like a lifetime looking for a way into museums, I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to be part of the Teaching Museums programme. I am currently occupying the post of Museum Development trainee, working as part of the SHARE team which offers support and training to museums across the eastern region.

But first, a brief bit about myself: I graduated from the UEA in 2018 with an MA in Medieval History, was a volunteer at Beccles & District Museum until
recently and am well-travelled. Since starting the traineeship, I have attended a number of events supported by SHARE, including a visit to IWM Duxford, a visit to North Herefordshire Museum (pictured above) and to Long Shop Museum (Leiston). I have also taken part in a fantastic range of training events through the Teaching Museums programme, which has aided in developing my skill set in a whole host of museum work.

Paula Murphy, Curatorial Trainee—Western Area

My path into museum work has been unconventional. My background is in hospitality, leisure and tourism, and I worked across Europe before returning to education as a mature student.

After graduation I struggled to find museum work without prior museum experience. So I was grateful to find the Teaching Museum which recognises that entry to museum careers via unpaid work experience is not an option for many people. Now, as the Curatorial Trainee I work across two museums in a varied role which includes museum learning, exhibition planning, social media content, public enquiries, and object handling – it’s a dream job!

In case you’re wondering what I’m doing in the picture, I am at Ancient House packing up some handling boxes for a learning session—this is a 400-year-old nutmeg grater shaped like a shoe!

Katie Carter-Street, Costume and Textiles Trainee

I am the new Museum Trainee for the Costume and Textiles Department. I have previously worked designing and making wedding cakes but have always enjoyed sewing. The traineeship is a fantastic opportunity to combine my interest in history with my love of all things textile.

The training has been excellent so far it is wonderful to have this unique opportunity to learn skills while working. So far my role has involved object research for exhibitions, assisting with visits from the public and researchers, helping accession donations and acquisitions and trying not to drop Queen Victoria’s slippers!

Other CPD and training news

Please look out for an All Staff email from Steve Miller about all staff meetings/briefings. The sessions will be held at Shirehall, Time and Tide and Gressenhall in late June/early July. Service-wide communication is not easy, but everyone is strongly encouraged to attend these meetings which will cover 5 year strategy including the Creative Case for Diversity and the Kick the Dust project all of which will have an impact on every area of NMS—see page 13 for details of dates and times of the sessions.

There is a training budget from which you can apply for funds to support CPD activity. Your PDP (formally known as appraisal) will be taking place soon and ideally any training needs should be identified at this meeting, in consultation with your manager.

The application process rolls throughout the year but ideally you will identify training soon so that costs can be budgeted for. The training budget does not cover transport or subsistence, but it does need to cover all operational training such as first aid and genie hoist training as well as supporting colleagues to complete their AMA (Museums Association work-based qualification).

When a certain number of applications have been received I meet with Robin and Jo and a decision is made based on personal and institutional benefit—the process is quick and informal. You can find a form here \Norfolk.gov.uk\NCCCDS1\SHARED-SHIRE\Teaching Museum\Specialist course application Form.doc.

Sarah Gore, Teaching Museum Manager
Welcome again to the section of the newsletter dedicated to our wonderful volunteers.

We now have over 400 volunteers, so it may take a while to get round to everyone, but I’d like to start this section introducing a couple more to you.

Get to know our volunteers....

Dickie Bird—Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum Volunteer

Dickie deals with hundreds of enquiries each year, with a whopping 400 enquiries in 2014— which she says was the busiest year so far. She is a wealth of knowledge and we are very grateful to have her as part of the team.

If you are at Shirehall and see Dickie do ask her about some of her more interesting enquires to date. In particular there is an interesting story about a drawing of the British flag she made that ended up on a St Lucian stamp!

Dan Morgan, Collections Volunteer and Artist, Ancient House Museum, Thetford

Dan has been volunteering with the museum for about 7 years. He is also the Secretary of the Friends of Ancient House.

He is a very talented artist and uses his skills to create some wonderful creations used as window displays. His creations are inspired by the museum collection and he has worked on various art projects, including two with our Teenage History Club.

He also regularly volunteers at the museum helping with collections and is never afraid to pop on a costume and become Professor Morgan to run toy handling sessions for our visitors.

“Growing up on a farm meant that as a boy I was able to walk over ploughed fields and occasionally find claypipes, pottery, the odd coin and other fragments of the past.

This sparked a life-long interest in history and archaeology; and now, in retirement I have been able to revitalise that interest with my involvement in the Ancient House.

My twin loves of art and history have enabled me to make a small, but utterly satisfying contribution to the life of this fascinating museum – I love the Ancient House and its staff!”

His creations are on display at the moment and look incredible; if you are in Thetford, make sure you take a look in the window before heading inside the Museum.

Training and Events

Medieval Costume Making Workshop-

In preparation for the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England redevelopment, a Medieval Costume Making Weekend was organised for volunteers with Sarah Thursfield, the Medieval Tailor. Volunteers from across the service learnt about medieval costume, from shirts to slips and had a go at making their own. Sarah is an expert in this field and we were very lucky to have her share her experience and knowledge for the benefit of our volunteers.
22 volunteers took part the weekends activities which included a lecture and two practical workshops.

“Thank you for a great weekend of costume making, what a fab lady Sarah is and what incredible knowledge, I just so enjoyed the whole experience. An extremely inspiring weekend” Jessica — Tapestry Volunteer.

Volunteers’ Week 2019

Volunteers’ Week is a National week of celebration of volunteers and volunteering and this year NMS will be celebrating our volunteers with events, open mornings and recognition of our volunteers through social media.

Volunteer Open Day and ‘Thank you’ at Ancient House— Tuesday June 4th between 11.30am-2.30pm
We are opening the doors of Ancient House to offer anyone interested in volunteering at the museum the chance to find out about available roles, what’s involved and to have a go.

Current Ancient House volunteers are also invited to join in for coffee and cake as a ‘thank you’ for their wonderful contribution to NMS.

Norwich Castle Tapestry Volunteers—Tuesday June 4th Norwich Castle Rotunda 10am-12noon
You are invited to see the volunteers in action, view their wonderful work so far and have a go! During Volunteers Week this session is also open to anyone interested in joining the group.

Volunteers will also be celebrated on our social media platforms during Volunteers’ Week using #VolunteersWeek and #VolunteersWeek2019. We welcome all staff and volunteers to join and share volunteer stories across NMS.

New Volunteer Opportunities

Ancient House Handling Collection Volunteers
Ancient House are looking for 4-5 volunteers to help create new learning resources for them through their handling boxes. Volunteers will receive object handling and object packaging training and will be supported in their role.

Strangers’ Hall and Museum of Norwich summer volunteering opportunities
Strangers’ Hall and the Museum of Norwich will be looking for volunteers specifically to help between 29th July and 11th August, when both museums are open for free, thanks to the Freemen of Norwich. Roles will include helping with informal learning activities at Strangers’ Hall and visitor surveys at both sites.

Deep Clean Volunteers at Gressenhall Store
Every year the Superstore located at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse gets the deep clean treatment. We are inviting volunteers to help us with this ‘mammoth’ task for two weeks at the end of July. If you are interested in learning more about collections care or conservation, this is the perfect opportunity to get involved.

Visitor Experience Volunteers
NMS will soon be launching an exciting opportunity for volunteers to conduct visitor surveys at many of our sites across the county. All volunteer roles will be advertised via our website https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/join-and-support/volunteering
For more information on any of the roles listed contact: Michelle Gaskin on volunteer.museums@norfolk.gov.uk or 01603 228993

Gressenhall New Volunteer meeting—Wednesday July 3rd 10am-12 noon
Open Morning for anyone interested in volunteering at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse.

Event—Save the Date
Volunteers from across NMS are invited to Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse on Wednesday July 24th for a Summer Celebration. More details to follow soon….

Michelle Gaskin, Volunteer Coordinator
Hellos and Goodbyes from across the Service

Changes in the Communications Team

We’re delighted to welcome Liz Elmore as the new NMS Communications Officer. Liz takes over from Jordan Bacon, focusing on delivering coordinated social media across the Service and helping to develop our digital and media presence. Liz will be familiar to many of you having worked in a variety of roles for the Service for the past 11 years, including Visitor Services, SHARE Museums East, in Cromer as the Olive Edis Project Officer and for the past 18 months as Project Support Officer for the Keep project. Liz brings a wealth of experience to her new role having managed the social media for the Olive Edis project and we’re delighted to have her on board. One early success in the role has been posting images for World Goth Day which attracted a huge response from Norfolk goths, past and present!

Changes in the Norwich Learning Team—welcome Helen

“Hello, I’m Helen Lunnon and I am thrilled to have recently joined Norfolk Museums Service as Norwich Museums Learning Manager. The role combines my varied experiences in the museum, heritage and education sectors, where I have held collections management, curatorial, research and teaching positions in London, Essex, and most recently at UEA as a Lecturer teaching Art History and Museum Studies. The Norwich Learning Team inspires thousands of people every year to engage with our museums and collections and is hugely skilled in supporting a broad range of audiences. It’s my delight to have the chance to support the Team’s continued success and shape its future. Having spent the best part of 10 years researching the art and architecture of medieval Norwich I am delighted to be closely involved in the Castle Keep renewal project and see years of hard work and preparation become a very exciting reality.”

New Operations Support Officer—welcome Annette

In March Annette Lightford joined NMS as Operations Support Officer providing operational support across the East & West areas for the next two years, with a particular focus on sites in Great Yarmouth and Gressenhall. Annette has a strong museums and operational background across several heritage organisations and has joined us from the Harewood House Trust.

Gressenhall: Goodbye from Lauren

“I have worked for Norfolk Museums Service for almost ten years and in that time I have had the pleasure to work with so many of you across the county. Way back in 2009 my first museum job was as part of the Packing Team at the Bridewell ready for the Museum of the Norwich redevelopment. At this time I also started work as Visitors Services Assistant at Gressenhall and later Ancient House. In 2011 as Collections Development Assistant I worked within the Collections Management team and Costume and Textile Dept undertaking the mammoth task of moving collections from Carrow to Shirehall. Then I continued to work with Curatorial teams around the county to streamline our rationalisation procedures and improve collections storage. In September 2012 I moved over to Gressenhall as Assistant Curator. I’m so proud of my time here—successfully applying for HLF and ACE PRISM funding; redeveloping galleries from St Nicks Barn to 50s room to Workhouse to Collections Gallery; ModesFest and huge documentation improvements; leading a team of fantastic collections volunteers and supporting trainees; creating fun school holiday activities and engaging exhibitions and starting the Early Bird events to increase access for visitors with autism. Thankyou so very much to all of my lovely colleagues and friends at Gressenhall for the last 6.5 years of support and particularly for your support over the last 5 months.”
Staff successes—and the OSCA goes to…

Norwich Castle once again hosted Norfolk County Council’s OSCAs awards. As reported in the last newsletter, it was wonderful to see Norwich Castle’s front of house team recognised by a Teamwork Triumphs Award for their brilliantly professional response to a visitor who’d collapsed in the Bird Gallery. Their timely and calm intervention saved the visitor’s life. The OSCAs event itself was a tremendous success with some spectacular entertainment laid on and the Keep once again providing an inspiring setting as these images demonstrate.

Staff stories—a trip to Mumbai
Jan Pitman, Learning Manager at Gressenhall, recently travelled to Mumbai as one of the UK delegates of the British Museum’s International Training Programme (ITP). He reports on an amazing trip. Arriving in Mumbai after a nine-hour flight, the five UK delegates of the British Museum’s International Training Programme (ITP) were driven to our hotel on the southernmost tip of the city. Home to 25 million people, the contrast between wealth and poverty is inescapable. I took a stroll from the hotel and discovered the Oval Maidan, or park. In continual use for cricket matches, the centre of the Maidan has watered pitches hosting official games between sponsored teams. By contrast, the edges entertain countless informal matches, some using sticks for stumps, all overlapping so that fielders are in constant danger of being struck on the back of the head by a ball. The Maidan suggests something of the spirit of Mumbai: unequal, vibrant and taking advantage of every possible opportunity.

Enough of the travelogue; we were there to work! Norfolk Museums Service hosts annual ITP placements for museum professionals from around the world. As a result of this partnership, NMS was invited to attend an ITP+ course in Mumbai. The course focused upon education, coinciding with the opening of the wonderful new Children’s Museum at Mumbai’s Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum (CSMVS).

On the first day, delegates shared stories of both success and failure – I spoke about NMS’s work promoting primary literacy at Time and Tide and Gressenhall. I must admit to being nervous. After all, we were showcasing our work to museums from across the world. It was humbling, with amazing people presenting case studies detailing a range of wonderful projects. However, I am relieved to report that, although there is no room for complacency, the breadth and depth of NMS’s work stands up well in such illustrious company.

Above all, this was an inspirational experience. UK facilitators assisted delegates to develop learning programmes to meet their needs and interests. These programmes showed amazing variety and vision: creating family learning spaces, developing the youth leaders of the future, employing collections to confront attitudes to gender. Dr Hartwig Fischer, Director of the BM, offered an excellent summary, using the programmes to illustrate why museums remain critical institutions in facing the challenges of the 21st century.

The final word must go to our hosts at CSMVS. Dr Mukherjee and his staff welcomed us with open arms and their hospitality was impeccable. CSMVS staff were interested in our work with schools and we are in contact to develop learning programmes and share experiences.
The Kick the Dust team continue to work alongside our partners and Norfolk Museums staff to deliver activity across the county.

Kick the Dust is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and it this funding which enables us to build on existing programmes as well develop new programmes and activities.

The team has already reached 23% of its target with 1861 young people having taken part in 1054 hours of activity up to the end of March. Whilst we are working with young people aged 11-25 we are predominately working with young people aged 11-15 years (51%) and are now looking to engage with more young people aged 16+. In total we have worked with 953 young people aged 11-15, 601 young people aged 16-18 and 306 young people aged 19-25.

Our aim is to work with 8000 young people aged 11-25 years by the end of the project in May 2022. In order to provide a range of opportunities, from heritage-based activity to work placements and structured volunteering for all age groups but in particular those young people who may be interested in a future career in this sector, we need the support and engagement of more staff who are able to work with the Kick the Dust team to create those opportunities.

Over the next 3 years we are looking forward to working with more staff to engage the hardest to reach young people in heritage and to develop a passion for the arts.

This project is enabling us to develop a range of activities across the county which reflect the nature of each museum and the communities they serve and to take the best of what is working and roll this out across the county. An example of this is the development of the successful ‘Make Your Mark’ programme delivered in partnership with the Norfolk Youth Offending team. This has been expanded and is due to start at Time and Tide and in Kings Lynn this month. The young people who take part in this 6 week programme gain a much deeper understanding of how a museum operates by being able to speak with curators, design teams to mention a few. By working alongside the Kick the Dust Project Workers and Learning Teams in each Museum, the young people are able to design and produce quality work inspired by the many collections.

Community Curator, Jenny Caynes at the Museum of Norwich, working alongside Rachel Daniel, Project Worker for Norwich, has played a key part in supporting a group of 5 ‘Young Costume Curators’ to co-curate and co-design the new Norwich in 1959 exhibition due to be launched this summer. By being able to work alongside and learn from professionals over a 6 week period, meeting once a week, this group has gained a wealth of experience and skills as well as increase their self-confidence.

Their display of 1950s clothing will form part of the exhibition. The group met with conservation and display teams to learn more about preparing textiles for exhibition and have since been busy drawing up designs and writing exhibition text for their display case. Come and see the finished display when the exhibition opens in July! It is this type of activity which the Project Workers can help establish and work with teams across the Museums service to provide such key learning opportunities.
their knowledge and experience to ‘queer’ the collections in both museums as well as host their tours for the public and other groups.

Over in the Western area the approach is to engage young people in ‘Youth led Project Groups’ so they can determine their areas of interest and influence and shape the programme that is to be developed at Stories of Lynn and Gressenhall. Having attended the ‘Futures Go Live’ careers fair at Lynn Sport on 4 April, and being named the ‘dressing up table’, the team worked with 114 young people from schools across the area and were able to recruit some of these young people to the new project groups.

The first of these meetings have taken place and have attracted 8 young people from schools across the area and were able to recruit some of these young people to the new project groups.

One of our key partners for Kick the Dust is the YMCA. Jade Prentice is the youth engagement worker for the YMCA and has been working alongside the other KTD Project Workers around the county on a range of activities. Up to the end of March 245 young people from the YMCA have taken part in the KTD programme. Having built up trust with the KTD Project Workers and other staff, who have agreed to support the programme, the young people have gained in confidence and have started to move from ‘player’ type activity to ‘shaper’ activity.

This month, YMCA activities in Norwich have been focused on all things Viking as a group came to the Castle Museum for a ‘Viking Invasion’ day. They were given an in-depth tour of the Viking exhibition and then took part in seafaring activities led by Whitlingham Adventure and finished off by making some Viking inspired metal art. The group are currently developing their own tours of the Viking Exhibition, supported by the Learning Team, based around their favourite Viking artefacts and featuring costumed character and Viking story telling. They will deliver these tours at a special event at the end of the month whereby over 25 CEO’s from the YMCA will attend their annual conference at Norwich Castle, something they would not have dreamed possible 6 months ago. To see these young people make such progress and gain such confidence is both inspiring and motivating, that the approach we are taking is the right one. Without the support of Museum staff they would not have come so far on this journey.

This year the YMCA will celebrate its 175th anniversary. To celebrate we have begun working with a group of YMCA residents to develop an exhibition that looks at the history of the organisation. To kick off their research we took the group to explore the YMCA archives in Birmingham City University where they went through diaries and photographs to uncover more about the YMCA’s role during the second world war. They also took part in oral history training in which they learnt their interviewing and recording skills which will help them capture untold stories from people who have worked with the YMCA throughout the years.

Over at Time and Tide the newly appointed Project Worker, Kate Cooper, co-hosted her first session with the YMCA and was able to promote the KTD programme to 5 young people who attended; the group used the Medieval Medicine exhibition as a stimulus, met a live apothecary character and created their own Bellarmine ‘Witches bottle’ jars.

Youth engagement workers in Yarmouth have also begun project-based work with the Youth Offending Team who will be asked to co-direct the project by making choices about the activities in which they take part.

The Saturday Art Club continues to develop its work...
into ‘shaper’ activities. The group is currently exhibiting *Medieval Medicine* inspired ceramics & glass in the museum Community Gallery and will also exhibit at Somerset House in London at the National Saturday Art & design Club Summer Show w/c 16 June.

The ‘Oceans of Waste’ project engaged with young people who are outside of mainstream school. 13 young people took part in a litter pick & a research day to investigate the impact of plastic pollution, especially by the fishing industry.

As a reward for their hard work the group took part in a sailing trip on the Excelsior, a 100-year-old fishing smack. Despite a number feeling ‘sea sick’ the trip and project was a huge success and shows how Norfolk Museums Service can play a key role in helping these young people re-engage in learning.

14 Level 4 Games design students from [East Norfolk Sixth Form](#) have used Time & Tide, Tolhouse, Elizabethan House and *Medieval Medicine* to create brand new site specific interactive video games. The games will be installed at the museums for their final course showcase in May and demonstrate how young people can directly shape how visitors engage with our collections.

**Young Communicators**

Yarmouth has been briefed about the *Kick the Dust* programme and can see how they can continue to contribute creative media skills as well as shape future programmes. They will begin the next phase of Young Comms by helping to shape and document LGBTQI+ related initiatives at Time and Tide and with local partners.

10-16 June is National Carers week and Norfolk Museums Service is focusing on Young Carers. To this end the *Kick the Dust* team are hosting a range of activities across its main sites during the week.

**Measuring Success** – The National Lottery Heritage Fund’s *Kick the Dust* funding has enabled us to appoint two independent evaluators. The Audience Agency have been appointed as Project Evaluator. They have run two workshops to help the team develop a range of tools to measure how far each young person travels and demonstrate to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other partners that *Kick the Dust* is a worthwhile project which has made a significant impact on the life chances of our most vulnerable and challenging young people.

Out of the 12 *Kick the Dust* projects nationally, Norfolk Museums Service is the only one to appoint its own independent Institutional Change Evaluators. Claire Adler and Anna Salaman have run the first of two workshops with key staff on 25 April and will be carrying out consultations with young people and staff in May to help inform the strategy for bringing about change going forward. Following on from this *Kick the Dust* will be involved in the staff workshops to be rolled out in June. More information will follow shortly.

**The Kick the Dust Team:**

**West**—Rachel Duffield, 01362 869264

**East**—Kate Cooper, 01493 743949

**Norwich**—Rachel Daniel, 01603 615975

**Project Coordinator**—Christine Marsden, 01603 615975

*Kick the Dust* was named by young people, because they wanted to stir up heritage. It is a £10m pilot grant programme, through which HLF aims to transform how heritage organisations engage with young people. Grants of between £500,000 and £1m are awarded to projects where heritage and youth organisations collaborate to create opportunities for 11-25 year olds. Through this pilot programme, HLF aims to increase the scale and ambition of heritage organisations’ work with young people, and show what this age group has to offer heritage.
Norfolk Arts Service round-up

2019/20 Arts Grants

NCC has awarded Arts Grants to 15 organisations for 2019/20, including the 6 Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) based in Norfolk. Investment via the NCC Arts Budget is a crucial means of enabling organisations, community arts groups and individuals to access a wide range of external funding, including public funds such as ACE, trusts and foundations. Almost all such funds require local authority match-funding support. All organisations supported through the arts budget enable access to high quality arts opportunities for our residents and visitors alike. They also play a key role in economic development, including the visitor economy, social and community development, learning and skills, health and wellbeing and place-making.

In 2018/19, Arts Grant investment of £85,000 in 17 organisations helped to generate a projected\(^*\) combined overall income of £25,362,827 from a range of local, national and international sources including £6,585,537 total revenue income and £18,777,290 total earned income. (\(^*\)Figures are based on projected end of year accounts).

Arts Project Funds

In addition to Arts Grants funding, Norfolk Arts Service administers the NCC Arts Project Fund. This small fund (£23,150 in 2018-19) is a vital means of supporting small-scale, locally based arts initiatives which help to meet NCC priorities. A total of 67 awards (including some in-principle) were made in 2018/19 (maximum award £500) to support a diverse range of events and activities throughout Norfolk. In 2017-18 Arts Project funding helped to leverage a total of £249,581 in match funding to awardees, including £200,668 from Arts Council England.

All staff meetings

All staff are invited to attend one of the forthcoming All Together Staff Meetings. These will enable Steve Miller and Jo Warr to update you on progress regarding Norfolk Museums Service’s new 5 Year Strategy, our important work around the Arts Council’s Creative Case for Diversity as well as have our Kick the Dust team introduce the exciting National Lottery Heritage Fund supported Kick the Dust project in more detail. Using examples of work that has already take place, the team will be able to show how all NMS staff can engage in this important project, supporting the development of skills in young people and helping shape the future of our Museums Service.

The dates for these sessions are:

**Norwich: 12 June**
8.30—10am or 12 noon to 1.30pm in the Crome Gallery, Norwich Castle or 3pm—4.30pm in the Town Close Auditorium, Norwich Castle

**Time and Tide: 26 June**
3pm to 4.30pm in the Learning Room.

**Gressenhall: 9 July**
3pm to 4.30pm in the Training Room.

To help with numbers, I would be grateful if you could confirm your attendance with Mingur Bhutia – mingur.bhutia@norfolk.gov.uk

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*Figures are based on projected end of year accounts.*
SHARE team news

2018-19 was as busy as ever for the SHARE team. We ran or funded **48 events** including training seminars, three large conferences and our regional Volunteer Awards, which were attended by no fewer than **832 people**.

The summer tends to quieten down a bit for SHARE as our training programme has largely come to an end until the autumn. Many of the museums we work with are wholly—or mainly dependant on volunteers, and their time over the summer is mostly occupied with manning the desks and opening the doors, so they have less time for engaging in our development programmes.

However, we are still busy behind the scenes. Summer is of course the main visitor season for museums and we are continuing to work to support them to gather visitor data and use it well. We have signed up several more museums to Audience Finder, a survey tool that enables them to find out more about who their visitors are. Understanding your audiences is key to understanding how they can be developed, and our work focusses on helping museums to use Audience Finder for the first time, to analyse the results of their surveys, and to create action plans that will help them reach new audiences next year.

We are delighted that we are collaborating with the new Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, supporting their first regional event in June on ‘Creative Health and Social Prescribing’. Museums and other cultural and health providers across the region are coming together to hear from a wide range of speakers, including the co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group report on its two-year inquiry into Arts, Health and Wellbeing (www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/who-we-are/appg).

We also use this period to plan our events for autumn and winter. Development of our new Training Calendar is already in hand and it will open for bookings as usual in September. We have also started to plan the annual SHARE Conference. This keenly-anticipated event is attended by upwards of 150 people from across the whole region, and this year will be at the new North Hertfordshire Museum in Hitchin. Look out for more details soon.

Welcome to our first Museum Development Trainee

This year SHARE has taken on a Museum Development Trainee for the first time. We will be having a trainee—who will be part of NMS’ Teaching Museum programme—each year for the rest of our 2018-22 programme. We are very pleased to introduce our first trainee Tom Beese, who has an MA in Medieval History from the UEA. After finishing his studies Tom volunteered at Beccles & District Museum, a small independent museum in Suffolk, and as a result decided to pursue a career in museums.

Tom says, “I’m absolutely thrilled to have been given the opportunity to work with museums in the East of England – the creativity, dedication and resourcefulness that I have witnessed in museums in this region continues to inspire me! Prior to starting the traineeship, I had some idea of what SHARE was about and the work that it does in this region, having attended a SHARE event called ‘Basic Display Techniques’ while volunteering at Beccles Museum. Now part of the team, I have had the pleasure of meeting a range of people involved with museums across the region, including attending training events at IWM Duxford and the Long Shop Museum (Leiston), as well as a visit with the team to North Hertfordshire Museum to plan the SHARE Conference. I look forward to developing closer relationships with the many fantastic museums there are in this region and to helping SHARE provide engaging training and support in our museums.”

He will be working with the whole team, assisting with planning and developing our many training programmes, conferences, seminars and grants schemes, all the while learning about the diverse and interesting world of museum development.
Exhibitions

Lines of Sight: W.G. Sebald’s East Anglia

This exhibition exploring the creative practice of W.G. Sebald opened earlier this month. The exhibition showcases previously unseen photographs taken by Sebald as he undertook a walking tour of Suffolk and Norfolk — later immortalised in his novel The Rings of Saturn which is celebrated as one of the key literary works of the second half of the twentieth century.

The combination of archive material together with some of the objects and paintings which inspired his subtle and complex musings on European history is attracting Sebald fans from around the country — and indeed the world. At the opening we were very pleased to be able to welcome Francisco Cantu, an acclaimed writer from the USA who counts Sebald as a key influence and who travelled all the way from Arizona to attend the Private View!

The exhibition—which runs until next January—is attracting national coverage with a segment of BBC Radio 3’s Free Thinking programme devoted to a discussion of Sebald and the show, and a lead piece in The Spectator as well as mentions in the cultural listings of national newspapers.

But while Sebald’s appeal is international, he also holds a very special place in the hearts of East Anglians, having made Norwich and the region his home from 1970 onwards, when he first began teaching at UEA, a fact picked up on by Amanda Geitner, Director of the East Anglia Art Fund and one of the exhibition’s sponsors: “Though founded to bring great art to the Region, we are delighted that EAAF is increasingly able to support great art that is of this Region, re-examining works made here that have received global acclaim and had a lasting influence. While Sebald is a writer of international repute and outlook, he was also inspired by the specific local context of East Anglia. It is a source of pride that he made Norfolk and Suffolk not only his physical, but his imaginative home through the course of his distinguished career.”

The exhibition is also sponsored by The Book Hive, a Norwich literary institution itself and one of the country’s leading independent bookshops. Look out for talks and events in the weeks and months to come as we delve into the words and images and of one of the most influential writers of our time.

Viking: Rediscover the Legend

A central aim of our exhibitions programme is that visitors leave the Castle with new knowledge and enthusiasm about the subjects explored. Which is why we were delighted to hear from 10-year-old Poppy who visited the Viking exhibition and accompanying activities on our recent Viking Ahoy! day. She wrote to us enclosing an essay she’d written on the Vikings following her trip to the Castle—here’s an extract which shows just how much she’d absorbed from her experience!

“Vikings means raiders, so the Vikings went around raiding people for money and land. We can see why they did that as many weren’t wealthy. There were other jobs if Vikings didn’t want to go to battle there were other jobs like farming, hunting and weaving. Most of the time they didn’t write anything down, so archaeologists has found it hard to find out more about them. But they did have a few things written down called sagas. These mainly told stories of battles and fights. These happened very often, for example if somebody said something offensive they would be challenged to a battle. One to one battles meant that you could have up to three shields as they broke easily. They could also be used as a weapon as well as defence. They also had swords and axes. Only wealthy people could afford swords, helmets and suites of armour. Others had axes and were at risk of serious injury. Many Viking skeletons found had damage on the skull and legs.”
Learning
This month we hear from George Baines who has just started as the Teaching Museum trainee for the Castle Learning Team.

“My time so far working as a learning trainee at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery has been an incredibly enjoyable as well as informative period. Everyone in the learning team has been wonderfully welcoming and has assisted me with issues that I have faced and have answered any questions that I have asked. Everyone in the team works incredibly hard to plan and deliver exciting activities and it has been a pleasure to observe this process. I hope to learn more about this process for when I move into the sector at a professional capacity. Recently, I was lucky enough to observe the Roman and Iceni school day. The day had a varied programme and appeared to be engaging and exciting for all of the students who took part. This engagement is vitally important to ensure each student comes away feeling as if history has come to life, increasing the likelihood of making another visit. I have also been working alongside the visitor events programme team and have been able to have a look at the process that go into developing all of the incredible events that are put on. One programme that I am really excited by is the Taboo programme that will be beginning very soon. This programme is great because it challenges the conventions of museum collections as well as uncovering some interesting hidden histories. I have been asked to aim to develop my own event as part of the taboo programme and this is an incredibly exciting opportunity and is one that I am looking forward to working on. All in all, my first few weeks in the learning team have been thoroughly enjoyable and I am very much looking forward to working alongside the learning team for the remainder of my traineeship.

Refurbishment news—Café and toilets

Work to refurbish the main visitor facilities and the central Rotunda at Norwich Castle have just been completed, thanks to a generous grant of £210,000 from FCC Environment, distributed via the FCC Communities Foundation (formerly WREN).

The update includes the complete refurbishment of the main toilets and a refreshed look for the Rotunda, the well-used multi-purpose space at the heart of the Museum well-known for its unique 1960s architecture. Norwich-based interior designers Waldorf Farrow worked with the Castle team to deliver an exciting makeover. Home to the Castle café, the Rotunda now boasts funky new furniture, new tables and benches for school group lunches and a striking ‘green wall’ of highly realistic-looking plants which runs up the side of the main stairs. Visitors in need of spending a penny are now welcomed to the refurbished toilets by a queue of humorous characters from the Castle’s past and collections, courtesy of artist Ben Hawkes.

The work will complement the transformation of Norwich Castle Keep through the major Gateway to Medieval England project, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which gets underway this autumn.

The FCC Communities Foundation is a not-for-profit business that awards grants for community projects from funds donated by FCC Environment through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Refurbishment of Castle art galleries

Essential structural work in the English Country House and Victorian Galleries gave us the unexpected opportunity to repaint both galleries and rethink both hangs, as well as the awkwardly-shaped space between them.

New research, as well as the research from The Paston Treasure exhibition, informed the new labels and panel texts. As a result, some of the texts no longer shy away from issues such as slavery and colonialism and there is a stronger focus on the role of the female artists and sitters featuring in the galleries.

The character of the Victorian Gallery was altered quite
significantly. In its previous incarnation it was very landscape-heavy and focused mainly on the early Victorian period. We increased the number of portraits and genre scenes including our only two paintings by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Everett Millais and added works from the turn of the century which provide a bridge to the 20th-century art in the East Anglian Painters Gallery next door.

Among them are firm favourite *Children and Roses* by George Clausen and new acquisitions by Walter Richard Sickert and Philip Wilson Steer. We also took the decision to repaint the dark red walls in a soft pink, a decision which gave us a few sleepless nights but turned out to be the right one! We think that it works particularly well against the pre-Raphaelite paintings and shows off the gilding of the frames beautifully. The rehang also allowed us to move George Vincent’s huge *Pevensey Bay* to the centre of the Colman Galleries where it can now be seen within the context of some of the best Norwich School paintings.

The majority of paintings in the English Country House Gallery was retained; here the major change was bringing in *The Paston Treasure* from its former home in the Treasure, Trade and the Exotic Gallery. In its new, much larger home *The Paston Treasure* can really be seen and appreciated properly; next to it is the *pietre dure* table which also came from Oxnead Hall, and which we are currently trying to acquire. A case has been brought into the gallery from the Keep and will soon be refurbished to showcase our other objects from the Paston collection.

Finally, while we were refurbishing the galleries, an amazing recent acquisition returned from the Hamilton Kerr Institute where it received extensive conservation work. Peter Lely’s glorious portrait of John and Sarah Earle, originally in a Norfolk collection, can now be seen in the Dutch Gallery.

*Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of History Art, Norwich Castle*

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**Keep project update: The clear-view Keep**

In preparation for the start of building works in October, the Keep has been cleared of collections and (just about) all cases and structures, a mammoth undertaking. Collections Management and the Design & Technical Team provide an insight into the work involved.

Over 1,300 objects have been carefully packed and moved, cases have been dismantled, structures removed, cases salvaged / stored / rehomed. Filming and photography have been recording the process throughout. The result is that the magnificent Keep is visible in all its structural glory for the next few months, prior to the handover in the Autumn for the next phase in the project.

To enable this to happen, as is highlighted in this edition, every department has employed each of their own specialisms. Rosalind Palmer (Registrar) has ensured the safe return or storage of British Museum and V&A loaned
objects, and Wayne Kett (Collections Officer) has applied his Tetris-like skills in allocating storage space at the Collections Centre and has supported Alan West (Archeology Curator) to provide enhanced storage space in the Archeology department.

The Collections Management team has utilised the powers of documentation (MODES) to carefully record, track and update each of the objects taken off display and put into store. Previously in large-scale object moves such as this, members of a packing team would have laboriously completed paper packing lists and updated each record individually. To streamline processes the team have employed the use of object move procedure records and established a methodical and rigorous programme which has ensured that we can account for each and every object throughout the move.

Please can I pass on many congratulations and grateful thanks to all who have worked so incredibly hard to complete this milestone in the project on time. This would not have been possible without the collaboration between colleagues in conservation, collections management, a range of curatorial depts, D&T and building services, while colleagues in learning and FOH staff have had to be flexible in delivery of our services to the public.

Samantha Johns, Collections Manager

Working on the Keep Decant

It has been an incredibly busy few months in my role as Design & Technical Coordinator working on the Decant of the Keep. I feel very lucky to work with such hardworking colleagues on what has been such a mammoth task. Working closely with the Collections Management and Conservation departments we have been regularly meeting to discuss the decant of every single object displayed in the Keep and what it takes to remove each object safely from display and where it will go.

My job has been to calculate the display costs involved, to work on the scheduling with Sam Johns, and to book in all of our contractors and suppliers like Ollands for specialist heavy lifting, The Alarm Company for removal of alarms, Alan Cross & Son for making safe any wiring and decommissioning of case lighting prior to case removal, skip hire, and of course our team of technicians to name but a few.

With each object we had to work out how much time it would take to remove it from its case, demount/unpin/lift it etc. Is that object going back on display or into permanent storage? Where will it be stored? How many technicians are required? Will heavy lifting equipment be needed? Is it alarmed? Do we have a crate for it or will one need to be designed and made etc. All of this needed to be costed up carefully and scheduled in over a period of weeks and months to make sure we had the right technicians/staff in on the relevant dates, working around school holidays and school bookings and events.

Just as much thought was also required into working out what to do with all the Non-collection items left in the keep after the objects had been removed. Display cases, case fronts, hundreds of mounts and plinths, and various furniture and electrical equipment all needed to be extracted and stored somewhere.

Fortunately, we have an incredible team of freelance technicians that we work with across the county who deserve a special mention for assisting in the decanting of non-collections, built in structures and general dust in just four days. Rob Filby, Tom Flint, Sam and Anna from ‘This Way Up’, Ruth Stanley, and Matt Higgins.

Now that the work is largely complete, bar a few display cases waiting to go to new homes, it feels quite emotional for me to see the Keep without its treasures, standing proud on its own for the last time before we bring it back to life again. I hope we can all find the time to take a moment in there before the building works commence and the next chapter begins.

Natalie Mead, Design & Technical Coordinator
**Strangers’ Hall**

**Hellos and Goodbyes at Strangers’**

At Strangers’ Hall we are pleased to welcome Tracey Mavor to her new role as Building Services Supervisor. Tracey has been a member of the Visitor Services team for some while, and over the last few months has helped with the delivery of mini-tours and Christmas tours at Strangers.

Meanwhile we were sorry to bid farewell to Laura Reeves, the documentation trainee who has been auditing the Children’s Book collection, but delighted that Laura is starting a new job as Conservation Assistant at Felbrigg Hall. Fortunately for Strangers’ Hall, her working pattern is allowing her to continue as a volunteer joining the Friday team. And even better, we look forward to working with Wednesday Batchelor who is the new Collections team volunteer, who has just started.

**Other news**

Our annual volunteer training to start the new season took place in March, and as part of it Michelle Gaskin had the opportunity to meet members of the volunteer steward and gardening teams and introduce her role as NMS Volunteer Coordinator.

Some welcome publicity for the Strangers’ Hall Toy collection resulted from Cathy Terry’s BBC Radio Norfolk interview with Antiques expert Mike Hicks. March proved a particularly busy one for school visits with most available weekdays booked for formal sessions or day events. Both of the new tours ‘If Stones Could Speak’ given by the Learning Team’s Jan Bensley and using structural evidence to show how Strangers’ Hall evolved over the centuries, were sell-outs.

This year our Easter offer took a rest from the usual bunnies, eggs and chicks and featured a hot-cross bun trail, with detail of the origin of the custom itself, recipes and tasting opportunities. Current curatorial work includes the conservation treatment and cleaning of the original upholstery from the Lord Mayor of Norwich’s Coach, which is receiving specialist restoration at Fairbourne Carriages in Kent. The process has revealed a previous, probably original, covering underlying the moth damaged top layer. This covering is an unusual and vivid raspberry Ottoman silk (see above). New upholstery will feature synthetic fabrics and fillings which match the original but that are unlikely to be attractive to moth.

The group is now up and running, with a social rather than didactic purpose: to build confidence to allow people with limited English to interact with the museum and museum staff, and to gain a sense of ownership of their community museum.

So far the group have visited the Museum of Norwich (they were so full of questions that that took two individual sessions!) and half of Strangers’ Hall (second half for a future date). After each introductory tour and talk, we’ve had a go at learning a craft together and, most pleasingly, this has already morphed into time for tea, biscuits, and chat, as well as sumptuous delights from the countries from which our participants hail. (My offer? Veggie sausage rolls with Colman’s Mustard, naturally.)

If you get a chance and fancy meeting some of the group, then do pop down to the Museum of Norwich on the Friday of Refugee Week (21st June) where we will show you how to do seventeenth century circle braiding.

Bethan Holdridge, Curatorial and Learning Assistant

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**English+ Museum Club**

In the last newsletter we reported that a group from English+ (a charity set up to help people newly arriving in Norwich to learn English) will be meeting in Norwich museums on a monthly basis.
Norwich in ’59, 25 June—5 October 2019
We’re looking forward to a new exhibition for this summer which celebrates the friendship between Norwich and Rouen in Northern France following the formal twinning which took place sixty years ago, in 1959. The museum will be marking the anniversary with contemporary photographs of the twin cities, along with collections from period, highlighting the social, cultural and political feel of the city in 1959.

Eventually though, councillors opted for a city a shorter distance from Norwich—Rouen—and the Lord Mayor of Norwich, Tom Eaton and his French counterpart met to formalise the arrangement.

The official ceremony was held in Rouen in May 1959, and the civic delegation from Norwich were warmly welcomed with a light show, and a procession through the streets of Rouen, lined with cheering crowds.

Following the ceremony, many schools, clubs and societies travelled across the channel, and welcomed visitors to the city as part of the twinning project.

The Norfolk & Norwich Rouen Friendship Association was founded in 1990, to revive links between the two cities, and in France, the Rouen Norwich Club meet regularly organising conferences, conversation sessions in English and an English short film festival—’This is England’.

As part of the anniversary celebrations, local photographer Stefan Ebelewicz has photographed various locations in the both cities, resulting in a series of contemporary images showing different and sometimes surprising aspects of Norwich and Rouen. Stefan’s images will provide the perfect backdrop showing the modern face of the two cities, whilst stories of Norwich in 1959 are also featured in the exhibition including Norwich City Football Club’s legendary performance in the FA Cup, when the team reached the heady heights of the semi finals, the birth of Anglia Television and the nationally prominent refurbishment of Magdalen Street which won the first Civic Trust Award for regeneration. Items on display will include memorabilia from Norwich FC fans, clothes from the period and Anglia Television’s iconic Anglia Knight which appeared before programmes made by the station.

City of Ale

Meanwhile the ’cordiale’ spirit between the UK and France was amply demonstrated by this year’s City of Ale festival and the arrival, by boat, of a special beer brewed in Rouen called Amitie, or Friendship. Dubbed ‘Thor Crossing’, the intrepid French dressed as Vikings to land their precious cargo at the Waterfront.

Members of the Castle learning team, Viking reenactors Ordgar and Museum of Norwich staff were all there to greet them—and to publicise the fantastic Viking exhibition at the Castle. A successful ale tasting event was held the following day at Museum of Norwich and our French guests also enjoyed a VIP tour of the Viking exhibition.
Events Update
May is a very busy month for the events team at Gressenhall. This year the early May Bank Holiday was bird themed with a new event called ‘Winging It’. This ‘day devoted to birds’ allowed visitors to get up close to our feathered friends and carry out some bird related arts and craft activities. It also saw the RSPB and British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) attend the day to give people advice on how to care for birds in your back yard and help raise awareness of the important job they do protecting wildlife. Sticking with the theme, there was also our ‘Early Bird Opening’ on Sunday 28th April where younger visitors with additional access needs could come and enjoy the workhouse galleries in peace and quiet with the sound effects, projected images and voices switched off for the morning.

The last week of May is proving to be a bumper week of events with three separate activities occurring. Throughout the school holiday half-term week ‘Create! Awash with colour’ is running daily, where visitors can help create a giant sculpture on the estate and learn about painting and watercolour techniques.

Over the weekend of the 31st May visitors can help solve a 1940’s murder mystery during ‘A Pound of Flesh: Murder on the home front.’ This interactive murder mystery show written by the learning team focuses on the efforts of ‘Detective Lightfoot’ in solving a murder during a morale boosting performance of Shakespeare’s ‘Merchant of Venice’. Visitors are encouraged to interact with the team, testing their knowledge of the back stories and alibis. Running until 10 pm this should be an atmospheric and thrilling night for all involved.

Finally, on Bank Holiday Monday 27 May, it was the annual ‘Retro Revival’ event, celebrating all things vintage from the 50’s to the 70’s. Visitors were encouraged to dress up in authentic period outfits, see classic cars and boogie on the dance floor to live music provided by DJ’s and bands. The event also included a classic car display and vintage market, allowing for those who weren’t able to find the right outfit in time to still dress up and have fun.

Things don’t calm down after May ends, with Open Farm Sunday soon coming around on 9 June, where the farm and workhouse will be open for free to celebrate all things rural.

New Suffolk Punch horse, Casper, joins the team

Casper was born and raised at Hollesley Bay on the Suffolk coast at the Colony stud. He was purchased for the farm through the financial support of the Friends of Gressenhall, who have raised all the funds to purchase our horses over the years. He becomes the fifth current working Suffolk Horse at the farm, continuing this long important traditional farming practice at the museum.

The Suffolk Punch is the rarest pure breed of working horse in the United Kingdom and originates from East Anglia. The number of Suffolk’s has declined dramatically from the heyday of the working horse. Over the next year Casper will start being trained and eventually will be able to work alongside our other four horses—Trojan, Bowler, Reggie and Jim—working the land using traditional farming methods and taking visitors on cart rides around the Workhouse site. By bringing this youthful blood onto the farm, Casper will ensure that the tradition of having working rare breed Suffolk horses at Gressenhall continues for many more years.
History Club Tudor Project

History Club have been working on a mini project covering all things to do with the Tudors. They’ve played Tudor games, made Tudor sweets and found out about the Howard Family and their links to both Thetford and Henry VIII. They concluded their project by creating their own coats of arms inspired by the Howard Family crests.

Studio Ceramics Exhibition Planning

Oliver and Melissa spent an exciting morning with Francesca and Rosy over at Shirehall looking at possible objects for the next Ancient House exhibition—Studio Ceramics.

Teenage History Club on Tour: Gressenhall and Lynn Museum

To celebrate LGBT History Month Ancient House’s Teenage History Club went ‘on the road’ to queer the collections at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, near Dereham on 20 February and Lynn Museum in Kings Lynn on 22 February. The tours build on the teens Rainbow Pride Project and Pride of the People: Helping History Out of the Closet exhibition. The project came out of a discussion at one of the sessions of the museum’s weekly Teenage History Club.

The young people were shocked to discover homosexuality was illegal until 1967. The group requested a project to explore what life was like for non-heterosexual people in the past in the local area. The project has particular appeal as some of the group identify as LGBTQ+ or queer. The young people have been working on the project since September 2017.

The teen queer historians used a technique learnt from the V & A LGBTQ+ Tours and recently adopted by the Cambridge University Museums. An object or story can be considered queer if it falls into one of the following categories:

- The object was made or used by someone who identifies as queer.
- The object depicts something with queer connections or a person who identifies as queer.
- The object has significance or has been given significance by the queer community.

Here queer is used as an umbrella term for all sexual orientations falling outside cis-gender heterosexuality.

Melissa Hawker, Learning Officer and Teenage History Club co-ordinator said: “Museums often think they don’t have any queer objects or queer stories—but they are there. We are so confident about this that the teenagers’ will be researching and delivering the tours all in one day and we will only feature items already on display.”

The quality of Teenage History Club’s work has been recognised by others in the museum sector. The V&A LGBTQ+ Tours are co-ordinated by Dan Vo, Museum Association Radical Change Maker, who called Teenage History Club his “favourite historians”. The Queerseum campaign said: “Keep up the amazing work you’re doing on your Queer Tours.” Professor Richard Sandell said: “It was inspiring to meet you and see your ground breaking work.”

The tours were well received. At Gressenhall students from the Sainsbury Institute of Japanese Arts and Culture Winter Programme attended the tour and said: “Massive thank you for today—it was amazing! THC were awesome and so brave!” At Lynn Museum it was wonderful to see Stephen Boyce, Chair of Trustees for LGBT History Month, on both tours! Look out for the touring version of Teenage History Club’s Pride of the People exhibition coming to a venue near you soon.

LGBT History Month is a month-long observance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer history, as well as a means of raising awareness for the issues
faced by LGBTQ+ people. This year’s theme was Peace, Activism and Reconciliation.

The month was originally started in the US in 1994 to coincide with National Coming Out Day. It was taken up in the UK in 2005 by teachers Sue Sanders and Paul Patrick as part of the Schools OUT UK project. Schools OUT is the thirty two year old organization—originally called the Gay Teachers’ Group—that works for LGBT equality in education.

The month of February has been dedicated to LGBT History Month in the UK since it began in 2005, despite the celebration taking place in October in the US. February was chosen to coincide with the abolition of Section 28. Section 28 prohibited local authorities from “intentionally promote[ing] homosexuality”. Section 28 was repealed in 2003. This means the members of Teenage History Club are the first generation whose education has not been under Section 28.

The Out of the Closet Tours join over 1,500 events taking place across the country for LGBT History Month.

**Sophia Project and Festival of Norfolk and Punjab**

We are thrilled to be working with the Essex Cultural Diversity Project on a £36, 800 National Heritage Lottery Funded project exploring the life and achievements of Princess Sophia Duleep Singh and a Festival of Norfolk and Punjab this summer.

This project follows on from the successful Festival of Thetford and Punjab in July 2018 and will include a ‘pop-up’ exhibition about Sophia’s life and a volunteer, education and events led activities.

**Victorian Museum family event**

During half term visitors explored the weird and wonderful world of the Victorian Collector. In the 19th century many private collectors gathered strange and interesting objects from their travels abroad for their own collections. These were often displayed in their own homes in ‘Cabinets of Curiosities’ and family and friends would have been invited to marvel at these wonders. Many of these collections were later donated to local and National museums and can still be seen and marvelled at today. Visitors handled some of the objects donated to the museum over the years. There was also an opportunity for visitors to make their very own mini Cabinet of Curiosities complete with accession numbers.

_Melissa Hawker, Learning Officer, Western Area_

**Lynn Museum**

**South Gate Project**
The Museums Service is continuing to support the enhancement of King’s Lynn’s South Gate on behalf of the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council and with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Improvements have included commissioning of additional display equipment for visitors’ enjoyment, a new visitor guide leaflet and a project working with young people to make a film about the historic monument to help people who find access to the upper rooms difficult. An events programme for the summer has also been arranged.

The South Gate is opened by a team of dedicated volunteers and is open through the season on
Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Harriet Foster has been commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the success of the project and the study will be produced later this year.

Visitor reaction to the Snettisham Treasure display

Large numbers of visitors are coming into Lynn Museum to see the Snettisham torcs on loan from the British Museum by kind permission of the Trustees. One visitor was Mr Wylie whose wife was the widow of Tom Rout who had found the ‘Great Torc’ in the 1950s. He referred to this in conversation as ‘Tom’s Torc’.

This visit generated interest from Radio Norfolk and the EDP and the additional publicity has helped bring more visitors in to see the finds. The Snettisham display case design follows the design used in the Coastal treasures book written by Museum Trainees Andrew Tullett and Monika Saganaowska.

The Coastal Treasures project, in partnership with colleagues in Historic Environment section of Norfolk County Council will feature in the Journeys exhibition at Lynn Museum opening in the summer.

Welcome Beth our new Front of House Supervisor

We are pleased to announce that Beth Kierman has been appointed as the Lynn Museum’s new full-time Front of House Supervisor. Beth will be starting her duties on the 28 May and will be working Tuesday to Saturday. Beth started at Lynn Museum as a casual Museum Assistant in 2014 and then as a part time Museum Learning Assistant in 2016. Beth also has experience of work at the Stained Glass Museum in Ely. Beth said: “I am thrilled to be taking up the position of Front of House Supervisor at Lynn Museum. Having worked as part of the learning team for the past three years, I know that we have a fantastic team in place and look forward to working with all involved to take the museum forward.”

Easter Family Events at Lynn Museum

Lynn Museum had a fun-packed Easter break with several activities for families. In addition to museum trails running throughout the school holiday, on Thursday 11 April the learning team hosted our second ‘Discovery Thursday’ event of the year, featuring a variety of Egyptian-themed activities and crafts, along with a chance to meet the costumed character ‘Howard Carter’.

And if that wasn’t enough, Lynn Museum also joined forces with fellow Lynn-based museum, Stories of Lynn, for an exciting mystery solving event on Tuesday 16 April. In a classic ‘whodunnit’ format, around 150 visitors got the chance to become inspectors and solve the mystery of the theft of a silver spoon. Visitors were transported back to the Victorian era, and were able to question witnesses, interrogate suspects in the jail cells, and search for clues, as well as completing lots of fun activities and crafts along the way.

Mini Museum Club

The Mini Museum drop-in sessions, which were piloted last autumn, are aimed at children under 5, and allow young children to explore the museum in a way tailored to their age group and development, through songs, games, crafts and stories. The group formally launched with its first fairground-themed session on Tuesday 12 March, with a remarkable 35 children in attendance with their parents, carers, or babysitters. This was followed by two further successful sessions. Mini Museum Club is held on the second Tuesday of every month, from 10.30-11.30am.
Over winter, the Visitor Services Assistants were able to ‘deep clean’ the museum and in addition repaint the entire Geology Galleries—quite a big job!

We were delighted that Cromer Museum re-opened on 1 March—a month earlier than had been proposed. And March turned out to be a busy month with several school visits, a Mardle & two Stitchers meetings.

In April we began our new museum trail, Deep History Coast Safari Trail and there were several well-attended craft sessions; Fossil Finders on 9th, Crafty Cromer – Egg-stinct! on 11th, Spring Cleaning: washing up! On 16th & Seaside Sculptures on 18th.

We have been planning our Sunday Summer Walks;

Alistair doing three on a general History theme; Alan, three on Cromer in WW2 and three Ghosts & Legends—a double header with Anna & Rebecca. The first of these spooky walks was on the evening of 28th April & there was a good turnout of seventeen people.

We have also written several more promotional local history articles for the EDP—Alan Anna & Alistair all contributing pieces that lead to booking for our events.

We also have planned four Archaeological Walks: Warham Camp, Godwick Deserted Village, Salthouse Prehistoric Barrows and Brampton Roman Town, all led by a Norfolk archaeologist and well worth attending.

We will also be participating in Norfolk Day, Museums at Night and Heritage Open Days. Plus there will be a range of half-term and summer activities including:

- Secrets of the Dark Darkroom, 28 May
- Crafts: Olive & Company, 30 May
- Crafts: Easy Excavations, 1 August
- Roll into the Stone Age (with award-winning John Lord as flint-knapping Stone Age man)
- Crafts: Sneaky Sea Life, 8 Aug;
- Victorians day out, 13 & 29 Aug
- Super Seaside Souvenirs 15 Aug

On 30 April Claire Pettit did her last VSA shift—she will be much missed for her contributions to the museum and especially the museum shop.

In other news, a pair of peregrine falcons have nested on the church tower right beside the museum attracting many bird enthusiasts. A web cam has been set up in the church & rumour has it eggs have been produced.

Finally, each year many businesses ‘buy’ a themed object to decorate for the Crab & Lobster Festival. Last year we had a lighthouse. The Friends of the Museum have bought one of these for Cromer Museum; it is an upturned half-boat with shelves which Rebecca Lusher is painting with the Poppyland story. It will then become part of the Crab & Lobster Trail so people will visit the museum to ‘tick’ it off.
At the start of March the Circus: Show of Shows exhibition came to a close at Time and Tide following a successful run over winter. However, the partnership behind the exhibition continues, with a version of the exhibition currently open at the Discovery Centre in Newcastle running until mid-June.

In late March our new exhibition Medieval Medicine opened. This is a touring exhibition from the Jorvik Group, operators of the Jorvik Viking centre and part of York Archaeological Trust. Time and Tide is the first museum to host the show on its nationwide tour. The exhibition focusses on the work of five key Medieval Medicine practitioners who would have aimed to treat illnesses during the period—a Physician, Barber Surgeon, Cunning Woman, Religious Figure and an Apothecary. It’s been designed to be interactive and family friendly but still deals with some serious topics such as death and human remains.

The exhibition includes the skeletal remains of seven individuals, each showing a different health condition prevalent at the time. There are three full skeletons laid out in the same positions they were discovered in by archaeologists in York. Illnesses featured include Osteomyelitis—an infection of the bone—cancer in a jaw, DISH, a spinal disease, and Leprosy. The Leprosy skeleton includes a facial reconstruction of the female victim based on the dimensions of her skull and the known symptoms of the disease. Despite the serious nature of the health conditions featured in the exhibition, there is a family friendly ‘fun’ side to the exhibition with a short film and interactive section written by Terry Deary, author of the Horrible Histories books. Due to his input into the exhibition, Terry Deary has agreed to come and perform his ‘history roadshow’ live travelling theatre production in Great Yarmouth as part of the exhibition events programme at the end of June and sign copies of his books.

The exhibition also features a trail where visitors can choose an ‘avatar’ of a person representing a real medieval story and illness to find out how the medical practitioners may have approached treating them.

One of the more challenging elements to the exhibition was making sure the human remains were displayed in an appropriate way, so that should people not wish to view them, they had the option to be warned in advance and leave the gallery. This has also included making copies of the NMS Human Remains policy available at the front desk with the support of the Visitor Services team. We’ve been gathering feedback and evaluation data to make sure that people are comfortable with what they are seeing and so far it seems to be proving popular.

We then asked visitors if they dared to take a spin on our Wheel of Misfortune, to discover what grisly disease or awful ailment pains them and see if at least one our Medieval “medical specialists” could find the best cure for them. We were joined this time by a cunning woman, an apothecary and everyone’s favourite, the barber surgeon. Each one had their own unique selling point as the visitors found out after calling in on each of the specialists. This caused a lot of laughing as family members were diagnosed with Black Death, arrow to the leg or even just plain old death!

Our apothecary made another appearance for our Appalling Apothecary event in which visitors could make their own smelling posies and balms as well as dive deeper in the world of the medieval pharmacist. Alongside these events we had our Mad Medieval Medicine trail in which visitors could find out
more weird and wonderful facts of life, illness and death in the Middle Ages and our potions craft, where people could make their own unique mixture for anything!

At the Tolhouse we had our Catapults and Castles game, designing characters to aim at on top of the castle and break their way into our miniature castle. Later we had Jousting at Knights—children could make their own knight in shining armour and joust them against their family and friends.

At Elizabethan House, it was all about magic and folk traditions with our Awesome Amulets, Terrific Talismans and Mystic Medicine events. We followed the medicine theme with our Kitchen Garden Potions trail connecting to our own courtyard plants.

**Great Places: Making Waves Together**

This three year project funded by is now in its final year. Funded by Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Making Waves Together is jointly led by Great Yarmouth Borough Council and East Suffolk Council to promote cultural heritage across both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Patricia Day has been working with Lowestoft Maritime Museum to update their current schools offer which is based around a treasure chest of maritime objects. Phoebe Wingate works with Lowestoft Rising, the local cultural education partnership (LCEP), to increase opportunities for children and young people to participate in arts and cultural activity.

Last month Patricia and Phoebe teamed up with Poetry People to invite local teachers to visit the museum and preview the suite of teaching resources. The twilight event was very popular, with fourteen teachers in attendance from both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. The benefits of cross county participation were soon evident because, as both towns share a similar geography and heritage, there were lots of shared ideas and suggestions for best practice. The new resources will also support the teachers to inspire a sense of identity and place in their pupils which, in view of the current economic status of the localities, is most important.

Over 90% of teachers who attended said they would recommend it to colleague, one in particular commented on the session saying: **“Great ideas and resources given to promote cultural learning so children can better understand their local area”**.

Meanwhile, the LCEP continues to plan more school activities and events during the next term and Patricia is looking forward to developing a series of summer family activities at the museum.

Collections news

As part of our ongoing collections audit in Great Yarmouth we have been focusing this month on some of the more volatile collections. Later on this year over winter we are renewing our Norfolk Museum Service firearms licence. Ahead of that we are working with the collections management team to carefully audit all our historic firearms collections just to make sure everything is all in order.

We have been carefully sorting, repacking and researching our weapons collections. The ongoing audit is part of a larger piece of work looking at our entire stored collections with staff and volunteers and how to look after them better and enhance their documentation.

The wonderful team of volunteers are currently working their way steadily through our archive collections. They are scanning and digitising collections weekly that include things like street by street records of Great Yarmouth War damages paid to residents by the council, new collections of negatives depicting the town in the 1980’s and deframed art works on paper.