

Curator's report to Museum Committee Tuesday 17th December 2019

As part of the Onwards and Upwards expansion project the Museum will be working through a detailed Activity Plan, approved by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). A key aspect of the plan involves our target audiences: people with disabilities, low income families, low income older people, 13- 24 year olds and primary schools. Throughout this and subsequent reports points outlined below that are pertinent to these groups or to another key area of the Activity Plan will be highlighted in purple.

1. STAFFING/ TRAINING

1.1 New Museum Officers – In October we interviewed for and have now appointed our two new Museum Staff members. Tessa Kerlake will be joining us as Marketing and Events Officer and Andrea Bartlett as Retail and Income Generation Officer. They both begin their NLHF funded contracts on January 1st 2020. We look forward to welcoming them to the team.

1.2 On and Up Research: The staff embarked on research trips to Bridport and London where we investigated how other museums displayed, interpreted and engaged visitors.

1.3 Staff development – On 9th October Hanne Dahl attended a Tactile Access to Collections training day facilitated by the South West Federation of Museums and Galleries. The day was an overview of how accessioned collections can be safely used in a public object handling programme. This included how to assess their suitability and restrictions for use, including policies and procedures.

1.3.2 Dementia Friends – Nikki Ritson attended a Dementia Friends refresher session on 7th November.

1.3.3 Forward Plan – Hannah Lyddy attended How to Develop a Successful Forward Plan on 8th October at the Swindon and Wiltshire History Centre. Our next Forward Plan is due to be developed in the early part of next year and is an essential part of Accreditation documentation, as well as an opportunity for the team to set collective objectives and review our mission and statement of purpose, as well as evaluating our work throughout the project period.

1.4 New Volunteers – After posting a call out on our Facebook page we have signed up and welcome 6 new volunteers to our team this quarter.

1.4.2 Volunteers and Friends Christmas party – This year's party was on Friday 13th December at the Guide Hut, complete with our annual Christmas quiz and buffet.

1.5 Work Placements – Two local secondary school students (from John of Gaunt and St Lawrence) will be coming to the Museum for Work Experience placements in the summer next year.

1.6 Value Exchange - This quarter the Town Council has received volunteer support for the Museum and its activities equating to £5926 (General: 45 hrs - £1125, Learning & Outreach: 71.25 hrs - £1781, Collections: 114 hrs - £3020).

2. OPERATIONAL

2.1 New equipment – We are putting together a list of the new equipment that will be needed in the Museum when we reopen next year. This includes IT resources such as new PC's, phones and a printer as well as items such as new (and improved!) donation boxes and high chairs (for under 5s), all of which are covered within the project budget.

3. COLLECTIONS

3.1 Accessioning- Items from the Wiltshire Times have been accessioned, after its Trowbridge Office closed.

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3.1.2 We have also accessioned a Mary Quant dress made of cloth woven in Trowbridge. The provenance was confirmed as the dress bears a label used only by the weaving mill Samuel Salter Ltd. It cost £150 and was paid for by the Friends of Trowbridge Museum. It will go on display when the museum reopens.



3.2 Deaccessioning- Regarding the deaccessioning process which started last year, as reported previously, most of the objects were transferred to other museum collections. However, a few of the objects which were not wanted for an existing collection but had a monetary value, were sold. In accordance with the accreditation scheme, income generated from selling of collection objects is required to go back into the collection. Below and in the appendix follows a report on income generated from the sales and how it was spent.

Income:

- Three train signs were sold at an auction for £850.
- The Hattersley loom was sold to a weaving company for £350.
- A £20 donation was given towards a collection of cameras.

Spending:

- £370 was spent on buying new objects for the collection
- Specialised chart paper for the thermohygrographs (which are still recording humidity and temperature in the museum) by the Teasel Gig and Spinning Jenny
- Digitising VHS in the collection (with films off/from Trowbridge to make them more accessible for research and potentially also new displays)
- Archival quality folders for organising the collection and relevant books to aid research into the collection.

A detailed breakdown is attached in the appendix and receipts can be viewed upon request.

It was decided that the £850 was to be spent on a new filing cabinet which holds the annual backup printout from Modes, the signed entry forms for the objects acquired since paper trail began in 1970s and paperwork for the current loans. It is a requirement of the accreditation scheme to maintain this paper trail in a 'futureproof and secure method'.

However, the lock on the current filing cabinet is broken and it is not fire proof. A Phoenix Fire Ranger FSI513 K for £940.83 (excl VAT) was chosen and the outstanding £90.83 covered by the museum budget.

4. EXHIBITIONS

4.1 The biennial West of England Festival of Textiles exhibition (WEFT) ran in September at Bridge House and was very well attended. There were over 400 visitors and the workshops and events proved to be popular. The demonstration day was held in conjunction with the Explore Art Trowbridge (EAT)/Heritage Open Day on 14th September.



5. ARTS

5.1 **Town Hall Arts** – Clare and Hannah attended the Town Hall's 'Celebrating its Heritage' event on the evening of 12th November. Director David Lockwood hosted a meeting that was open to anyone who has an interest in the heritage aspect of the Town Hall or who wishes to support their development in this area. We continue to work very closely with David and have offered to assist with the cataloguing and auditing of the historic objects they have there and in conducting oral histories associated with the building.

5.2 **Cultural meetings** – David Lockwood has instigated quarterly meetings open to any cultural venue in the Town, Clare and Hannah have been attending these on behalf of the Museum. A number of ideas have been discussed, including a joint publication produced quarterly by all and a Trowbridge Music Festival using a variety of venues throughout the Town.

6. LEARNING & OUTREACH

During Aug - Nov we have facilitated 55 workshops for 1818 participants and have taken £1532. This included 7 school workshops, 10 Holiday craft sessions, 10 walks and talks plus our regular sessions including Nikki's Monday Crafts, the Not In A Pub Quiz, Reminiscence Sessions and Christmas Crafts. We continue to provide a free service within the Trowbridge town boundary, and charge for groups and schools outside the boundary.

6.1 **School Workshops:** Although we have suspended our regular schools' service until January 2020, we are trialing new activities and have worked with a number of local schools (7 School sessions/160 students)

- **World War 2:** We have updated our existing WW2 activities, adding a guided walk and drawing activity. These were trialed with Oasis Academy Longmeadow and Bellefield.
- **Local History:** We put together a guided walk around the town centre for Holbrook and followed this with three activities in the school – Mapping Trowbridge, Woollen Story and Immigration timeline.
- **Victorian Seaside:** This was a second trial of a new workshop we put together for Grove Primary School last year. This quarter we purchased some new handling resources especially for this activity.
- **Toys and Games:** Updated toys and games activities for Oasis Academy Longmeadow.

6.2 Guided Walks: We continue to develop a series of guided walks for adults and families. In the summer David led several evening Woollen Walks around the town. One of them was aimed at families and older children. Attendance was rather varied with the adult oriented walks proving more popular than the family walk. David led a WW2-themed walk around Trowbridge's WW2 connected sites in September.

6.3 Monday craft group: Nikki's Monday craft workshops are now back in full swing. She has facilitated regular sessions using resources purchased through a small Alms Houses grant. Her Monday group also produced some promotional posters advertising the Museum expansion for displaying on the hoardings covering the Museum entrance.

6.4 Lifelong Learning: Our Lifelong Learning service has led a number of reminiscence sessions for cared-for adults and talks to various community groups. These have included reminiscence sessions at Alzheimer's Support's Mill Street centre and Shockerwick House (BUPA Residential Home), a WW2 talk to residents of Raleigh Court (Sheltered Housing) and a WWI talk for residents of Shockerwick House. David also gave a talk to West Ashton WI on the origins, development and future of the Museum. Nikki led a popular felting workshop for Keevil WI in November. David was invited to give a talk at the West Wiltshire U3A's 30th birthday celebrations at St James's Hall. His talk – A Potted History of Trowbridge – was very well received. Our Father Christmas visited residents of the Old Vicarage at Staverton for a Christmas sing song and reminisce.



6.4.1 Salisbury U3A: We put on a guided walk and talk for Salisbury U3A. They enjoyed a short stroll around the town centre, followed by an illustrated romp through the town's history with David, ably supported by two volunteers – Phil Lucas and Colin Muller. They are planning to return in 2020 for a tour of the new Museum.

6.5 Holiday Workshops: We ran children and family activities during the Summer and Autumn holidays. In the summer we visited the Rifles Museum in Salisbury for three days of WW2-themed activities. We devised a range of activities reflecting life on the home front, which were well attended with 121 participating. The Rifles are looking to run more family days in 2020 and have invited us to take part again. Nikki and David led three felt making and printmaking workshops as part of the Town Hall Summer School.

6.5.1 Autumn Half Term: We ran a series of holiday workshops over the autumn half term including several for the Shires Shopping Centre. We used the Sensory Garden for a well-attended Autumn Leaf workshop and volunteers assisted at a very busy Spooky Crafts session. The busiest sessions were the two days of Pumpkin Carving in the Shires. David and Nikki assisted in the carving of 297 Pumpkins purchased by the Shires!!

6.6 Not In A Pub Quiz: Three more quiz nights were held at Leykers Café in White Hart Yard, raising £132 as income.

6.7 Trowbridge Apple Festival: David, assisted by volunteer Harriet Clarkson, staffed a Tudor-themed cookery stall at Trowbridge Apple Festival in the Park. A number of authentic C15th and C16th dishes were prepared for sampling and we made fresh apple fritters (called Apple Frutours back in the day) for people to try. One of the dishes – Apple Snow – elicited lots of memories of 1960s and 70s cookery lessons!



6.8 Great Hinton Ladies Group: David and Nikki were invited to give a talk on the history and future of the Museum for Great Hinton Ladies Group. This was to acknowledge the donation to the Onwards and Upwards project that will be forthcoming when their charity year is over.

6.9 Handling Collection: We have purchased more new resources for NLHF funded activities – these include replica Victorian objects such as a folding camera, an ice cream lick and Victorian buckets and spades.

6.9.2 A number of items from the handling collections have been loaned out this quarter including cloth making tools to a Shepton Mallet heritage group and clothing and period objects to St Laurence School for their open evening.

6.10 Christmas Crafts: We have put on a couple of Christmas craft workshops at Trowbridge Town Hall this year. Nikki led a needle felting workshop and David led a Christmas Card printmaking session. Both took place on Saturdays in November.

6.11 Active Trowbridge: David and Nikki helped out at a couple of Active Trowbridge's after school clubs as they were short-handed.

6.12 Alzheimers Support: Nikki has led a further 2 information sessions to new support staff for a local care branch.

6.13 Under 5s: Nikki spent a day at a nursery school and child minding group researching activities for our planned Under 5s sessions as part of the Activity Plan. We are looking at using Longfield Community Centre and trialling some sessions in the new year.

6.14 Safeguarding: HL, DB and NR met with Hayley Bell, the Council's Safeguarding Lead to discuss simplifying the safeguarding training volunteers are required to undertake.

6.15 Onwards and Upwards: We have continued writing outlines for the design and interpretation of the new Museum.

6.16 Care homes: Shockerwick House (A BUPA care home in Box) have booked sessions until December 2020, this is the 3rd year we have taken block bookings for the home. We have also taken 6 bookings for Father Christmas to visit care homes and day centres this year, including Shockerwick and Alzheimer's support in Salisbury.

7. MARKETING/PROMOTION AND WEBSITE

7.1 Marketing – Clare Lyall took part in a live broadcast for BBC Wiltshire on the 11th November. The project and our reopening in the summer of next year were discussed with reporter Ben Praitier.

7.2 Bath and Wiltshire Parent Magazine – Our October half term events were listed in the What's On section of the BWP Magazine.

7.3 Press Coverage – In September, the Heritage Open Days events and the Weaver's Market received a full page article in the Wiltshire Times.

7.4 Visit Wiltshire - The Museum project and the reopening in August next year received a small mention in Visit Wiltshire's travel guide.

7.5 Facebook – Having reached the 1000 'Likes' milestone on Facebook, we ran a competition and gave away two free tickets for one of Christmas craft workshops. The lucky winner just had to share and like our page.

7.6 Autumn/winter brochure – We distributed 2000 Autumn/ winter programme leaflets this quarter.

7.6.2 Life Long Learning Leaflet – We have designed a new leaflet with Brightside to promote our Life Long Learning programme. These have been distributed locally and in the wider region; it is notable that we have reminiscence sessions booked for a Salisbury Residential Home.



LIFELONG LEARNING WORKSHOPS & ACTIVITIES

NEVER STOP LEARNING

We understand that for some groups coming out to a Museum can be difficult so we offer a wide range of workshops and services, giving a hands on history experience, in care homes and day centres throughout Wiltshire.



REMINISCENCE BOXES



An ideal way of encouraging relaxed and informal conversation individually and within a group. Our reminiscence boxes contain objects, newspapers, clothing and images covering post-war to the present day. To make each box suitable for a wide age range, they are organised by themes, including Royalty, Everyday Life and Childhood. Some sessions include singing and we can add a craft. In November & December we can bring along our special Victorian Father Christmas to join festivities. Sessions are usually led by a member of staff or trained volunteers and can last 45 – 90 minutes. Boxes can also be loaned on a monthly basis.

HISTORY TALKS



Scop back in time and learn something new with our engaging history talks. Our object-led talks range from Romans to WW2 and every period in between. We are happy to deliver talks specifically related to Trowbridge, including the woollen cloth trade, the story of the Museum or notable characters. If you have a particular subject in mind, please discuss it with us.

CREATIVE SESSIONS



Hands on learning which encourages creativity and artistic expression. Not all of our Lifelong Learning activities are history based. We also offer creative options, from weaving, printing and felting sessions, singing songs and carols to creative writing workshops using photographs from our collection. We also run a weekly craft activity for adults with learning difficulties, which encourages the development of fine motor skills, colour recognition and social skills.

Prices are very affordable but vary for each workshop depending on location or session booked. Check trowbridgemuseum.co.uk for current costings and full details

To book a session or for more information contact the Learning & outreach team on 01225 751359 or david.pirish@trowbridge.gov.uk / nikki.nitson@trowbridge.gov.uk.

CONTACT: [FACEBOOK](https://www.facebook.com/trowbridgemuseum) [INSTAGRAM](https://www.instagram.com/trowbridgemuseum) [YOUTUBE](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv0n0m0w0q0m0)

TROWBRIDGE MUSEUM
www.trowbridgemuseum.co.uk

HERITAGE FUND

Trowbridge KNOWLEDGE

8. TOURISM/VISITS

Engagement figures this quarter (Aug, Sep, Oct): Schools: 23, Other Groups: 1933, Website: 2981

8.1 Trowbridge Heritage Festival – Nikki met with David Lockwood (Town Hall Arts Director) and 2 Performance Artists on Monday 18th November who we may be collaborating with for an aspect of the Heritage Festival called ‘Outrage!’, a street performance piece incorporating aspects of Trowbridge’s heritage. David is submitting a grant application to the Arts Council to help fund this in December and should find out the result in February. We will also be looking to secure funding over the next few months.

9. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

9.1 Order of St John’s Care Trust – We have started our oral history project with Goodson Lodge Care Home in Trowbridge. We gave a talk on the History of Trowbridge and ran a family history day there on Saturday 2nd November (though in truth not many family members of residents came along) and produced a leaflet containing 10 questions to ask your grandparent. We will be heading back to conduct some 1-2-1 oral histories in the New Year.

9.2 Mill Street Day Care Centre – We continue to have a close working relationship with the Alzheimer’s Support Mill Street Day Centre and volunteer once a month to cook them some lunch. We also lead regular reminiscence sessions for the Centre.

9.3 Portable Place Project – This project has now been renamed ‘Making Place’ Trowbridge as the emphasis has shifted from saleable retail lines (though that element is still there) and more to creating contemporary material representations of Trowbridge that will form part of our launch Temporary Exhibition, ‘Trowbridge Then and Now’. We are hoping to submit the Arts Council application in January and should know 6 weeks later if the bid is successful.

9.4 Investors in Trowbridge

9.4 Town Hall – I attended a Board meeting on the evening of Monday 2nd December as an observer and it was interesting to see the impact of the recently appointed trustees.

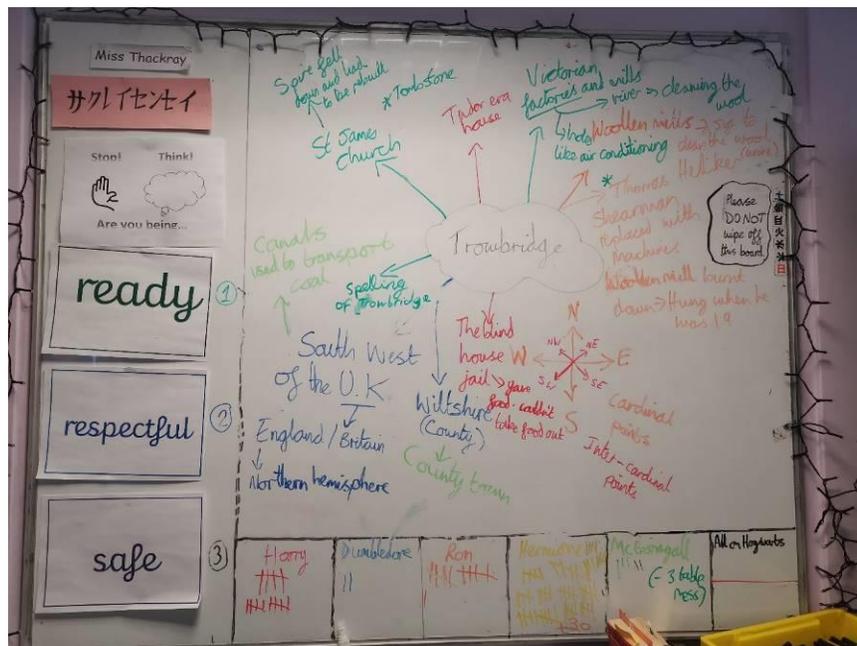
On Thursday 5th December I supported the Director, Chairman and one of the trustees with their interviewing and selection of four more trustees. They impressed with the range of the skills, knowledge and enthusiasm.

9.5 Investors in Trowbridge – I was invited to attend their meeting held at Little Earth on Tuesday 26th November. I updated the group about the Museum Project and the positive impact this should have upon Trowbridge. They are going to have a tour of the Museum site at their next meeting on the 15th January 2020.

10. EVALUATION

10.1 We have taken our CultureForce training onboard and are being a lot more creative with our evaluation. We've taken snapshots of comments we receive via social media about our events and we are aiming to include some of our vlog material.

10.2 Holbrook School created a topic board after a workshop and guided walk led by the Museum, a great opportunity for us to see the sort of longer term impact our sessions can have.



11. **MUSEUM - FINANCE SUMMARY (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

11.1 2nd Qtr accounts are attached.

Museum 101 (July - Sept 19)

	Actual	Budget	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Expenditure	59,014	68,690	9,677
Income	3,349	3,096	253
Net Expenditure	55,664	65,594	9,930

Grants Cultural 104 (July - Sept 19)

	Actual	Budget	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Expenditure	12,693	11,500	1,193
Income	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	12,693	11,500	1,193

Financial summary

Please see summaries on Actuals attached.

11.2 DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21 (AGENDA ITEM 8) (COPY ATTACHED)

To consider the draft budget 2020/21 and make a recommendation to approve to Policy & Resources Committee at their next meeting on 14th January 2020.

11.3 Funding – The total amount donated by parishes is as follows:

Hilperton £2500

North Bradley £100

Keevil £75

Bratton £600

Great Hinton Ladies Club TBC

Museum Expansion Project

12. MUSEUM EXPANSION PROJECT (CL)

12.1 Project History

Our successful round one pass with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) secured £100,000 towards the development stage, which allowed us to complete the work required to complete our successful round two application to the NLHF for £1,172,500 million, which was submitted in May 2017. The Museum sought funding from others of around £200,000 and the town council will be making a contribution of around £1million, funded by reserves and borrowing (costing around £50,000 per annum) over the 25 years of a new lease for two floors of Home Mill.

Improvements to signage outlined in the *Town Centre* section will include the museum and other historic locations, cross-referenced in the new museum displays and visible from the new top floor windows. In addition, we will improve the brown tourist signs on the approaches to the town.

Trowbridge Museum must undergo Accreditation every four years. This is an external independent assessment and covers every aspect of the Museum operation, from being appropriately resourced to employing suitably qualified staff. Without Accreditation, the Museum would not be able to obtain major funding from external bodies including the NLHF. Trowbridge Museum underwent a semi-assessment during 2017/18 and therefore much of the focus of work prior to commencing the Development Phase of the project was on Accreditation.

During the closure period (from June 2019) the Museum implemented the project **Activity Plan**, which was developed during the Development Phase, and enabled our Learning and Outreach service to continue to offer a series of workshops in other locations and outreach services. The Museum also continues to work with our partners to enhance Trowbridge as a tourism destination, supported by the Information Services department.

12.2 Design & Interpretation

Following our meeting with the Design and Interpretation contractor for the Museum Project, Chris Jones, of Smith and Jones, on the 16th July we held two open day events for staff, councillors and volunteers, with a further Open Day on 2nd November in The Shires for the public, sharing with everyone visuals of the designs produced by Chris.

All Museum staff have been preparing text for the themes and simultaneously sorting objects which will populate the displays. The graphic panel layouts are being finalized too. Clare and Hannah met with Chris Jones and Nic on site on Thursday 17th October. Chris had a series of questions to ask which we answered and he also wanted to confirm the positions for power to supply display cases within the Museum. We held a meeting with the NLHF on 9th October.

12.3 Capital Works

12.3.1 Roof – Further tests on the roof surface showed that it had been installed ineffectively and had failed extensively causing damage to the insulation underneath. The landlords said that the guarantee had run out 18 months before we took over the new lease. We are therefore having to strip the whole roof of its existing insulation before installing a new surface. This will cost an additional £20,000 which will have to be taken from contingency.

12.3.2 Third Floor - M & E progressing well. Duct work and HRU being installed. The window refurbishment has been completed and decorations to the steel work and ceilings continue, with the plastering has been completed.

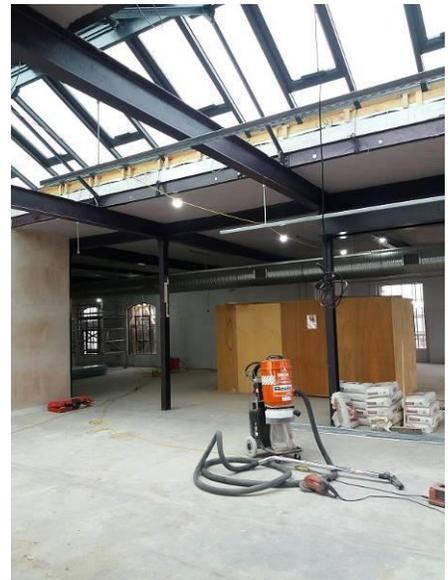
12.3.2 Second Floor – the lift steel work to the roof level has been completed as has the blockwork. Work on the concrete gantries from the building to the lift has commenced. The door opening from the Museum to the new lift on the ground floor has been completed. The roof light work has now been completed and has had a huge impact upon the upper floor and within the Learning and Outreach space.

12.3.3 Shires – the Museum entrance plaster work has been completed, as have the repairs to the tiled floor. The works to the Mall have been suspended for the Christmas period and the Landlords will pay for the delayed works. There is a delay to the program due to the stoppage of work within The Shires, and delays caused by issues with the glazing from the walkways to the lift and the external cladding on the lift shaft.

12.4 National Lottery Funding monitoring – We held a meeting on 9th October with the NLHF's Project Monitor Ellen Dempster. The project is progressing - Ellen and Tom Brewer of the NLHF approved the job roles which the NLHF will be funding for 2 years. When the appointments have been made they have requested copies of the application forms and contracts. They have also requested a copy of Beard's building contractor report, and to see a procurement strategy from Chris Jones of Smith & Jones, who are the design contractors.

12.5 Borrowing for the Project - we will apply for the second tranche of borrowing (£450,000) later in the financial year when appropriate.

12.6 Collections – the collections continue to be stored in an off-site facility.



12.7 Appointment of consultants & contractors – we advertised the roller racking tender contract on the Contract Finders website on the 5th September 2019. Closing date 27th September 2019. The final contract was awarded to Brynzeel Storage systems.

We advertised the design and interpretation fit-out tender contract on the Contract Finders website on the 1st November 2019. The closing date was the 22nd November 2019. The final contract was awarded to Beaufort Bespoke Ltd.

12.8 Museum Project 102 (July – Sept 19)

	Actual £'000	Budget £'000	Variance £'000
Gross Expenditure	437,682	616,262	178,580
Income	437,682	616,262	178,580
Net Expenditure	0	0	0

Clare Lyall – Curator; with contributions from:

Hannah Lyddy - Museum Manager

Hanne Dahl - Collections and Exhibitions Officer

David Birks - Learning and Outreach Officer