

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE
13 SEPTEMBER 2010**

Present: Councillors Cartwright, Charlesworth, Finch, Hodges, Kramer (the appointed substitute for Cllr Chowney), Martin and Webb (in the Chair)

Museum Association Representatives: Mr Adams, Mrs Barrett, Ms Cornish, Mr Peak and Mrs Purdey

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Chowney and Miss C L Reed.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following councillors declared their interests in the minutes as follows:

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Minute</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Cllr Kramer	6) Forward Plan	Personal – Govenor at Dudley Infants School and Chair of Bridge Children’s Centre
Cllr Webb	6) Forward Plan	Personal – Member of ESCC, Childrens Services Scrutiny Committee

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

15. CURATOR’S REPORT

Cathy Walling, Acting Museum Curator, presented a report to update members on matters carried over from previous meetings, which were not included in the agenda. The report also contained information about the commemorative plaque; a visit for the Museum Committee members to the Museum; sales and income and confirmation of loan.

Cathy Walling reported on the status of the commemorative plaque, which she re-confirmed as waiting for Listed Building Consent to be granted for No. 7 Pelham Crescent.

Members confirmed the unveiling ceremony held on 4 August 2010 was a huge success. The Chair requested a letter of thanks be sent to (St Mary’s) for the organisation of the event.

Cathy Walling advised the visit to the Museum for the Museum Committee Members would take place before the next meeting of the Museum’s Committee, prior to 6 December. Members will be informed as soon as the details have been arranged.

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE
13 SEPTEMBER 2010**

Cathy Walling reported on the sales and income recorded from across the two museum sites.

Headline figures include:

414 separate items made up of: 100 postcards, 60 books and publications and 254 Souvenirs. It should be noted that books and publications sell better at Old Town Hall and Souvenirs at Johns Place. These figures exclude sales related to exhibitions, such as catalogues or commission on works of art.

Members questioned the efficiency of the systems used for recording sales and stock. Nick Sangster, Resort Services Manager, confirmed he would look into the efficiencies of the museum's systems and compare with other services.

Marion Purdey thanked Cathy Walling for the report and for the extra work which had been appreciated.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

16. MUSEUM FORWARD PLAN

Cathy Walling, Acting Museum Curator, presented a report to update the Committee on progress of the draft 2010-2013 Forward Plan.

The Forward Plan is a requirement of the Museum Accreditation scheme. The Forward Plan outlines the museums achievements of the last three years as well as the proposed action plan for the next three years and brings together various recommendations. The 2010-2013 Forward Plan will replace the 2006-09 Forward Plan.

Cathy Walling advised the Committee on the probable future abolition of the Museums, Libraries and Archives body, which runs the accreditation scheme to which Hastings Museum, the Art Gallery and the Old Town Hall Museum have been accredited to since 2007. The accreditation scheme will be replaced by a new form of official registration or accreditation in 2012. Further updates will be provided to the Committee when details are known.

Councillor Kramer suggested the educational statement referred to in Appendix 1, page 19, of the Forward Plan should be incorporated within the Mission Statement, this was seconded by Marion Purdey. Members further discussed the role of the museum within the local economy and its wider effect on visitors to Hastings.

Councillor Hodges queried whether the access to the Archives Website would be feasible without going through the main website. Cathy Walling confirmed the matter would be investigated and reported as an item on the next agenda.

MUSEUMS COMMITTEE
13 SEPTEMBER 2010

Councillor Webb expressed his appreciation of the work undertaken on the access to Archives Website which has led to an increase in family history research. He congratulated the staff for their work.

Nick Sangster recommended a 'cultural trail' involving a tour of all the museums, picking up on all that Hastings has to offer and advised members to contact him directly for further discussion. Councillor Charlesworth agreed with the idea, involving a cultural trail which would divert visitors on from Jerwood to the museums.

Councillor Kramer suggested the draft Cultural Regional Strategy should incorporate the local economy issues. Members agreed to add this to the key aim to establish a higher profile in stimulating and supporting the local economy.

Councillor Webb offered his assistance to help speed up the review of storage of archaeological material from outside the Borough in consultation with Rother and East Sussex.

Cathy Walling confirmed the Data-mapping and Audience Development Plan will require further evaluation. The reconfiguration of the touch-screen films at OTH will be reported to the Committee at the next meeting. Members thanked Beatrice Rapley for her input. Also to be reported at the next meeting, the programme of exhibitions and events undertaken with national and regional institutions and practitioners.

Members requested the rebuilding of the partition in the Dinosaur gallery to be reported as an item on the next agenda.

Councillor Hodges raised an interest in mounting a plaque for Alan Turing. Cathy Walling confirmed it was part of the 2012 programme of exhibitions.

Councillor Kramer recommended looking at timesaving measures such as utilising Hasting Voluntary Action which could be beneficial.

Nick Sangster and Cathy Walling confirmed they would look into identifying further issues of income.

Steve Peak made the observation when an individual dies, family members are not aware of anywhere such as the museum for items of interest to go. He recommended it should be incorporated within the action plan.

Members considered optimising displays in a way to benefit schools and colleges which could secure a benefactor.

Steve Peak recommended using Johns Place to focus on using it for extra storage space.

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE
13 SEPTEMBER 2010**

Marion Purdey congratulated the Museum Curator on the Forward Plan. She thanked her for the detail and clarity of the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

17. ATTENDANCE FIGURES

Cathy Walling, Acting Museum Curator, presented a report to inform members of figures for attendances, educational activities and use of the Museum's website for the first quarter of 2010/2011.

Cathy Walling confirmed a rise in visits and group visits between both museums had been recorded compared with the same period last year. She added that a slight decrease in website visits had been recorded during this period.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

18. MUSEUM EVENTS

Cathy Walling, Acting Museum Curator, presented a report to inform Members of forthcoming events and educational activities.

These include, amongst others:

- 'The Hastings Rarities Affair' – thirteen artists inspired by an ornithological scandal. 24 September – 2 January 2011;
- 'Helen Woods' – An exhibition of new work inspired by the Museum's collections and exploring ideas of subterfuge, truth, memory & lies. 25 September – 2 January 2011.

Events:

- Finds identification with Sussex Finds Liaison Officer;
- DJVJ screening at Electric Palace and video installation at Museum;
- Private view for Hastings Rarities Exhibition;
- Ring in the Changes. Bird-ringing session
- Bird Sing Walk in Summerfields Woods;
- The Big Draw – Big Bird Draw;
- Fraud and Fakery in the Bird World – talk by Nik Borrow;
- Junior Walk on the Wild-side;
- Stuff a Bird – fabric workshop;
- Bird Passports – workshop;
- A Roo in my suitcase – poetry performance;
- Artist book-making;
- 'An Evening of Utter Nonsense', Lear, Carroll and all that jazz;

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE
13 SEPTEMBER 2010**

- Talk on Lewes Keep, by ESRO;
- Birdy Christmas Decorations;
- Museum Association AGM.

Cathy Walling confirmed details of the forthcoming Tressell Exhibition, will held in the main gallery from 15 January 2011.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

19. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

Cathy Walling, Acting Museum Curator, presented an updated report informing members of items acquired by the Museum since June 2010.

These included, amongst others:

- Two postcards, showing Albert Memorial and a Mayoral procession.
- 1950's Biscuit Tin with image of Old Town
- Teaspoon from Queens Hotel, Hastings
- Photo of Bidy the Tubman

The Committee wished to express its thanks to Mr R Mucci for the items donated.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted and the Chairman sign the acknowledgments of thanks to the donors.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 4:10pm)