

Scrutiny Briefing Note

The Tourism and Visitor Economy Panel have asked to monitor progress on the following matters. This briefing contains the latest position as at 10th January 2022.

Subject: History Centre and Archives Review

1. The History Centre

1.1 Background

The 2018 One Public Estate report advised that the archives be co-located with another cultural facility. It also considered the benefits which could be realised if cultural services such as the archives, libraries and museum collection were to co-locate in Grimsby Town Centre, and the positive impact which would be created from doing this.

This was taken forward as part of the Greater Grimsby Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) within the 'Central Library, Town Hall and Archives' project, which includes an aim to 'build on One Public Estate proposals to identify and develop proposals for integration of Library/Archive and the feasibility of a new museum/gallery space and café.'

1.2 Feasibility

During 2019 a number of discussions were held with both National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and project partners including Lincs Inspire Ltd and Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre, with the co-location of archives and the museum collection being suggested to form a new 'History Centre'. NLHF were keen to see some feasibility work undertaken for this and suggested that an application should be submitted to them.

1.3 Funding

Approval was granted in February 2020 for Council Officers to submit an application to NLHF for a History Centre feasibility study. A bid was prepared but before being finalised in Spring 2020, NLHF closed all grant programmes and diverted funds to covid-emergency grants.

In the Spring of 2021 government announced a Community Renewal Fund grant scheme, for which the History Centre feasibility study fitted the criteria. An application, which included a 'pop-up' exhibition on North East Lincolnshire's heritage of innovation was submitted. However, this was not successful.

1.4 Current Position

NLHF are now its grant programmes and the project team are revising / updating their draft NLHF application ready to submit it by end of March 2022.

2. Archives Review

2.1 Progress Report: Jan-Nov 2021

Although 2021 has been a very difficult year, with the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and the tragic death of conservator Peter Noon in January 2021, North East Lincolnshire Archives (NELA) has continued to deliver an important service.



For the first three months of 2021 the search room was closed to the public, but both the Archivist and the Archives Assistant were on-site. Postal and e-mail enquiries continued to be answered as normal, a considerable amount of cataloguing was undertaken, and the Facebook page was regularly updated with new material, with 1,400 new followers in 2021.

NELA reopened to the public on Monday 12th April 2021 and from then until the end of November there were 297 research visits to the search room. 23 donations were also accessioned in 2021. In July 2021 Claire Fraser, who had previously worked for Nottinghamshire Archives, was appointed as conservator and since then has conserved and rebound a large number of items as well as assisting with exhibitions and displays.

2.2 Outreach and Events

NELA has continued to work with local schools during 2021, including Old Clee Primary Academy, Oasis Academy Nunsthorpe, and Welholme Academy. In addition, the 'Streets and their Stories' project restarted following the easing of lockdown restrictions, including a very successful exhibition in St Augustine's Church, Grimsby, on 4th Sept which had 84 visitors and a wealth of positive feedback.

NELA also held an exhibition at Grimsby Town Hall on 17th and 18th September for Heritage Open Days, and on the 23rd October staged an exhibition on the history of Scartho in the Church Hall, which was one of the more successful events held, with 297 visitors.

2.3 National Archive Accreditation

NELA continue to send regular reports to The National Archives. The provisional accreditation status runs out again this year (2022), so the required paperwork will be submitted in a few months' time. The date for submission has not yet been confirmed by The National Archives.

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