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**Gem**  
the voice for  
heritage learning

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# Case Studies

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# What is GEM?

## Editorial

GEM champions excellence in heritage learning to improve the education, health and well-being of the general public.

GEM believes that involvement with our rich and diverse heritage is an enriching and transformational experience that provides distinctive opportunities for learning. We aim to make that learning accessible, relevant and enjoyable for all. GEM works with its members and collaboratively with other learning organisations across the UK and internationally to:

- champion excellence in heritage learning and participation enabling people to be inspired by, value and enjoy their and other's heritage;
- advocate the power of heritage learning in transforming people's lives to sector organisations, national agencies, funders and government;
- influence sector organisations to deliver excellent learning and participation for their visitors;
- promote and explain the benefits of learning through heritage which is inclusive, sustainable and respectful of communities;
- develop creative partnerships with other organisations to share effective practice in heritage learning and participation;
- research and pioneer innovation in heritage learning and participation;
- inspire and support the work of heritage learning practitioners;
- provide opportunities for practitioners to develop their practice through networking, mentoring and learning together.

Welcome to volume 15 of Case Studies and an inspiring range of articles outlining the successes and challenges of developing engaging and participatory programmes for both existing and new audiences.

Two case studies reveal how the 100th anniversary of the first world war has provided a focus for young people to engage with their local heritage in different ways, the first through the creation of an art installation inspired by the museum's collections as part of a Bronze Arts Award week (*Unearthing our first world war heritage*), the second by involving young people in visits, local research and creating a film and exhibition (*The Great War*).

*Sleepover at the museum with Arts Award* describes how the Discover Arts Award and the appeal of a sleepover were used to attract an untapped audience. Ways to enhance informal learning are also discussed in Explorer backpacks where a variety of tools and activities were developed to encourage younger visitors to engage with different exhibits.

Building children's confidence in responding to collections is addressed in a different way in *Symbols, Signposts and St Peter: a 3D art project* where 3D printing was piloted as a tool to engage pupils with contemporary art.

Partnership working continues to be a strong theme in this issue with heritage sites working together to maximise opportunities for joint development and training (*Museums and cathedral in partnership*) and to enhance their offer to schools with the help of an educational specialist

(*CoastEd*). Another partnership in *Making Waves* led to young people from different organisations responding creatively to their local heritage.

From Canada, *Meaningful participatory engagement techniques* describes a student residency in an exhibition space and explores the challenges of such participatory projects. As always, the importance of appropriate evaluation to aid future development is stressed. *Engaging with longitude: Ships, Clocks & Stars* outlines how Royal Museums Greenwich used audience research to plan and deliver public programmes for targeted adult audiences.

Finally, the new history national curriculum in England has both challenged and offered opportunities for museums. Building teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in delivering the new curriculum is one response, explored in *Prehistory in the primary classroom*.

We hope you enjoy reading your copy of Case Studies and that it inspires you to submit an article yourself for our next issue. The deadline for submissions is 9 March 2016.

**Jo Roberts**

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Museums and cathedral in partnership  
Kathryn Bedford and Canon Elizabeth



# Museums and cathedral in partnership

## Summary

This partnership was initiated as part of a larger one year Arts Council England funded project on making education self-financing, but has developed in unexpected ways.

## Background

Ripon Museum Trust is a charitable trust running three small museums on the theme of Victorian law and order. Ripon Cathedral has been a place of worship for 1,300 years. Between them they comprise the

major heritage sites in Ripon.

## Challenge

To make education at both organisations more financially sustainable, taking into account the changes in the national curriculum.

## Approach

A learning development officer was appointed to oversee the project and act as an initial point of contact between the organisations. She worked with existing staff at both sites and was part of the project management group.

## Intended outcomes

- Improved cross sector knowledge through sharing of expertise.
- Increased awareness of each site by the other to encourage cross promotion.
- A sustainable partnership.

## Intended outputs

- A new day of curriculum linked activities for schools on crime and punishment involving both sites.
- A set of mix and match sessions at both sites for teachers to choose from.
- Increased school visits and income.

## Obstacles and issues

- We were unable to find a way to link the sites with the curriculum in a way that was coherent and of interest to schools. However, visitor analysis showed that adult groups were a growth market at both sites, and several ideas that were not suitable for schools were of interest to adults.
- There are differences between a museum's and cathedral's priorities. Educational needs in the latter must

be balanced against those of worship and other events, so there are limits to possible growth.

- Our education programmes did not always have the same priorities. The museums had a well-established programme that was particularly vulnerable to curriculum changes. The cathedral was better placed for the new curriculum but had very few sessions ready for delivery.
- The place of training was initially underestimated, and required more time and money than expected.
- The one year timescale of the project was an additional pressure.

## Actual outcomes

- Significantly greater awareness of both organisations amongst volunteers
- Improved communication between cathedral guides and educators.
- Appointment of casual learning assistants working across all sites.
- A strong partnership that both sides are committed to developing further.

## Actual outputs

- Joint volunteer training including customer care, education delivery skills, developing guided tours, visitor surveys and disability awareness.
- New adult offers across both sites.
- New school sessions developed with the benefit of a heritage educator.
- Extensive joint and mutual marketing that increases our exposure.
- Joint Big Draw day for schools.
- Increased numbers and income.

## Lessons learned

- Partnerships are most valuable when they are allowed the flexibility to move in unexpected directions. Our plan for a joint, multi-site session proved unachievable but that failure led to unforeseen opportunities.
- In small organisations with few staff it is helpful to have a strong local partnership providing critical friends to bounce ideas off whilst developing new activities.
- Regular meetings between partners are invaluable for ensuring good communication and the partnership doesn't get forgotten.
- There is a need for an education professional at the cathedral.

## Next steps

- Two new education roles have been created at Ripon Museums and the cathedral with a remit to continue to develop the partnership.
- Volunteers from both organisations will be recommending additional ways to share audiences following visitor surveys.

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# Meaningful participatory engagement

## Summary

The && Collective residency was a participatory project undertaken at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG). Members of the collective worked alongside education and curatorial staff to respond to the themes, materials and approaches used in the *sciencefictionsciencefair* exhibition by creating a “re-manufacturing facility” in the gallery’s exhibition space for their fictional Ampersand company.

## Background

Established in 1956, the KWAG is an award-winning contemporary art gallery in the heart of south-western Ontario, Canada, that showcases both Canadian and international artists. KWAG plays a vital educational role in the community and actively seeks to enhance visitors’ appreciation of contemporary art by creating diverse opportunities for meaningful, participatory, community engagement.

The && Collective is a student collective based at Waterloo Collegiate Institute led by artist and teacher Kyle Bishop.

*sciencefictionsciencefair* featured the work of three artists who playfully investigated methodologies of science and science fiction by exploiting them to create sculpture, video and installations.

## Challenge

Increasingly museums and art galleries are experimenting with new ways to engage their audiences using a wide range of participatory programming techniques as a community engagement strategy, in an effort both to demonstrate their relevance to the public and fulfil their pedagogical missions. Instead of being about something or for someone, such cultural institutions create content with audiences.

## Approach

One participatory programming technique that museums and art galleries use to actively involve audiences in the creation of new content involves collaboration. In a first for KWAG, the gallery experimented with this technique by inviting the && Collective to collaborate on a unique residency project.

## Intended outcomes

The && Collective residency aimed to:

- animate the *sciencefictionsciencefair* exhibition in a new and innovative way;
- provide new opportunities for community engagement through participation;
- break down the hierarchical barriers between curatorial and educational endeavours as well as “high” and “low” art; and
- challenge the gallery’s perceptions of ownership and control of exhibition and programming content.

## Intended outputs

Over several months, the && Collective committed to creating various product lines of hybrid electronic goods, which would be unveiled to the public through a series of product launches inviting visitors to test out their innovative products.

## Obstacles and issues

The main challenge proved to be sustaining students’ motivation to participate in the project throughout its duration, which spanned several months. A shorter residency period, more concrete timelines and clearer communication on the part of the gallery could have helped the project maintain its momentum.

Using the same space both to create and exhibit work proved to be an additional challenge. Separating the residency space from the exhibition space could have minimized the ad hoc feel the project sometimes had, which suited the project conceptually but was less successful visually.

The collective also struggled with reconciling the process-oriented nature of the project with the need to produce a well-rendered finished product. Although pleased with their overall concept, they thought that the project always felt like a work in progress and wished that the final product was of a higher calibre.

## Actual outcomes

The && Collective residency successfully provided members of the collective with the opportunity to participate in the generation of both exhibition and programming content, illustrating a deep level of community engagement.

In blending curatorial and education work, the project established a more egalitarian working relationship between education and curatorial staff. It also decreased the hierarchal divide between curatorial and educational endeavours by hosting the residency in the gallery’s exhibition space, traditionally reserved for professional artists. As a result, the project has increased the education department’s status and ensured that education takes a more prominent, integrated role in the gallery’s future operations.

Despite these successes, the project was less successful at changing everyone’s thinking about the value of inviting the community to guide professional practice in a participatory way.

## Actual outputs

The && Collective created three distinct product lines during their residency. These included an electronics line, and a line of toys and games, which were displayed in a retail



area within the gallery’s exhibition space devoted to the residency. Lighting, packaging, site graphics and advertising supported the finished products. The project was launched with an opening reception that drew 168 visitors and closed with a final performance, which saw all three product lines re-built into a new recycled piece. Numerous activities, public events, online content and ephemera were also generated to animate this participatory project.

## Lessons learned

- Participatory projects are more about process than product. As such, gallery staff ought to have a significant tolerance for risk, ambiguity, and imperfection, and focus on partnership building rather than the final product.
- As involvement in participatory projects is time consuming, museum administrators need to value the participatory process in order to allow their staff to engage meaningfully in addition to their other duties.
- Participatory projects require a non-traditional relationship between visitors and galleries, characterised by a shift in the roles played by museum staff from that of expert to resource, and a shift in skills used in museum education from those concerned with systematic learning to those with mentoring and coaching.
- As project ownership is shared among gallery staff and participants, it is necessary for staff to strike a balance between providing participants with freedom and structure.

- Sustaining participation can be difficult over an extended period of time. As such, careful attention needs to be paid to both project length and visitors’ motivation and availability for ongoing participation.

## Next steps

The dearth of evaluations of participatory projects in museums and art galleries is possibly the greatest contributing factor to their slow uptake. As KWAG moves forward it will need to give further thought to how to evaluate such projects, which require very different evaluation techniques to those traditionally employed by museum visitor studies. Evaluation can provide heightened understanding of how to improve future participatory projects, and can help identify possible best practices to be shared with other interested cultural institutions, thereby helping to contribute to their wider acceptance.

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# Explorer backpacks

## Summary

The Victoria Gallery & Museum (VG&M) created a set of Explorer backpacks for children aged five to eleven. We aimed to encourage younger visitors to engage with exhibits they might otherwise find challenging.

## Background

The VG&M is the University of Liverpool's gallery and museum and is home to a collection ranging from fine art to Victorian dentistry, with exhibitions changing on a regular basis. Although not as central as some of the larger city museums or galleries, we have a steady number of family visitors; many attend every monthly family event.

## Challenge

Although we have on-gallery interactives, limited space means portable education resources had to be considered. We have a number of trails that, although updated regularly, have been completed by return visitors. We wanted to push the self-guided element of trails by giving children tools to interact with the exhibitions further.

## Approach

Having seen backpacks being used successfully in the Victoria & Albert Museum and Tate Liverpool we wanted to strike a balance between the more general activities of the latter and the highly specific of the former. With changing exhibitions we needed activities that did not have to be regularly updated but retained strong links to the collections and building.



## Intended outcomes

- To encourage children to engage with exhibits they might previously not have been interested in.
- To encourage families to learn together.

## Intended outputs

- Four backpacks featuring activities linked to the building and collections
- Activities with longevity that don't have to be constantly updated.

## Obstacles and issues

- The VG&M has a small visitor services team so we had to devise activities without resources that needed replenishing.
- The use of torches in a dimly-lit gallery was questioned. Although the light wasn't strong we replaced them with LED torches so there were no issues with light damage.
- During piloting some instruction labels were found to be unclear, with terms for some areas in the building not being understood, resulting in confusion over where to go.
- The packs were too heavy for younger children, with parents sometimes having to carry them, meaning they didn't get the full experience.

## Actual outcomes

- Feedback forms have been very positive, with many children's favourite activities relating to exhibits that hadn't previously been easy for them to engage with.
- Families are using the packs to learn together; when walking around the building family groups are often seen working on activities.
- Children are using their own initiative with the tools provided, using the torch, coloured viewers and other objects to interact with the building and exhibits in their own way.

## Actual outputs

- Four backpacks with torch, magnifying glass, binoculars and activities, including questions and coloured viewers to encourage children to look at art differently, and a collection of creatures in resin blocks to be examined and

compared with the museum's wet collection. The packs each have a set of labels attached explaining the use of all objects within them and further instructions for the activities.

- A welcome sheet for adults, explaining the nature of the backpacks and the location of exhibits linked to activities.
- Check-list, sign out sheets and feedback forms for visitor services to keep track of how many backpacks are taken out and if everything has been returned.

## Lessons learned

- Pilot sessions don't always raise issues that are mentioned by other visitors. Nobody in the initial session brought up the issue of the pack's weight.
- It's important to watch the weight of the backpack overall as individual activities add up. Whether deciding against a particular activity or changing the target age of the pack, it has to be addressed.
- Official terms for parts of the building or exhibits used in instructions may not make sense to visitors. We decided to refer to areas of the building by their floor rather than simply their name.

## Next steps

- The Explorer backpacks are continuing as they are. Over 30 families used them in the three months following their introduction.
- We recently launched a mini Explorer backpack for children aged three to six. The packs are smaller and their design relates to items within the collections – a dinosaur, butterfly and dolphin. The packs contain themed torches, magnifiers, binoculars and coloured viewers but no other activities. The themed nature of the packs allows them to be a fun activity for children in their own right, not just a smaller version of the Explorer backpack. We hope these packs will solve the issue of weight whilst remaining engaging for younger children.



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# Prehistory in the primary classroom

## Summary

Funded by the London Schools Excellence Fund, the Museum of London's *Prehistory in the Primary Classroom* project focused on building teachers' subject knowledge and chronological understanding of the prehistoric period with the long-term goal of improved pupil attainment in a new national curriculum subject.

## Background

Prehistory was introduced in primary schools, as part of changes to the national curriculum in September 2014. Drawing together expert knowledge from the curatorial, archaeology and learning departments at the museum we developed a training programme for primary teachers that told the story of life in prehistoric Britain.

## Challenge

Feedback from teacher confidence surveys and results from participatory subject knowledge activities confirmed our initial assumptions that:

- subject knowledge was extremely low and at best patchy;
- teachers were unsure of the chronology of this period and

concerned about how to introduce this to lower key stage two children; and

- confidence levels overall were low and teachers were finding it difficult to find reliable/suitable resources to support their teaching.

## Approach

Initially working with two teaching alliances in east London, we adopted a cascade methodology to embed learning within schools. Working first with two lead teachers to shape the programme we then went on to train history co-ordinators before providing twilight sessions open to all teachers within the alliances.

By creating a timeline story of the prehistoric period, teachers were introduced to common themes from the Palaeolithic through to the Iron Age. We consolidated this by focusing on the chronological journey featured in our *London before London* gallery and by using our handling collection to enable teachers to get to grips with interpreting real prehistoric objects.

We then replicated the training model to provide a continuing professional development (CPD) offer for teachers London-wide.

## Intended outcomes

- Increased teacher subject knowledge.
- Confidence in skills and knowledge vital for teaching prehistory.
- Increased chronological awareness.
- Confidence in object-based learning.
- Improved peer-to-peer support and awareness of resources.

## Intended outputs

- Cascade training for teachers in two teaching alliances.
- London-wide CPD training for 100 teachers.
- Training for 150 Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students.
- Development of online resources.

## Obstacles and issues

The main obstacle was in the cascade element of the project. A number of teachers in the first group (lead teachers and history co-ordinators) who trained in the spring/summer term either moved schools, changed year group or changed curriculum focus, which meant that crossing over from one academic year to another, some teachers didn't have the opportunity to put their training into practice. However the 100 teachers who self-selected to attend London-wide training from September 2014 to March 2015 could see the immediate impact the training would have in their classes or with colleagues on return to school.

## Actual outcomes

We recorded before and after

confidence ratings from every teacher and student who attended training. Teachers reported a significant increase in confidence in all areas, with 95% rating the training as excellent overall.

Many teachers commented that the combination of having a curator and a teacher jointly leading the training session provided the expert voice alongside a practical classroom based approach.

## Actual outputs

- Training of over 400 teachers and ITT students.
- Creation of numerous, freely accessible, online resources including two videos about the Stone Age and Bronze Age featuring primary school children as "young curators".
- Creation of ten interactive 3D artefacts from the museum's collection.

Our main unplanned output was the creation of a prehistoric loan box scheme in response to teacher feedback around access to objects. We submitted a successful bid for additional funding and were able to create 30 loan boxes to support pupils' understanding that prehistory (being before written record) is understood through the investigation and interpretation of objects and landscapes. Additionally we established a new partnership with London schools library services which are delivering the loan aspect of the scheme to schools across London on the museum's behalf.

## Lessons learned

- We had an overwhelmingly positive response from teachers attending training and by capturing teachers' confidence ratings before and after sessions we are able to demonstrate impact.
- When building a programme based on a cascade model, it's wise to increase the size of the initial group to allow for natural shrinkage of participant numbers as job roles change over time.



- The model of providing CPD led by a curator and a teacher enables participants to confidently "ask an expert" a broad range of questions to improve their own subject knowledge while at the same time feeling that the practicalities of the classroom are understood.
- That the curator/teacher led CPD model is replicable to other periods and providing training in a museum setting makes teachers feel valued.

## Next steps

- Continued promotion of the online learning resources created as part of the project.
- Ongoing work with ITT providers to support students with all aspects of the history curriculum and learning in a museum setting.
- Consider the potential of offering CPD in relation to other areas of the history curriculum.

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[www.museumoflondon/prehistory-resources](http://www.museumoflondon/prehistory-resources)  
[www.museumoflondon.org.uk/schools/classroom-homework-resources/3d-objects](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/schools/classroom-homework-resources/3d-objects)

[www.youtube.com/user/museumoflondon](http://www.youtube.com/user/museumoflondon)  
[blog.museumoflondon.org.uk/tag/teaching-prehistory](http://blog.museumoflondon.org.uk/tag/teaching-prehistory)



# Unearthing our first world war heritage

## Summary

This five-day, Bronze Arts Award project had the aim of engaging young people with our first world war collections. These were explored through object handling, a drama-based workshop looking at life on the western front, and working with artist Stuart Simler to create a three dimensional installation inspired by the first world war. Their work was on display at our open house\* event in September 2014.

## Background

Gunnersbury Park Museum holds the local history collections for both Ealing and Hounslow in west London. The museum has received a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant for renovation, interpretation and developing learning and participation programmes. This project, however, was funded by a grant from HLF's *First World War: then and now* programme.



## Challenge

Encouraging participation from and engaging young people is always a challenge for us, as well as finding ways to bring some of our more "static" collections to life.

## Approach

We wanted the group to take ownership of the collections and stories, as well as interpret them in ways relevant to them. Working with an artist meant that the young people were introduced to new and experimental art techniques – including burying their artwork in the park!

## Intended outcomes

We intended that young people would feel more ownership of Gunnersbury and perceive it as a place "for them", as well as having the experience of working with a professional artist, developing their skills and gaining a qualification.

## Intended outputs

An installation inspired by the collections and heritage of the first world war, and all participants creating a body of work and gaining their Bronze Arts Award.

## Obstacles and issues

We are trying to build relationships with local schools, colleges and other organisations working with young people as recruiting young people is a challenge. For this project we recruited 11 young people but we were aiming for 15. On further consideration, we feel that a good strategy might be to visit more schools to speak directly to the young people about our projects rather than sending information for teachers to pass on.

An obstacle for the young people was having their perceptions about what art is and how it's made challenged. There was initial resistance to burying their artwork in the park as some perceived this as spoiling something they had worked hard on getting "perfect". The process of unearthing the work the next day and brushing it down gave them an experience almost akin to archaeology and allowed them to see their creations in a different light. They almost became the conservators of their own work.

## Actual outcomes

The original outcomes of the project were met; all the young people created a portfolio and gained their Bronze Arts Award. We have had further involvement in Gunnersbury from some of the young people attending other workshops or taking up work experience placements. However, although this is a positive start we are still a long way off the sustained, regular engagement from young



people that we would like to achieve.

## Actual outputs

The group created an installation consisting of their individual pieces of work brought together to create one piece. Although everyone had been given the same materials and guided through the same range of processes, the approach and look of each piece varied. However, once brought together the collaborative installation had a coherency.

## Lessons learned

- Visiting and spending time at schools and colleges could bolster recruitment. Young people like to know who they will be working with and have the chance to ask questions face to face. However, this may not be a sustainable model due to time and staffing constraints.
- Experimental and abstract approaches do work. They make the learning experience richer and more

challenging for the young people and allow us to approach and explore our collections in new ways.

- There are a variety of ways to bring the park and museum together through our projects, beyond focusing purely on the historical.

## Next steps

We plan to continue offering Arts Award (Bronze and Silver) as summer projects as this is a good way to attract and engage young people. Funding for this has been built in to our main HLF project. We are also planning outreach sessions / visits to schools and colleges to start building those key relationships and publicising what we can offer.

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Heritage Lottery Fund – funding body providing grants for heritage organisations [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

\*Open House London – a London-wide event which allows the public to visit whole or areas of buildings and sites not normally accessible [www.openhouselondon.org.uk](http://www.openhouselondon.org.uk)





# Engaging with longitude: Ships, Clocks & Stars

## Summary

The National Maritime Museum's (NMM) 2014 exhibition *Ships, Clocks & Stars* was the focus for a major research project on the Board of Longitude, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

A season of events engaging the public with the outputs of the project was programmed to coincide with the exhibition.

## Background

In April 2014, a dedicated public engagement officer was appointed to the Board of Longitude project team, a joint research project between the NMM and the History and Philosophy of Science department at the University of Cambridge.

## Challenge

The public engagement officer was to deliver learning events linked to an

academic research project, while meeting the objectives of the NMM's public programmes strategy to test and establish new, regular, must-attend event strands which encapsulate Royal Museums Greenwich's (RMG) brand.

## Approach

We developed four strands of charged event programming for different audiences. Using the Arts Council England's arts audience research, we identified "Traditional Culture Vultures" and "Urban Arts Eclectics" as our two key non-specialist audiences. We further divided the "Urban Arts Eclectics" into arts enthusiasts and science enthusiasts, developing programming for each strand. We also developed events for specialist audiences, including history of science and horology (the art and science of timekeeping) enthusiasts.

On top of this we ran a series of free events, including tours of the exhibition six days a week.



## Intended outcomes

The aims of the special exhibitions programme at RMG are to

- Increase attendance
- Increase repeat visits
- Deliver high quality public programming which increases access to NMM collections and expertise
- Generate income
- Deliver value for money
- Attract new audiences and broaden demographic.

In addition to these outcomes, the specific learning outcomes of the programme were to enable visitors to enjoy learning about the longitude story, understand how the modern world has been shaped by the 1714 Longitude Act, understand that solving longitude was an important issue in Georgian Britain and increase understanding about the importance of Greenwich to the longitude story.

## Intended outputs

The public engagement officer was to deliver a season of events linked to the *Ships, Clocks & Stars* exhibition, reaching 2,500 people and raising £6,000.

## Obstacles and issues

As a core aim of the museum's public programmes strategy is to attract new audiences and broaden demographic, there is not an established core audience for events linked to the



special exhibitions programme at the NMM. Each temporary exhibition must establish its own new, unique audience. On top of this, history of science topics like longitude can fall between two groups, appealing to neither groups of people interested in history, nor those interested in science, and potentially not meeting the needs of either group.

## Actual outcomes

The most successful events in terms of attendance were either very specialist, such as the *Decoding Harrison* horology conference, or very general, such as the *Dark & Stormy LATE*, which featured a range of activities from live music, craft activities, short talks, curator tours, actor performances and a pub quiz. The *Dark & Stormy LATE* in July was the museum's most successful LATE, reaching more people than ever before, with half of the visitors visiting for the first time and 97% saying they would visit again.

The least successful strand was a series of evening lectures: the topic was not specific enough to appeal to dedicated enthusiasts (such as horologists) or the connection to the exhibition was not obvious enough to

appeal to a more general audience.

## Actual outputs

Across the season, the public engagement officer delivered 15 charged events for the audiences outlined above. The events season raised over £7,500, thanks in large part to the success of the *Decoding Harrison* conference which raised over £4,000.

The season reached over 4,000 people, compared to the target of 2,500.

## Lessons learned

- The exhibition should be at the heart of every event.
- Events must have clear links to the museum's collections and expertise.
- Social media is an integral part of an events season.
- Evening lectures should be part of LATES or other events.
- LATES need to take place regularly with a recognisable programme of activities.

## Next steps

Building on the successes of the programme, there was a follow-up conference to *Decoding Harrison* on 18 April 2015.



In April 2015, we began trialling a new type of event based on the Board of Longitude research project, a Wikipedia edit-a-thon. In conjunction with international organisation Wikimedia, the Board of Longitude researchers, alongside volunteers, will update relevant pages of Wikipedia to ensure the museum's research is made accessible to audiences worldwide. We are trialling this as an event-format which may work well for future exhibitions, galleries and research projects.

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# The Great War

## Summary

Our project encouraged young people to engage with the hundredth anniversary of the first world war through visits, research and creating a film and an exhibition. The project was funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Young Roots grant.

## Background

Haslemere Museum has a good record of engaging young people in heritage projects having run the Haslemere Young People's Exhibition (HYPE) team since 2000. At the start of the project in 2013 the group was very boy-heavy. As the museum is totally independent and reliant on donations and grants to survive, the HYPE team relies on external funding. The 100th anniversary was an ideal opportunity both to acquire funding and try and expand our

youth interaction, as the *Young Roots* funding required us to work with additional young people. As the HYPE team was mainly boys we went to Liphook Guides who were keen to work with us on the project.

## Challenge

To increase the number of young people interacting with heritage and especially the first world war.

## Approach

There were two strands to the project: the HYPE team making a film and the guides producing an exhibition. This was enhanced with visits to the local sites of Bramshott camp where many Canadians were based and Bramshott church with its 300 plus Commonwealth War Graves Commission graves and a trip to London to the Imperial War Museum, Cenotaph and Tower of London field of poppies.

national and international commemoration.

- A film telling local stories from the first world war.

## Obstacles and issues

- Timing – finding times that were convenient for all the participants. Young people have a lot of commitments, especially at certain times of year with exams and so on. The guides were doing this in

addition to their usual programme so the project had to fit around this. The project was run by the education officer in addition to her "day-job".

- Change of participants – the nature of the HYPE team and guiding is that participants come and go
- Making sure the project was engaging, especially the research parts. It is important that it doesn't seem too school-like.

## Actual outcomes

- 91 young people were involved in the project in a total of 698 interactions.
- The vast majority of young people felt they had learnt new skills and made connections with the first world war.

"I don't think the girls realise it, but by listening to them during and after project activities, I can really tell how much they have learnt about WW1 and how museums work. I think they have really made connections with the past and this shows in the work they have done. The project has afforded them a unique and privileged opportunity" Liphook Guider

## Actual outputs

- The main exhibition at the museum for summer 2014, occupying two rooms with 4,676 visitors.
- An exhibition at the Liphook Guide Hall over the remembrance weekend with 184 visitors.
- Project booklet.
- Panels that can be reused and

loaned out.

- Three linked museum explorer activities (for children aged five-eleven) with 25 attendees.
- Three linked adult events with 114 attendees.
- Intergenerational learning.
- Arts Awards.

## Lessons learned

Funding doesn't need to be a problem. The Young Roots funding from the HLF has an easy application and quick turnaround.

Timing – always allow extra time.

Luckily for us HLF was very flexible and allowed us to extend the project to give us the time we needed. If it is a long project make it easy for people to dip in and out of, around their other commitments.

Food is very important, it creates a break for social interaction, increases energy levels when participants seem to be flagging and is a good hook for sessions that might not be so outwardly appealing.

Plan in additional things that might not be directly part of the project to increase the appeal – we had a sleepover at the museum, a trip to London and a donutting session at a local ski centre!

Have faith in the young people. It will seem at times that you are getting nowhere but it will all come together in the end.

Make everything fun and enjoy yourself! Your enthusiasm will enthuse those around you.

## Next steps

The film is on the internet and the panels and booklet will be used again. The HYPE team is already working on new projects and the museum is working with some of the guides on Arts Awards.



Kay Topping  
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www.hypeteam.org.uk/video.html  
www.historypin.org/en/explore/  
first-world-war-centenary/the-great-war





# Symbols, Signposts and St Peter

## A 3D Art Project

### Summary

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum (LSAG&M) worked alongside St. Peter's Catholic Primary School and local artist Sally Larke on an Arts Council England funded, collaborative, creative project, *Symbols, Signposts and St. Peter*, exploring 3D and digital arts with young audiences.

### Background

Based in the historic Royal Pump Rooms, LSAG&M has collections including contemporary, fine and decorative arts and local history, and an interactive children's gallery.

### Challenge

We were keen to engage a local school in contemporary and digital art, catering for a range of interests, ages and experiences, over an extended period of three months. As just over half of the children at St. Peter's school, based five minutes' walk away, had never visited LSAG&M before, we hoped to spark their interest by using an exciting digital medium capable of challenging perceptions of art.

### Approach

During four art workshops and interactive gallery tours, each child had the opportunity to create a clay sculpture and contribute to a wall mural created using the 3D printer.

### Intended outcomes

Our aim was to inspire the children's confidence in their artistic skills, in formulating their own opinions and in their experience of 3D printing as a digital art form, building relationships between each child and LSAG&M that would continue into their home and school lives.

### Intended outputs

Each child would experience both the traditional making process of working with clay and the 3D modelling and printing used to recreate their clay artworks and create an artwork inspired by LSAG&M collections, documented through a project film and a temporary display.

### Obstacles and issues

There was some difficulty in the use of a previously untried piece of technology, not only to create artworks but also to engage with children. There was a steep learning curve involved in working with the 3D printer that at times added an unexpected strain to the project schedule.

Some of the evaluation methods used for the children proved to be more successful than others and finding a measure that worked consistently for the whole school proved difficult. There was also some difficulty in collecting evaluation from the school staff.

### Actual outcomes

There was improvement in the children's digital confidence, with increased levels measured across the school. Some of the older children registered diminished confidence, suggesting their increased knowledge of the difficulty involved in 3D printing.

Their confidence in art was more consistently improved, with a number of children writing about their knowledge of working with clay, their understanding of the huge variety of contemporary art and new appreciation that their own opinions are important. This has been reflected in an increase in the likelihood of visiting LSAG&M outside the project.

### Actual outputs

The 3D printed wall mural and project film are currently on display in the art gallery as part of a co-curated exhibition, introducing visitors to the project and encouraging the participants to return and see their work being celebrated. A large number of the children made repeat visits during and after the project, bringing their families. This was especially facilitated by an exhibition launch party for the entire school and their parents, introducing the project facilitators to the wider community network the school represents.

Each child created a clay sculpture of one of four symbols representing St



Peter and took home a 3D printed cockerel, modelled from one of those made in clay.

### Lessons learned

A key learning point emerged in using the 3D printer, as the level of the children's engagement was good but their opportunities for deeper learning were hampered by having no Wi-Fi access in the building, a lack of compatible laptops for the modelling software and the necessary time. The limitations that arose were foreseen but occasionally had a greater impact than anticipated, providing a good basis for the potential development possible in future engagement using 3D printing.

The project highlighted the need for a strong network of support and knowledge in using a relatively new technology, with museum development officer Gemma Dhami providing invaluable training, advice and even another printer. It quickly became clear that it is easy to underestimate timings and be overly ambitious where new technologies are involved, and expectations need to be managed. This has contributed to a growing knowledge bank about digital printing created for LSAG&M.

### Next steps

We aim to continue exploring the opportunities presented by the 3D printer as a tool of engagement with our collections, with similar school projects and with contemporary art practice. A recent example is in creating handling objects for our display, *A Leamington Musical Meteor*.

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# Sleepover in the museum with Arts Award

## Summary

For the first time Ancient House held a sleepover for Girl Guide units. The event contained varied activities and behind the scenes access, plus an integrated Arts Award Discover.

## Background

Ancient House Museum of Thetford Life is situated in a Tudor merchant house in Thetford, Norfolk, and is part of the Norfolk Museums Service. The museum piloted a new unique offer specifically for guide groups. The museum has been offering Arts Award since winter 2011 and is the only museum to be named an Arts Award Centre of Good Practice 2015 by Trinity College, London.

## Challenge

Uniformed groups are an untapped audience for Arts Award and the

museum. As the first sleepover held at the museum, staff knew it would be a challenge, in addition to incorporating the Arts Award elements.

## Approach

Museum staff pooled their previous knowledge of Girlguiding UK, our collections, our successful programme of Arts Award delivery, plus our marketing understanding to develop a plan and strategy. We used already popular activities that were suitable for the Arts Award. We aimed to cover our costs if we had sufficient numbers. Guides were charged £20 with activities and breakfast included. Leaders attended for free, as they volunteered and committed to bringing the girls. We created booklets to act as Arts Award log books and souvenirs once assessed. We ensured a strong timetable that staff and leaders knew beforehand.

engagement is maintained before, throughout, and after the event.

- A robust framework and legacy for future sleepovers is created.
- Participants give constructive feedback to help future development.

## Obstacles and issues

- Marketing. Due to a short time frame we had to market over winter. We had to keep a constant social media

presence to build momentum. After contacting the Norfolk Girlguiding offices they advertised the sleepover on their website.

- The site needed an informal inspection by a local Guiding Advisor which meant finding the right person.
- Guides brought a large amount of kit, despite giving them a kit list.
- The initial icebreaker games lasted longer than planned but were essential as the units didn't know each other.
- One leader and a guide needed extra requirements for sleeping arrangements. Luckily we had received this information on our forms beforehand and had spoken to the leaders.
- Guides wearing slippers and socks. We added this to our risk assessment.
- The pub next door played loud music – which was unexpected and not in its event listing.
- Some leaders said in feedback that a few of the girls had been hungry during the evening.

## Actual outcomes

The sleepover was successful and we received positive and constructive feedback from leaders and guides. From leader: "you had organised so many interesting and varied activities for the girls, so that we could just turn up and leave it all to you".

## Actual outputs

- All fourteen guides completed Arts Award Discover.



- All participants received a unique woven Ancient House badge.
- Two units attended – more than expected.
- A strong event framework providing a legacy and increased staff confidence.
- Enhanced social media presence and communication online.
- Press attended to take photographs and featured the event in the local paper and online.
- Increased awareness of museum and interest in more sleepovers.
- A financial profit.

## Lessons learned

- Use what you know – staff knowledge and activities that work. Make it easy for yourselves.
- Girlguiding UK has a guiding manual on its website – use it.
- Do a run through, for example, how it will be when sleeping, route to toilet etc.

- Offer time for gift shop.
- Begin earlier and offer dinner – the price could be increased.
- Consider outside influences such as pubs or social establishments nearby.
- Offer free exploration time – the fact that it's night-time makes it special.
- Have enough staff – we needed three for the whole evening.
- Make it easy for guide leaders, but don't be afraid to ask for assistance from them.
- Create a hashtag for Twitter.

## Next steps

We would like to run a similar event as part of the national *Museums at Night* annual festival in May, as this would make the event part of a wider network. The majority of the development is complete for future events. We have a great amount of constructive feedback to tweak our offer to uniformed groups and other organisations.

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Visit\_Us/Ancient\_House/index.htm

www.artsaward.org.uk/

https://museumsatnight.wordpress.com/

www.girlguiding.org.uk/

Badges created by www.bestbadges.co.uk





# Making Waves

## Summary

Eighty eight children from four of Scarborough's community groups mounted a one-year outdoor exhibition of their own artwork inspired by the town's lifeboat history. The children responded creatively to visits by members of the lifeboat crew during special sessions led by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) heritage education volunteers. They also took trips to Scarborough Art Gallery to see paintings of historic lifeboat rescues, and to the lifeboat station on Scarborough's seafront before working with a local designer to realise their display in various artistic forms. Their finished artworks decorate the hoardings of the build site of Scarborough's new lifeboat station alongside selected maritime rescue paintings from the gallery.

## Background

The RNLI seeks to engage under-eighteens with its rich rescue heritage to promote its vital safety messaging and volunteering ethos. It does this through outreach to schools and youth groups, at community events and in partnership with heritage organisations.

Scarborough Museums Trust (SMT) looks after Scarborough Art Gallery and the Rotunda Museum. The trust has recently embarked upon a new

strategy which places emphasis on reinvigorating the relationship between venues, the collections they house and the local community, through various initiatives and projects. *Making Waves* is one of these. This partnership sought to help Scarborough's young people learn about their town's cultural and lifesaving heritage and develop creative skills.

## Challenge

- Nurture diverse young people's sense of pride and involvement in the community in which they live.
- Seize the time limited, one off opportunity of the new boathouse build.
- Develop novice volunteers to deliver an intensive project.

## Approach

Firstly, gaining permission for the exhibition was a lengthy, uncertain process due to station build costs and timescale shifts. Step two was to recruit diverse young people's groups. Step three was to recruit and brief RNLI education volunteers, then stimulate and scope their ideas. Step four was to tender for a local designer to help the young people realise their professional display. Step five was designing an interactive session programme to give the children access to SMT's collection, Scarborough lifeboat infrastructure and crew, information about the lifesaving work of the RNLI past and present and creative skills. Next was a briefing event for the many local stakeholders before the project got underway.

## Intended outcomes

- To engage with young people to inspire future interaction with local heritage, lifesaving and volunteering.
- To develop opportunities and skills for RNLI outreach volunteers.

## Intended outputs

- Weekly sessions for four young people's groups for a five-week period.
- A long-term exhibition of the young people's artwork.
- An exhibition launch celebration event.

## Obstacles and issues

Working with Scarborough Youth Service during its restructure proved a period of intense change and stress for its staff and service users who were hard-to-reach teenagers. Staff members were consistently absent; the lead on the project retired before project completion, without a handover. This group's sessions were "drop-in" which meant that although there was a core of consistent attendees, the majority dipped in and out, making meaningful engagement and learning very difficult. Sadly, the Youth Service closed before the celebration event, so we were unable to have any of those young people attend.

Protests about the size of the site by local traders meant the hoardings' size decreased so our design had to be changed at the last minute. However, much of the design worked as stand-alone pieces.

High winds blowing from the sea meant installation of the panels was

delayed by several days. Fortunately, we were still able to have the panels up in time for the celebration launch.

Working with Springhead school, a specialist school for young people with learning and physical disabilities, led to challenges with timings and transportation and space for extra carers.

## Actual outcomes

Diverse groups of young people were:

- engaged with art in Scarborough Art Gallery and helped to feel at home there;
- educated and enthused about the RNLI in Scarborough and the new lifeboat station.

RNLI volunteers planned and delivered different sessions for different age groups which challenged and developed their skills.

Following participation in this project, a pilot Wordworms reading group will now continue to run at Scarborough Library.

## Actual outputs

- Sessions were achieved for all groups.
- The exhibition, currently on the seafront in Scarborough, has been seen by a huge number of visitors and locals alike. Footfall on the seafront is in excess of one million people over the course of a year, so we hope the exhibition is making an impression.
- The RNLI is looking to keep a version of the panels on permanent display inside the new lifeboat station once its build is complete.
- Each group was offered a celebration event in situ at the display site. We were able to take photos and the young people were so excited to see their work on show.
- Children from the groups plus RNLI education volunteers got to meet the RNLI's chairman to showcase their achievements and advocate for heritage education.



## Lessons learned

- Ensure community groups are in a position to commit fully to the project with a designated liaison to take overriding responsibility for this.
- Ensure flexibility at all times when working with construction companies.
- Seek longer lead times for planning once permissions are in place to go ahead.

## Next steps

To continue to work in partnership with the SMT and the RNLI.

## Verity Owens

Youth education manager  
(Heritage), RNLI

## Rachael Drew

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# CoastEd

## Museum learning in Arun, Adur and Worthing

### Summary

The aim of the project was to work in partnership, to provide a schools programme across the Arun, Adur and Worthing region. The project was supported by Arts Council England (ACE) and the partner organisations were Worthing Museum and Art Gallery; Littlehampton, Rustington and Marlipins museums; and Worthing Theatre.

### Background

The partner organisations vary in size and remit but all had the desire to

enhance their offer to schools. There are approximately 60,000 children and young people living in the areas directly served by the partners.

### Challenge

Prior to the project, each organisation operated no, or a limited, education service due to insufficient staff time and knowledge.

### Approach

By working together, the partners sought to overcome the challenges of capacity. The education project manager took the lead in developing a new education programme on behalf of the partner organisations. ACE funding supported the project set-up.

### Intended outcomes

The aim was to create high quality, financially sustainable, curriculum-driven education provision for schools in Arun, Adur and Worthing reflecting the core themes of each organisation.

### Intended outputs

The project planned for the development of a series of workshops, outreach sessions and loan boxes for schools in the region, delivered by trained learning assistants able to operate across the different organisations.

### Obstacles and issues

The greatest challenge was the lack of time. Funding restrictions shortened the launch phase from two years to one, limiting the time available for the programme to become fully embedded. The programme was immediately popular with schools; however, responding to this demand

was time consuming and prevented more proactive marketing for the future and support for those organisations that were not benefiting directly from the initial surge of interest. With more time, the team of learning assistants would have been trained fully in advance of, rather than in parallel to, any school bookings.

### Actual outcomes

The CoastEd service has led to the creation of a rebranded and professional education service for the partners. The educational offer is now more wide ranging, diverse and relevant for local schools, and has been curated by a specialist. The project has generated income that will support the next phase of development.

### Actual outputs

The project succeeded in increasing engagement with schools across the region. In the first full term of

operation, twelve times more school children engaged with CoastEd than the previous year and there was a fivefold increase in income generation. Another fantastic element was a schools art project, delivered by Creative Waves, which worked with 130 children and all the museum partners. This led to 64 children being moderated for the Bronze Arts Award and 18 gaining the Explore Arts Award.

### Lessons learned

- More preparation time would have allowed for fully embedded practice from the outset, more extensive marketing and closer work with the partners who needed extra support.
- Get procedures for things like booking, delivery and payment in place before the full launch so that everybody knows what is happening and when.
- Schools will always want the thing that you haven't planned. Be flexible, have a stock of resources and activities that can be adapted to different topics.
- Teachers don't always talk to each other. Treat outreach sessions as a networking opportunity and take brochures!

### Next steps

Worthing and Littlehampton museums will take the project forward for the next year using the income generated to fund a part-time education co-ordinator. This will provide the opportunity to re-assess in a year's time and look at bringing additional partners in, once the programme is fully operational.

Lisa Gale

Museum education project manager

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