



Kent Museums Group
Protecting Kent's Heritage

Minutes of the General Meeting

held at Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, Faversham on 23rd September, 2013

Present: Chair & Secretary: J Harrison; S Corn, J Fryer, R Morley, L Thompson, M Goodhew, R Dann, J Collard, T West, M Blacker, V Mulford, D Boston, M Thomsett, R O'Brien, C Boxer, J Andrews, A Denne, T Whitling, J White. Speakers: Adrian Babbidge (Egeria), Julie Coles (Museums Essex)

1. Apologies:

J Adamson, C Griffiths, C Ward, K Harris, D Wills.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting & matters arising

Minutes of the meeting from Maidstone on 24th May 2013 had not been distributed in time for approval. These will be agreed at the next meeting.

3. World War I Commemorations

Sarah and Martin Goodhew (Swale BC) attended recent regional coordination meeting at Visit Kent HQ in Canterbury (Visit Kent now leading on WWI – see last minutes). KM Group and BBC now involved – gives great publicity to specific events. Group now branded 'Frontline Kent' and will be creating a logo (presumably to be used by all participants to brand their WWI projects).

University of Kent has a steering group to coordinate/monitor the historical aspects of projects – led by Mark Connelly. New website in October, programme of lectures and advice re HLF grants.

Sarah holding a follow-up meeting to the meeting at Royal Engineers earlier in the year on 4th November at RE again – this will feature a catch up session and will advise on project funding etc sarah.corn@bright-hove.gov.uk for details

Martin Goodhew is also coordinating projects from museums in Swale. MartinGoodhew@swale.gov.uk

4. New Accreditation deadlines

ACE has adjusted its deadlines for upcoming tranches of application – museums are being notified of new deadlines. The future review of successful applicants will now be on a 3-year cycle rather than 2-year. The Scheme's review of policy documents relevant to Accreditation will accept those documents previously reviewed and still within their stated 'lifetime'; expired documents will need to be re-drafted and submitted.

Sarah advised that museums who have already gone through the current phase of the Scheme have found it straightforward enough but were helped by starting the process before they were invited to apply, so giving them more time to process everything. Good advice for those yet to apply!

Charles Boxer asked if changes in governance status during Accreditation process i.e. new CIO should be related to ACE; basically, yes.

5. Training

Sarah gave report of future training:

- a. Income Generation – assessing different income streams. 15th October at Chatham Dockyard
- b. Engaging children and young people in the museum. 24th October at Fleur de Lis, Faversham
- c. World War I projects meeting. 4th November at Royal Engineers Museum
- d. Social Media strategies. 22nd November at Canterbury Christ Church
- e. Engaging with the Arts. 25th November at Tunbridge Wells Museum & Gallery

6. MDO Update

Sarah confirmed the new Museum Development Service programme planning (and funding!) for 2015-18; welcome news!

The application to ACE for this new programme will be submitted April 2014 and Sarah will be circulating new annual returns (nothing onerous!) to gather evidence and measure impact of Museum Development Service delivery. JH requests that you fill these in and return to Sarah promptly so that we can maintain her high level of service.

New regional Museum Development website to be launched soon. This will include minutes from meetings, resources for Accreditation, training details, useful links, and a 'noticeboard' where you can post queries.

7. Any Other Business

- a. JH received information from a power/utility broker – offering to provide reduced group rates if our members want to club together. Lukewarm reception at the meeting but if anyone is really interested please contact JH. Charles noted that an individual approach may be better as you can haggle and play different suppliers against each other. See attached papers on email.
- b. Rod Dann queried an update on fire alarms and necessity for confirmed calls before Kent Fire Brigade attend an emergency. JH promised to contact Rochester Guildhall from where the original point had been raised (Peter Boreham had resigned his post and reappointment is yet to happen).
- c. Many thanks to Rod and Penny from the Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre for provision of our meeting room, facilities and refreshments today!

8. Next Meeting

Alex Seth-Smith from the Textile Conservancy in Cranbrook will present on care of textile collections and conservation on **November 14th** at Ashford Borough Council HQ in Ashford; 9.30am for a 10.00am start

Following the business meeting, members were given a very thorough presentation on the new Charitable Incorporated Status (CIO) by Adrian Babbidge – our national expert on museum governance issues. Adrian's expert opinion led us through his presentation (attached with these minutes to the email). Adrian was followed by Julie Coles who presented her direct experience of guiding three institutions towards better governance and legal status. Julie will be available for direct support through Sarah Corn.

Members' News

Fleur-de-Lis Museum, Faversham

Recent Visitor numbers are up on last year after a slow start. Gallery Exhibition visitors have showed an even better improvement due to some popular recent art shows during the summer.

Our accreditation process is in full swing – we will be invited to apply in January for an August deadline. We have begun preparations with invaluable guidance from Sarah and John has begun his input.

Our Learning Activities Manager Moya Dean had to leave last month, before the expiry of her contract but we have just appointed a replacement for the final 6 months. She set up an amazing variety of systems, projects and contacts for us and has handed these over.

There have been several special events this summer – the highlight being the 'Making of Faversham' Day in July. Free activities and lectures in the Alexander Centre, demonstrations in the Fleur Museum and a wonderful archaeological dig in the Pub garden opposite attracted many visitors.

Chart Gunpowder Mills, Faversham

Visitor numbers are up, helped by group visits and special events (one next Sunday being 'Music at the Mill').

Minster Gatehouse Museum, Sheppey

We continue to be active in developing links with other local organizations and have been involved with community events and exhibitions during the summer.

Education programmes have been developed including archaeology loan boxes for Primary Schools. Youth groups and schoolchildren have visited the museum in term-time. We have continued with the Friday afternoon activity programme for children at the museum.

Members of the museum team will be involved with commemorations of the Great War: one idea involves use of a building at Eastchurch Prison, formerly part of the Aerodrome. Discussions are progressing with the Governor to repair the premises and mount a display describing the role played by the area in the conflict and the development of air power in warfare from the base at Eastchurch.

The annual Promenade Arts Festival was a successful event – including the Gatehouse Museum hosting a street theatre performance by Big Fish Arts