

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	Community Committee
Meeting date	08 November 2022
Report author	Dan Sancisi
Agenda item	13

Report of Museum Manager

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Members about the current activities and events at the Abingdon County Hall Museum.
- 1.2 To report on One Planet Abingdon's five-year license to use the café.
- 1.3 To report the Collections Officer's updates.

2 Summary

- 2.1 **Museum Operation**
- 2.2 Updates on the current exhibition, digital development, education and Heritage Day.
- 2.3 **One Planet Abingdon and Café update**
- 2.4 Updates on the climate emergency centre in the café.

3 Action required

- 3.1 Members are requested to note the report.

4 Link to strategic plan and objectives

- 4.1 KO2 To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future. Facilitating a climate emergency centre in the café promotes public engagement with sustainability and develops skills and knowledge about reuse, repair and recycling.
- 4.2 KO4 To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity. Working with Abingdon Carbon Cutters and One Planet Abingdon creates an opportunity for diverse communities to access free events and support, also to engage with the Museum.

5 Background

5.1 One Planet Abingdon and café update

5.2 One Planet Abingdon signed a license agreement to utilise the café space at Abingdon Museum as a climate emergency centre, on 27 November 2021.

5.3 The license was drafted by Slade Legal and formed a legal basis for the formal utilisation of the café for a climate emergency centre.

6 Key information and options

6.1 Museum Operation

6.2 Exhibition

6.3 The exhibition of artworks by visual artist Kate Hammersley ‘Common Land’ opened on 01 October 2022. The film Convalescence and the accompanying drawings were created to document a piece of common land over the course of a year. During this time the artist was diagnosed with and underwent treatment for cancer.

6.4 Kate Hammersley MRSS is an elected member of the Royal Society of Sculptors. Since being selected for Sotheby’s International Young Art programme she has exhibited nationally and internationally at the Royal Society of Sculptors London, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Elizabeth Foundation New York, the Museum of Oxford and many other galleries. She has collaborated with scientists at University of Oxford and Goldsmiths University of London supported by Arts Council England.

6.5 Digital

6.6 Your officers continue to develop the digital offering of the Museum through mainstream channels of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We also continue to update the blog with new articles and are developing a library of videos on YouTube which showcase current exhibitions and talks at the Museum.

6.7 Education

6.8 The education programme is running well with confirmed school bookings going forward into summer 2023. Museum educator Jennifer Doran continues to create popular workshops which maintain school interest and relevance to the national curriculum.

6.9 Heritage Day

6.10 17 September 2022 was Heritage Day in Abingdon, part of the Heritage Open Days week, which is a national annual event. The Museum was had over 300 visitors attending talks and children’s activities during the day.

6.11 ‘The Abingdon Sea Monster’ by Professor Dave Martill, comprised the digital offer of the day, as a YouTube premier.

- 6.12** John Foreman talked about 'The Davis Boatyard, an example of Victorian Innovation', while Martin Buckland entertained his audience with 'The Wilts & Berks Canal - Some Local Stories'.
- 6.13** 'The Cinemas of Abingdon' by Bob Frampton, and 'The Morland Lager Experiment' by Elin Bornemann completed the day.
- 6.14** **One Planet Abingdon and café update**
- 6.15** Following the approval for the creation of a five-year license to One Planet Abingdon's use of the café space, at FGAM meeting on 13 October 2022, your Officers have instructed Slade Legal to proceed with drawing up the license.
- 6.16** The license will run from 27 November 2022 to 27 November 2027.
- 6.17** Longer term aims of OPA is to establish a storage space local to the museum café and increase days open from three to six.
- 6.18** **Visitors**
- 6.19** Visitor numbers are improving each month but have yet to meet pre-covid numbers. On 15 October 2022 we had welcomed 10,008 visitors since 1 April 2022 which puts the annual total on course for around the 20,000 visitor mark.
- 6.20** **Collections Officer report**
- 6.21** **Accreditation**
- 6.22** Accreditation. Our application for re-accreditation was successful. The assessment panel at Arts Council England has approved it, and the museum has received a letter confirming its status as fully accredited. The next Accreditation return is due in approximately five years.
- 6.23** Abingdon Museum hosted the AGM of the Oxfordshire Museums Council on 20th October. The programme included a visit to the Abbey Buildings, followed by refreshments and the formal meeting at the museum.
- 6.24** **Key performance indicators of the Museum**
- 6.25** Shop sales total £4,916.55 which equates to £0.49 per visitor.
- 6.26** Donations hold steady at £2,770.19 averaging at £0.28 per visitor.
- 6.27** Roof takings of £3,340.42 have an improved visitor average spend of £0.33, reflecting the seasonal variance of roof visits.

7 **Climate change/green implications**

- 7.1** No additional climate change / green implications to report.

8 Financial/budget implications

8.1 There will be a cost incurred for legal services which will be coded to legal fees in the budget.

9 HR implications

9.1 Changes to regular staffing are reported in the confidential report of the Museum Manager.

Dan Sancisi, Museum Manager, 28 October 2022

Forward Plan entry

Museum: temporary exhibitions programme	Jan to Mar 22	Morland; A family business
	Apr to Jun 22	70 – Life in Abingdon in the 2 nd Elizabethan Era
	July to Sept 22	Sea Dragons & Giant Monsters of Abingdon
	Oct to Dec 22	Kate Hammersley - Common Land
	Jan to Mar 23	Planes, Trains and Automobiles - RAF Abingdon, GWR, MG.
	Apr to June 23	Abingdon Quilters
	Jul to Sept 23	Abingdon's Lost Monuments
	Oct to Dec 23	Geoff Dunbar – Abingdon Folk
	Jan to Mar 24	Mary Buckland's drawings
	Apr to Jun 24	Fitzharris Estate - Harwell's influence on Abingdon's town planning (Fitzharris estate residents association)
	Jul to Sept 24	
	Oct to Dec 24	Dolls in period costume
Museum: digital projects	Aug to Sept 22	South Asian History month - Couldrey India paintings and poetry
	Oct to Dec 22	
	Jan to Mar 23	
	Apr to Jun 23	Women of Abingdon ATOM festival
	Aug to Sept 22	South Asian History month - Couldrey India paintings and poetry - Festival Archaeology
Museum: events	July to Sept 23	Festival of archaeology – ancient sites tours
	Oct to Dec 23	Museum at Night
	September 23	Heritage OPEN DAY