

Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service: Case Study

Museum: Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth Project: Great Yarmouth Experience Days

Why we did it: These special days provided a unique experience for museum lovers who wanted to study the collections in more depth. This audience was given the opportunity to interact with objects and artwork from our reserve collections in a special way, through behind-the-scenes access and guided talks and sessions with our Curator and Artist-in-residence.

What we delivered: The two pilot days offered a glimpse of the fascinating behind-the-scenes work within NMAS. We delivered workshops, demonstrations and guided talks to help people better understand our collections. From undressing Queen Elizabeth I to revealing the secrets of the masters of the Norwich School painters, the days were refreshingly original:

Costumes and Creativity 15/02/12:

Participants were shown a great range of costumes, textiles and accessories from the stored collections. People could then create their own 1960's style bag with the help of our professional costume designer. We provided the kit, all they needed was enthusiasm!

The secrets of Watercolours 14/03/12:

Participants had a behind closed doors tour of the museum's art collections with curator Jo O'Donoghue and artist Philip Harvey, highlighting the techniques and styles of the painters. The Conservation team showed the processes and effort used to protect and maintain the delicate colours.

Who benefited: Each day was fully booked, with ten participants for each session. The participants gained a deeper insight and access to stored collections than would have been possible on a regular visit to the museum.

What happened next: The most successful and positive elements from the experience days have fed into the 2013 events programme highlighting stored collection access.

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“A delightful day
... Very inspiring
and great to see
the art up close.
What a wonderful
sneak peak behind
the scenes!”

The Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) is a multi-award winning service comprising **ten museums and a study centre**. The Service aims to inform and inspire people's interest in the cultural and natural heritage of Norfolk, and address relevant contemporary issues by:

- **Collecting, preserving and interpreting material evidence of the past**
- **Stimulating creativity, inspiration and enjoyment**
Providing an enjoyable way to learn throughout life
- **Engaging with the widest possible audience**
- **Enriching people's lives and creating a sense of place and identity**
- **Enabling people to understand and value other cultures**

It is a high performing service. In 2010/11 **380,000** visits were made to the museums, and **43,000** schoolchildren participated in formal learning events.

The Norfolk Museums Service was established in 1974 when the County and District Councils in Norfolk agreed to delegate their museum powers to a Joint Committee to manage museums through a county-wide Museums

Service. The museums in each district are managed by local Area Museum Managers who liaise closely with each District and ensure that the museums support local strategies and initiatives.

NMAS is one of only 16 Major Partner Museums receiving substantial revenue funding from Arts Council England in order to achieve ACE's vision for museums:

"A museums sector that is delivering inspiring public programmes using high quality collections to reach more and more people, especially children and young people. The sector is innovative; it shares best practice and is embedded in communities and responsive to audience needs. It is made up of strong, sustainable organisations with a highly skilled and diverse workforce; it is excellently led."

For more information contact:

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