

Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service: Case Study

Museum: Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

Project: *Project 18: An intergenerational oral history project*

Why we did it: Project 18 was a partnership between Norwich Castle and the Mancroft Advice Project [MAP], an independent information, advice and counselling service for young people aged 11-25. The aim was to bring different generations together to create an archive of oral history testimony about the experience of being 18 in the past and today. Increasing the skills and self-esteem of the young people involved, expanding their knowledge of the past and encouraging inter-generational dialogue were also key goals. The project also celebrated MAP's 18th birthday.

What we delivered: The 18-month Heritage Lottery Fund project was managed by a steering group made up of young people, a member of museum staff and a MAP worker. This meant young people were able to take ownership of the project from the start. The young people were given training in oral history recording and worked with museum curatorial staff to explore collections and identify suitable objects with sensory appeal for handling and reminiscence e.g. carbolic soap and vintage fabric. Thirty nine oral history interviews were carried out, including sessions with residents at two care homes. This raw material was then crafted by the young people into a film using animation to create titles, and a booklet with quotes and pictures: <http://diffusion.org.uk/?p=2516>. A final presentation was held at Norwich Castle in October 2011. Five of the young people spoke at the celebration.

Who benefited: Thirty one young people were involved, 16 of whom were NEET [not in education, employment or training]. Evaluation demonstrated that these young people, many of whom have complex needs, increased their skills in a number of areas, including interpersonal, project management and practical skills: *"It has helped with my confidence...because I was involved in the planning it made me feel like I had an important role."* Intergenerational understanding also developed as a result of this project—the quote right is a typical example of feedback. Both generations were surprised at how similar their experiences of being 18 turned out to be. The museum service also learnt a great deal from working with these young people.

What happened next: Fifteen of the young people went on to take part in work experience or volunteering opportunities at Norwich Castle. MAP are planning a Young Roots bid to HLF to work with the museums service in Great Yarmouth, building on Project 18's success.

Contact: Colly Mudie, Head of Norwich Museums Learning Team, colly.mudie@norfolk.gov.uk, 01603 493662



"Old people and young people aren't so different...It wasn't until I came on the project that I noticed the similarities."

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:

Esther Morgan, Relationships Officer
01603 223215
esther.morgan@norfolk.gov.uk
www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk

 www.facebook.com/NorfolkMuseums

 [@NorfolkMuseums](https://twitter.com/NorfolkMuseums)

