

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee Meeting held in the Moulton Room, Guildhall at 10.30 am on Thursday 11 April 2019

PRESENT:

Representing Lichfield City Council: Councillor R Awty (Chairman), and Councillors J Brooks, Mrs S James, A Thompson and R Yardley.

In Attendance: Joanne Wilson (Museums & Heritage Officer),
Penny Taylor (Museum Administration Assistant)
Tony Briggs (Town Clerk)
Richard Davies (representative of the Johnson Society)

Apologies: Councillor C Spruce

65 MINUTES

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.* [Minutes adopted by Council on 5 December 2018.]

66 A PROSPECT VIEW OF LICHFIELD FROM THE WEST

Councillor R Yardley detailed his work in photographing 'A Prospect View of Lichfield From the West' (a painting that forms part of the Birthplace collection and is currently displayed in the Ashmole Room, Guildhall) in order to reveal more detail. A print of the enhanced painting is included at **Appendix A** of these Minutes.

RESOLVED:

a) That the report be noted and the best thanks of the Committee be given to Cllr Yardley for his efforts.

b) The Museum and Heritage Officer investigates options for the sale of prints of the enhanced painting and also the possibility of an exhibition of this and similar paintings at the Birthplace.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

a) A press release be compiled and released detailing the project and its results

b) The Council procure a print of the enhanced painting to display alongside the original painting, together with an explanation of the project

c) That expert advice is sought as to what the enhanced painting reveals in regard to the current understanding of Lichfield at the time the original painting was completed

d) Cost estimates be sought for the reglazing of the original painting in order to protect it from damage.

67 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the updated Forward Plan 2019-2022 (**APPENDIX B** to the Minutes).

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: *That the Forward Plan 2019-22 be adopted.*

68 DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Committee considered the MHO's update, including communication had been received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) following submission of an Expression of Interest. The Committee were informed that the initial response from NLHF had been somewhat negative in that the expression of interest would not be carried forward into a full bid at this stage. However, NLHF representatives did wish to meet with LCC representatives to discuss the application and this meeting was scheduled for 15 May. The Committee felt that this meeting was a positive development and supported and encouraged the forthcoming dialogue.

RESOLVED: *That the report be noted*

69 COLLECTIONS CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY AND VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The Committee considered the draft Collections Care and Conservation Policy and draft Volunteer Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That The Collections Care and Conservation Policy and the Volunteer Agreement (both documents form APPENDIX C to these Minutes) be adopted.

70 KEELE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Museums and Heritage Officer on the recent completion of the '18th Century Textual Studies' project in partnership with Keele University.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

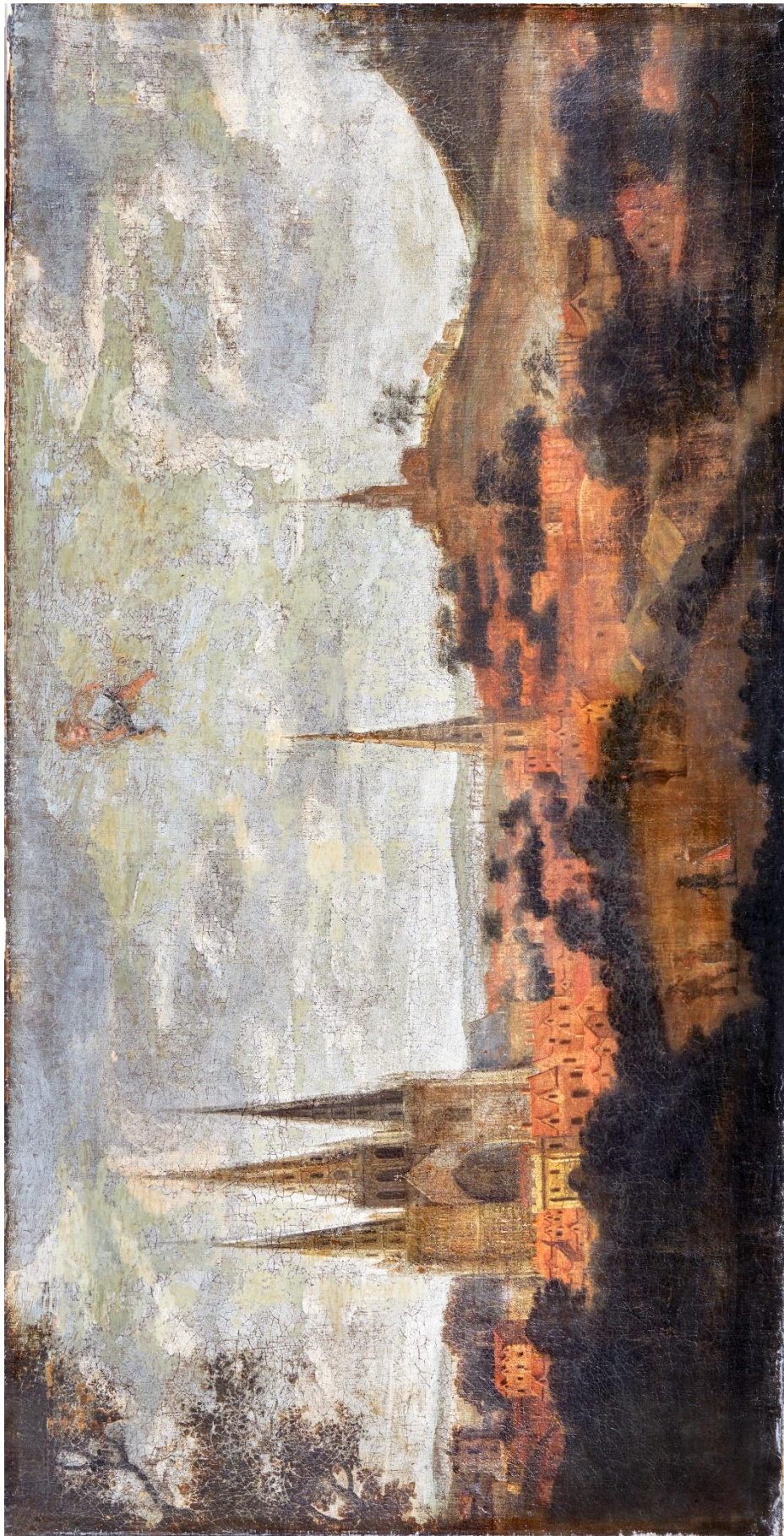
71 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

In Calendar of Meetings as 10.30am on Tuesday 5 November 2019.

In closing the meeting the retiring Chairman thanked the Committee and the Museums and Heritage Officer for their hard work and support during his tenure. Councillor Thompson, a former Committee Chairman, echoed the Chairman's comments and emphasised the considerable improvements in terms of outreach, visitor numbers and events at the Museum during the past 10 years or so.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 11.10 AM



The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum Forward Plan Strategic Aims & Objectives 2019 – 2022

This document is updated annually from the full SJBM Forward Plan 2018-2021 (next full plan to be approved March 2021). The Museum is currently undertaking a development project and it is recognised that this project will significantly contribute to all objectives within our strategic aims, particularly those at ii, iii and iv.

Our key strategic aims are:

i) Operate to a high professional standard, making the best use of available resources

- a) To maintain ACE Accreditation status
- b) To maximise all possible revenue streams
- c) To maximise staff development
- d) To maximise volunteering

ii) Build our audiences and respond to user consultation

- a) To attract more local, family and young visitors
- b) To monitor users and consult non-users
- c) To increase the number of education visits and partnerships
- d) To increase the number of group visit bookings

iii) Develop access to the Museum and collection

- a) To improve awareness of, and access to, all parts of the collection
- b) To update interpretation and displays
- c) To improve facilities for researchers and publicise provision more widely
- d) To assess and seek alternative solutions to access limitations

iv) Care for the Museum building and collection

- a) To improve the storage and care of the collection
- b) To improve the documentation of the collection
- c) To ensure the ongoing protection of the collection against disaster
- d) To ensure the continued maintenance and sustainability of the Birthplace building

Work completed in 2018 – 2019

In addition to tasks identified as 'ongoing' and reported in monthly officer reports to Council, significant activities relevant to meeting the strategic aims included:

i)	First full year with new Museum Administration Assistant in post and regular oversight of shop stock and events bookings New volunteering relationships with South Staffordshire College, Keele University and attendance at KEVI volunteering fair
ii)	New literature for Group bookings produced Considerable build in social media use and audience, including introduction of Instagram and working with college students to create content Established part of the University of Birmingham work placement scheme and newly Keele university post-graduate placements

iii)	Online collection search and blog launched Wood Library project to update resources for researchers and clear space
iv)	New store established at Donegal House Minor repair works identified in Quinquennial inspection carried out A significant number of collection images added to modes database Documentation plan goals completed

Achievement of Current Objectives

i) To operate to a high professional standard, making the best use of available resources		
Objective	How to be achieved	Achieve by
a) To maintain Accreditation status	Maintain Museum policy and procedures in preparation for return application	Ongoing (next return due in 2021)
b) To maximise all possible revenue streams	Update stock displays and introduce new souvenir lines, with 10% target increase per year for total spend per head Maximise donation and the use of gift aid, aiming at 50p average donation per head by March 2021 Regular programme of a least six special events per year planned, well publicised and profitable or cost-neutral. Increase group and education bookings by 20% per year (see ii.c & d) Establish an improved online shop area as part of new website plans, and research options for internet second hand book sales for specialist donated stock Include improvements into facilities for event visitors and hirers in development project	Ongoing; annual figures reported at October BAC Ongoing; annual figures reported in October BAC Ongoing; season ahead schedule July & December Ongoing; annual figures reported in October BAC March 2020 October 2021
c) To maximise staff and volunteer development	Continuing regular in-house training sessions, make staff & volunteers aware of relevant training possibilities. Match volunteer and attendant staff interests to appropriate tasks and projects Creation of 'How to' guides as part of SJBm succession planning, to enable volunteers and Attendants to take on varied tasks and roles	Ongoing, 3 sessions held annually Ongoing Ongoing
d) To maximise volunteer input	Liaise with universities, colleges and volunteer recruitment centres Targeted recruitment for volunteers to work with specific areas and projects when places vacated (especially schools and marketing)	Ongoing Ongoing

ii) To build audiences and respond to user consultation		
Objective	How to be achieved	Achieve by
a) To attract more local, family and young visitors	<p>Develop a targeted 'locals' advertising campaign within development project</p> <p>Develop special events to appeal to a wide range of audiences, including free of charge events/activities. Ensure that the museum and all special events are well and widely publicised locally, maintaining strong links with local media. bi-annual leaflet, posters and press releases 1 month ahead of events.</p> <p>Make wider use of social networking and social media to advertise museum and connect with younger audiences</p> <p>Develop interpretation, displays and interactives to appeal to a wide audience, including responding to youth consultation held in 2014 (see iii.b)</p> <p>Recruit young volunteers through local schools and colleges to develop areas such as social media (see also i.d)</p>	<p>October 2021</p> <p>Ongoing; season ahead schedule Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing; 2 posts per week</p> <p>Ongoing; to be considered within re-display project</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
b) To monitor users and consult non-users	<p>Carry out an effective survey to be completed by visitors, and regularly compile statistics</p> <p>Identify and conduct market research with non-user groups including focus groups, questionnaires and interviews as part of the</p>	<p>Annually; data compiled in January and reported</p> <p>March 2020</p>
c) To increase the number of education visits and partnerships	<p>Maintain a database of school contacts and make termly contact to market current offering</p> <p>Develop upon school visits partnership with Erasmus Darwin House</p> <p>Recruit volunteer(s) to assist with development, marketing and delivery of museum education.</p> <p>Extend the museum's education provision to also cover Key Stages 3 and 4 within development project</p> <p>Maintain and develop work experience partnerships with higher education institutions</p>	<p>Ongoing; quarterly mailout</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
d) To increase the number of group visits bookings	<p>Develop the group visits offer</p> <p>Targeted postal and e-campaign to relevant interest groups locally and in Midlands)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annual</p>

iii) To increase access to the Museum and collections		
Objective	How to be achieved	Achieve by
a) To improve awareness of, and access to, all parts of the collection	<p>Programme regularly changing items within permanent displays and small exhibitions or displays to provide access to reserve collections, with one display every summer.</p> <p>Enable more of the collection to be displayed by providing more display case space and room for changing displays within</p>	<p>Ongoing; display reported annually</p> <p>October 2021</p>

	development project. Incorporate digital archive interactives (for e.g. manuscript collection), in development project.	October 2021
b) To update interpretive materials and displays	Working with Museum designers within development project, update displays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve tactile and sensory interpretation provision within development • Develop high and low-tech interactive displays, in response to feedback • Improve interpretation of Museum libraries and bookcases, re-display significant books • Re-allocation of rooms to update the visitor journey in displays. 	October 2021
c) To improve facilities for researchers and publicise provision more widely	Improvements to Wood Library in development project to create a dedicated and user-friendly space for research visitors. Evaluate user experience. Raise academic profile of Museum through forging and maintaining links with universities, research institutes and libraries	October 2021 Ongoing
d) To assess and seek alternative solutions to the physical limitations of the building	To act on advice and action points from 2017 Access Audit and 2018 Consultant report, to provide level access to the Museum building as far as possible, and virtual access to everything beyond within development project.	October 2021

iv) To care for the Museum building and collection		
Objective	How to be achieved	Achieve by
a) To improve the storage and care of the collection	Re-organise collection locations within new Donegal House storage Prioritise collection care tasks within SJBM work plans, carrying out tasks and projects as specified in the SJBM Collection Care Plan Identify key items requiring conservation and work with Johnson Society (Friends fund) to raise funding for work.	October 2020 Ongoing Ongoing
b) To improve the documentation of the collection	Maintain numbers of volunteers who regularly work on both the collection database and paper records Improve records and add images to collection database. To produce an overall Collection Management Plan & Framework Clear backlog of old accession and provenance information and enter into database.	Ongoing Ongoing March 2021 Ongoing
c) To ensure the	Ensure that all staff are fully trained in the Museum Emergency	Ongoing; annual

ongoing protection of the collection against disaster and damage	<p>plan procedure</p> <p>Fully analyse environmental monitoring data and produce report with recommendations</p> <p>Research further improvements into heating system controls to address specific issues raised in environmental monitoring report as part of development project</p>	<p>testing</p> <p>Ongoing; annual</p> <p>October 2021</p>
d) To ensure the continual maintenance and sustainability of the Birthplace building	<p>Conduct regular visual checks of the building and report any issues promptly</p> <p>Implement improvements outlined in the SJBM Environmental Action Plan, with replacement of lighting for LED and low energy within development project</p> <p>Carry out quinquennial inspection and programme works arising</p>	<p>Ongoing, fortnightly checks</p> <p>Ongoing, lighting by 2021</p> <p>Next report due 2021</p>

THE SAMUEL JOHNSON BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM

CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY

Name of museum: The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum (SJB), Accredited Museum 767

Name of governing body: Lichfield City Council (LCC), as sole trustee of the Dr Johnson Birthplace Trust, Charity No. 500046

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 20 April 2015

Date at which this policy is due for review: April 2019

This policy guides the work that SJB does in the field of collections care and conservation, along with the SJB Collections Care and Conservation Plan which will help to deliver the statements made in this policy. Conservation is defined as the prevention, protection, care and restoration of our cultural heritage. SJB recognises that caring for collections is a fundamental duty for all museums, and that our approach to collections care and conservation should be based on a combination of preventative and remedial conservation. Preventative conservation covers the measures necessary to slow down or minimise deterioration of museum objects and structures. Remedial conservation involves a treatment to an object or specimen to bring it to a more acceptable condition or state in order to stabilise it or enhance some aspects of its cultural or scientific value. SJB's collections work is guided by Benchmarks in Collection Care, SPECTRUM standards and the Museum Association's Code of Ethics, and we are committed to ensuring the long-term preservation of our collections and historic building.

We will meet these aims by:

- Maintaining a planned approach to collections care and conservation, and committing to the care of the collection and building in our forward planning and development
- Ensuring that collection care and conservation issues are considered at object entry stage for all potential acquisitions and for all loans in and loans out of the collections
- Periodically checking collections and maintaining condition records
- Monitoring the museum environment and undertaking integrated pest management, recording, analysing and acting on the information gathered
- Regularly reviewing, updating, sharing and testing our Emergency Plan and related risk assessments to ensure our collections and building are protected from disaster
- Ensuring the continuation of building cleaning staff and access to maintenance staff, and carrying out periodic cleaning of display and store areas
- Ensuring that only professionally accredited conservators are contracted for remedial conservation work, and that professional advice and training has been sought before undertaking basic care tasks
- Training our staff and volunteers to share and uphold our care and conservation aims and follow all procedures when handling and working with collections
- Continuing to act on the recommendations of a collections care health-check report and seeking professional advice when required through the local Museum Development Officer

The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum

Volunteer Agreement

The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum (SJBm) recognises and encourages the valuable contribution made by volunteers.

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between you and the museum. We appreciate you contributing your time and skills to us and we will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

We will provide you with:

- ★ A welcoming and inspiring environment in which to volunteer
- ★ A full induction to the museum and your role
- ★ The opportunity to ask for help whenever you need it
- ★ Appropriate and clear training before starting any new task or role
- ★ The chance to gain new skills and experiences, and use your existing ones
- ★ Regular opportunities to be given feedback and to give us feedback
- ★ Fair, equal and respectful treatment as a valued member of the museum team
- ★ An environment that is safe and protects you from injury

We expect you as a volunteer to:

- ★ Carry out your role to the best of your ability
- ★ Conduct yourself in a friendly and professional manner
- ★ Follow the training given to you and the relevant policies of the Museum (for example Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities)
- ★ Be realistic about the amount of time and commitment that you can give to the Museum, do your best to come in as arranged and give us reasonable notice if you are unavailable for your volunteering session
- ★ Keep the museum informed of any problems encountered during your time with us, and ask for help whenever you need it.

The Museum is an inclusive environment and we expect staff and volunteers to treat each other and museum visitors fairly and with respect regardless of sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, parental or marital status, disability, religion or race.

This agreement is a statement of values, not intended to be a legally binding contract or a contract of employment between us and can be cancelled at any time by the museum or volunteer.

Date of next review: March 2021