



MUSEUM *of*
RICHMOND

IMPACT REPORT

April 2021 to March 2022

Museum of Richmond, Second Floor, Old Town Hall, Whittaker Avenue, Richmond, TW9 1TP
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ROYAL PATRON Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, the Hon. Lady Ogilvy, KG GCVO

PATRONS Anita Anand, Sir David Attenborough OM, Ann Chapman-Daniel, Greville Dare,
Lord Fellowes of West Stafford, Lady Annabel Goldsmith, Lord Watson of Richmond CBE

CHAIR Hilda Clarke **VICE-CHAIR** Rose Barling **DEPUTY CHAIR** Lord Lee of Trafford DL

CURATOR AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER Laura Irwin

LEARNING AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER Victoria McGrath

Vision Statement

The Museum of Richmond will be recognised as the heart of the local community and a place of which both the community and the Council will be truly proud. It will be a challenging, inviting and popular focus enabling all to interact with Richmond's unique and extensive heritage.



Mission Statement

The Museum of Richmond seeks to preserve, interpret and communicate the material evidence of Richmond's past for the public's benefit, education and enjoyment.



**MUSEUM of
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Figures for 2021/2022

GENERAL VISITORS

2296 FREE, INDIVIDUAL VISITS

382 ATTENDEES at events and group visits

674 OUTREACH PARTICIPANTS

14,001 WEBSITE VISITS

1221 VIEWS of three online exhibitions

LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT ESTIMATED AT OVER £140,000
(AIM economic toolkit)

93% OF VISITORS rated their visit as excellent or very good

LEARNING, FAMILIES & ADULT WORKSHOPS

1460 PUPILS at on-site and online learning workshops for schools

288 CHILDREN AND ADULT ATTENDEES at on-site and online family workshops

631 USERS of Discovery Boxes for schools

174 PARTICIPANTS at the NEW Coffee and Crafting workshops, which were initially funded by Richmond Parish Lands Charity

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWING

Instagram: 1813 (increase of 59%)

Twitter: 1426 (increase of 38%)

Facebook: 965 (increase of 9%)

COLLECTIONS

2 EXHIBITIONS
(both in person and online)

OVER 80% OF OUR 5,000 OBJECTS photographed and made accessible online

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

OVER 10 LOCAL PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

OVER 30 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS, including Duke of Edinburgh and work experience placements

16 MEMBERS of the Museum's Benefactors' Circle

45 ANNUAL FRIENDS and **168 LIFE FRIENDS**

2 YOUNG PERSONS EMPLOYED as fixed-term Museum Assistants



ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT: COVID-19

Re-building and Recovering

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to pose an unprecedented challenge during this period.

In line with government guidance, the Museum remained closed to the public until May, when it re-opened on a ticketed basis with Covid restrictions. July saw the re-introduction of drop-in visits, with the Museum closing earlier and for longer than anticipated in December due to the Omicron variant.

In spite of these challenges, we are proud to have exceeded our target for re-building visitor numbers to 50% of pre-Covid (2019-20) levels. We recovered:

- 52% of free, individual visitors
- 70% of school pupils
- 81% of family workshop visitors

Adapting and Developing

A 'Recovery' grant from the Museums Development Office allowed us to undertake an Audience Research Survey, to better understand what our users and non-users wanted from the Museum in a post-lockdown world. This helped us to adapt our offer and purchase some new digital equipment.



In October we recruited a Museum Assistant, Ffion Lanigan, thanks to the government Kickstart scheme which funded the employment of a 16 to 24 year old on

Universal Credit for six months. Not only did the Museum gain an invaluable member of staff, we helped to train and develop a young person who is now studying archaeology at university.

Digital Engagement

Though visitors could not always access the Museum physically, we delivered a successful programme of digital events and activities, including:

- Online exhibitions
- Online family workshops
- Online schools workshops
- Online talks
- Downloadable 'digital detox' booklets for families
- 'How to' videos for families
- Digital Curator tours and a video produced for the Totally Thames festival
- Daily social media posts



FUNDRAISING + FINANCE

£80,000
CORE COUNCIL FUNDING
from the London Borough of
Richmond upon Thames

£38,393
COVID-19 SUPPORT
& RECOVERY GRANTS

£8,790
BENEFACTORS' CIRCLE

£6,152
EXHIBITIONS & MUSEUM
DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

£5,588
LEARNING INCOME

£5,000
KICKSTART GRANT
to employ a Museum Assistant for
six months

£3,802
GENERAL DONATIONS &
INDIVIDUAL GIVING

£3,024
LEARNING PROJECT GRANT



Our thanks to Minesoft and Be Richmond for organising this vibrant, promotional banner for the Museum in the window of a vacant local retailer on George Street



£3,177
FUNDRAISING EVENTS

£803
MEMBERSHIP FEES
Friends of the Museum

£10,155
OTHER INCOME



**MUSEUM of
RICHMOND**

COLLECTIONS AND ACCESS

We tell the story of Richmond through the objects we care for, enabling our visitors to learn about the local area

We are Accredited



This means that we meet national standards of best practice for museums as set by Arts Council England.

We are Increasing Online Access

We re-started our Digitisation Project in February after an 18-month pause due to Covid-19. We recruited and trained 8 new volunteers, who have helped to digitise over 80% of our 5,000 objects. Nearly every single object in our stored collection has been addressed.



The Digitisation Project was started in 2016 and aims to make every object in our collection available online. This will help visitors and researchers to find out more about the wonderful items we care for.

We are Caring for our Collections

We continue to document, conserve and store our collections in line with best practice, so they can be enjoyed by future generations.



DISPLAYS AND CHANGING EXHIBITIONS

Through our displays and changing exhibitions, we play a significant role in creating a sense of place for all residents and tourists, playing an important role in making Richmond an attractive place to live and visit:

The King's Observatory

This exhibition explored the unique history of the King's Observatory and Richmond's scientific legacy.



Built in 1769 for George III to observe a rare astronomical event, the Transit of Venus, the Observatory became a centre for scientific endeavours until the late twentieth century in fields which included standardisation, calibration and meteorology.

The exhibition opened online in February 2021 and in person in May, when Covid restrictions permitted museums to re-open. In spite of these challenges, 1049 people viewed the online exhibition; over 2296 individual visitors saw the display in person; and over 350 participants were engaged with related talks, family workshops and Curator Tours. Many thanks to the Museum's Benefactors' Circle, without whom this exhibition would not have been possible.

Visit from our Royal Patron & Partnership with the Observatory

In November we were honoured to receive a visit from our Royal Patron, HRH Princess Alexandra, to celebrate this exhibition and mark its end after a successful six months on show. HRH was given a tour and remarked on how fascinating and significant the Observatory is to Richmond's history.



In autumn we were delighted to work with the Observatory itself, when the building was opened to visitors for guided tours. As well as benefitting from cross-promotion and increased public awareness, we enjoyed reciprocal volunteer visits.

We are extremely grateful to the Observatory's current owner for the very generous donation that was made to the Museum from the proceeds of the public tours.



DISPLAYS AND CHANGING EXHIBITIONS

OT 50: Fifty Years of The Orange Tree Theatre

From a room above the pub to an award-winning independent theatre, this exhibition shared the extraordinary history of the Orange Tree Theatre as it marked its 50th anniversary.

Though concerns surrounding the Omicron variant meant it was not possible to formally open the exhibition in December as planned, a successful celebratory event was held in March where we were delighted to welcome Michael Billington, *Guardian* theatre critic and long-term supporter of the OT.

The exhibition saw nearly 1000 individual visitors in its first three months and provided the themes for several family workshops, Curator Tours and outreach talks in this period.



OT 50: Oral History Project



With help from two Exhibition Volunteers, we conducted interviews with a selection of more than 15 inspirational actors, directors, writers and staff members who told us their Orange Tree stories. These informed the content of the exhibition and audio extracts were made available on-site and online. Over 120 people listened to the latter in the website's first six weeks!

Changing Exhibitions—What Visitors Said

- *The physical objects from the plays at the Orange Tree brought the exhibition to life*
- *Orange Tree exhibition very interesting—local stories and obviously beloved*
- *I could better understand the science conducted at the observatory*
- *I hadn't heard about the observatory before even though I've lived here for 20 years!*
- *The King's Observatory and knowledge of the Volunteer [was the best thing about my visit]*



SCHOOLS AND HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

We support teachers in delivering the National Curriculum using local stories and the Museum's rich handling collection:

86% of the schools who used our services in 2021/2022 were from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames —schools are staying local post-Covid

From Pre-History to World War Two, we offer a range of hands on, cross curricular workshops to help pupils really engage with the past. All of the workshops focus on local case studies and are led by our Learning Officer, who has over 15 years of experience of working with schools in museums. So teachers can sit back, and enjoy the workshop with their class!



14% of the schools who visited in 2021/2022 were from out of Borough schools— showing that schools are also willing to travel for our services



100% of teachers

- rated their visit **Excellent or Good**
- Said their pupils had an experience that **improved their mood**
- Said that their pupils **developed their skills**
- Said that their pupils had **learnt something new**

We have been developing history craft workshops to compliment our hands on history workshops, as stand alone or full day workshops, ready for a launch in 2022/2023



We also provide Discovery Boxes which are full of handling objects and case studies to use in the classroom. They offer effective teaching resources on a number of curriculum subjects. Current themes include: Archaeology, Romans, Tudors, Victorian and Edwardian Homes, Victorian Children , Victorian Medicine, The Workhouse, World War One, World War One: 1916 Case Studies and World War Two: The Home Front, 1939-45

The Museum has developed two new Discovery Boxes on The Stone Age and Bronze Age thanks to funding from the Arts Society, Richmond



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FAMILY WORKSHOPS

Our Family Workshops give families a hands-on experience where they discover more about the history of the local area together:

164 children and 114 adults engaged with:
27 online workshops
13 on-site workshops with different themes linked to exhibitions and displays

100% of the adults said:

- They would **recommend** the workshops to others
- That they had **learnt more** about **Richmond's history**
- That they had **developed or learnt new skills**

How families feel about the workshops:

It was a great workshop and I appreciated that Vicky catered to all ages as my daughter was younger but has a keen interest in science/history so she thoroughly enjoyed this.

Workshop very good and Vicky is excellent host and presented in a very interesting way and encouraged kids to be interactive. I would highly recommend!

I LOVE these family workshops - they are so fun and enjoyed by all members of the family of different ages

Vicky was a fantastic guide, very knowledgeable and great fun for the kids!

Perfect. Pitched well for adults and children

I enjoyed going for a walk - all great to see physical place

Vicky is a lovely lady who introduced us to the lives of the Georgians - very informative and fun for the both of us

Really well pitched and managed to cater to a range of ages



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EVENTS AND ADULT LEARNING

We develop events in order to raise funds, raise our profile and as another way to engage a wider audience with Richmond's history:

Talks and Events for Adults

We ran several popular events in person from May onwards, once the Museum was permitted to re-open. These included:

- **Foreshore Finds:** a free Curator's Talk, 'show and tell' with local mudlarkers and archaeology-inspired family activity
- Part of the Totally Thames Festival in September
- Over 50 participants

- **Free Exhibition Tours**
- Every Saturday in August (King's Observatory) and March (Orange Tree Theatre)
- Approximately 20 attendees

- **'Nature's Palette': a talk by historian and paint expert Patrick Baty**
- Part of the Richmond Literature Festival in November
- 57 attendees



Adult Learning and Outreach

We offer a growing programme of talks, tours and reminiscence workshops that can be booked by groups and held at the Museum or run as outreach sessions.



2021-22 saw the Museum team deliver to a total of 674 persons at a number of local groups and societies, including: the Richmond Local History Society, the Full of Life Festival, Barnes and Mortlake History Society, Greenwood Community Centre, Ealing U3A and the Richmond and Kew Quilters. We also had stalls at Ham and Mortlake Fairs, where we raised awareness of the Museum and offered free activities for children.



EVENTS AND ADULT LEARNING

Coffee and Crafting

With a generous grant from the Richmond Parish Lands Charity, we were able to devise and implement a popular programme of craft workshops for adults, to help them re-engage with the Museum post-Covid, increase access to collections and reduce loneliness after the Lockdowns.



Working with Works of Love, part of The Vineyard Charity, we developed workshops that used Museum objects as inspiration for a craft project, and members of Works of Love came to help deliver the workshops.



The workshops have proven to be consistently popular and a new programme, funded by participant donations has been planned for delivery in 2022/2023.



Garden Party at Trumpeters' House

We were delighted to host a sold-out Garden Party at Trumpeters' House in September, after a two-year hiatus due to Covid-19.



150 people spent the afternoon in the beautiful gardens of Trumpeters' House, enjoying cake, tea and wine whilst being entertained by the Barnes Concert Band. This is an important fundraising event for the Museum and we raised over £1500 through tickets and donations.

We are extremely grateful to the owners of Trumpeters' House for allowing us use of the space, and to the local businesses who so generously donated prizes for the raffle. We could not run this fantastic event without their support.



**MUSEUM of
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OPPORTUNITIES

We provide meaningful opportunities for local people of all ages through volunteering and work experience:

Visitor Services Volunteers

We welcomed back our team of over 30 Volunteers at the end of June, once it was safe for them to return to the Museum in person. Volunteers offer invaluable support to the Museum and we couldn't operate without them.

Volunteering is a great way for people to give back and engage with their local community.

Our Visitor Services Volunteers commit to a regular shift each week where they welcome visitors, take sales in the shop and be on hand to answer public enquiries. Their knowledge and enthusiasm is frequently complimented by our visitors!

Other Volunteers

Alongside Visitor Services Volunteers we also have Project Volunteers who help us with Digitisation, Collections Management and Learning Activities. These volunteers tend to be developing their skills while in higher education, or because they want to change careers and work in the heritage sector.



We are also assisted by a group of *ad hoc* volunteers who help with everything from envelope stuffing to stewarding at events.

Work Experience



The Museum facilitates Work Experience and Duke of Edinburgh placements with students from local secondary schools. We also work with universities to offer relevant placements for History students, this year with St Mary's, Twickenham and Royal Holloway.



REMEMBERING BAMBER GASCOIGNE (1935—2022)



The Museum was saddened to hear of the news of the death of Bamber Gascoigne in February 2022.

His support for the Museum goes back to the early days in the 1980s when he was part of the group that helped set up the Museum under the leadership of John Cloake. Bamber became our first Patron when the Museum opened in 1988 and he led the celebrations for our 30th Anniversary Exhibition in 2018. We were delighted that he joined us for our latest royal visit by Princess Alexandra, in November 2021, for a celebration of the King's Observatory exhibition.

Bamber was a keen supporter of the Museum and through his attendance at events and patronage, he helped the Museum as it grew and developed over the last 30 years. His love of Richmond and its history came through whenever he talked about the Museum, and he remained dedicated in his support to the future development of the Museum and its interpretation of the past. Bamber's commentary on the audio-visual exhibit on the buildings of Richmond remains as one of the key features of the permanent display in the Museum.

Bamber's commitment was unwavering, and he gave generously of his time and support. His warmth and enthusiasm will be long remembered by the trustees, staff and volunteers of the Museum of Richmond.



LOOKING AHEAD



During 2022/23 we will be:

Adapting our offer in response to changing levels of demand and visitor behaviours in a post-Covid world

Developing a temporary exhibition and accompanying programme of events and family workshops to mark the 100th anniversary of The Poppy Factory and its Richmond connections

Providing a varied and interesting engagement experience for new and repeat visitors through free Curator Tours and our Coffee and Crafting workshops for adults

Researching how the demographics of the local area have changed over time, to inform a future re-interpretation of our permanent displays

Working to develop our audience with a focus on families and schools, helping to keep costs as low as possible in response to the cost of living crisis

Partnering with The Poppy Factory to develop a learning offer for school visits

Recruiting a second Museum Assistant through the government's Kickstart scheme, designed to help young persons at risk of long-term unemployment

Carrying out an audit of our collections with a professional conservator, so we can provide the best level of care and continue making our objects accessible



LOOKING AHEAD: IMPROVING THE MUSEUM SPACE

We are committed to increasing the Museum's size and visibility, improving our facilities and updating our permanent displays:

Visitor Feedback

We know there is demand for a larger and better equipped Museum space that would allow us to:

- Display more of our objects
- Better represent the local community
- Tell more diverse histories
- Expand our programme of activities
- Engage with even more people

We asked our visitors:
What one thing could we do to improve the Museum?

- **18% of respondents** said: 'review the Museum's layout and/or displays'
- **17% of respondents** said: 'more space'



Re-interpretation

We have been researching and developing content to be used in a future update of our permanent displays. These will reflect how the demographics of the local area have changed over time.

Community Consultation

Constructive criticism from the Audience Research Survey we commissioned in November centred on physical improvements to the Museum's space, as well as its lack of visibility at street level.

This feedback from users and non-users has greatly contributed to the building of our Strategic Plan for 2023-28. We are committed to re-developing the Museum over the course of the next five years.

Our thanks to the London Museums Development Office for providing us with a Covid Recovery grant to fund this research.



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