



FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Date of Publication: 3 September 2020

AGENDA

Meeting: **Folkestone Town Council**
Date: **10 September 2020**
Time: **6.00 p.m.**
Place: **Virtual Zoom Meeting [Link](#)**

To: **Town Councillors**

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of the Folkestone Town Council on the date and at the time and place shown above to transact the business shown on the agenda below. The meeting will be open to the press and public.

Any member who wishes to have information on any matter arising on the agenda which is not fully covered in these papers is requested to give notice prior to the meeting to the Town Mayor or Town Clerk.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'J Childs'.

J Childs
Town Clerk

Prayers

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
To receive and approve any apologies for absence.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of either personal or prejudicial interest that Members may wish to make.
- 3. MINUTES**

To receive the Minutes of Meeting of the Council held on 23rd July 2020 and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Up to 15 minutes shall be allowed for written public questions from registered electors to be put to the Council in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.

5. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

6. TOWN CLERKS REPORT

Report C/20/272 is attached for adoption.

7. RESERVES POLICY

Attached is a reserves policy for Council's consideration.

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

12th November 2020 6pm (provisional)

Folkestone Town Council

MINUTES of the Extra Ordinary Council Meeting of the Folkestone Town Council held virtually on Thursday, 23rd July 2020 at 6 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Ann Berry, Paul Bingham, Peter Gane, Michelle Keutenius, Jonathan Graham, David Horton, Ray Field, Dylan Jeffrey, Nicola Keen, Mary Lawes, Jackie Meade, Connor McConville, Tim Prater, Belinda Walker, Richard Wallace and Roger West.

In attendance: Jennifer Childs (Town Clerk), Toni Brenchley (Assistant Clerk) and Georgina Wilson (Executive Assistant).

Prayers and messages of condolence where led by Rev Bob Weldon.

Following issues with sound in Microsoft teams the meeting was adjourned at 6.20pm.

RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned under Standing Order 10.

Proposed: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey
 Seconded: Councillor Richard Wallace
 Voting: F: 17, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

The meeting reconvened in Zoom at 7pm.
 Unfortunately, Cllr Richard Wallace could not log on to the meeting.

1710. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

1711. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

1712. MINUTES

Council was asked to receive the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 12th May 2020 and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 12th May 2020 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly
 Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen
 Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1713. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

In accordance with standing order no.3 written public questions received by the Town Clerk not less than seven clear days (excluding weekends and public holidays) before the meeting will be put to the Council.

No questions had been received.

1714. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor advised that during the first few months into her term as office a lot of events had been cancelled due to the pandemic, however she had managed to:

- Attend a small service to commemorate Canada Day
- Lay a wreath at the Normandy Veterans Flower Bed in the Garden of Remembrance
- Place chaplets at the William Harvey statue on behalf of the townspeople of Folkestone, and the Harveian and Medical Societies of London.

The Town Mayor gave thanks to all the contractors, staff and Councillors who worked to ensure that all these significant events went ahead in these challenging times.

1715. A GUIDE FOR THE MAYORALTY

An updated Guide for the Mayoralty was presented for the Council's adoption.

RESOLVED: That the revised Guide for the Mayoralty be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for further consideration.

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade

Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane

Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1716. INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Internal Auditor's Report 2019/20 was duly noted.

1717. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RISK ASSESSMENT AND INSURANCE REVIEW

Council considered Report C/20/267 which provided an updated business risk assessment and insurance review.

RESOLVED: That the Governance and Accountability Risk Assessment and Insurance Review be noted and approved.

Proposed: Councillor Mary Lawes

Seconded: Councillor Paul Bingham

Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1718. ALLOTMENTS RULES AND RENT REVIEW

Council considered Report C/20/268 which reviewed allotments rules and charges for 2021/22.

RESOLVED: That Report C/20/268 be referred to the Community Services Committee for further consideration.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey
Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1719. TOWN CLERKS REPORT

Council considered Report C/20/269 which provided an update on services being actioned under the Town Clerk's scheme of delegation.

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt Report C/20/269.

Proposed: Councillor Paul Bingham
Seconded: Councillor Belinda Walker
Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1720. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 April 2020 and 31 May 2020 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Jonathan Graham
Seconded: Councillor Mary Lawes
Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1721. BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2020/21

RESOLVED: That the Budget Monitoring Statement to 31 May 2020 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Mary Lawes
Seconded: Councillor Jonathan Graham
Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1722. WARD GRANTS

A list of ward grants approved by the Town Clerk was provided for information and duly noted.

1723. WARD GRANT BALANCES 2020/21

The ward grant balances available to each Councillor as of 31 May 2020 was provided for information and duly noted.

1724. CORONAVIRUS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE GRANTS

A list of coronavirus community resilience grants approved by the Town Clerk was provided for information and duly noted.

1725. TOWN GRANTS

A list of town grants that have been approved by the Town Clerk was provided for information and duly noted.

1726. SMALL PARKS

The Town Clerk updated Council on the current position regarding Folkestone Town Council officially taking responsibility of 8 small parks on 40 year leases and the need for approval to sign the deeds once the terms of the leases have been agreed.

1727. BY-ELECTION

Council noted the casual vacancy and that no elections are allowed to take place until Thursday 6th May 2021 in line with The Local Government and Police Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

RESOLVED: That Council move to the next item on the agenda under Standing Order 10.

Proposed: Councillor Tim Prater
 Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen
 Voting: F: 15, Ag: 1, Ab: 0

1728. MEMBERS ATTENDANCE POLICY

A policy providing additional guidance on the legislation regarding Councillor absences was attached for adoption.

RESOLVED: That the Members Attendance Policy be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for further consideration.

Proposed: Councillor Michelle Keutenius
 Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane
 Voting: F: 15, Ag: 0, Ab: 1

1729. MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Council considered Report C/20/270 which advised that the Personnel Sub-Committee's support Council email addresses for members.

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt Report C/20/270.

Proposed: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey
 Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane
 Voting: F: 12, Ag: 0, Ab: 4

Councillor Nicola Keen advised that exempt Report C/20/271 had not been brought forward. The Mayor reminded members of their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED: That Exempt Report C/20/271 be referred back to the Personnel Sub-committee and in future agendas only go to the sub-committee members and minutes to the sub-committee and its parent committee Finance & General Purposes.

Proposed: Councillor Mary Lawes
 Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane

Voting: F: 16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1730. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS
Thursday, 10th September 2020 at 6pm

The meeting ended at 7.45pm

.....Town Mayor

This report will be made public on 3rd September 2020

**Folkestone
Town Council**



Report Number **C/20/272**

To: Full Council
Date: 10th September 2020
Status: Public Report

Subject: TOWN CLERKS REPORT

SUMMARY:

This report provides an update following the procedures the Town Clerk has put in place to protect Council's establishment, staff, members and the general public during the coronavirus pandemic and provides additional information not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because:-

- a) Government has implemented strict guidance to maintain public safety and limit the stress on the NHS and other essential services.
- b) Government have changed legislation to allow virtual meetings until May 2021.
- c) Folkestone Town Council as a local government authority should lead by example.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/20/272**

Aims and Objectives – *To meet the requirements of a Quality Gold Council*
Financial Implications – *To operate in an open and transparent manner within approved budgets*
Equal Opportunities – *To provide equal access to all services*

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an update on service delivery not covered elsewhere on the agenda following closure of the Town Hall on the 17th March 2020 due to coronavirus pandemic.

2. CANCELLATIONS

All physical meetings are cancelled until further notice but Committees and Council are now meeting virtually online as necessary.

3. COMMITTEE UPDATEPlanning

Planning Applications are still being considered by the Planning Committee members electronically and comments sent back to the District Council on a weekly under the Town Clerks Scheme of Delegation, comments submitted since the last report are included at appendix A.

Community ServicesMuseum Update

This update on Folkestone Museum's work covers the period 1st July to 29th August 2020. The Curator and Audience Development Officer reduced remote working during July, spending the balance of their working week in the Town Hall and Museum to prepare for reopening and also progress learning, engagement and collections-based work.

Whilst National Lottery Heritage Fund support effectively finished on the 30th June resources being acquired with the sponsorship of NLHF have been steadily arriving through July as lockdown has lessened. This has included high quality replicas of prehistoric material including Iron Age ceramics and Bronze Age axes, Roman household items and Anglo-Saxon material, all to support original items in the Museum collection for use in learning and engagement programmes.

The other area to benefit from NLHF support during the period is the foyer. The new retail space had its wall displays fitted during the last week of July and the new retail and reception desk is currently in manufacture with 3 Planks Limited. In addition, life expired UV film was removed from the window adjacent to the retail area opening up the view from Guildhall Street into the space; which will shortly be further improved by moving the existing planters outwards by one metre.

The final aspect of NLHF work to be completed was the overall evaluation for the Folkestone Heart project. Whilst final sign off is yet to be received all evaluation materials have been submitted and both the NLHF Investment Manager and Monitor consider that the project has been brought to a successful conclusion. A copy of the Evaluation Report is attached.

The Museum reopened to the Public on Thursday 6th August and from that point has been on three-day week basis, this will be upscaled to a five-day week during September. As previously reported a one-way route is now in operation, supported by a wayfinding and [Covid-19] safety signage scheme, this has included bringing the rear door back into use. Whilst the Museum sector as a whole was surprised to be required to implement Test and Trace, as well as mask wearing, this has been accepted very well by visitors to the Museum. Expectations were low in regard of numbers but 250 have now been welcomed since reopening with a noticeable daily increase in visits as visitor confidence improves.

With the reopening of the Museum, FTC have been pleased to present South Kent Mind's community led exhibition which both celebrates Folkestone's diverse community and also, more sensitively records the community's efforts to cope with lockdown and the health and wellbeing issues it has brought to the fore. Planning is also in hand with the Friends of St Mary's and St Eanswythe's Church on an exhibition coinciding with the centenary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and one-time Folkestone curate Rev. David Railton's part in the original effort to give a physical place of commemoration for members of the services with no known grave. The exhibition will open on 17th October and run with South Kent Mind's through to the end of the year.

As referred to above, resources are now all in hand for formal workshops. The Museum website is about to go live with the refreshed learning offer as is a new learning programme brochure for schools which is ready to distribute, both joining the FM Learn With Objects website which has had further testing with teachers during July with very positive feedback.

As social distancing has impacted the ability to provide activities in the Museum the Audience Development Officer and Curator have produced a series of themed craft activity videos which relate to themes within the museum, with a craft pack available to buy containing some of the more hard to find items. The weekly videos during August have had a good reaction, with social media posts viewed 2,376 times, shared 59 times and YouTube channel videos being watched 85 times; upwards of 20 activity packs have also been sold.

Appendix A – Planning Applications

Year	Planning Application	Site Address	Proposal	Comment	Closing date
20/	0816/FH	41 Foreland Avenue	Erection of Garden/Playroom	No objection but some concern was shown that the garden building was described as an "office" a couple of times, and the possible traffic implications if used as an office.	22.7.20
20/	0869/FH	7 Ashley Avenue	Change of use from Nursery (Use Class D1) at ground and first floor to Residential Institution Use (Use Class C2) comprising one 1 bed flat at ground level and one 2 bed flat at first floor level. (The existing second floor flat to be retained as a C3 flat).	No objection	24.7.20
20/	0839/FH	2 Earlscliffe Mews Shorncliffe Road	Crown reduction and crown lift of one Sycamore and one Tree of Heaven, both subject of Tree Preservation Order No 4 of 2015	No objection - Subject to Tree Warden opinion	31.7.20
20/	0563/FH	The Leas Club	Listed building consent for the restoration of the Leas Pavilion, including external and internal alterations in connection with the use of the building for ancillary residential use (Class C3), and flexible use for community access/assembly and leisure (Class D2), together with the construction of a nine storey residential apartment block (5 full storeys, with setbacks to the upper four storeys) and associated cycle and refuse storage, landscaping, with parking provided to either side of the Leas Pavilion at half-basement and lower ground floor levels, accessed from Longford	Object comment	29.7.20

20/	0579/FH	The Leas Club	Terrace and Longford Way. Full planning application for the restoration of the Leas Pavilion, including external and internal alterations in connection with the use of the building for ancillary residential use (Class C3), and flexible use for community access/assembly and leisure (Class D2), together with the construction of a nine storey residential apartment block (5 full storeys, with setbacks to the upper four storeys) and associated cycle and refuse storage, landscaping, with parking provided to either side of the Leas Pavilion at half-basement and lower ground floor levels, accessed from Longford Terrace and Longford Way.	Object comment	29.7.20
20/	0890/FH/TCA	49 & 51 Earls Avenue	Works to three Sycamore trees situated within a conservation area comprising of a 5 metre reduction on the east facing side of the canopies to give a new tree line approximately 1 metre back from the car park edge	No objection - Subject to Tree Warden opinion	31.7.20
20/	0891/FH/TCA	209 Sandgate Road	Reduction and shaping of a Holly tree situated within a conservation area to form a cylindrical shape with a crown diameter of approximately 4 metres	No objection - Subject to Tree Warden opinion	31.7.20
20/	0906/FH	3 Stanley Road	Erection of a rear single storey extension	No objection - The building extension is more on the side of the neighbour, who's already extended further.	30.7.20

20/	0903/FH	1 Wiltie Gardens	Removal of a structurally damaged mono-pitch roof to the original single-storey outrigger at the rear of the property and replacement with a new parapet flat roof. Erection of a single-storey side extension with parapet flat roof to match the above and lime wash existing poorly matched brickwork to existing lean-to	No objection	31.7.20
	20/0893/FH	80 The Bayle	Replacement of roof tiles and installation of 2 No. roof lights	No objection	7.8.20
	20/0927/FH/TCA	571 Homepine House	Tree works situated in a conservation area comprising: 2 x Ash (851 & 854) and 2 x Sycamore (858 & 860) 2 metre overall crown reduction, crown lift to 3 metres over path and 6 metres over road; Horse Chestnut (852) crown lift to 3 metres over path and 6 metres over road; Horse Chestnut (853) 1.5 metre overall crown reduction, crown lift to 3 metres over path and 6 metres over road; Cherry (855) crown lift to 3 metres over path and 6 metres over road; Ash (856) pollard @2.2 metres, retain west facing lateral cut at 300 mm from main stem; Silver Birch (857), Holly (862) and Rowan (871) fell; Yew (859) crown lift to 3 metres over path and 6 metres over road, cut back from street lamp and car park by 1 metre; Sycamore (861) 2 metre overall crown reduction, crown lift to 6 metres over drive and exit; Sycamore (863) remove basal growth; Holm Oak (864) reduce east, west and south laterals by 4	Object unless the Tree Officer can confirm he is agreement with this application and felling of a holly, rowan and silver birch. We feel some of these should be replaced.	7.8.20

			metres, reduce height and north laterals by up to 1.5 metres, crown lift to 4 metres; Yew (865) remove epicormic growth, crown lift to 2.5 metres, cut back from building to give 3 metres clearance		
20/0877/FH	26 Narrabeen Road		Erection of a single storey storage shed/workshop	No objection- Although a retrospective planning application, the owner seems to have been unaware that his alterations to the previous asbestos building were slightly bigger. Cllr Mary Lawes objected to this application due to the height and feels that it is an eyesore.	4.8.20
20/0900/FH/PA	78 Sandgate Road		Determination as to whether the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority is required under Class C of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 for the change of use from A1 retail to A3 cafe to include building a commercial kitchen.	The Committee supports the JAG remark to at least get an explanation from the Planning Officer. This would require planning permission for at minimum, for the extraction needed. This would affect tenants above and close to location extractors required for a professional kitchen. There would need to be extra deliveries, waste bin storage and collection.	7.8.20
20/0765/FH	1 Cherry Garden Avenue		Erection of a 2 bedroom detached dwelling following the demolition of an existing dilapidated garage	No objection, this house design is an improvement from the dilapidated garage that currently sits on this site.	13.8.20
20/0938/FH	14 Foreland Avenue		Erection of single storey front, first floor & rear extensions & alterations	No objection subject to neighbours comments as does seem a little excessive on the boundary line.	5.8.20
20/0682/FH	13 Cherry Garden Lane		Reduction of approved extension omitting first floor and retaining ground floor only to avoid unknown, discovered major drainage	No objection, this is a reduction in size of a previous application which was approved.	5.8.20

20/0947/FH/TCA	Grimston Gardens Open Space	Works to trees situated within a conservation area comprising of felling of one Horse Chestnut and one Cherry; reduction of one Weeping Ash to a monolith of 5 metres in height	Object as although Horse Chestnut, Weeping Ash and Cherry all appear to be dying, the Committee should wish to see a replacement made in a mature space of this type. Only the cherry appears to be small and arguably in the 'wrong' place. Ultimately these garden sites may be rendered more vulnerable to redevelopment by large tree removal, and certainly will be less use to Nature.	7.8.20
20/0871/FH	South Kent Community Church, Castle Hill Avenue	Listed Building Consent to install a full CCTV system to cover the exterior of the building and one interior camera covering the front doors. Also to install a panic alarm system to link our back hall to the main office.	No objection	13.8.20
20/0911/FH	25-61, 34-68, 69-75 Brabner Close	Replacement of existing uPVC windows and doors with new uPVC windows and composite doors.	No objection, changing these many windows will make sure they are all within the upkeep of the local area.	6.8.20
20/0913/FH	8 Fairfax Close	Raising main roof to accommodate increased headroom in loft for conversion.	No objection	10.8.20
20/0960/FH	59 Earls Avenue	Felling of a multi stemmed Lime subject of Tree Preservation Order No 4 of 1994	The felling of a multi-stemmed lime maybe necessary per a consulting engineers report for complainants. It is however a fine tree and has been the subject of criticism for decades from garage owners. This can sometimes demonstrate a serious problem or simply one or two persons with fixed opinions. In view of the letter report the Tree Officer will have to make a judgement, but the Committee would support retention if possible and replacement if the complaints are justified.	14.8.20

20/0929/FH	12-14 Rendezvous Street	Change of use and conversion of first and second floors (function room and managers accommodation) to provide 2 x self-contained flats with alterations to window openings and existing shopfront.	No objection	20.8.20
20/0972/FH	134 Canterbury Road	Re-pollard back to previous pollard points of one Horse Chestnut subject of Tree Preservation Order No 14 of 1990	No objection - Subject to tree consultant comments on Tree Preservation Order No 14 of 1990	10.8.20
20/0963/FH	Tesco Car Park Cheriton High Street	Advertisement consent for signage including 5 x freestanding signs, 1 x banner unit, 1 x play land sign and 21 x dot signs	The Committee objects on the basis of overdevelopment, possible lack of parking and the existence of a McDonalds less than two miles away at Park Farm. Cllr Graham would at present wish to speak against the application.	14.8.20
20/0964/FH	Tesco Car Park Cheriton High Street	Advertisement consent for the installation of 6 x fascia signs, 1 x 15" digital booth screen and 3 x booth lettering	The Committee objects on the basis of overdevelopment, possible lack of parking and the existence of a McDonalds less than two miles away at Park Farm. Cllr Graham would at present wish to speak against the application.	14.8.20
20/0965/FH	Tesco Car Park Cheriton High Street	Advertisement consent for the installation of 2 x freestanding totem signs	The Committee objects on the basis of overdevelopment, possible lack of parking and the existence of a McDonalds less than two miles away at Park Farm. Cllr Graham would at present wish to speak against the application.	14.8.20
20/0969/FH	Tesco Car Park Cheriton High Street	Advertisement consent for the relocation of existing tesco totem	The Committee objects on the basis of overdevelopment, possible lack of parking and the existence of a McDonalds less than two miles away at Park Farm. Cllr Graham would at present wish to speak against the application.	14.8.20

20/0914/FH	1 Plimsoll Avenue	Erection of two semi-detached 3 bed houses in the side garden to the west of 1 Plimsoll Avenue, Folkestone.	Object - The plot appears to be arguably overdevelopment for two houses even by modern standards although there are yet no neighbour complaints. However a native tree and 'shrubs' are being removed. Being on the edge of the Downs the Committee would like some native hedge or small tree incorporated. It objects on the basis of overdevelopment and lack of landscaping.	10.8.20
Y19/0965/FH	2 Martello Road	Change of use from dwelling house to a 7 bed HMO (House in Multiple Occupation).	Object - no changes from the last application, which was inadequate and over developed for no apparent reason.	21.8.20
20/0975/FH	87 Surrenden Road	Planning application for rear and side extension.	Object - This is not in keeping with the local area and looks overdeveloped.	11.8.20
20/1013/FH	38 Wells Road	Proposed Loft conversion, including rear dormer	No objection - In keeping with the local area, however the dormer is very large and in some eyes ugly but being on the corner of Bowen Road it doesn't look too close neighbours. Some concern shown but no objection subject to neighbours.	12.8.20
20/0983/FH	Tesco Car Park Cheriton High Street	Erection of a freestanding restaurant with drive-thru facility, car parking, landscaping and associated works, including Customer Order Displays (COD), goal post height restrictor and play frame. Relocation of the existing recycling area, click and collect and trolley bays.	The Committee objects on the basis of overdevelopment, possible lack of parking and the existence of a McDonalds less than two miles away at Park Farm. Cllr Graham would at present wish to speak against the application.	14.8.20
20/1016/FH	Flat 1 20 Grimston Gardens	Installation of window in existing one story extension	No objection if sympathetic to attractive Edwardian elevation.	20.8.20

20/0951/FH	134 Sandgate Road	Change of use for the basement and ground floor from A2 (professional services) to A3/A5 (food and drink) with external works comprising new front signage and extractor flu to the rear.	No objection however it would be nice if a heritage sign was used on this listed building	27.8.20
20/1004/FH	54-56 Shornclyffe Road	Development of residential flat block with 19 apartments with associated vehicle access and parking	No objection however, it must be ensured that both properties do not end up with an alleyway effect, the house at one side has a number of side windows that must not be block. There was some concern and disappointment that the proposed building was out of character with the attractive Edwardian buildings that were demolished and with No.58. But no objection in view of invaluable use and consistency with the other neighbour	27.8.20
20/0985/FH	Dorlands 42 Cooling Lane	Remove one limb of one Cedar and crown reduce back to previous pruning points of one Lime, both subject of Tree Preservation order No 11 of 2015	No objection	19.8.20
20/0923/FH	Brook House Pelham Gardens	Proposed extension over existing garage.	No objection	19.8.20
20/0990/FH	Bouverie Place BT Telephone Exchange	Proposal to remove the glazing from two windows on the third floor of the North West elevation to be replaced with aluminium weather louvres (one window fully, one window partially).	No objection	19.8.20

Y19/0674/FH	31 Westbourne Gardens	Replacement of existing timber-framed windows with double-glazed, white uPVC framed windows. (Retrospective).	Object, the Committee does not approve of retrospective applications. The officer who seems to have already decided but will probably be appealed must be supported as they were over Quain Court where windows were replaced without application and out of character. If people can do this and then apply retrospectively the window control policy will break down.	
Y19/0633/FH	2 Kings Road	Erection of a two storey dwelling in the garden of 2 Kings Road.	Object, the location of the drop curb is on a bus stop, room sizes & garden size seem small, the windows do not seem big enough to let enough natural light in, concern over the closeness of properties and this development set to form a precedent of neighbouring properties wishing to create an unsustainable overdevelopment of the area.	18.8.20
20/1012/FH	84 Cheriton High Street	Section 73 application for the removal/variation of condition 1 (work commencement) of planning application Y16/1191/SH - Erection of a two storey block of 5 residential flats incorporating the change of use of the first floor from storage to residential following demolition of existing single storey workshop building	Object to any removal of conditions. There are a number of small sites around the district not being built. The properties or land are derelict and bring areas down.	21.8.20
20/1057/FH	21 Walton Gardens	Proposed alterations to existing single-storey rear extension, to include new pitched roof plus widening, new side dormer extension, replacement windows/doors & associated external alterations, including provision of weatherboarding to upper storeys.	No objection	24.8.20

20/1009/FH	Hunter Health Club, The Metropole, The Leas	The conversion of the ground floor and part basement of the Metropole Hotel building in Folkestone from a fitness suite (D1) into residential comprising 12 flats (5 x one bedroom and 7 x two bedroom) and storage space.	No objection, however in view of the importance of the Metropole as a pre-eminent listed building in an important part of Folkestone, the Committee would like a meeting of some sort with planners or developers to assure itself, among other things, that the best internal features were being preserved and that the parking would be adequate.	25.8.20
20/1020/FH	Hunter Health Club, The Metropole, The Leas	Listed building consent for the conversion of the ground floor and part basement of the Metropole Hotel building in Folkestone from a fitness suite (D1) into residential comprising 12 flats (5 x one bedroom and 7 x two bedroom) and storage space.	No objection, however in view of the importance of the Metropole as a pre-eminent listed building in an important part of Folkestone, the Committee would like a meeting of some sort with planners or developers to assure itself, among other things, that the best internal features were being preserved and that the parking would be adequate.	3.9.20
20/1067/FH	Flat 2, 27 Castle Hill Avenue	Replacement of current single glazed sash windows with uPVC double glazed casement windows.	No objection, provided the replacements appear in character with the sash windows in this very prominent row of Victorian building.	3.9.20
20/1080/FH	103 Surrenden Road	Erection of a single storey rear extension	No objection	31.8.20
20/1089/FH	46 Foreland Avenue	Erection of a two-storey front extension over, a single-storey rear extension with previously approved balcony over, conversion of existing detached garage into a home study & external alterations to include the provision of weatherboarding to the upper storeys	No objection subject to neighbours comments	1.9.20
20/0981/FH/PA	Ground Floor Business Premises, 302 Cheriton Road	Determination as to whether the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority is required under Class C of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 for the	No objection	4.9.20

			change of use from takeaway sandwich shop to cafe/deli			
20/1100/FH	Flat C, 50 Earls Avenue		Replacement windows to front elevation	No objection	4.9.20	
20/1072/FH	1 Majestic Parade		Application for the continued use of premises as restaurant (A3) Hop Kweng restaurant to be replaced by Rosemont restaurant, new glazing and full width fixed canopy to front elevation outside seating and tables to front and side	No objection	17.9.20	
20/1108/FH	88 Shorncliffe Road		Installation of driveway gate to front of property.	No objection	4.9.20	
20/1022/FH	10 New Dover Road, Capel-le-Ferne		Conversion of existing outbuilding currently used as a shed to a home office	No objection but some concern. Due to the current Covid Crisis and long term environmental considerations the committee understand the need for office space at home with an adjoining toilet, it is concerned that the shower, gives this outbuilding the potential for being used as an annexe or rented out as a bed sit and believes a planning condition to prohibit separate residential use should be considered.	9.9.20	
20/1067/FH	Flat 2, 27 Castle Hill Avenue		Replacement of current single glazed sash windows with uPVC double glazed sash windows.	No objection	17.9.20	
20/1071/FH	5 Majestic Parade, Sandgate Road		Change of use from a hot food takeaway (class A5) to takeaway with restaurant (class A3) and front infill extension for restaurant seating area new glazing and fixed canopy to front elevation outside seating and tables to front	No objection	10.9.20	

Reserves Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Folkestone Town Council (FTC) is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of reserves.
- 1.2 Sections 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specified minimum level of reserves that an authority should hold and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to advise the Council about the level of reserves and to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.

2. Types of Reserves

- 2.1 Reserves can be categorised as general or ring fenced (but only for a specific item / project).

- 2.2 Ring fenced reserves can be held for several reasons:

- Renewals – to enable the council to plan and finance an effective programme of equipment replacement and planned property maintenance. These reserves are a mechanism to smooth expenditure so that a sensible replacement programme can be achieved without the need to vary budgets.
- Carry forward – of underspend on an identified project which cannot be spent in the budget year. Reserves are used as a mechanism to carry forward these resources.
- Insurance reserve – to enable the Council to meet the excesses of claims not covered by insurance.
- Other ring fenced reserves may be set up from time to time to meet known or predicted liabilities.

- 2.3 General reserves are funds which do not have any restrictions as to their use. These reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cash flows, offset the budget requirement if necessary or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

3. Earmarked Reserves

- 3.1 Earmarked reserves will be established on a “needs” basis, in line with anticipated requirements.

- 3.2 Reserves will not be held to fund ongoing expenditure. This would be unsustainable as, at some point, the reserves would be exhausted. To the extent that reserves are used to meet short term funding gaps, they will be replenished in the following year.

However, earmarked reserves that have been used to meet a specific liability would not need to be replenished, having served the purpose for which they were originally established.

- 3.5 All earmarked reserves are recorded on a central schedule by the RFO which lists the various earmarked reserves and the purpose for which they are held.
- 3.6 Reviewing the Council's Financial Risk Assessment is part of the budgeting and year end accounting procedures and identifies planned and unplanned expenditure items and thereby indicates an appropriate level of Reserves.

4. General Reserves

- 4.1 It is recommended that the General Fund does not exceed the equivalent of nine months of the precept circa £655k. The primary means of building general reserves will be through any underspend from the annual budget. This will be in addition to any amounts needed to replenish reserves that have been consumed in the previous year.
- 4.2 Setting the level of general reserves is related to decisions in the formulation of the medium term financial strategy and the annual budget. The Council must build and maintain sufficient working balances to cover the key risks it faces, as expressed in its financial risk assessment.
- 4.3 If in extreme circumstances general reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council would be able to draw down from its earmarked reserves to provide short term resources.
- 4.4 Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the council's finances the council must keep a minimum balance of 25% of the current budget.

5. Opportunity cost of holding reserves

- 5.1 In addition to allowing the Council to manage unforeseen financial pressures and plan for known or predicted liabilities, there is a benefit to holding reserves in terms of the interest earned on funds which are not utilised. This investment income is fed into the budget strategy.
- 5.2 However, there is an "opportunity cost" of holding funds in reserves, in that these funds cannot then be spent on anything else. As an example, if these funds were used to repay debt the opportunity cost would equate to the saving on the payment of interest and the minimum revenue provision, offset by the loss of investment income on the funds. However, using reserves to pay off debt in this way would leave the Council with no funds to manage unexpected risks nor provide a mechanism to fund the planned expenditure for which the reserves were earmarked.

- 5.3 Given the opportunity costs of holding reserves, it is critical that reserves continue to be reviewed each year as part of the budget process to confirm that they are still required and that the level is still appropriate.
- 6. Current Level of Financial Reserves
 - 6.1 The level of financial reserves held by the council will be agreed during the discussions held regarding the setting of the budget for the next financial year.
 - 6.2 The current level of general reserves held by the council is estimated as 60% of this year's annual precept.
 - 6.3 The recommendation of the internal auditor is that any underspend due to the Covid19 pandemic is placed in the General Fund.

This policy was adopted by the Town Council at the meeting on _____ and the levels of reserves will be reviewed when setting the budget for the next financial year.

RESERVES & PROVISIONS AT 31 JULY 2020			
		BALANCE	BALANCE
CODE		AT 1/4/20	AT 31/7/20
		£	£
310	GENERAL FUND	114,664	114,664
340	NEW SERVICES RESERVE	99,240	99,240
350	TREE PLANTING RESERVE	0	0
362	MUSEUM/HERITAGE RESERVE	220,564	271,337
363	TOURISM RESERVE	4,735	4,735
365	BUS SHELTERS	9,000	9,000
383	WARD GRANTS RESERVE	9,792	9,792
385	TOWN GRANTS RESERVE	1,096	1,096
386	FTC ELECTIONS	0	0
387	ARMED FORCES' DAY RESERVE	0	0
390	SALT BINS	6,313	6,413
391	FLOWERBEDS	0	0
392	LEAS FLOWER POWER	0	0
393	ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN	2,000	2,000
403	CCTV EQUIPMENT/MAINTENANCE	19,657	19,657
404	CHRISTMAS EVENT (FTC)	0	0
405	CHRISTMAS EVENT (CHERITON)	3,367	3,367
406	NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND	0	8,635
499	PROVISION FOR OUTSTANDING INVOICES	5,166	5,166
TOTAL		495,594	555,102

Folkestone HEART
Folkestone Museum

July 2020

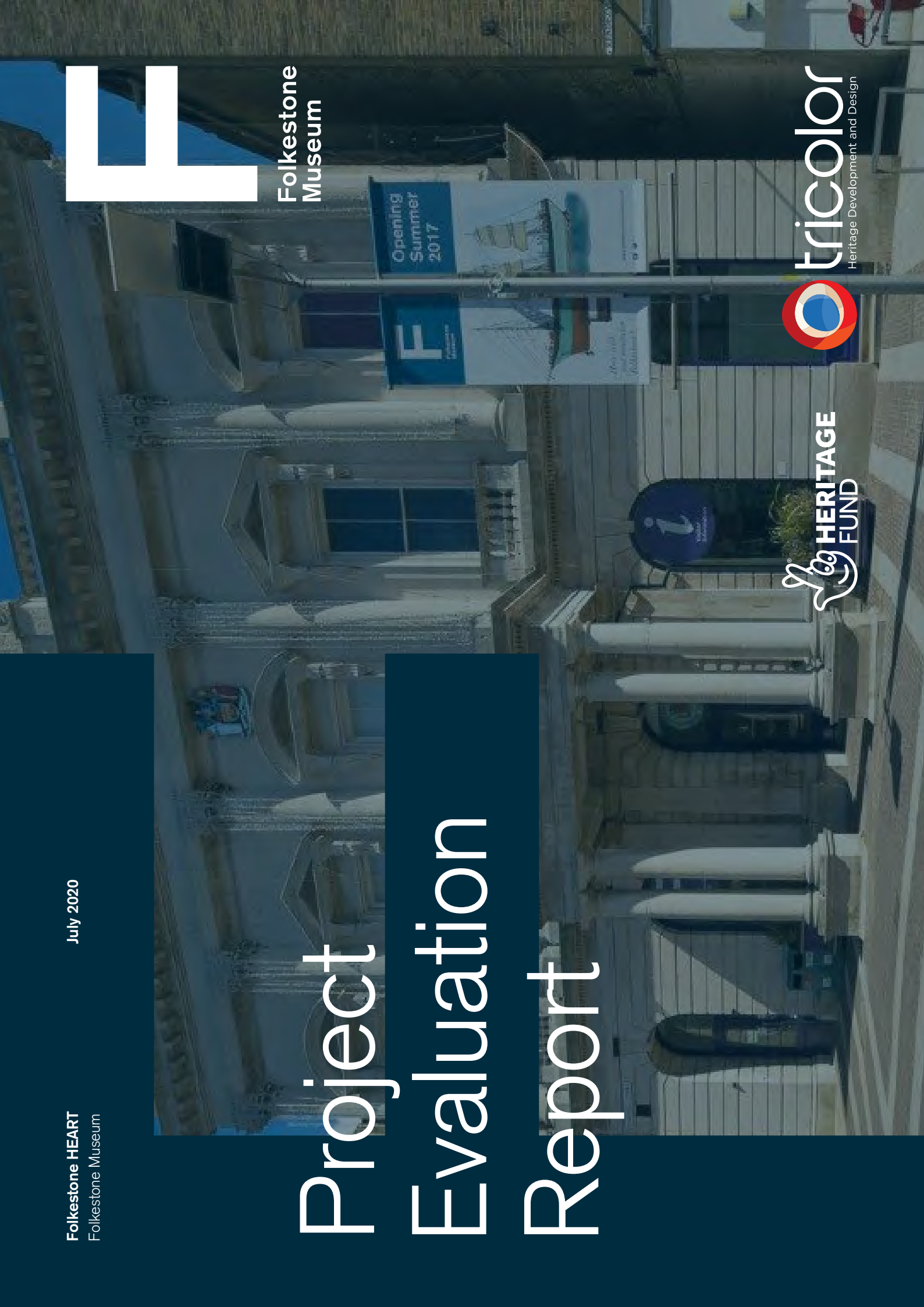
Project Evaluation Report



Folkestone
Museum



tricolor
Heritage Development and Design





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Executive Summary

In October 2015, the Folkestone HEART project was awarded a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for £1,950,000 (84% of the total project costs) for the creation of a new Museum within Folkestone's Old Town Hall. The project would unify and conserve the significant archaeological, natural and social history and fine art collections - which had been put into storage or dispersed - and would put them on display in a modern and accessible museum space. Colocating the new exhibition areas and Museum store with the town's civic offices and improving access to the town's cinema would bring together Folkestone's key cultural heritage assets and provide a heritage hub for the local community. The Museum was opened in May 2017 and in November 2018 was awarded Arts Council England Accreditation status, which was a major milestone for the collections, the project and the town.



The learning and participation elements of the project were based on five key aims:

- Aim 1: To develop a challenging, interesting and engaging offer for both general and special interest visitors that enables them to engage with the collections.
- Aim 2: To protect, preserve and promote the collection for the good of the community so that there is a sense of pride about the Museum within the community.
- Aim 3: To increase opportunities to engage with the town hall and the heritage of the town through research, interpretation, events and exhibitions.
- Aim 4: To develop structured and well planned educational and interpretative resources both in terms of life-long learning and information targeted at schools, families and young people.
- Aim 5: To engage individuals through volunteering and training opportunities and to provide opportunities for them to learn more about heritage and develop skills in areas such as tourism, customer service and disability awareness.

Tricolor were appointed in 2019 to undertake the project evaluation and assess how the above aims and wider outcomes for heritage, people and the community were being met. At that time, the operational phase of the project was beset by difficulties, with a pause in project delivery. An interim evaluation report prepared in January 2020 highlighted areas of achievement as well as concern, and with the Museum team we developed a combined activity and evaluation plan to work with target audiences and implement a rigorous and extensive evaluation for the remaining delivery period, until May 2020. We were especially interested in the wider community outcomes and understanding if and how the Museum was contributing to a sense of place and pride within the town. Unfortunately, in March 2020 the Museum was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with no further opportunity for on-site activities or data collection. We were, however, able to conduct a new series of online surveys, 1-2-1 interviews and case studies. This new data, when combined with the information previously collected and feedback from the activities that were run in 2020, such as Science Week, has nonetheless allowed us to present an overview of the project and its achievements as well as where there are opportunities for future development.

Our findings show that:

- The Folkestone HEART project has made a positive contribution to the preservation and accessibility of the heritage of Folkestone by creating an active and vibrant accredited Museum space. The collections are now well managed and the exhibition and display areas interpret and explain more items within the collection for a greater number of visitors to enjoy;
- The project has supported the development of skills among some volunteers and staff;
- The project has secured the future of the town's historic assets and has made the Town Hall more welcoming and interesting for visitors, with people feeling they are now visiting a community hub space that was previously significantly underutilised;
- The Museum is already having a positive impact on how people are thinking about the heritage of the town and their part within that. People report that it is giving them, and visitors, the opportunity to engage with their past, learn about the history of the area, is creating a point of interest and is contributing to a wider sense of community, place and pride.

The evaluation has also identified areas for growth and development, including a review of the volunteering programme, development of adult and community focused events and activities, digital delivery, audience development, marketing and ensuring that the long-term understanding of changes in motivations, attitudes and behaviours is built into an ongoing evaluation delivery plan. What is critical for the future success of the Museum is to develop programming - both formal and informal learning and events - that is firmly based on audiences and outcomes. This will ensure maximum reach and greater and more meaningful interaction with the communities that it strives to engage with.

The Folkestone Museum has turned a corner and is now well-positioned to make a tangible contribution to the wider community. Overall, it has become clear through the evaluation that the project has delivered a high-quality museum experience which visitors enjoy.



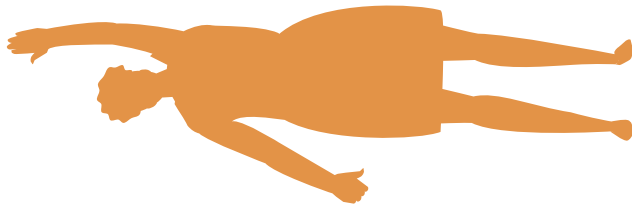
Interesting statistics

10,166

MODES records created

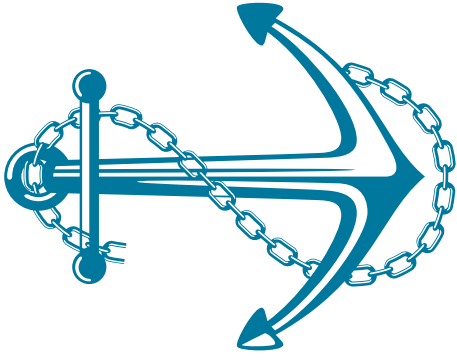
15,626

objects documented or audited



65

people have volunteered their time



300

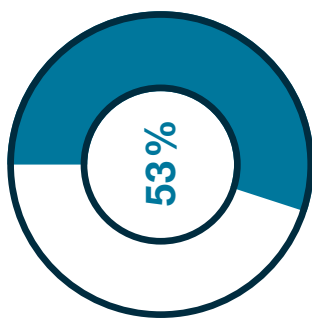
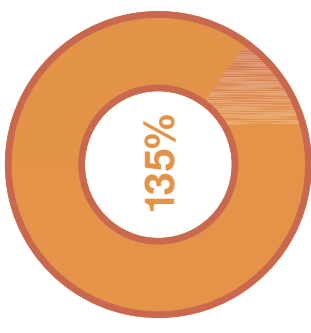
items conserved and displayed



new acquisitions to the collections

135%

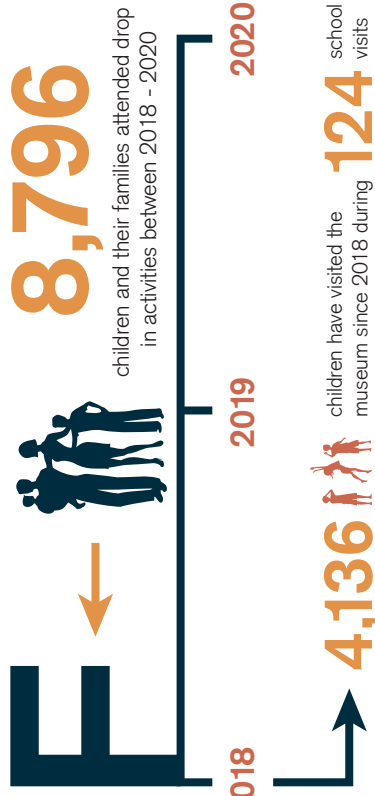
increase in website visits from 2017 to 2019



53% increase in Twitter followers

38,517

people visited the museum in 2018 - 9,000 more than the previous year



children and their families attended drop in activities between 2018 - 2020

children have visited the museum since 2018 during school visits

124

1. Project background

1.1. Project background

The Folkestone HEART project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, is an integral part of the Folkestone Town Council's initiative to bring together Folkestone's cultural and historic assets in the Old Town Hall. This marks the end of a long journey, from the collection's formation in the mid-19th century to more recent iterations as a history resource centre in the town's library. The significant archaeology, natural and social history and art collections have survived relatively intact through periods of dispersal, reorganisations of local government structures and the closure and deregistration of the original Folkestone Museum.

The vision behind the project was to save the town's heritage and provide a new Museum for the town - a haven to protect, preserve and promote the collections, increase and improve access to previously dispersed collections and encourage a sense of public ownership and pride in Folkestone's heritage. It was always intended that the Museum would promote a sense of pride amongst local residents, attract new audiences, contribute to the town's regeneration and help draw together a diverse population. The appetite for a local museum was demonstrated by initiatives such as the 2009 A Town Unearthed Project and the 2011-12 Treasures Revealed Project - with very few resources, one full-time staff member and 8 volunteers delivered 102 events and 34 workshops, involving 18,389 participants.

In October 2015, following the successful submission of the application developed by the Town Clerk, Folkestone Town Council (FTC) was awarded a Heritage Grant of up to £1,950,000 by the Heritage Fund, which represented 84% of the total project costs. The Museum was opened in May 2017 and in November 2018 was awarded Arts Council England Accreditation status, which was a major milestone for the collections, the project and the town.

1.2. Approved purposes

The National Lottery Heritage Fund set out the following approved purposes on which the FTC received funding:

- Report on progress towards meeting the additional grant conditions listed under Part 2 of this letter
- Carry out restoration and conversion of Folkestone Town Hall to create new museum display and storage spaces and visitor facilities, as set out in submitted capital development plans

- Fit-out the new museum and create displays and interpretation utilising the Folkestone Collections in five interlinking themes, as set out in the submitted design plans
- Deliver the community engagement, education and volunteering programme as set out in the submitted Activity Plan
- Carry out conservation and collections management work to Arts Council England accreditation standards as set out in the submitted Conservation Plan and Collections Audit

1.3. Target audiences

The target audiences identified in the Activity Plan were based on several earlier feasibility studies, market research and consultation exercises.

The core target audiences were given as:

- Family Groups
- School Groups
- Older people and adult learners
- Special Needs Adults and Children
- BAME and the Gurkha Community.

The following audiences were additional groups that the Museum expected to attract based on their catchment and demographics through targeted marketing and planned activities:

- Heritage and Arts Audiences
- Special interest visitors
- Events audiences
- 'Wanderers' (local visitors, domestic and international tourists staying in or around Folkestone who drop in without specifically planning a visit)
- Volunteers and interns
- Online Users

1.4. Planned activities

The 2015 Activity Plan recognised that the planned programme needed to appeal to their 'core' audience of retired locals with a keen interest in history and culture. However, one of the objectives of the Town Plan was to enhance the quality of life of the residents of Folkestone by providing services that reflected their needs.

As such, they identified that they also needed to maintain and build existing partnerships with key organisations within the community to attract core and new/ developing audiences, including schools, the Folkestone People's History Society, the Folkestone Research Archaeology Group and family groups. They also sought to develop potential new partnerships with nurseries, the Folkestone Library Users Group, local youth groups, special needs organisations, Age UK Folkestone, the Folkestone Adult Education Centre, language schools, the Gurkha Community, ARRC - Activities, Respite, Rehabilitation, Care Centres and the B48s Folkestone.

As well as offering semi-permanent exhibitions based on 5 key interpretative themes, the 2015 Activity Plan also planned to deliver the following umbrella activities to attract, appeal to and enrich the experiences of the cross-section of the target audiences, with various specific activities planned over the first 5 years.



Activity	Audience
Art Collections	Heritage and arts audiences, special interests, schools and researchers.
Archaeology Exhibitions	Heritage and arts audiences, special interest audiences, schools.
Social History Exhibitions	Heritage and arts audiences, special interest audiences, art and photography
Celebration of local figures	Heritage and arts audiences, schools
Workshops - creative and object handling, role play	Children Aged 5-11
Workshops - creative interpretations, collections and artefact study, creative writing based on objects	Children Aged 9-12
Workshops - find out about Folkestone through original historical sources. View and discuss historical objects and their value to history and archaeology.	Ages 16-18
Teacher and Museum Led Visits	5-18
Story and Craft Sessions	Age 3-5
Schools Outreach - Virtual Museum and Handling Boxes	8-16
Coffee and Culture - reminiscence and object handling	Heritage & art audiences Older people – 65 + Priority groups e.g. Age UK, Old People's Homes etc.
Talks	Heritage & art audiences Mostly adults
Walks	Heritage & art audiences including tourists Gurkha walks with a translator
Children's Workshops and Family Drop-In sessions, Heritage Story Time	Families including Gurkha Families
Finds Days - Archaeology and Paleontology	Heritage & art audiences Families Specialist
Virtual Museum: any theme	Harder to reach – Gurkha community, Online visitors

CASE STUDY: Outreach and Audience Development Officer

Experience of change

The Outreach and Audience Development Officer (OADO) joined the Museum in July 2019 on a part-time basis, moving to full time in October 2019.

During that time, the OADO has seen an increase in the community visiting the Museum as word of mouth marketing has increased - particularly about informal workshops and craft for children and families.

Since she started, the OADO feels the resilience of the Museum has improved and is in a much stronger position than it was. For her, the cause of this improvement has been the employment of a professional curator with appropriate experience - providing the Museum with stability, direction and new ideas.

Development of role

Initially focused on the outreach part of her role, the OADO says that now she is full time she is now also responsible for formal and informal education sessions, alongside other Museum duties as required, including exhibitions, event organisation and development of the Museum website. While the education side was not something she had significant experience in before, it has become one of her favourite parts of the job.

In terms of the skills she has developed, the main areas have been in workshop planning and organisation. *“The role requires a good level of organisation as it is multi-layered and I think I’ve learnt a lot about how to organise myself, my time and how I work much more efficiently.”* She has also identified an increase and diversification of her IT and digital skills through producing online content for homeschooling and crafting sessions during the lockdown.

The OADO felt that the Museum now had a positive buzz and energy about it and that this is something she hopes the team can capitalise upon and build on in the future. Before everything closed down for the pandemic, the OADO felt that the whole team were working well together and all pulling in the same direction which makes it a really enjoyable place to work.

Experience of self-worth, value, and ability

The OADO enjoys her role and feels extremely lucky to work there. She is looking forward to putting the team's big plans into action as soon as the team can return.

“My confidence, both within my role and personally, has increased and I’m delighted to be able to use and share my knowledge. Watching a child’s face light up on seeing an interesting artefact gives me an enormous

sense of well-being and satisfaction. I do feel valued in my role and that my contribution is appreciated and listened to. In general, I feel I have grown in the role and have more faith in my own abilities than before I started working at the Museum.”

Sense of community in Folkestone

The OADO feels that the project has been very good for Folkestone. She feels it has helped contribute to it being a better place to live and a source of pride for residents.

She also felt that the Museum provided an opportunity for second or third generations of the Nepalese community in Folkestone who now had somewhere where they could find out about the town's history in an accessible way and therefore help them connect with the wider Folkestone community. She noted that the same benefits would be true for people moving to the town from London or other parts of the country, giving them a place to find out about the history of the area and help them feel more knowledgeable and embedded.

However, despite having been open for nearly three years, the OADO noted that people are still visiting for the first time, walking around and saying they never knew the Museum was there.

In terms of future development, the OADO felt that there are opportunities around developing a community hub at the museum. She is already starting a session for older residents called 'coffee and culture' where visitors can come and have a short talk about the collections. She also sees opportunities around parent and toddler sessions and making the Museum available for children's birthday parties. This last option she feels would generate additional income, as well as increasing awareness of the Museum among more of the town's population.

Improvements

On reflection, the only improvements or recommendations the OADO made were around improving the marketing and promotion of the Museum among more of the community. The fact that so many people in the community still are not aware of the Museum is frustrating for the OADO.

She also identified that much of the Roman collection was underutilised and required re-interpretation, but stressed this was something the curator was aware of and was acting on. She also felt there were opportunities around improving the reception and front of house space in the museum, to include more retail opportunities - again stressing that this was something the curator was addressing before Covid-19.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1. Methodology

An outline evaluation methodology was given in the 2015 Activity Plan, which committed the project team to collect qualitative and quantitative data relating to the project aims and outcomes (discussed below). At that time, a formative evaluation programme was planned that would consist of: periodic visitor surveys; testing visitor satisfaction; evaluating the learning experience; evaluating informal learning and activities, and; evaluating the volunteer experience.

Although the Activity Plan did have an Action Plan, very few specific targets or measures of success were included in the grid. Feedback forms were collected during some formal and informal learning sessions but these were sporadic, inconsistent and were not suitable for purpose. Project evaluation was one of the areas that suffered the most during the project delays and problems with delivery.

Evaluation commenced in Summer 2019, following the appointment of Tricolor, when the project was paused and limited opportunities remained in which to gather information. Our interim evaluation report, in January 2020, provided an opportunity to create a project Logic Model (see Appendix 1) and analyse what information had been collected. We were able to identify gaps in project learnings and support the Museum in developing a 6-month delivery programme as part of the project extension. This included tools for the Museum to gather quantitative evidence towards the achievement of longer-term outcomes. We were particularly interested in demonstrating how the project has improved the Museum's resilience, developed partnerships within the community and hard-to-reach audiences, and contributed to an overall improvement in a sense of civic pride and wellbeing. Unfortunately, soon afterwards the Museum was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.2. Evaluation data sets

For this report we have been able to draw on the below qualitative and quantitative data sets, although they are sometimes incomplete:

- Visitor numbers, provided by breakbeam counters
- Activity booking database
- Feedback forms
- Volunteer hour logs
- Website and social media logs
- Online surveys to targeted audiences / users (staff, stakeholders, teachers, volunteers and community groups) - see Appendix 3 for analysis
- 1-2-1 interviews

A full breakdown of survey and interview respondents can be found in Appendix 3.

CASE STUDY: Sarah - Primary School Teacher

Sarah first visited the Museum for an educational workshop in September 2019. Her reception (Early Years) class were doing a project on dinosaurs and she worked with the learning team to develop a bespoke session for her class. Since then, the school she works for has visited the Museum again, although Sarah has not taken another class herself.

The session lasted one hour, and included use of some of the Museum's interactives, such as the dig pit, and a variety of fossils. The children loved being able to dig things in the sand and open the drawers to see what inside. Sarah said she felt the session was well designed and was inspiring for the children who wanted to continue learning about the subject when they returned to school. She felt that the staff were very welcoming and helpful at designing the bespoke learning session for her and the class.

The session was not designed to be focused on engaging the children with the heritage of Folkestone, but what the school has tried to do is encourage the children to view the Museum as 'their museum'. The school is just a short walk away from the Museum, and they want the children to return regularly for sessions so they feel a sense of ownership of

the space and the heritage it explains.

The children were too young to be able to report changes in behaviour and wellbeing as a result of the session, but she could confidently say that the children enjoyed their time at the Museum and learnt something from the session.

In addition, the school works with children who come from communities and backgrounds where a visit to a museum is not something they would do with their families. In fact, following the session, one or two of the children managed to persuade their parents to take them on another visit to the Museum- something that would not normally be part of their family time.

Since the visit with her class, Sarah has visited the Museum with her own children and family. She feels that the Museum is a safe place to visit and she plans to visit again with her family post Covid-19. Sarah noted that the whole Museum is interesting for her and her older children, but suggested that they get the most from a visit when there are activities and sessions on site. She finds her children engage more with costumed interpreters, activities and sessions than with static interpretation.

She particularly felt that having a museum in the renovated Town Hall has been a significant improvement for the community in Folkestone - it provides 'wet weather' activities to do with the children in the school holidays and weekends, something that was missing before. Although she does not think the Museum on its own is responsible for improving the perception of Folkestone, it does contribute to a stronger positive identity for the town.

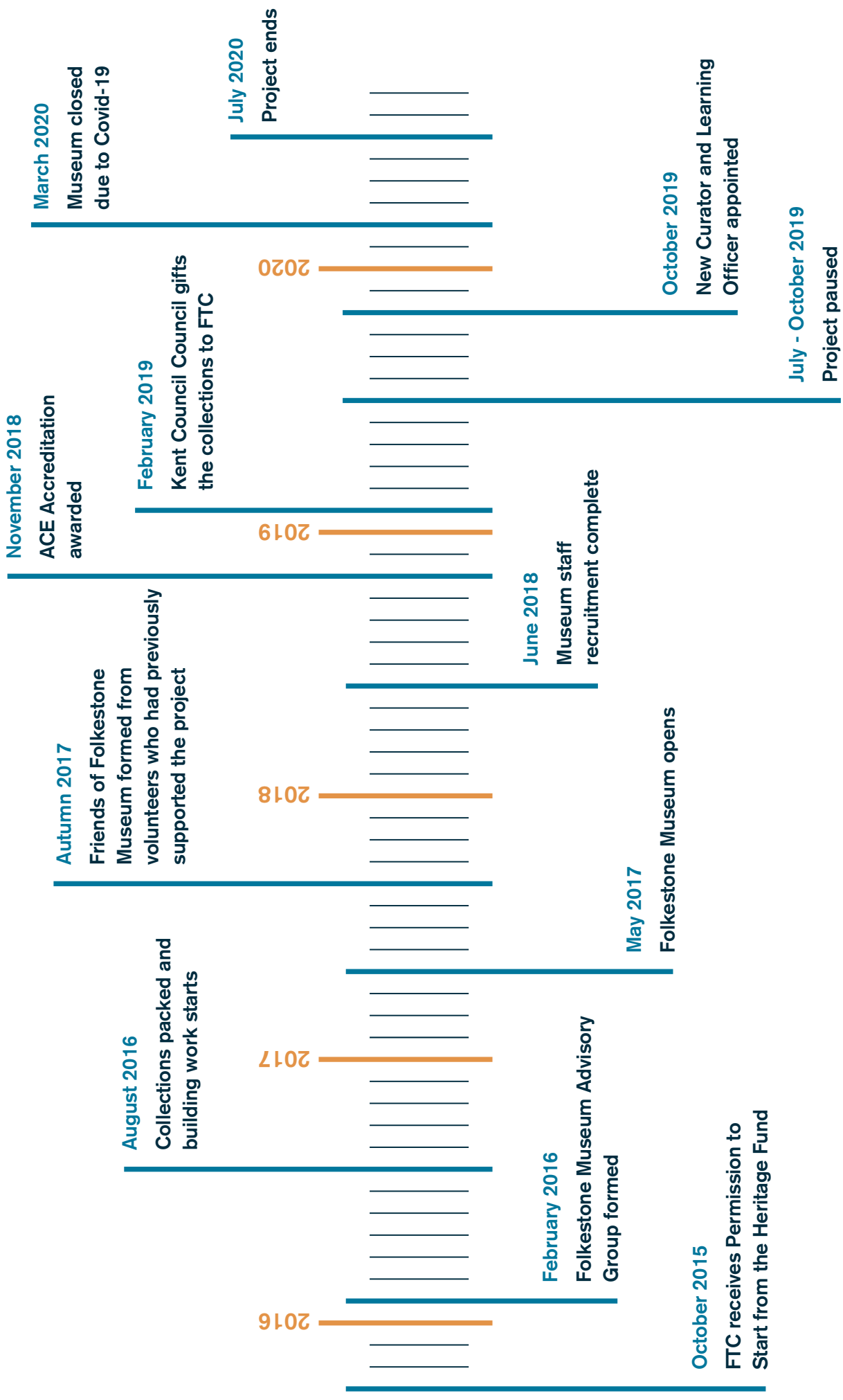
In terms of improvements or recommendations for the Museum, Sarah identified a weakness in the Museum's marketing and engagement with teachers and schools. She noted that many parents at her school wouldn't know about the Museum. She suggested that the school could promote school holiday activities at the Museum through their parent's Facebook page if they were given details.

She also pointed out that she didn't know about the online resources available during the Covid-19 lockdown. Had she known about them, she would have looked at them for their suitability for her homeschooling suggestions.

Post project, Sarah suggested that her school would be keen to continue working with the Museum. They see it as an important resource for their children and are excited to bring classes to sessions designed according to the curriculum.



3. Project achievements



3.1. Capital works

The capital works associated with the Folkestone HEART project were focused upon creating exhibition and storage space within the Town Hall. The core aim has been the development and maintenance of a curated and accredited museum within the Town Hall that not only conserves the town's cultural heritage but also brings together the key assets of the town (the Town Hall, the collections and the cinema), thus making a lasting difference to the town's heritage, people and communities providing a heritage hub: Folkestone's HEART.

The Grade II Listed Town Hall dates from 1860, but went out of public ownership in the 1980s. Folkestone Town Council bought back the Town Hall in June 2011 and following essential capital works moved into the Town Hall in December 2012, by which time it was already identified as a potential home for the future museum. The renovations of the basement and ground floor space collocated the collections and Museum staff with the town's civic offices, as well as providing improved space and access for the existing cinema. Works to the Town Hall funded as part of the Folkestone HEART project were:

- New permanent and temporary exhibition space on the lower and ground floor levels with associated lighting and technical support, security measures and interpretation
- New education room (32 students) / meeting room on the lower ground floor
- Collections stores, with appropriate environmental controls and rack storage
- Improved access throughout, including a lift to all three stories and refurbished stairs
- Better facilities, including refurbished toilets and new disabled WC
- Refurbishment of the original auditorium (now cinema space)
- Reordering of the ground floor to create a flexible civic space, including a new Tourist Information Point, meeting room and reception area.

Before the HF project, the Folkestone Collection, much of which required conservation, was dispersed throughout the region and largely inaccessible. The majority of the collection was in basement storage at the Folkestone Library and some of the more valuable items, including the Master Collection, was in secure accommodation elsewhere or displayed in County Hall in Maidstone. There was also a large archaeological archive requiring suitable storage, research and eventual display. The permanent exhibition has been developed along 5 themes: Invasion and Migration; Embarkation / Refugees; Natural History; Fashionable Folkestone, and; Maritime Folkestone. There are a large number of interactive stations associated with the exhibition and a temporary exhibition space on the lower floor.

Overall, people's responses to the reconfigured space are extremely positive and perceptions of the Town Hall have dramatically improved as a result of the project. Before the project the Town Hall itself was either not noticed by survey respondents, or regarded as a beautiful, historic but underused building, with words such as 'tired', 'dated', 'sad,' being most frequently used to describe the site. From the general survey, 77% of people have significantly changed their opinions of the Town Hall since the Museum opened. It is now regarded by many as a community treasure. The ground floor, which functions as the entrance to the Museum as well as the reception for the civic offices, was particularly thought to give a good impression of the town. FTC staff members also commented that the environment is better for council services and that the day to day interaction with the public is improved.

“The Museum really places the town hall at the heart of the town's cultural history.”

Within the Museum, it is thought that the project has done a good job in making the exhibition areas feel 'modern and open and quite light.' Comments refer to the flexibility of the space, and that it is easy to deliver activities, particularly with the high quality of the fit-out and equipment.

Across the surveys and 1-2-1 interviews, the lack of signage outside of the Town Hall was repeatedly raised as an area requiring improvement. There were several comments referring to the lack of visibility from the street, and that local people may still not be aware that the Museum is there. This led to comments about marketing and advertising of programming and events in general, and how that more promotion of Museum activities across different platforms would be welcomed. The reception / front of house area, and the lack of a retail offer, was also repeatedly commented upon, and the Museum is already addressing these concerns.

3.2. Activities

The learning and participation elements of the project (which cover the majority of the project's activities) were based on five key aims:

- **Aim 1:** To develop a challenging, interesting and engaging offer for both general and special interest visitors that enables them to engage with the collections.
- **Aim 2:** To protect, preserve and promote the collection for the good of the community so that there is a sense of pride about the Museum within the community.
- **Aim 3:** To increase opportunities to engage with the town hall and the heritage of the town through research, interpretation, events and exhibitions.

- **Aim 4:** To develop structured and well planned educational and interpretative resources both in terms of life-long learning and information targeted at schools, families and young people.
- **Aim 5:** To engage individuals through volunteering and training opportunities and to provide opportunities for them to learn more about heritage and develop skills in areas such as tourism, customer service and disability awareness.

These aims formed the basis of the project's Action Plan and activity interventions.

The interventions broadly fit under four main categories:

- Partnership working
- Planned Activities (formal and informal learning)
- Volunteers, and
- Training

3.3. Activity Plan - delivery

Delivery of the activity Action Plan was found to be more challenging which meant that by May 2019 a portion of the planned activities had not been delivered and the project was not meeting all the intended outcomes for people or the community.

The new curator felt that the reason for this was that the initial consultation creating the Activity Plan was too narrow. It did not engage enough of the community in its design and was therefore stilted. The team recognises the need to boost community engagement and tell the real story of Folkestone. This is being addressed through revised interpretation panels within the Museum, ensuring there is a narrative appropriate to every part of the community.

To support the interpretation review and project outcomes a new delivery plan was created by the Town Clerk in Autumn 2019 and was scheduled to run until May 2020. Up until this point, evaluation had been sporadic, with data not routinely collected or monitored. Evaluation (both qualitative and quantitative) was built into the development of the new delivery plan so that the Museum would have a number of indicators and a strong evidence base to demonstrate that they were, in fact, meeting project outcomes.

This new delivery plan was partially realised, however, as challenges relating to flooding at the Museum and the Covid-19 pandemic meant these were paused. The one activity programme that was successfully delivered, Science Week, does show that there is interest and potential within the Museum, staff and volunteers to create engaging and quality activities for a variety of audiences.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the staff team has focused on making learning and educational resources and sessions available online for schools, teachers and parents to use. This was planned to be delivered during lockdown through the new BETA learning website, however, this has only just gone live in July 2020. It is now hoped that the website will provide a user- friendly learning resource for teachers and families over the summer.

3.4. Activity Plan - targets

As discussed above (Section 2.1) the Action Plan did not, on the whole, set clear targets for engagement or participation in the post-opening planned activities. However, we have extracted and collated the planned activities with the general measures of success originally set and have noted where we can evidence the results (see Appendix 2 for discussion).



Planned activity	Targets and measures of success (from Action Plan)	Results
Access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More visitors that have physical impairments, are infirm or more families with pushchairs come to the site 2. Improved visitor experience 3. Volunteers with disabilities able to access all areas 	<p>The Museum is fully accessible, with lifts and appropriate signage for all users considered within the design of the capital works, and no issues were anecdotally flagged during the final evaluation consultation.</p>
Interpretation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased engagement and enjoyment of children and families in the permanent exhibition spaces 2. Hands-on learning experiences 	<p>General feedback indicates that this has been achieved but is difficult to quantify based on paucity of information.</p>
Exhibitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changing programme, curated by the Museum, local special interest groups, and schools 2. Visiting public have a positive experience 	<p>The Booking Database shows that a variety of activities, talks and events were carried out but there is a lack of evidence to report further.</p>
Formal Educational Visits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 4 children's workshops in year 1 as part of pilot, Year 2 six workshops, year 3 eight, year 4 & 5 ten workshops 	<p>Monitored booking data was only available for evaluation from 2018 onwards. However, from the data recorded the project far exceeded its aims:</p> <p>2018 - 62 Primary Visits (2,154 children)</p> <p>2019 - 45 Primary Visits (1,459 children; 2 Secondary School Visits (61 children)</p> <p>2020 (January - March) - 13 Primary Visits (402 children); 2 Secondary School Visits (60 children)</p>
School Outreach (Virtual Museum, handling boxes and staff delivering workshops in schools)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased use of website 2. Increased engagement of schools that cannot travel in 3. More schools engaged through outreach opportunities with handling boxes 	<p>The educational website only went live in July 2020, although downloadable PDF resources were distributed via social media during Lockdown.</p> <p>There is a record of 6 loan boxes (5 Seaside Loan Boxes and 1 Fossil Loan Box) being shared with schools to a total of 210 Primary Aged children.</p>
Children and family Workshops and craft sessions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance 2. Families have fun 3. Visitors return and recommend to other families 	<p>From 2018-2020, 8796 children and their families have attended for drop in/ School Holiday activities.</p> <p>The completed evaluation forms provided for the final report showed that between 80-97.55% of attendees rated the family workshops as 'Excellent'.</p>
Adult informal learning programmes (heritage walks, talks, and craft sessions)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No. of participants taking part 2. Enjoyment of participants 3. No. of community groups and local historians etc. contributing 	<p>54 feedback forms submitted for the final evaluation report were from events targeted to adult learners, friends and volunteers. Between 60-87% of respondents rated their experience as 'Excellent'.</p> <p>There is no central record available that records the total number of adult learners who have participated during the life of the project.</p>

Partnership working with community organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No of participants 2. Enjoyment of participants 3. Sessions in partnership with Gurkha community 	Community photographic exhibition by South Kent Mind about 'Diverse Folkestone' and 'World in a Tent' exhibition, co-produced with the Nepalese community, were both cancelled due to Covid-19.
Volunteers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100 involved over life of project 2. Enjoyment and retention of volunteers 3. Volunteers gain new or enhanced skills, knowledge or understanding. 	<p>The current curator feels that the original target of 100 volunteers throughout the life of the project was unrealistic and too high. There is no record, but we believe that approximately 65 volunteers have worked at Folkestone Museum throughout the project excluding the Friends, with 28 volunteers on the current security pass register.</p> <p>Some volunteers have been with the project since the Museum was at the Heritage Resource Centre and are hoping to return to the Museum despite frustrations within their roles. These frustrations were centred around their being unable to learn new skills, or opportunity to use their existing ones. 75% of the 9 volunteers surveyed stated that they found their role enjoyable.</p>
Marketing: Website, Social Media and Print Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of visitors and interactions 2. Increased visitors to the museum 3. Increased awareness of the Museum 	<p>Website visits are increasing year on year, though this is driven by events rather than proactive advertising of the website itself:</p> <p>2017/18 - 8,605 2018/19 - 14,323 2019/20 - 20,301</p> <p>Facebook Likes have increased from 1348 in 2017/ 2018 to 2294 in 2019/2020; Twitter followers have increased from 350 to 536.</p> <p>Physical visitors to the Museum have also increased year-on-year from an estimated (based on breakbeam calculations) 29,407 from April 2017 to 38,517 in 2019. Visitor numbers in 2020 were 8,279 up until March 2020.</p> <p>No printed materials were presented for analysis. However anecdotal evidence in the surveys and 1-2-1 interviews suggested that improved outdoor signage and more obvious front-of-house promotion would benefit the Museum in raising its profile amongst people who were still unaware of the Museum and what it had to offer.</p>
Evaluation of public activities and partnerships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surveys and activity evaluation forms 	<p>From the Action Plan, it appears as though evaluation of the project was originally planned to be delivered in-house following the creation of an Evaluation Framework by external consultants. Tricolor has been appointed to undertake the evaluation instead.</p>

Despite being able to collate the above data, it represents a fraction of the potential data that could have been collected. Indeed, the progress reports suggest significantly higher engagement, but we have not seen the evidence to prove that these numbers were accurate.

In the interim report, the lack of quantitative data was highlighted as a critical weakness within the evaluation and monitoring process. As part of Tricolor's role as evaluation consultant, training and resources were provided to the Museum team, supporting them to develop processes and principles for data collection when planning and delivering activities. During the period between the interim report and the final report, one major activity was delivered - Science Week. Science Week represented the first time the Museum had pulled together an activity programme that spanned multiple audiences and new and immersive experiences. It was also the first time the team built evaluation data collection into the planning of this large scale activity.

CASE STUDY: Science Week

To celebrate British Science Week, Folkestone Museum ran a series of events between 6th and 14th March 2020 titled 'CSI Folkestone'. These events were aimed at both school groups and adults. The week included:

- Morning formal learning workshops for schools
- Afternoon drop-ins for schools and families
- Takeover and evening performance by Lunatractors, a performance art duet
- Evening lecture by Dr Andrew Richardson
- Weekends either side of science week were themed days, based on the Anglo Saxons

The activity programme was focused around archaeological science and corresponded with the announcement of the recent carbon dating results of the skeleton of St Eanswythe. The Museum was able to connect and expand upon this using its own collection of Anglo Saxon artefacts.

Outcomes for People

Learning outcomes

Feedback from the attendees at Dr Andrew Richardson's talk showed that all 23 participants

who submitted a feedback card felt strongly that they had learnt something new and they had been personally and emotionally engaged as a result of the lecture. All the respondents strongly agreed that they had enjoyed their visit to the Museum.

In addition, 96% of children from Stella Maris Primary School (Year 6) enjoyed their workshops. They most enjoyed learning about Anglo Saxon artefacts and the CSI Laboratory (Science) theme. The teacher from the school felt the sessions provided excellent student participation and encouraged student inquiry. The session had good connections to specific curriculum outcomes, student communication and enhanced learning.

Schools

Over 245 children from 6 different schools participated in the morning formal learning sessions. The ages of the children ranged from Year 4 to Year 9. The sessions represented one of the first times the Museum had engaged Key Stage 3 pupils since the formal learning programme began.

Feedback from a Year 4 primary teacher indicated that the children really enjoyed their workshop sessions as part of Science Week. Being able to walk the children up to the Museum and engage them in a series of science-based activities was tightly linked to the curriculum was very welcome. The teacher felt that the sessions explored a range of topics that were new to the children, such as encouraging them to use lines of enquiry. The teacher intended to expand on many of the topics explored in the session, and more broadly around civic pride and the role of a museum later in her classroom, but sadly just two days after the workshop, the schools were closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Outcomes for Heritage

The primary outcome for heritage from Science Week was being able to connect a piece of extremely significant local archaeological heritage to the Museum's strong Anglo Saxon collections. The project built on the museum's already rich collection with the important carbon dating findings of St Eanswythe.

Outcomes for Communities

The Science Week project was an excellent way of integrating the Museum into the heritage of Folkestone and making the artefacts on display in the Museum relevant to new audiences.

School teachers felt that the sessions provided an excellent opportunity to connect their students to the wider history and heritage of Folkestone, however, they were not able to capitalise upon this because of the closure of schools.

KPI data

- 1,066 people engaged with activities at the Museum over Science Week
- 245 of these were school children
- 30 were adults at the evening lecture, many from the CT20 and CT19 postcodes of Folkestone District.

Analysis

Science Week was a sea change for the team at Folkestone Museum. They took the opportunity of British Science Week to run a programme of activities for different audiences at one time, rather than staggering them over a longer period. The programme also focused on different audiences, like adults and the creative community within Folkestone.

Although some elements of the project did not work as expected, such as the Lunatractors take over, the Museum tried something new to engage hard to reach audiences. They embraced a wider section of the community through themed family events and interesting talks.

The project was also an opportunity to embed evaluation into the central process of running a programme of events at the Museum. They were able to collect accurate quantitative data and qualitative feedback from participants.

This shows what the Museum has learnt over the past two years. When they are organised, focused and audience centred, they can put on excellent events and collect meaningful feedback that will make future projects stronger.

4. Outcomes for Heritage

The Folkestone HEART project has successfully delivered all of the anticipated outcomes for heritage. The new Museum was completed in the Town Hall in 2017 and the disparate collections are now managed under one roof in a permanent home by a professional staff team, have been Accredited by the Arts Council England, and are under a process of careful monitoring and conservation.

Better managed because:

- the heritage will be conserved and more accessible,
- the dispersed collections will be brought together in a central location;

- the new stores will meet appropriate environmental conditions;
- permanent officers will be appointed to care for the collections;
- and the collection will be catalogued and digitised, the Town Hall will provide a secure and sustainable museum.

Through the work of the conservation volunteers and the work of the curator, the collection has been conserved and made more accessible through the project.

Most recently, the new curator has done a review of all of the interpretation on display in the Museum and has identified opportunities for display and reinterpretation particularly within the Roman area of the museum. This part of the project was paused due to the pandemic crisis but is well progressed and the curator intends to complete this upon their return to the museum.

- the dispersed collections will be brought together in a central location; the new stores will meet appropriate environmental conditions; permanent officers will be appointed to care for the collections; the collection will be catalogued and digitised, and; the Town Hall will provide a secure and sustainable museum.

Thanks to the work of volunteers and the curatorial staff, a strong collections management process has been established, and the Museum has achieved Accreditation status.

During the project, the Museum experienced a flood. Following this challenging situation, the environmental controls for the collections were upgraded, and all items have now been assessed for damage, conservation plans put in place, and repacked or stored.

Museum MODES has been installed at the Museum and volunteers have now digitised over 10,000 items from the collection. In addition, a paper catalogue of all items from pre-1960 has been analysed and these are now added to the object listings within MODES. This means that the Museum has a more holistic understanding of each of its historic objects and accurate records are now available digitally. This will greatly improve the management of the collection going forward.

Most importantly, however, Folkestone now has a high-quality museum experience where the entire collection is all under the management of a specialist agency. The importance of the objects is now recognised and interpreted for the people of Folkestone once again. The collection was treated as an archive - now it is a living part of Folkestone's history, accessible and well cared for thanks to the collections volunteers. In addition, the appointment of the curator in October 2019 has added much needed professional collections experience and oversight - helping to preserve the future for the Museum and its objects.

In better condition because:

- heritage that has been hidden for over 40 years will be conserved and made available to the public,
- permanent officers will be guided by the new management and maintenance plan to ensure the ongoing protection of the collections and the building.

“Great place - and a wonderful asset for Folkestone, its inhabitants and visitors to enjoy and be proud of. It's in a good position and easily accessible for people of all ages and abilities.” - survey response

Not only has the historic Town Hall been made accessible for the wider public again, but the Museum's collections are now available and accessible for visitors. Through the project, it became clear that the original exhibitions only showcased a small portion of the items available, and following his appointment the new curator has led a small project to increase the amount of the collection on display, making even more objects available for visitors to the Museum.

As mentioned above, new conservation management and maintenance for the entire collection has been completed, including a dedicated condition audit of the fine art collection led by Krystyna Matyjaszkiewicz in 2019/20. The condition audit has highlighted that one significant work, a portrait of Sir Edward Watkin, who had a major impact on Folkestone's late Victorian history as local MP and railway promoter & director, is worthy of conservation and could then be immediately displayed.

Better interpreted and explained because:

- new and exciting ways of interpreting the heritage such as a comprehensive website, smartphone app, interactive displays, community events, talks, exhibits and workshops will ensure this project provides a focus for wider community engagement,
- understanding the key stories of the town and its people is essential to re-establishing Folkestone's identity.

Thanks to the new interpretation, interactive displays, community events and talks the Museum's heritage is better interpreted and explained. Feedback from visitors suggests that they find the Museum enjoyable and interesting, with many saying the redisplay of the objects is engaging. The Museum has been particularly successful at connecting with school groups and families during holidays.

The interim evaluation report highlighted that activities aimed at adult learners and the community more generally had not been happening in line with the Activity Plan. A new

programme of events was scheduled for the following six months including more talks and an exhibition in conjunction with the Nepalese community. However, the pandemic in March required the Museum to close its doors and sadly it was not possible to deliver the programmed activities.

Two evening events were held as part of the museum's 'Science Week', the first the culmination of East Kent musical duo Luntatratkors Thursday residency with the composition and performance of 'The Truth of St Eanswythe's Bones.' The second evening event, on Friday, was a lecture by Dr Andrew Richardson delving into the science behind the work done on St Eanswythe's relics which has proved almost beyond doubt that the relics are of one of England's earliest saints; both events were well received.

From the end of project survey, there are repeated statements captured that illustrate that there is a sense of pride returning to the town from many respondents as a result of the project. However, this is tempered with realism that more work is required to improve other areas of the town and the wider offer.

When asked if they agreed with the statement "I am prouder to live in Folkestone because of the Museum", 36 agreed and 34 strongly agreed.

However, some constructive criticism of the Museum from survey respondents suggested that important elements of the Town's maritime and seafaring heritage were not as well communicated as it could have been:

“It has a purpose but unfortunately the path it's gone down is the wrong path - the connection with the sea, the community and visitors to the town [is not well made].”

“The history surrounding Folkestone...is the sea as well as the land”

“It is a seaside place but has no real strength in knowledge or communication with things like local fishermen from years ago, ships sunk off the coast of Folkestone etc, very disappointed.”

These comments, should, however, be taken with a pinch of salt. According to two professional advisors to the Museum, the idea of Folkestone being particularly a fishing town is a modern social construct. Whether or not fishing and seafaring is a part of the town's history, the community thinks that is and feels some connection to this. Therefore, there are opportunities around exploring local stories and folklore and the role this plays in local identity, if not rooted in historical truth.

Better identified/recorded because:

- a comprehensive catalogue of Folkestone's heritage has been produced,

- the Town Hall will be seen as a centre of excellence, renowned for its arts, heritage and tourism, allowing local people to be proud of their town.

The comprehensive digital catalogue of the Museum's collection has been completed, using Museum MODES, with volunteers making quick progress through the backlog following additional training on inputting data directly into the system. As has already been mentioned, the collections review has been completed and this has improved the care and recording of the objects and artefacts.

The Museum has also achieved Accreditation standard, a landmark for the collection, and gives the Museum a solid standpoint for ongoing management of the collections.

According to a survey of local residents, opinions of the Town Hall have also improved significantly for the majority (77%) since Folkestone Museum reopened. Before the regeneration of the Town Hall, respondents said that the space was 'Tired' (38%) and Dated (32%). The community felt it was imposing and underutilised, not welcoming and people didn't have a reason to go in. When asked how the project had changed their opinions of the town hall, respondents said:

"It has added to the movement that's growing in Folkestone. A time of change and prosperity for the town. The Museum is a space to celebrate Folkestone's wonderful history."

"It has given us a feeling of optimism and generates interest in local history."

"The Museum really places the town hall at the heart of the town's cultural history."

Analysis

The Folkestone HEART project has made a positive contribution to the preservation and accessibility of the heritage of Folkestone for its residents. The project has taken provision for these heritage assets from a 'locked away' historic resource to an active and vibrant accredited museum collection made accessible to everyone.

The project has secured the future of the town's historic assets and preserved the Town Hall, making it more welcoming and interesting for visitors. Perceptions of the Town Hall are also changing, with people now feeling they are visiting a community hub space that was significantly underutilised.

The end of project consultation has revealed that many of the local residents feel their history and heritage has a permanent home. The collections are now well managed and the exhibition and display areas will be (after the pandemic has eased) full of more of the collection, interpreted and explained for more visitors to enjoy.

In these ways, the project has met and in some ways exceeded the outcomes for heritage as originally anticipated.

CASE STUDY: Friends of Folkestone Museum

The Friends of Folkestone Museum have been involved since the very beginning of the process, lobbying for the return of the Museum's collection from Kent County Council. They were significant supporters of the Town Hall project. Initially set up as the Museum Partnership Group, the organisation developed into the Friends of the Museum once the Folkestone HEART project got underway.

The Friends mainly support the work of the Museum through hosting a monthly talk as well as publicising the Museum through events and newsletters. They operate like the informal marketing support team for the service. Through the new curator, the Friends feel actively involved in the Museum and have a dynamic group of trustees.

The Chair of the Friends highlighted that having the Museum resource available had helped her personally to connect with the local history and heritage of the town. Before the project, she felt that the collection had been downgraded to a history resource centre, but now with accreditation, the objects and collection are given more status.

The Friends are also very supportive of the community outreach work undertaken by the Museum - particularly the work with the Nepalese community and older people through Age UK and Mind. They feel that outreach activities have helped to integrate these audiences into the core of the museum, allowing them to engage with the heritage of the town in a new way.

They feel the museum's content reflects well the variety of Folkestone's history and that the temporary exhibitions involve the community very well.

The Friends felt that there was a long way to go in restoring civic pride in Folkestone.

Certainly, as part of the Creative Quarter, the Museum is contributing to the regeneration to this part of Folkestone. They felt the Museum should play a focal and central role in this, which to date has been missing.

When in the Town Hall it would be difficult to 'miss' the museum, but they suggested more signage and positive encouragement to visit the Museum should be considered.

Increasing outreach and community involvement in temporary exhibitions were seen as one way the Museum could improve its depth of connection with the local community. It was also

felt that there was no unified style in the design of temporary exhibitions and that sometimes exhibitions were in place too long to keep interest high for repeat visitors.

Overall, the Friends are delighted in the Folkestone HEART project and feel it has been money well invested. They are extremely pleased with the quality of the exhibition and display areas, and having been involved for so long, are pleased that Folkestone has such a high-quality community resource.

5. Outcomes for People

As part of the Folkestone HEART project evaluation the outcomes for people were also assessed. Outcomes for people were mainly focused around developing skills, having an enjoyable experience, volunteering time and changing attitudes and behaviours as a result of the project. While we feel confident that the Museum has met many of these outcomes, there remain opportunities for growth.

People have developed skills in:

- conservation, collection care & maintenance, digitisation and project management.
- have learnt about heritage through:
- access to the collections,
- an innovative schools programme,
- access to loan boxes,

Through the Folkestone HEART project, over 2,000 volunteer hours have been dedicated to conservation, collections care and digitisation of the Museum's collections. The Museum now has a new collections management system, Museum MODES. One volunteer, Richard, has created a new accession register of the old paper archive that was previously at the Library - completely digitising a very disjointed register.

The Museum has created a schools programme that is well attended and well received by schools. Over 124 school sessions have been carried out on-site since 2017, a total of 4,136 children. This has included the creation of 6 loan boxes which are made available to schools.

The feedback from students and teachers also shows high levels of engagement and self-reported learning as a result of the school learning programme, all of which is encouraging and shows that the programme is delivering against this outcome.

Opportunities for growth in skill development outcomes

- new and engaging exhibitions, workshops and talks.

The Museum has delivered engaging exhibitions, workshops and talks, but the interim evaluation identified a weakness in the development of all three for adult and hard to reach audiences in the period before December 2019. The Friends of the Museum occasionally run talks to support the Museum which are well attended but adult audiences were otherwise missing from the Museum's programme.

Since then the Museum had planned to rectify this through an exhibition with the Nepalese community (May 2020) and through the Science Week programme (March 2020).

As can be seen in the Case Study, Science Week was a particularly successful programme which embraced a variety of different audiences through a week-long programme of events.

Sadly, the co-produced exhibition with the Nepalese community had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The purpose of this exhibition was to tell the story of the community in Folkestone, linking to a similar programme at Maidstone Museum. A Story Mat was produced to support this exhibition by a group of older Nepalese ladies from the community.

Sadly, given that the exhibition was cancelled, at this time we cannot confidently say that the Museum has met this outcome well. However, the intention was there for this exhibition and others to be the turning point for the Museum team and the exhibition will be reprogrammed once the Museum is again open and functioning, post-pandemic.

- digital technology,

There have been some significant advancements concerning developing skills in digital technology at the museum. The volunteers have had training in the MODES cataloguing software, and digitisation of the collections has included photography to provide a full digital record for each object.

The Museum has also developed a suite of online learning resources for schools prompted by the Covid-19 lockdown. The Outreach and Audience Development Officer supported by the Marketing and Communications Officer has taken on the bulk of this work, creating the website and developing the resources - with the OADO specifically noting that her IT skills have significantly improved.

However, we feel there is still an opportunity to increase the digital skills of both staff and volunteers. The digital training of volunteers beyond those working in collections management has not been reviewed. There are several opportunities we have identified

relating to development in this area:

- Digital marketing and communications
- Digital delivery of learning and education sessions
- Management and promotion of online learning resources.

The creation of online learning resources is one major way the team has started to develop new digital skills. With the ongoing future of education and learning sessions by schools still uncertain, there are more opportunities the Museum could explore – around delivering online sessions and diversifying online learning materials.

It is also not clear from the evaluation data collected whether a full skills audit of volunteers and staff has been completed in relation to digital skills. This is an activity that would highlight where there are gaps, and how these might be addressed.

People have had an enjoyable experience through:

- participation in fun, interesting and rewarding programmes of activities and events,
- cross-generation social interaction and wide family audiences,
- good customer service and a warm inviting welcome to the Town Hall,
- a volunteering programme that helps to deliver the Museum from conception to daily operation,

The interim report found that there was a large amount of evidence supporting that visitors to the Museum have a very enjoyable experience. 82% of visitors who left feedback between 2018 and 2019 left exclusively positive comments. The remaining 12% of comments were either partially positive, negative, or unrelated.

From the general survey completed in 2020, visitor satisfaction level was high - with 70% of those who had visited rated their experience 'Very Good' and with 24% rating it 'good'.

70% of respondents who have visited strongly agreed that the exhibitions and displays were interesting, and 60% strongly agreed that they had learnt something new. Teachers and school groups, in particular, felt that the Museum was welcoming and inviting.

There was also evidence of cross-generational engagement with families attending workshops and feedback from grandparents using the standard response form. The general public survey completed in 2020 found that over 30% of the respondents were from families with grandchildren.

For visitors, there was a feeling that the visit could be improved through improved signage, providing a shop and having more local information. These issues had already been identified by the Museum team, who were in the process of redesigning the layout of the reception area to make it more welcoming, increase visibility and provide a small retail space. Although this project was not completed before the Museum had to close, it was well progressed and should be completed either shortly before or just after reopening.

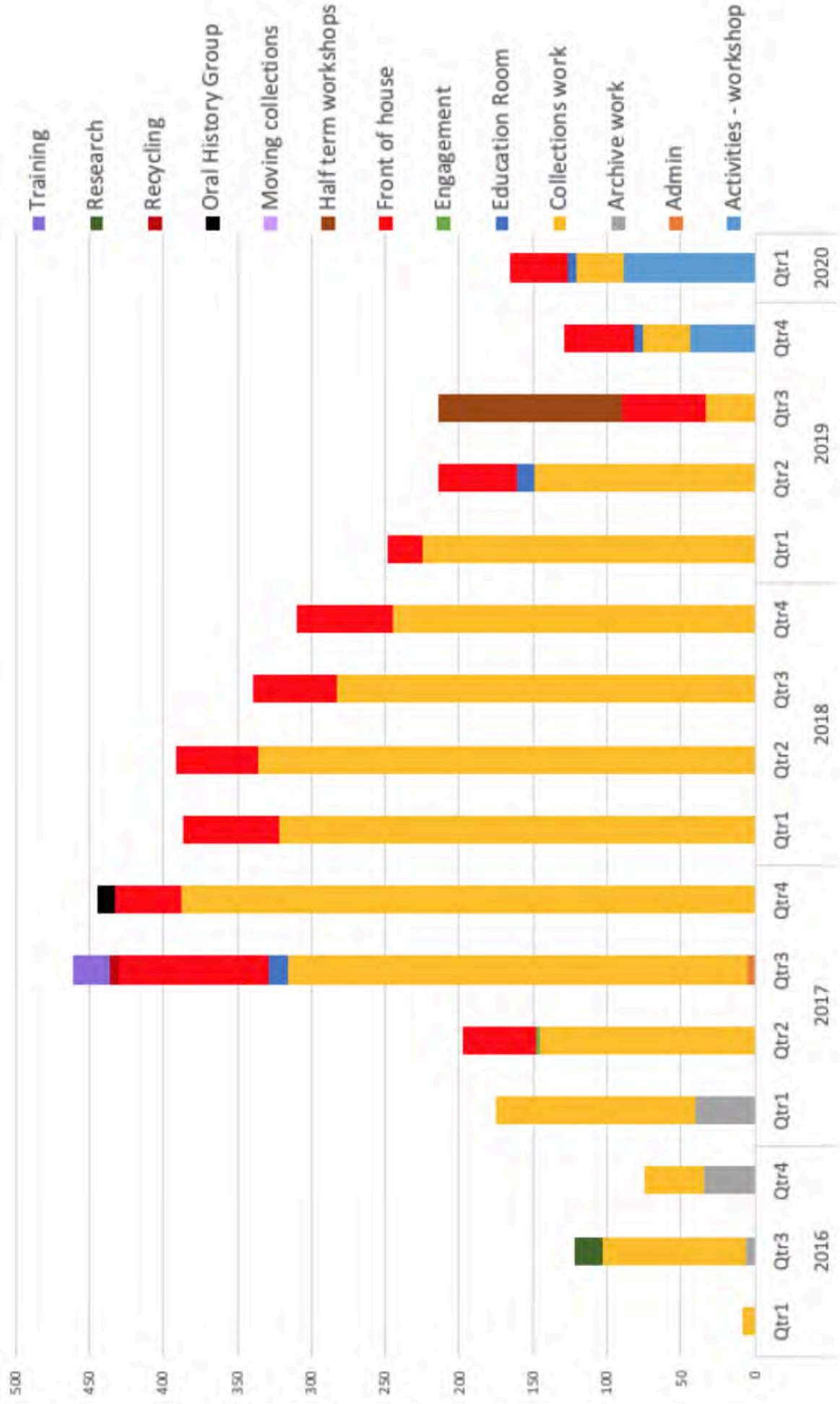
Have volunteered time to:

- help with delivering events and activities,
- support exhibitions and workshops,
- support cataloguing, labelling and cleaning the collections,
- digitise and record the collections
- help with planning events and activities,
- create a comprehensive interactive website,
- record the stories of Folkestone.

Volunteers have supported a vast range of activities across the life of the project. In total, volunteers have contributed 3,882.85 hours since 2016.



The below table shows the breakdown of those hours by volunteer tasks. As can be seen, collections focused work has been the area where volunteers have contributed the most time. This has included sorting and archiving, moving collections, and digitising.



As the Museum has become more visitor focused, volunteers have increased their provision of support for activities and workshops, particularly supporting school and half-term educational activities

Areas where there have been less participation from volunteers are supporting exhibition planning, planning events and activities, and the creation of the website. These elements have been taken over by the project staff. It is not clear from consultation whether this was done because there were not the skills in the volunteer cohort to deliver them, or whether they were felt to be too important to leave to volunteer delivery.

We attempted to engage volunteers through a survey and focus group, to gather more detailed information on their experiences of volunteering. Despite having 28 active volunteers at the museum, only nine completed the survey, and only three were willing to expand on their responses further.

In the survey, when asked to describe their volunteering experience, 75% of respondents used the word 'enjoyable'. However, when asked to rate their volunteering experience out of 5 (5 being excellent) 12.5% of volunteers rated their experience of volunteering a 5, 50% a 4, and 37.5% a 3.

There was no baseline collected for the volunteers when they started at the Museum, which has made it difficult to analyse whether the volunteer experience has improved or reduced since starting.

Certainly, the experience of the Case Study volunteer, Nick, was not what he expected and have contributed to his decision not to return to volunteer at the Museum.

In the survey, some of the feedback from volunteers was:

“Despite the initial enthusiasm for volunteers when the Museum opened I think that after a few staff changes volunteers were merely left to get on with it and that paid staff were far more concerned about what was happening to their own jobs. There did not seem to be anybody in charge of volunteers with the relevant training to manage them. However, I still think that the Museum has a lot to offer and my time there was an interesting one.”

There is work to be done on managing, encouraging and supporting Museum volunteers. While many volunteers would describe their experience as enjoyable there are significant challenges. Better engagement with and appreciation of the volunteers is an opportunity for growth. A review of the entire volunteer programme is therefore required (see Appendix 4).

CASE STUDY: Museum Volunteer - Nick

A trained archaeologist, Nick was keen to use his skills to support the Museum, but was also interested in museology and wanted to volunteer in a museum rather than training for a formal MA qualification. He felt his existing skills were transferable and he could learn new skills in running a museum at the same time.

Nick was particularly interested in collections management and so volunteered initially in the collections department. Nick started by archiving and cataloguing information but felt that he was 'left to it', rather than being asked about his development aspirations and the skills he could bring to the Museum.

Since getting involved with the Museum, Nick has felt more engaged with the local history of the town, something he says has helped him connect with his understanding of Folkestone as a place. He feels that the Museum contributes significantly to the cultural scene in Folkestone and that the Town Hall is now a vibrant community asset for Folkestone because of the Museum. He also feels that since the Museum project the local economy is growing as businesses from further into Kent are starting to see the area as a place of opportunity.

In terms of his skills development, as a result of volunteering, Nick feels that his time at the Museum has made him more confident at speaking directly with visitors. For example, when he was cataloguing or archiving at the Museum, he would leave the storeroom door open so he could hear what people were discussing and answer visitors questions - both about the displays and the work he was doing. In terms of improving the overall volunteer experience, Nick felt there was a gap in the training of volunteers, and allowing them to develop new skills in a structured way, based on their personal aims and experiences.

Nick felt that despite volunteering at the Museum for over two years, for 4-5 hours every two weeks, he would only rate his experience of volunteering at the Museum as a '3' out of '5'. He felt a bit forgotten and 'left to it' by those in charge of volunteering. He did not feel that his professional development was considered. This was exacerbated when Nick had to travel for his main work and sustained a back injury. He has not been volunteering at the Museum because of this injury for over 12 months, but has had no contact with the Museum and thinks they may have forgotten him.

However, Nick was very optimistic about the future, and following the consultation and survey, has expressed an interest in getting back involved with volunteering after the Covid-19 crisis. He hopes that with new management in place, he can begin volunteering again and hopefully put his professional skills to good use, and learn more about managing museums through the process.

People will have changed their attitudes/behaviour by being:

- able to participate and be involved in protecting their heritage,
- better informed about services provided by local government,
- given greater opportunities to learn new skills.

As part of the general public survey, Tricolor asked people about whether their attitudes and behaviours were changing as a result of the project.

The respondents to the general public survey expressed that they believe that the Museum is part of an ongoing programme of improvements to the town centre, which is raising the profile of the town and community aspiration.

91% of people believed that the Museum is a hub for heritage, education, learning, arts and tourism in Folkestone, with 70% of people agreeing or strongly agreeing that Folkestone is a better place to live because of the Museum, and 87% seeing it as a vibrant community asset.

“It has added to the movement that’s growing in Folkestone. A time of change and prosperity for the town. The Museum is a space to celebrate Folkestone’s wonderful history.”

Before the Museum project, aside from being a beautiful heritage building, the perception was that the Town Hall was unwelcoming and not for visitors. People viewed it as tired, dated but cultural.

77% of people have significantly changed their opinions of the Town Hall since the Museum opened. It is now regarded by many as a “community treasure. In addition, 63% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safer using the Town Hall with the Museum on the premises.

Consultation with volunteers and staff supported the perceptions expressed by the general public. Many felt that they had learnt new skills as a result of the project, and felt more connected to the history and the town because of the museum.

However, there has not been enough data collected to fully ascertain whether this is the perception of the wider part of the town’s community. The participants who responded to surveys, or who volunteer, already show an interest in heritage. The surveys were not particularly successful at engaging non-attendees. In addition, there has not been enough data collected to ascertain whether the average visitor has developed new skills, or feel that they are better informed about local government.

There is also evidence that some of the volunteers did not feel that they had had the opportunity to develop the skills they wanted when they started. Indeed, 62% of volunteers

said they would appreciate more training and opportunities to try new things to improve their volunteering experience.

Overall, the Museum has partially met this long term outcome. Further and ongoing evaluation will need to be undertaken to confirm this in the future.

Analysis

Overall, it has become clear through the consultation that the project has delivered a high-quality museum experience which visitors enjoy.

The project has also supported the development of skills among some volunteers and staff, but we identified opportunities for improvement among the wider volunteer cohort.

In addition, we have suggested that volunteering should be completely reviewed by the Museum to reevaluate the role of volunteers, how they are managed, and whether they are being maximised according to their existing skills and their aspirations.

Finally, there are additional opportunities for growth in the development of adult and community-focused events, exhibitions and workshops. This was identified as a gap in the interim report and sadly, due to the Museum’s closure for the pandemic, these activities could not be delivered.

Another area for development was identified as being digital delivery. The original activity plan identified digital skills as an area for development. The initial plan as designed around digital skills has been met but there are more opportunities for digital growth that should be taken forwards, which could include marketing and delivery of school sessions, workshops, talks and events. The consultation with teachers highlighted that they want resources digitally, and they want to hear about sessions via digital programmes and flyers. The ongoing impact of Covid-19 on schools and talks for museums is also unknown but could be an area of development for the Museum, engaging a wider range of people through new channels.

The main area where the Museum will need to consider ongoing evaluation about changed motivations, attitudes and behaviours as a result of the project. There are indications that this is happening, but whether the Museum has achieved these outcomes at this stage is not clear. Furthermore, the indicators to establish whether these outcomes have been met have not been developed. We would, therefore, recommend that this is done as a priority, and long-term evaluation of changes in motivations, attitudes and behaviours is built into an ongoing evaluation delivery plan.

6. Outcomes for Communities

The original project Outcomes for Community were broadly centred around engagement - enabling residents and tourists to easily access and interact with the town's heritage; connecting the Museum and Town Hall with the other redevelopment and regeneration elements in the old town and harbour, and; nourishing a sense of civic pride and community. This would lead to greater resilience, with more improved partnership opportunities, and stronger skill base within the staff and volunteers and a more knowledgeable and interested community.

The project outcomes were:

Our local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit because:

- the Town Hall will be restored as a vibrant community asset,
- the Town Hall will provide a permanent home for the collections,
- people will have better access to the heritage,
- the heritage will be understood and interpreted,
- the heritage will be recorded for future generations,
- the heritage will provide a vehicle to increase engagement with other public services,
- exciting opportunities will be readily available for engagement with heritage,
- a wide education programme will be developed,
- a feeling of pride of place will be nurtured.

The local economy will be boosted because:

- the project will contribute to the redevelopment of Folkestone, by connecting the pedestrian shopping precinct to the old town and harbour,
- this once vibrant and beautiful Kent seaside town will become known as the hub for heritage and culture,
- a vacant heritage building will be restored and put back into public use,
- tourism will be promoted attracting more visitors to the town centre.

More people will engage with heritage because:

- the central pedestrianised location of the Town Hall will enable the unique opportunity for people to connect with their heritage on the streets and pavements of the town centre.

Folkestone Town Council will be more resilient because of:

- greater local involvement in decision making,
- increased management and staff skills,
- greater partnership working opportunities,
- wider access to knowledge,
- greater access to resources through volunteer participation.

In addition, many of the medium and long term outcomes of the project, identified in the Logic Model, were focused upon Generic Social Outcomes of:

- Improved health and wellbeing
- A greater sense of civic pride in the town
- Helping to build a stronger and safer community through the creation of a friendly safe environment for people to meet, learn, volunteer, take part and access their heritage and culture
- The Town Hall filled with the collections will be the real heart of the town, a hub for heritage, education, arts, regeneration and tourism and a one-stop-shop providing information and support in an attractive and safe environment providing a sense of place and focus for all.

As outlined in the interim evaluation report we used the project extension to concentrate on investigating these wider social outcomes by asking residents, stakeholders, staff, volunteers and community groups whether they had noticed any improvements or changes as a result of the project. Although it is very early days, the online surveys and 1-2-1 interviews carried out as part of the final evaluation give a strong indication that the Museum is on the road to positive, demonstrable change within the community.

“The Town Hall filled with the collections will be the real heart of the town, a hub for heritage, education, arts, regeneration and tourism and a one-stop-shop providing information and support in an attractive and safe environment providing a sense of place and focus for all.”

“Having a Museum of any size is a focus for civic pride and its central location bringing in tourists (when life returns to normal) will be of benefit to the High Street/local businesses.”

“The museum... is something new, bringing ideas to the community and showing them what has happened in the past and what we should celebrate in the community – historical education for newcomers as well as the long old fogies!”

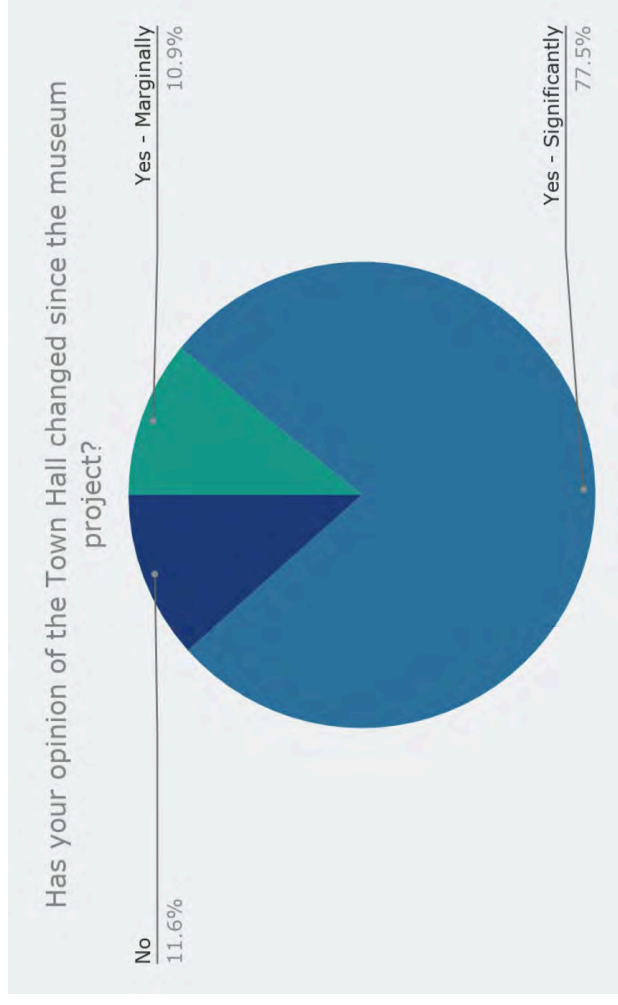
112 people answered the survey question ‘what did you think of the Town Hall BEFORE the Museum project?’ Almost universally, the comments were neutral or negative, with the most frequent being ‘not much’ or ‘I didn’t know it was there.’ Many respondents referred to the Town Hall being an underused historic building and that they had little or no reason to visit.

“Until the Town Council managed to acquire it, the building had become a wreck and an eyesore! The then addition of the Museum turned it from simply being an office and meeting place for the Town Council into an important visitor attraction, for locals, visitors, school parties etc”.

88% of respondents (out of 129) reported that their opinion of the Town Hall had changed significantly since the Museum opened. The free-text comments are overwhelmingly positive, with many people referring to the building as a new focal point for the town, is welcoming and accessible, has a sense of purpose and that the Museum itself is interesting and genuinely communicates the heritage of the town both to the local community and visitors.

“I am pleased and relieved that the Town Hall still stands and has not been pulled down to make way for other development! I love the cinema, Museum and education area and believe the present usage is a great asset for Folkestone.”

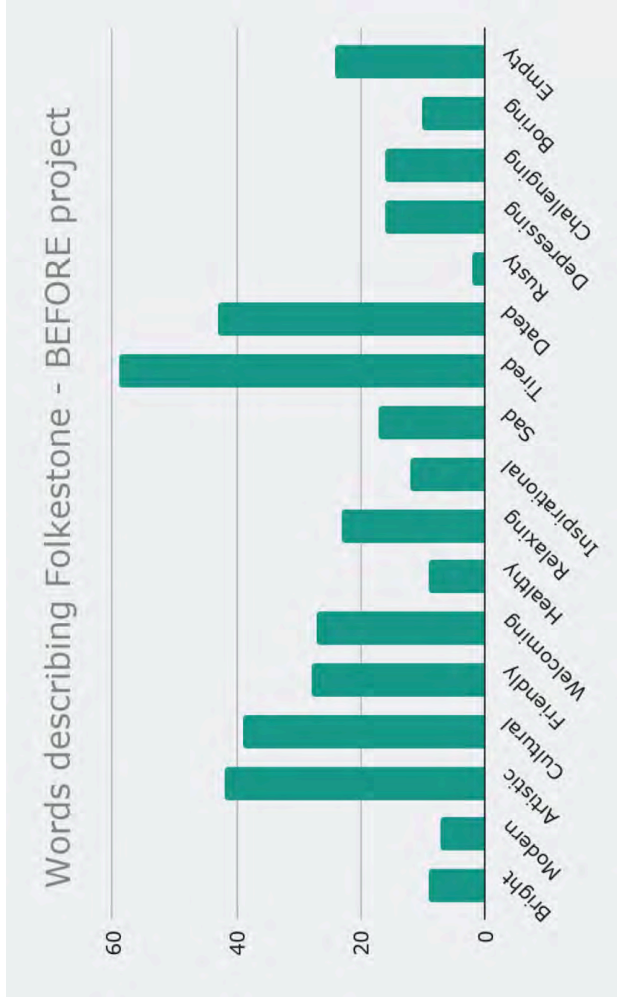
“In my view, it has become a focus for information & learning about the town, it’s history, it’s purpose past & present and the region it inhabits. A sense of place.”



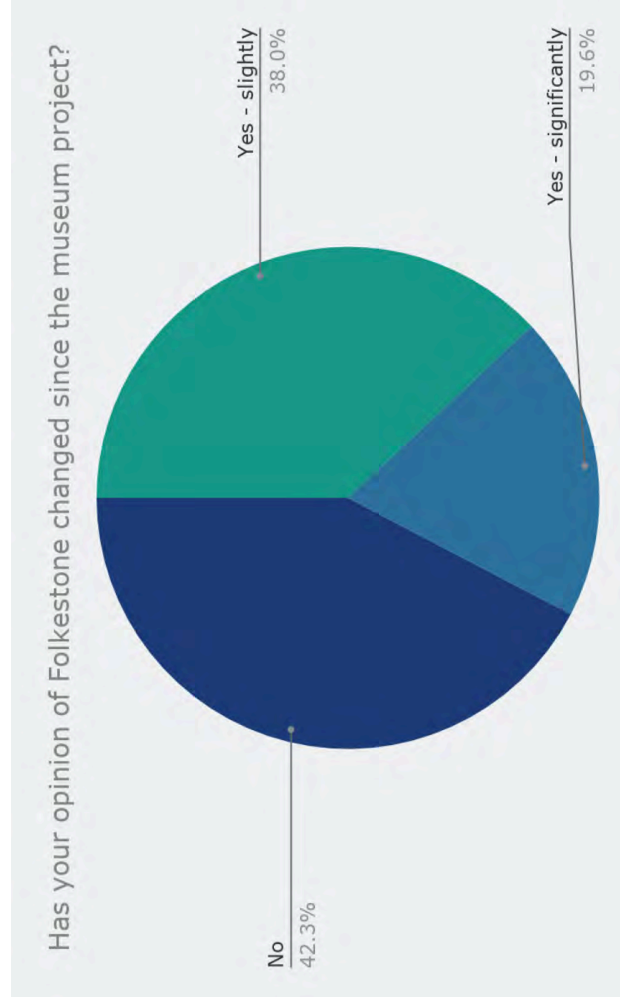
Part of the HF project saw a lift being introduced to the upper floor which has made the assembly room - now the cinema - fully accessible. Since the lift was installed there has been a significant increase in visits to the cinema from wheelchair users and other customers who are unable to use either the stairs or the original stair-lift that was previously in place.

The new lift now makes the cinema available to many local people who are disabled or elderly, families with pushchairs, and others with injuries or medical conditions. Several visitors have commented that before the lift was installed, they were forced to travel outside of Folkestone to visit a cinema which was fully accessible to them. New technological aids, including infra-red transmission equipment and hearing loops, have enabled visitors with visual or hearing impairments to use the cinema.

The enthusiasm for the Town Hall redevelopment is also being mirrored in people’s responses to how the project has changed their attitudes towards Folkestone as a whole. When asked ‘what words would you have used to describe Folkestone BEFORE the Museum project?’ a large percentage of respondents selected terms referring to the cultural offerings in the town, and that it is a friendly and welcoming place. This is counterbalanced, however, by a greater number of respondents choosing to include words such as ‘sad’ and ‘tired’. In the comments section, a few people noted that the place felt run down and that as a coastal community, it should be more vibrant.



As with their attitudes towards the Town Hall, there was a notable shift in opinion when asked what people thought of Folkestone AFTER the project.



It would be much too soon to attribute a causal relationship between the Museum and an overall change in attitude towards the town. The Museum is only part of the regeneration of the town, the growth of the Cultural Quarter and overall offer. Although an integral part of town improvements, the Museum is only part of the story. The Council will need to continue to invest in the wider regeneration of the town, as well as continuing to support the Museum itself, by addressing issues such as economic decline, the closure of many high street shops and attracting tourists.

“It was important for me to see this space being used for a community purpose. It is a shame that the Museum hasn’t made more of an impact to the high street, but it has certainly helped!”

“The town has changed for all sorts of reasons. The Museum is a minor part of that, but a change for the better.”

“I have lived here all my life and have seen a steady decline in Folkestone. It has started to pick up and the Museum is a welcome addition.”

“Folkestone was already building up its reputation for the arts when the Museum opened, with the Creative Quarter and the Triennial public art exhibition. In providing a link to the town’s important heritage the Museum has added a new dimension which was missing before.”

What is clear, however, is that the Museum is already having a positive impact on how people are thinking about the heritage of the town and their part within that. People report that it is giving them, and visitors, the opportunity to engage with their past, learn about the history of the area and is creating a point of interest. The FTC and Museum teams are discussing how to better integrate civic events with the Museum collections and hosting shared exhibitions or activities, and tours to the Town Hall, which focus on the mayoralty and civic history are using the Museum displays.

“[It has] made me more reflective of community issues and culture.”

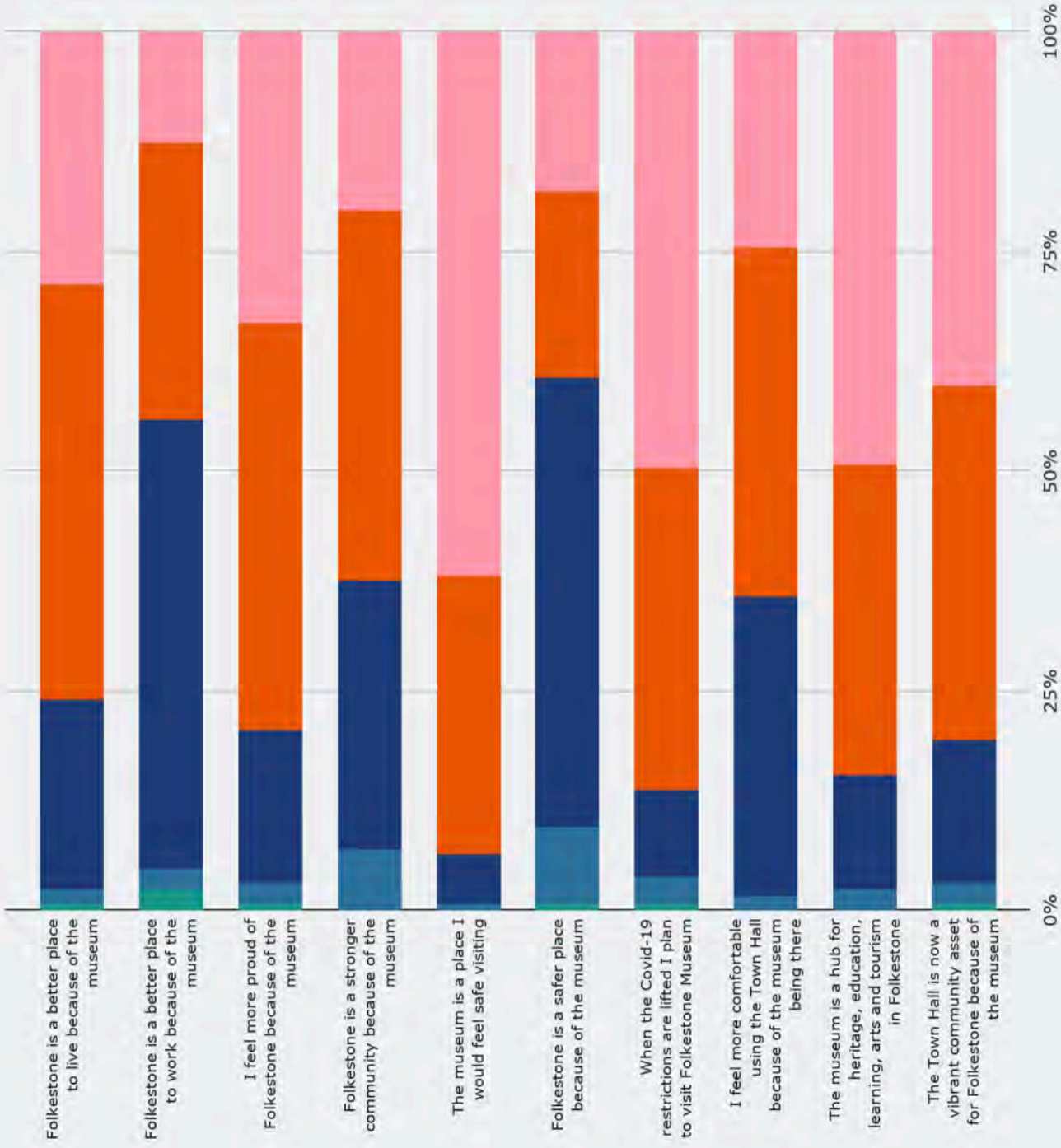
“The Museum project has added to the growing cultural offering of Folkestone.”

“The Museum has given for more opportunities to locals and visitors. I do think that the town is underrating the values of the Museum and firmly believe that by continuing with the Museum projects and promoting them fully Folkestone will benefit greatly.”

Lastly, people were asked to rate if they felt the Museum had contributed to a wider sense of community, place and pride. From the results, it is clear that the Museum and wider regeneration of the Town Hall that the HF project has enabled is a welcome and positive addition to the town.

“It has added to the movement that’s growing in Folkestone. A time of change and prosperity for the town. The Museum is a space to celebrate Folkestone’s wonderful history.”

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neither agree or disagree
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly agree



Analysis

The Folkestone Museum has turned a corner and is now well-positioned to make a tangible contribution to the wider community. One staff member described the space as 'democratic' in that it is free and freely accessible.

Several opportunity areas have been identified when looking at the potential for greater community outcomes. Many people have noted that the Museum still suffers from a lack of awareness of both its location and programme; the lack of signage has already been mentioned, but there is an additional need for more promotion locally and regionally. The Town Council is presently developing its tourism offer and is expanding its web presence (the Visit Folkestone and Hythe website sits under the Visit Kent website); consistent monitoring of visitor traffic through website hits and inquiries to the Tourist Information Centre in the Town Hall should be regularly captured to see where potential audiences are located, and target Museum marketing appropriately.

The Museum must also be aware of the need to continuously develop its audiences to reach out to and include the entire community. It was thought that there was a great potential to bring the community together and increase engagement, but that it wasn't doing so just yet. Specific hard to reach audiences mentioned include those from the Nepalese community and those from areas of higher deprivation. It was thought that links with the collections would be the best way of engaging these audiences.

CASE STUDY: Community Group - "Stitch and Chat" group for Nepalese women

In May 2020, Folkestone Museum was due to launch an exhibition based around a Story Mat created by older women from the Nepalese community in Folkestone. Although the exhibition was cancelled, the story mat was completed. The mat was an opportunity to tell the story of the Nepalese community's role within and connections to Folkestone in an authentic way, designed by members of the community.

The purpose of working with the stitch and chat group in the project was to partner with an already established group which has been engaging with this community, giving participants a targeted project that would support the temporary exhibition.

The session coordinator noted that once the participants understood the purpose of the exhibition, they were very excited to participate. This was matched by their happiness and

surprise at the unveiling at the size and scope of both the exhibition and the museum.

None of the participants had been to the Museum before, and the session leader felt that the project helped give the participants greater pride in the work and the role they play in the Folkestone community. They felt stimulated to make lots of suggestions for what should be included and how best their community could be represented in the exhibition.

By asking the women to be involved in the project, the session coordinator felt that the participants felt recognised and valued for their role in the community. The group was initially created to give older Nepalese women a voice and something of their own outside of the military role of their husbands. This project was a recognition of the progress made by the group and brought a feeling of pride to the participants.

7. Project review

In the round, Folkestone HEART project has done what it set out to do - there is a brand new museum; the collection has been brought together; there is a professional curatorial team, and; staff and volunteers are beginning to deliver learning and engagement activities to the community and the surrounding area.

The capital works programme and exhibit installation were completed on time and within budget, but the project had difficulty delivering some elements of the activity plan and associated audience engagement programme. This resulted in a pause to the project in 2019 when the Heritage Fund temporarily withdrew support while conducting an internal investigation into the project difficulties and how to solve them.

The core of the project's problems seem to be rooted in problems with the Activity Plan delivery which stem from a lack of experience and knowledge of HF requirements at the onset of the project.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to pick out issues and events that contributed to the project's difficulties. Some very candid and open conversations with FTC, Museum and HF staff have brought to light several issues: while none of these would have been fatal in themselves, the combination of factors led to a degree of staff turnover and an inability to deliver the quality, depth and pace of programming that the project required and indeed envisaged.

The primary factors leading to the HF's withdrawal of support and continuity of delivery include:

Area of concern	Issue
Heritage expertise	
	An external project monitor was not appointed by the Heritage Fund to support the lack of heritage experience within FTC
	FTC underappreciated the specific skills, time and resource required to create a Museum from scratch
Governance and management	
	The Town Clerk had to manage a major the project with very limited support or reprieve from her day to day role
	Roles and responsibilities of the project not clearly understood by FTC
	Recruitment; availability of appropriately skilled staff for a new museum and lack of performance management for team once appointed
	Lack of staff retention and handover procedures by HF & FTC
	Project evaluation / evaluation consultants not appointed earlier in the delivery
Communications	
	FTC did not seek assistance early enough when areas of concern were highlighted

As a result, the Museum entered a crisis period - staffing matters eclipsed the day to day running of the Museum and detracted from its ability to deliver the intended outcomes. The remaining FTC staff had to enhance their existing support and involvement in the project.

In Spring 2019 the Heritage Fund was made aware of difficulties with the project because of concerns over irregularities in reporting that were made through 'whistleblowing' to sector peers and stakeholders. These were not accurate accusations but are indicative of the overall atmosphere at the Museum at that time.

As a result, the HF temporarily suspended the grant until matters could be investigated and resolved. This led to a number of proactive measures, most significantly the creation of a new post of Museum Curator. This appointment, in October 2019, was of a museum professional with good sectoral experience and connections, who was able to begin the process of picking up the pieces and repairing relationships. The hiring of a new Audience Development / Learning Officer and the revisiting of the original project Business Plan, as well as a more regular and rigorous reporting structure, have also aided in putting the Museum back on track. A 3-month extension to the project was also negotiated to implement a number of targeted activities and associated evaluation outcomes and demonstrate that the project - and indeed the Museum - was functioning to a high level and able to demonstrate value. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, forced the Museum to close before the extension period was complete.

Looking back, perhaps many issues could have been addressed if communication throughout the project had been clearer. Folkestone Town Council, as an organisation, had little experience of working within the National Lottery Heritage Fund structure. The FTC lacked the confidence that a more experienced organisation may have had in seeking advice when needed, and would have benefited from having an external monitor acting as a critical friend from the outset. A better understanding of minimum reporting requirements expected, and how to evidence progress, would also have been beneficial. Overall the Council lacked the heritage experience that would have assisted the project at a senior level.

There is now, however, a renewed commitment to the Museum and how it can be supported. During 1-2-1 interviews, several staff members commented that, as a team, they all needed to pull together to make the Museum a success and to realise its potential.

“Everyone who has the say so has to work with the curator to make things happen.”

“Everyone needs to be working together and top down from the FTC - make use of a good curator and be open minded about embracing opportunities and let them flourish as will benefit everyone.”

“The council is totally committed to the Museum - in the last 12 months we were not one team, but many positives have come out of what were tough times - everyone is now engaged, want to support each other, there is no more them and us, we all sit under the FTC banner and yes, the Museum is autonomous and we don't interfere, but they know we are there.”

8. Lessons Learned

The evaluation process has revealed a number of lessons encountered throughout the project, many of which have been discussed above. The 1-2-1 interviews conducted as part of the evaluation, in particular, have shown a great deal of personal reflection from the

staff and stakeholders most closely involved with the project, which are captured in the table below.

Lessons Learned			Learning
No	Lesson	Impact	
Organisational			
1	Oversight of the Folkestone HEART project was inappropriate for the size of the project, experience of the team and overall level of risk. There was a lack of heritage expertise in a decision making role.	Impacted upon FTC's ability to deliver the Activity Plan, particularly the outcomes for people. Caused significant stress and anxiety to staff and temporary withdrawal of HF support. Negative effect on programming and budget and reputational damage.	<p>FTC acknowledge the detailed skill set required in the Museum Curator role and enable and support the Curator in leading on the programming, collections work, outreach and educational activities.</p> <p>FTC to ensure that there is continuity and an accurate job description available as part of succession planning.</p> <p>FTC to ensure that staff are not over committing, and is setting realistic and appropriate delivery targets.</p> <p>The Fund to internally review why, given the risk and proposed delivery structure, an external consultant was not appointed as project mentor and critical friend from the outset.</p>
2	The project reporting to the Fund could have been better as it was overly reliant on out of date and non-evidenced data. This can in part be assigned to a lack of guidance in what level of detail / evidence is required in reporting.	Led to the risks and issues within the project being underrepresented, which resulted in matters not being flagged as being of concern until too late.	<p>FTC to develop a culture of sharing and openness among staff, and encourage them to ask for support when needed.</p> <p>The Fund to consider preparing guidance notes to grantees outlining minimum standards expected in reporting.</p> <p>The Fund to prepare internal notes for Grant Officers on identifying 'red flags' in project reporting (ie. lack of budget breakdown; lack of updated risk register; lack of evidence).</p> <p>The Fund to stress to grantees across the sector that they are there to help and can provide additional expertise in the form of ROSS consultants or more Officer time</p>

3	Lack of understanding of importance of evaluation from the beginning of the project	<p>An evaluation framework was not created at the project outset. This resulted in inconsistent data collection, a lack of review of outcomes and KPIs throughout the life of the project and a corresponding inability to build on successes and / or address shortcomings.</p> <p>The Activity Plan did not consider how some of the more complex and nuanced outcomes of the project would be assessed in terms of indicators. It has been difficult therefore to analyse how or whether these outcomes are being met through the project - particularly relating to changes in attitudes and behaviours as a result of the project. Some of this has been created by Tricolor through the logic models, but long-term evaluation of these areas will require the development of much clearer indicators.</p>	<p>FTC to embed a culture of formative evaluation throughout all museum activities, with clearly stated outcomes and audiences.</p> <p>Evaluation frameworks in the future to also consider the indicators (what it is that proves an outcome is being met) from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective.</p> <p>Evaluation Framework to be highlighted by HF as part of the Stage Two Application</p>
Heritage			
4	Folkestone's narrative needs to mature as more in depth knowledge of the collection grows; a greater emphasis on storytelling would appeal to more diverse audiences and make fuller use of artefactual material	Enabling the opportunity to connect with a wider variety of audiences and make the museum experience more personal and meaningful	Consider revising the permanent displays / panels to emphasise the Folkestone narrative
5	Activities and events would be more meaningful to the local audience if they were to be based upon the collections; during the delivery phase, due to lack of curatorial support, activity packages were 'off the shelf' that did not refer back to the archaeological and other collections.	Reduced the opportunity to share Folkestone's own heritage and identity and create a sense of place while appealing to the local audiences.	Make better use of the collections in developing new learning and educational resources.

Volunteers			
6	<p>There has not been consistent ownership and management of the volunteer programme due to staff changes</p>	<p>Skilled Volunteers have not always been matched to roles that could bring best benefit; such as heritage being well interpreted by archaeologists or art specialists - and has also led to some Volunteer frustration that they have not been up-skilled, negating their possible personal outcomes from the project.</p>	<p>Ensure that the new 2019 Volunteer Policy is followed going forwards.</p> <p>Undertake a complete review of volunteering opportunities and management of volunteers within the next 12 months.</p> <p>There is already recognition that things have improved since the new Curator has been in post including job descriptions and cpd.</p>
Audiences			
7	<p>Focus on engaging hard to reach audiences, primarily those of adult age. The interim report identified a lack of engagement with any audiences other than schools and families. Additional research has not found a significant increase in this (although the museum did close in the middle of a re-developed plan for engaging these audiences).</p>	<p>The activities delivered by the Museum to date had been focused primarily on school and family audiences. The project had, at the interim period, almost completely neglected the other project audiences. The impact of this was identified by the project team, and an updated delivery plan was developed to help address this. However, during this period the museum had to close and so, to date, these activities had not been addressed.</p>	<p>The team at the Museum have identified since the interim report the need to engage a wider range of audiences through talks, exhibitions and workshops, and did have this built into a specific programme.</p> <p>The learning is that the Museum team continues to consider and develop adult and hard to reach audiences through targeted interventions, and consider how best to publicise and promote these for the biggest impact. As the demographics of Folkestone have changed, and a wider catchment area for Museum users and visitors is better understood, it would be ideal for the Museum to undertake a new Audience Development Strategy to fully maximise new opportunities.</p> <p>The Museum must develop a culture of partnership working and co-curation of temporary exhibits, social media and events with the target audiences from the outset, so that the audience needs and wants are fully understood and met, creating a more meaningful experience and further embedding the Museum within the cultural offering of Folkestone.</p>

8	<p>The Museum has not capitalised on digital engagement and marketing – particularly with schools – which has likely reduced bookings for the September 2020 term. People in general have commented on a lack of physical and intellectual visibility, which will have had an impact on visitor numbers.</p>	<p>One area for review is the forward plan for the Museum, and then considering the digital marketing and communication strategies needed to maximise this engagement. For example, schools could promote the Museum's school holiday workshops to parents on their facebook pages and email newsletters. In addition, teachers consulted really need to have received the learning brochure by the end of June to be able to confidently make bookings for the Autumn term. It appears the team have missed this, and so they may not achieve the same level of bookings that they would have anticipated.</p>	<p>Work with audiences to understand the most appropriate digital marketing and communication channels.</p> <p>Work with school teachers to understand when they need information about sessions in order to book them for the next term.</p> <p>Develop a forward plan for activities and events at the Museum, and ensure the appropriate digital channels are explored for each audience, in order to engage a wider range of people with the events.</p> <p>FTC has already supported monoliths around the town and has requested brown museum signage at arterial routes into the town and is considering increasing street signage for the Museum and improving signage at the Town Hall site.</p>
9	<p>Detailed activity reports from the Museum website are not readily available as these are controlled by the web hosting agency.</p>	<p>This is impacting on the ability to report how the 'People' outcomes are being met – we should be able to report how many people are accessing the Museum online and where they come from within (or beyond) the Museum's catchment to help define these boundaries. It would also tell us how people are accessing, interpreting and understanding the heritage by the specific web pages they are accessing.</p>	<p>Now the learning website is launched, consideration as to how to maximise and promote this resource with teachers should be considered. There may be opportunities around the provision of online learning sessions, or engagement with schools through online channels.</p>

9. Folkestone Forward Plan

Moving forwards, the Folkestone Museum has already put in place many of the tools and systems required to further embed the Museum within the community and build on its current relationships. The operational phase of the HF Folkestone HEART project has not run as intended, but many valuable lessons and learnings can be taken into the next stage of the Museum's life.

What is critical for the future success of the Museum is to develop programming - both formal and informal learning and events - that is firmly based on audiences and outcomes. This will ensure maximum reach and greater and more meaningful interaction with the communities that it strives to engage with. Taking a step back, and revisiting the overall vision of the Museum would be appropriate at this time alongside the creation of a new audience development strategy.

At this time the Museum team is aware that there is a significant amount of work to do to consolidate their recent achievements, especially when goodwill and enthusiasm are markedly high. The Museum has captured many of these tasks in the 2020-2026 Folkestone Museum Business Plan, which maps out activities and areas of focus at the Museum that can be evaluated into the future during post-project years 5-10.¹ However, the Business Plan was prepared before this report was completed so has not captured any of the project learnings and requires review.

Nonetheless, until the strategic work can take place, the Museum must continue with data collection using the tools that have been developed.

It will be critical for them, as a minimum, to collect:

Activity	Method	Collection frequency	Review
Overall visitor numbers	Breakbeam counter	Ongoing	Review monthly and then annually
Visitor numbers by audience	Feedback forms Visitor observation exercise	Consider having a visitor observation day each quarter where staff and volunteers can work together to capture different visitor types, dwell time, which interactives are in demand, etc	Quarterly 'day' Ongoing activity tracking
Activity and events	Participant numbers Feedback forms	Ongoing per activity	Every 2 months
Website and social media engagement	Count visits, likes, retweets, comments, user profiles	Ongoing	Monthly

¹ Year 5 is 2020/2021; with Year 10 being 2025-2026. Year 5 assumes that the Museum will reopen in September 2020, social distancing and the layout of the building assumes two family groups per hour through the Museum and minimal formal school visits. Year 6 anticipates a near return to normal, subject to easing restrictions.

School groups and learning boxes	Numbers of participants / schools Feedback from each group leader on content, engagement and improvements Informal feedback from session participants (voting / stickers) Formal feedback from session participants	Always count participant / schools / loans Collect group leader feedback from each session Collect informal feedback from each session Collect formal feedback (comment cards / forms) from one school group / month	Every two months
Volunteers	Volunteer numbers	Ongoing	Every 2 months

The Museum should also work to collect qualitative feedback on people's responses to activities and how this applies to social and learning outcomes. These can be developed alongside programme development. The Museum and FTC must be careful, however, to ensure there are not unrealistic expectations placed on what a 2.5 FTE member team can realistically deliver or evaluate.

Tricolor has already provided the Museum with activity feedback forms created to capture specific and generic outcomes. These must all be consistently planned and applied, and the data stored in a single spreadsheet. Volunteers can be trained to assist in data collection and visitor observation exercises as well as data inputting. We have also provided a template KPI template which can be adapted for ongoing use.

In order to give best support to FTC we have taken the findings from the project evaluation as well as our own observations and have created a suggested Forward Plan for the Museum. We have framed this within the model developed by the Association of Independent Museums for the Hallmarks of Prospering Museums. This 8 point framework brings together the key characteristics of strong and successful heritage attractions and enables others to apply these to their own organisations.



The AIM Hallmarks provides the overall structure for the Forward Plan, but we must also prioritise the most important requirements. This will help the Museum team understand what order to approach tasks, and which ones are less significant, particularly if there is pressure on resources.

We have adopted the MoSCoW method for the Forward Plan, which stands for Must, Should, Could and Would:

- M - Must have this requirement to meet the business needs

- S - Should have this requirement if possible, but project success does not rely on it
- C - Could have this requirement if it does not affect anything else on the project
- W - Would like to have this requirement later, but delivery won't be this time

Unlike a numbering system for setting priorities, the words mean something and make it easier to discuss what is important. The must requirements need to provide a coherent

solution, and alone lead to project success. These are largely non-negotiable, and failure to complete a must task will put the Museum at risk.

The team should aim to deliver as many of the should requirements as possible. *Could* and *would* requirements are nice to have and do not affect the overall success of the Museum, but should be recognised and progressed as appropriate.

Folkestone Museum - forward plan			MoSCoW rating
No	Item		
Purpose			
1	Reestablish overall vision for the museum. Now that the Folkestone HEART project is completed, develop a new vision for the next chapter of the Museum that reflects the project learnings and consolidates the role of the Museum within the community.		M
2	Embed evaluation into the heart of the Museum's vision and planning. Evaluation should be seen as a cornerstone principle of activity and exhibition development, rather than an afterthought.		M
3	Continue to connect with the town's civic roles and needs to provide an integrated community and cultural hub		S
Finance			
4	Review the current Business Plan in light of the evaluation report, recommended revising and audience development strategy to set realistic and appropriate KPIs and targets for the future		M
5	Improve the retail offer in order to increase per visitor spend and investigate other income generating ideas		S
6	Conduct new consultation around income generation ideas and charges in the light of challenges caused by Covid-19		S
Collections			
7	Make better use of the collections to engage different audiences. Develop co-curation temporary exhibitions, or use collections with target audiences to support reminiscence or emotional responses. Could also be used to engage hard to reach audiences digitally through digital museum 'takeovers' with content shared on social media.		S
8	Refresh interpretation panels and objects on display to better tell the story of the town		S
9	Create an additional 'Community Case' in the foyer of the Town Hall or the Cinema. This case could be co-curated and interpreted by community groups on a rolling or seasonal basis. An opportunity to engage different groups from inside and outside the Town Hall with the museum's collection and the Town's heritage.		C
10	Conservation - implement the management and maintenance plan and the conservation strategy for the collections		M
Visitor Focus			
11	Work with a consultant to develop an Audience Development Plan following the completion of the Museum's visioning process.		M
12	Improve signage and marketing through the creation of a Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the Museum and its programming		M
13	Reconfigure the ground floor and reception area to improve flow and make the space more functional		S
14	Formally launch the planned Young Curators programme		S

Awareness and Networks	
15	Continue to develop partnerships with local community and social agencies and include these audiences in future exhibit and event programming
Innovation	
16	Digital review - Undertake a digital review to explore how the museum could embed digital and digital principles into the everyday functioning, and to allow for innovation, co-curation, partnerships and engagement with a wider range of audiences.
17	Partnerships with the Creative Sector - continue to develop partnerships with other organisations in the creative sector. Identify how they align with the museum's new vision and target audiences. Explore the programming, cross promotion, co-curation and training opportunities these partnerships may present.
18	Cross-promote activities associated with civic commemorative events and functions to underpin the joint role of the Town Hall and Museum in providing a community <i>and</i> civic space.
Governance	
19	Review succession plans for the Curator and the Outreach and Audience Development Officer
20	Appoint new Heritage Services Assistance



Appendices

1. Logic Model
2. Data Review
3. Evaluation Survey Results - general public, stakeholders, community groups, volunteers and teachers
4. Volunteers





Folkestone
Museum

