



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

### MEMBER REPORT

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY</b>	Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)
<b>DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> July 2021

#### BRIEF REPORT

Please note that the Museum's 2020/21 annual report accompanies this report. It was approved by the Museum's Governing Body at their meeting on 26th July.

From the w/c 19<sup>th</sup> July the museum team re-opened the mansion to general visitors, previously only accessible by booked tours. The mansion displays present a number of challenges, not least the open display of a lot of objects which cannot be cleaned using 'regular' cleaning methods. A number of mitigations against Covid transmission have been retained and the team are preparing for an increase in visitors throughout the summer. Programming will continue to be minimal and largely focus on the outdoor areas. The museum team have done an excellent job of maintaining engagement with audiences during lockdowns and retaining trust once audiences were able to return to the museum.

At the beginning of July the museum collaborated in a Space to Breathe weekend organised by the Festival of Nature which involved Covid-secure activities in Stratford Park and the walled garden. In addition, four outdoor theatre shows were run by theatre companies through the museum during July and August.

The summer exhibition is a partnership with Gallery Pangolin: Jon Buck: March of Mutability, this sculpture exhibition closes on 12<sup>th</sup> September and is to be succeeded from 18<sup>th</sup> September by a textiles and mixed media exhibition: Colour Conversations: Ruth Issett and Dorothy Tucker.

As a result of the pandemic the museum team have identified a need for a covered outdoor space and are currently working on a permanent awning to be situated in the courtyard of the museum. This will offer a safe, covered, outdoor space from which a range of community focussed activities can be run and help with resilience to future viral outbreaks.

The museum is producing a monthly sustainable stories series which focusses on exploring different collection objects from the past which reveal useful lessons for a kinder, more sustainable, living in the present and future. Please visit:

<https://museuminthepark.org.uk/sustainable-stories>

The museum has completed the complete repacking and updating of records for the entire coins and tokens collection. The opportunity presented by the Covid-19 lockdowns was taken up to start this work which is part of the museum's documentation plan backlog.

The museum was successful in applying for an Institute of Conservators (ICON) Care Stimulus Fund grant to preserve and stabilise case of 12 taxidermy birds on display, digitise, use outputs in audience engagement. The birds are now back on display following this work.

The museum issued a consultant brief to review the current **collections storage** situation and make recommendations for future space needs for on-going storage of the collections – the bid process concluded in late April and the team have appointed two consultants to assess the collections – this work will be taking place over the summer and autumn. The museum has a number of space challenges regarding current storage arrangements.

Following the March announcement of successful funding, the museum has commenced the implementation phase of the new **free-to-join Supporter Scheme**. This has initially involved establishing the various teams/packages of work, including procuring external expertise. The implementation phase runs until March 2022. This year-long implementation project will create the scheme, providing audiences with new and exciting opportunities to engage with the museum, extending community reach to new audiences, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the museum particularly as it recovers from the impact of Covid-19. A Cowle trustee is acting as a representative on the project.

**Rebuilding the Foundations: Gloucestershire Museums** – the museum is one of eight museums on this SW Museum Development (SWMD), NHLF funded, project. Consultants appointed by SWMD are due to make contact with each museum to discuss a range of topics that span audience development and volunteering. This project is about review, evaluation and peer input to look at these two areas, both of which link strongly with the museum's recovery and supporter scheme. A Cowle trustee is acting as a representative on the project.

<b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b>	Cllr Nigel Prenter
<b>DATE</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2021