

**Curator's Report - Eastleigh Museum  
Joint Management Committee Meeting – 17 October 2012  
(Covering period June-September 2012)**

**1. Providing a welcoming and well maintained Museum**

The Exhibitions Team have started the updating of displays at Eastleigh Museum with the installation of new panels for the 'Browns' room and the Kitchen. More new panels are in preparation for other areas. However, already this has made the existing displays in the museum more coherent and accessible to visitors.

This updating of existing displays is part of a longer term commitment to phased improvement of the display galleries and reception areas within the museum, working in close partnership with One Community.

The relationship between One Community and HCC Arts & Museums Service has been productive and has enabled the delivery of service to the Eastleigh community to grow. Visitor numbers, which dropped off following the transitional closure period during May, are steadily increasing, as can be seen in the visitor table below. The level of visitor satisfaction is high, with regular compliments to the service.

The final section of this report deals with the profile of visitors through postcode surveys. The ambition is a renewed community focus of this service will lead to the museum attracting new visitor groups in addition to existing service users. A substantial survey of this data is currently underway to provide evidence to establish if this is the case.

The Arts & Museums Service recognise that, in addition to enthusiasm and local commitment, One Community bring considerable new knowledge and experience to this service. This is already contributing to discussions around programming for the future to make maximum benefit for the local Eastleigh community and service users.

**Visitor Figures**

The visitor numbers are down on previous years, although this is likely to be as a result of the essential closure during May and the impact of this disruption on numbers in adjacent months. The numbers have been generally improving and it is anticipated that by the year end we will have seen a substantial recovery.

Totals	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Eastleigh 2009-2010 28,213	2179	1864	1521	2574	2693	2046	2401	1714	1300	3087	3598	3236
Eastleigh 2010-2011 24,041	2372	1567	1780	2493	3205	2091	2349	1881	1151	1236	2109	1759
Eastleigh 2011-2012 18,987	1713	1408	1516	2022	2322	1805	1542	1351	1297	1140	1550	1321
Eastleigh 2013-2013	923	163	1153	1131	1640	<b>1213</b>	<b>Total to Sept 6,223</b>					

## **Hosting special temporary exhibitions and related events**

### **Inspire Exhibition 2 June to 8 September**

#### **Inspire! Hampshire's Stories of the Olympic Games**

The Exhibitions team planned and project managed the Inspire! exhibition including production of the timetable and budget . They were primarily responsible for the core content which was replicated across all 7 sites. Detailed and extensive research led to the development of interpretive themes which formed the backbone of the exhibition. Images and film footage were researched and sourced and image licence fees paid to private photo archives. Staff visited the RAPTC Museum's Olympic collection to select images and objects. All core text was written, edited and produced by the team. Text produced by numerous local teams was collated and edited. The local Community Engagement staff worked closely with the Exhibitions team to produce a cohesive and comprehensive exhibition narrative. The team designed the overall look of the exhibition and printed and mounted much of the display material in-house. Text and interactives were supported by specified learning objectives based on a mix of learning styles and age-targets. Flexible design templates allowed each venue to create tailor-made labels and panels themselves. Ongoing liaison with LOCOG via Barry Kitcher, the Hampshire 2012 Co-ordinator, ensured that Olympic branding guidelines were maintained and the museum sites benefited from official 2012 'look' merchandise. With installation complete, the team then managed maintenance of displays and provided ongoing support. Posters, leaflets and press releases were designed and produced and online marketing and social media promotion undertaken. Deinstallation carried out September 2012.

#### **Tea Tales Exhibition**

The exhibition team are preparing the Tea Tales exhibition to open in Eastleigh on the 1<sup>st</sup> October. The exhibition will be an interactive, fascinating and fun look at Britain's favourite drink. We are assembling collections and planning installation.

## **2. Caring for collections, promoting access and providing specialist knowledge and advice**

As part of the induction programme for One Community, a visit to the headquarters of the Arts and Museums Service was arranged in September. Staff and volunteers met with the Collections Team and were shown around the stores, conservation studios and workshops at Chilcomb House in Winchester. This provided them with an opportunity to get to know the full range of collections, expertise and advice that is available to support them with the running of Eastleigh Museum. In addition one volunteer, currently undertaking an Open University Fine Art degree, is being supported by the Keeper of Art and is assisting in, and being given access to, the Arts Library as part of personal and academic skills development.

New guidance on the handling of objects deposited for identification, possible donation and expert advice has been agreed and circulated. Further support is being provided by the Collections Team in the deposition and processing of objects and local photographs. Objects formerly part of the local studies resource area and from the local collections store

have been brought back to Chilcomb House for safe storage and to enable them to be more appropriately stored and made accessible to a wider audience. A CD of all Eastleigh related photographs held at Chilcomb House has been provided for the museum to share with users of the local history files.

Table top safaris were also provided for the Eastleigh Mela.

#### **4. Inspiring Learning and Community Engagement**

##### **4.1 Formal Education Provision**

Over the 6 month period April to September 2012, the Learning and Community Engagement Team have worked with **5** school groups in the museum, a total of **121 pupils** in school groups.

<b>Date</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Key Stage &amp; Year Group</b>	<b>No. of children</b>	<b>Type of workshop</b>
19 June	Stoke Park Junior	KS2 Yr 6	23	Home From Home (Wartime)
21 June	Stoke Park Junior	KS2 Yr 6	25	Home From Home (Wartime)
21 June	Stoke Park Junior	KS2 Yr 6	25	Home From Home (Wartime)
17 July	Cherbourg Primary	KS2 Yr 4	24	Exhibition visit
17 July	Cherbourg Primary	KS2 Yr 4	24	Exhibition visit

The Community Engagement & Learning Officer has undertaken a review of schools' use of the museum over the last 3 years (see separate report), which includes an action plan to improve uptake of the offer.

##### **4.2 Community Engagement and Learning**

From April to June the CEL Team were developing all the local elements of the 'Inspire!' exhibition, liaising with borough officers, interviewing sportspeople, researching and producing text panels, organising the loan and display of objects and devising interactives and linked holiday activities. The majority of the community based engagement work over the reporting period involved working with local sports clubs, athletes past and present and the family of 1930s Olympian Tommy Green to achieve this.

In line with the Service Plan aim of widening participation, a diverse programme of activities in the museum was also offered over the 6 month period. A particular emphasis has been put on maintaining a good activity offer for local families. 364 people took part in the led activities (see table overleaf).

<b>Activity/Event</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
'Spotty Crafts' workshop linked to the 'Where's Spot?' exhibition	Families with young children	12 April	71
Spot the Dog Under 5's Story Time Fun	Children under 5 with parents/ carers	3 May	23
Exhibition visit	Pre-school children	3 May	20
Right Royal Fun Activity Day	Families	7 June	67
Kings & Queens Storytelling	Families	8 June	20
Reminiscence Workshop at Surrey Court	Older people	21 June	10
Olympic Animals Workshop	Families	2 August	75
Museum Decathlon Workshop	Families	15 August	43
Story Sacks Workshop by Hampshire Learning	Families	15 August	17
Local Heroes Workshop run by Curator as HL tutor ill!	Families	29 August	18

The CEL Team also provided self-led drop-in activities for all school holiday periods:

- Easter – Can you spot Spot? Trail
- June half term – Jubilee make and takes and 'You Joining In' activities linked to the Inspire! Exhibition
- Summer holiday, July – 'Healthy You' activities linked to Inspire!
- Summer holiday, August – 'Explorer You' activities linked to Inspire!
- Summer holiday and Saturdays, September – 'Challenge You' activities linked to Inspire!

The CEL Team have put together an activity programme linked to the Tea Tales exhibition, which includes a reminiscence offer for older people's groups. This will be reported on next quarter.

The Community Engagement and Learning Officer is also part of the project group looking at a possible 'reimagining' of Eastleigh Museum with grant funding for developments over the next two years. She has produced a project initiation document and is working on aims, objectives and a public consultation brief currently.

## **5. Marketing and management**

### **Marketing**

20,000 copies of 'What's On in Hampshire Museums and Archives', covering the period July to September, were distributed in June, which included events at museums across Hampshire. Distribution covered TICs, local museums, libraries and visitor attractions throughout the county.

20,000 copies of the new edition covering October to December was delivered in early September and is in the process of being distributed county-wide.

Posters were circulated locally for each new exhibition and press releases are produced and circulated to the local media for each show.

### **Online marketing**

Events at Eastleigh Museum were promoted on a monthly basis via the Hampshire County Council cultural e-newsletter, Showcase. With new people signing up all the time, Showcase is now reaching over 30,000 subscribers. It regularly features both an exhibition and an object of the month as well as signposting recipients to events in their local area. In addition, the monthly e-newsletter Museums Monthly is sent to over 12,000 subscribers who have asked to receive museums specific information.

### **Social Media**

The facebook page and twitter feed set up by the exhibitions team at Chilcomb House to promote exhibitions and events at Museums Service sites is becoming well established. Facebook now has over 400 "likes" and twitter nearly 550 followers.

### **Research**

Postcodes are being collected from visitors to Eastleigh Museum from June onwards. These will be profiled in mosaic giving us an up-to-date picture of the types of people using the museum and where they come from. This information will feed into our service and marketing plans.