



# Trustees' Annual Report for the period

Period start date			Period end date		
Day	Month	Year	Day	Month	Year
1	4	2021	31	3	2022

**From** **To**

## Section A Reference and administration details

**Charity name** Beccles and District Museum CIO

**Other names charity is known by**

**Registered charity number (if any)** 1191550

**Charity's principal address**

Beccles and District Museum	
Leman House, Ballygate	
Beccles, Suffolk	
<b>Postcode</b>	NR34 9ND

### Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Barry Darch	Chairman		
2	Andy Lovegrove	Secretary		
3	Paul Gurbutt	Treasurer		
4	Robert Bacon			
4	Mary Jacqueline Butler Holmes		until 6 December 2021	
5	Jennifer Langeskov		until 11 March 2022	
6	Linda Last			
7	Charles Middleton		Until 8 March 2022	
8	Chris Scott			
9	Richard Sword		from 21 June 2021	
10	Alan Wheeler			
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**Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)**

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

**Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)**

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Museum Mentor	Heather Lomas	

**Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)**

Honorary Curator Alan Wheeler until 21 January 2022

**Section B Structure, governance and management**

**Description of the charity's trusts**

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Trust
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by other members of the Trust

**Additional governance issues (Optional information)**

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

The Charity has a formal Constitution which governs how the Trust is managed. The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), accepted by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of the Trust. Day to day management is in the hands of a curator who also has the task of caring for the collection. A group of volunteers assists the curator with these tasks and where possible the volunteers will have attended suitable training as provided by SHARE Museums East.

The Museum is located in a building owned by the Townlands Charity which lets space in the building to the Museum. The Townlands Charity retains responsibility for the building and its upkeep. A member of the Townlands Charity Board (the Feoffees) is invited to attend Museum Trustee Board meetings and chooses whether to be a trustee. The representative since November 2021 has been James Hartley who succeeded Jennifer Langeskov (who was a trustee in her own right).

Beccles Town Council may nominate a representative who attends Trustee meetings and who may choose to be a trustee. From May 2021 this has been Cllr Barry Darch, an existing trustee.

The Museum is a member of the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) and the Association for Suffolk Museums (AfSM). AfSM provides assistance and advice; and our membership also provides emergency help from Harwell Drying.

The Museum is an Arts Council Accredited Museum and as such has to meet professional standards in its policies and operating procedures covering all aspects of its management. These documents are audited as part of our accreditation application. Accreditation lasts for five years and then we have to re-apply. We achieved Full Accreditation in May 2018, following the submission of documentation in February 2017; the delay was due to a review of accreditation by the Arts Council.

The Museum has a Museum Professional Mentor, Heather Lomas, who attends Trustee meetings and provides support, help and guidance as requested.

CCTV helps keep secure the Museum's collections.

Annual training is provided for stewards to help them keep visitors and themselves safe. This was reviewed and enhanced to include guidance covering the Covid virus situation.

In respect of the pandemic, we followed government regulations and advice, putting in place measures to reassure stewards and visitors about the safety of the Museum environment. Stewards were consulted on the Risk Assessment prior to our opening in June 2021. We keep the need for protective measures under review. We kept in regular communication in 2021/22 with the stewards.

Copies of the Friends' Newsletter are given to all our volunteers (as well as members of the Town Council) to keep them informed about the Museum's operation and plans for the future.

## **Section C Objectives and activities**

### **Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document**

The Museum objectives are to provide and maintain a collection relevant to Beccles and district for the purpose of educating and entertaining the local community in all aspects of the history and natural history of the area.

**Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)**

In 2021 the Museum did not open to the public at the beginning of April, the usual start of the season, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The museum opened on 24<sup>th</sup> June and closed at the end of September. The Museum was open for fewer afternoons of the week than usual, because three stewards were on duty rather than two.

Plans were made to revert to two stewards on duty for the 2022 season and to open on four afternoons a week.

We have continued to provide help and advice on the history of the area and its people to enquirers. Typically, we receive and answer enquiries on family and local history and support other organisations, such as the Town Council and local history groups with their activities. Local researchers have used material from the Museum for particular projects, such as a history of the Beccles Lido (researched by a group from Beccles U3A) that was published during the year, a history of Ballygate (on which the Museum stands) and the book *Secret Beccles* (due to be published in July 2022).

The pandemic reduced our ability to host pre-arranged visits out of normal opening hours for various groups, as we have done in previous years. Photographs and information from the Museum's collection have been used in the media, such as an article on plague written by the chairman which appeared in the local newspaper in February 2022.

Visits from the ten classes of Year 7 pupils at Sir John Leman High School (one class per visit) were resumed after cessation because of the pandemic.

In the 2021 season we did not provide our usual number of temporary exhibitions, but one display of art work was mounted which was available through the season. Additionally, in early March 2021 we mounted a one-day exhibition in the Museum as part of the 'Beccles Wild About Art' event. Two temporary exhibitions will be available in the 2022 season.

In 2021/2 we continued with a 'Community Museum' display cabinet in the Beccles Library.

The Museum has been able to enhance further its ICT facilities and improve its Collection Management System which will increase accessibility, including for visitors and researchers.

**Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)**

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The Museum does not make grants to other organisations.

The Museum is completely run by volunteers. Stewards open the Museum to the public and assist with visitors' questions. A team of trained volunteers looks after all aspects of the Museum's day-to-day operations under the direction of the curator, including care of the collections, setting up exhibitions, managing group visits, giving talks to outside bodies, answering enquiries from the public and supporting visiting researchers.

Several new volunteers have been recruited to assist with the management of the collections and administration. We are pleased to give opportunities to young people as volunteers.

Our curator relinquished his responsibilities in January after six years of very dedicated service. We have advertised widely but have not yet been able to appoint a successor. Our chairman and secretary are covering key aspects of the role with support from other volunteers.

## Section D

## Achievements and performance

**Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**

The limited opening of the Museum for the 2021 season reduced what it was able to do. But visitors much appreciated that the museum was open and more than 600 adults and children visited.

The Museum has received a number of donations of historic material which have been accessioned and added to the collections. The Museum is keen that new material is made available to the public: so, for example, a number of drawings by a well-known artist that were donated featured in the temporary exhibition in the 2021 season.

Some updating of permanent displays has been undertaken.

The Museum has been successful in obtaining a grant for a card reader from East Suffolk Council through the agency of Community Action Suffolk.

The Museum has also received some financial donations from the Ancient Order of Buffaloes and individuals.

In January 2021 a grant was received from the Waveney and Yare Housing Association to enable the Museum in conjunction with The Beccles Society to begin a visual history project, which will take the form of the display of historic images of Beccles from the Museum's collections. A location for the first set of images has been chosen in consultation with the Town Council which owns the building where it is proposed that the images will be displayed.

The Friends of the Museum subscriptions and the 100 Club income have also contributed to the Museum's sound financial positions. But we keep a close eye on expenditure and continue looking at ways to increase our income. A Fundraising Working Party was also established and its recommendations in the form of a plan will be considered by trustees in June 2022. An important aspect of the plan is the raising of public awareness about the Museum and its collections.

A Finance Working Party was set up and its recommendations accepted by Trustees.

To increase visitor numbers, the Museum continues to look for ways to grow its public profile via talks, newspaper items and other media.

The Museum has continued to strive to safeguard the town and district's historical heritage and increase access to historical records.

## Section E Financial review

**Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves**

The Museum aims to keep reserves of two years' operating costs and we have maintained that in 2021/22.

**Details of any funds materially in deficit**

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### Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The Townlands Charity continues to be a major donor to the Museum, effectively covering the Museum's rent.

The Museum shop makes a useful contribution to income, including through the sale of books and booklets, many of which have drawn on the museum's collections. In 2021/22 some online sales have also been made.

The Museum continues to make no admission fee in order to make the collections and its facilities as widely available as possible.

Expenditure on the presentation of displays and exhibitions and on maintaining a safe and attractive environment has supported the Museum's aim to provide a relevant and accessible collection and to educate and entertain the local community in all aspects of the area's history.

## Section F Other optional information

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## Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

<b>Signature(s)</b>	B. Darch	
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<b>Full name(s)</b>	Barry Darch	
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<b>Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)</b>	Chairman of Trustees	
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Date 20 June 2022