

Case study



HINCKLEY & DISTRICT
MUSEUM

See what they had to say

Succession Planning Programme

Between 2021 and 2022 MDEM ran a Succession Planning Programme twice. The programme aimed to support independent museums in the region to consider their future sustainability and to develop an inclusive approach to trustee recruitment.

Eyam Museum and Hinckley and District Museum were two museums which took part in the programme. As a result of their participation, they have developed plans for trustee recruitment and are considering how best to attract a wide range of people onto their boards.



“There were a number of very interesting sessions. As a newcomer to museums, I found them very educational, particularly the diversity and inclusion one and Kids in Museums. It also really helped to put some structure on to my thoughts around succession planning, it helped me put things into context.”

Richard Coates,
Trustee



The programme

MDEM's Organisational Health Check in 2020 highlighted succession planning as a key developmental need for many museums in the region. This was something which was worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic with many boards experiencing a turnover in members within a short period of time.

In response to this MDEM developed the Succession Planning Programme. The programme consisted of a range of activities led by Heather Lomas, Museums & Heritage Consultant. There were six sessions including, an *Introduction to Diversity and Inclusion* workshop led by [Inclusive Boards](#) and A Kids in Museums session which focused on recruiting young trustees.

Session 1	April 2022	Introduction to the programme and developing your succession plan
Session 2	April 2022	Diversifying your museum board – Introduction to Diversity and Inclusion
Session 3-5	May - August 2022	3 x cohort meetings, covering the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trustee roles • recruitment, advertising, and induction • developing an equality and diversity policy • recruiting younger trustees.
Session 6	November 2022	A peer network sharing session for all programme delegates.

Having six sessions enabled participants to build skills and expertise over a period of time. Museums were asked to report back on their progress at each session and this helped them to action their session learning. Alongside the sessions individual tailored support from MDEM was offered to all participants.

Hinckley and District Museum and Eyam Museum were two of nine museums selected to participate through a competitive expression of interest process. All of the participating museums were small independents with less than 3 FTE staff or completely volunteer run.

Hinckley and District Museum

Taking part in governance and succession planning work has helped Hinckley and District Museum become more sustainable.

Hinckley and District Museum is an independent Accredited museum managed and staffed by volunteers. The museum first opened in 1996 and is housed in three seventeenth century Grade II listed thatched cottages. The cottages were originally built as a farmhouse and were assets of the Atkins hosiery factory. The family business, which can be traced back to 1722 was one of the oldest running hosiery firms in the world.

Heritage lovers in museum plea

PEOPLE who are interested in local heritage and history are being invited to apply to become a volunteer at Hinckley and District Museum.

Volunteers at the museum currently steward exhibition spaces, provide drinks and snacks in the tearoom and work in reception. Some volunteers also work on events for the school holidays or handle interesting objects that are relevant to local history.

The museum is also looking for people to join its board of trustees, who will work on developing the museum for the next five to ten years. People from all backgrounds are welcome to apply, although the museum is keen to hear from people with marketing, IT, or communications skills, as well as young people.

For more information on voluntary opportunities, please contact Philip Lindley by emailing hinckleymuseum@hotmail.co.uk or if you would like to apply to become a trustee, please contact Ann Cobtree: hinckleymuseum@hotmail.co.uk





Background

In 2018 Ann Crabtree, Chair of the Trustees began working with MDEM and Heather Lomas to address challenges related to succession and governance. At that stage there were six trustees and with an average age of c.70 years.

Recognising that the museum was an ideal candidate for the Succession Planning Programme Heather signposted them to the application. They were successful and three trustees took part in the sessions.

Impact

From the discussions and work undertaken three new trustees were appointed, taking the board from six to nine trustees.

The new trustees' range in age from their 20's - 40's. The museum also introduced a new approach to trustee terms.

As part of the process the trustees also undertook a museum audit. As a volunteer run museum, the trustees are also active volunteers who are responsible for the operating of the museum. The audit aimed to highlight the areas of strengths on the board and areas where there were gaps for both operational and strategic matters. The identified gaps created an opportunity to define specific roles

Future

The museum's five year forward plan sets out an ambition to extend and develop access and alongside the Atkins building to create a heritage hub destination for the town.

To support this ambition a new build fund has been set up, a forward planning working party has been established and an architect has been appointed to develop concepts. The plans for the museum include new spaces for meeting rooms, school groups, an office and toilet. In addition to the Succession Planning Programme the museum has benefited from MDEM training, grants, and advice. Heather Lomas supported the museum through the process

The participating trustees were guided through a process with Heather through which they explored how and where best to advertise trustee opportunities.

They considered what they could do to advertise widely and recognised the need to make the roles exciting. An approach for recruitment and groups to target was developed and this proved to be successful.

for trustee recruitment. Following on from this the board plan to review their skills through a skills audit.

A new rolling term system for trustees has been introduced whereby they join for 3 years and if they want to continue, they can through a voting process. There's still work to do and recently the museum has advertised for new volunteers.

"It's an ongoing process, we can't stop"
Ann Crabtree

of becoming a registered CIO in 2018 and advice provided through Covid was particularly helpful for the museum.

"MDEM provided a lot of support through Covid and grants. Being there and having someone you can speak to has been really valuable to us."
Ann Crabtree



Eyam Museum

Eyam Museum is an independent village museum in the Peak District which welcomes in excess of 30,000 visitors per year.

It tells the story of Eyam Plague in 1665 -1666 when the village 'self-isolated' to prevent infecting the surrounding area, at great cost to the local population. The Museum's profile and that of the village was raised significantly during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The museum was created in 1994 from the collection of Clarence Daniel, a local historian and lifelong resident of Eyam. In addition to the Plague Story, the Museum records the development of the village and its social, industrial and geological history.



Background

In 2021 the museum was preparing to reapply for Accreditation. This, alongside the appointment of new trustees led to a thorough evaluation of the future direction of the museum and, amongst a range of other important issues, succession planning of trustees.

Richard Coates was one of the newly appointed trustees and he picked up a skills audit when he joined the board.

Richard asked his fellow trustees to complete forms, he talked to them about their responses and then compiled a report which highlighted the strengths and gaps on the board and the impact this could have on the organisation.

In parallel a MDEM Organisational Health review fed into an overall review of what the museum needed as an organisation and the role of its trustees in delivering it. The invitation to apply for the Succession Planning Programme arrived while this work was underway. The timing was ideal and the Chair, Tony Parsons attended the sessions along with Richard Coates and Carol Mealing, two Trustees.

Impact

After the first meeting of the Succession Planning Programme, the Chair, Tony Parsons, indicated that he intended to step down from his role once the museum has gone through the Accreditation process.

The programme has helped the museum to identify the need to develop a succession plan and implement a recruitment process for the Chair and additional trustees.



It recognises that the recruitment process needs to reach beyond the parish of Eyam to attract the range of skills and experience required, and, in increasing the remit and scope, hopes to attract a greater diversity of applicants.

In addition to the structured sessions the museum benefited from sharing with the programme cohort.

“You learn from the other museums in the course, you learn from the difficulties they have faced and also get reassurance.”

Richard Coates, Trustee

Future

The museum will be invited to reapply for Accreditation in July 2023 and is ready to submit its application.

Through the process of reapplying and with support from MDEM it has identified the need to undertake an options appraisal project whose purpose is to identify how best to develop the museum.

The building within which the museum is situated has limited space and there is a need to develop the interpretation of the displays and exhibition spaces to make it more accessible to a wider audience.

The museum is also building on existing relationships with universities and schools to develop a more child friendly and accessible experience for people with disabilities.

In addition to the Succession Planning Programme the museum has benefited from MDEM support in a variety of ways. Heather has supported the board with a visioning exercise and the museum will be looking to MDEM for support when they start a trustee recruitment process.

“I have been very impressed with Museum Development East Midlands, my main contact is Heather and she’s great. She is very practical, knowledgeable and gives sensible advice. In addition, the materials provided by MDEM have been really good.”

Richard Coates, Trustee

Next phase

The Organisational Health Check 2022 has continued to highlight the need for museums to take action in this area.

MDEM are now rolling the Succession Planning Programme out for a third year, opening up

spaces for museums from across both the East and West Midlands. There will also be a follow up meeting for previous participating organisations to come together to share their longer-term learning and explore barriers and opportunities when embedding this practice at their museum.



**Museum
Development
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