



## **Chairman's Report 2021/22**

AGM 10 June 2022

This is the second year in which the Essex Museum Development Officer post has been hosted by Colchester Borough Council, through Colchester and Ipswich Museums, with support from Museums Essex and SHARE Museums East. The postholder continues to be Beth Wilkey who has again made a major contribution to supporting the county's museums this year. This hosting arrangement was due to finish at the end of the financial year 2022/2023 but, following an extension of Arts Council England funding to SHARE, will now remain in place until 31 March 2024.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect the county's museums for much of the period covered by this report. Although museums were able to reopen on 12 April 2021, various restrictions remained in place for many months and the surge in Omicron BA2 variant cases in February-March 2022 undoubtedly impacted visitor figures. As a result many museums in the county will have continued to face significant financial difficulties and several were successful in receiving SHARE/Art Fund recovery grants.

Beth Wilkey has continued to establish links with museums and heritage sites in Essex, visiting twenty-eight museums during the year to meet staff, see the venue and provide support as needed. Her work has included promoting diversity in museums and a number of Essex museums have participated in AIM's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme and SHARE training. Decolonisation has also been a theme in 2021/22 and Beth has provided support to Epping Forest District Museum, who are embarking on a decolonisation project through an ACE Project Grant, and organised a decolonisation and inclusive narratives training session for Essex museums with Inbal Livne from the Powell-Cotton Museum. Other areas of activity include volunteer and workforce development and support, with several Essex museums benefitting from an external consultant, accessibility, a training session in September 2021 on disability access led by Jo Gillam was attended by ten Essex museums, and organisational health checks, with ten Essex museums using the toolkit. Lastly, Beth has continued to support museums who are converting from being an unincorporated organisations to Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) and it is good to record that five museums have made this transition during the year.

The Heritage Engagement and Learning Group met in October 2021 and January 2022. The October meeting looked at marketing and communications, and some formal training from Christina Lister was delivered. The January meeting was focused around supporting school groups to have successful museum visits, behaviour management and understanding children with additional needs.

The Essex Museum Development newsletter is supported by regular emails and social media activity to ensure that the county's museums receive up to date information on the latest developments in the museum sector. The Museums Essex website at [museums-essex.org](https://museums-essex.org) contains sections on membership, individual members, the Grants Scheme, case studies and contacts. Further contributions from members are always welcome.

The eighth round of the Small Grants Scheme was concluded during the year with a grant to Jaywick Martello Tower and awards under a ninth round for collections care and management

related work were made to Maldon Museum in the Park, Mersea Island Museum, Braintree Museum, Thaxted Windmill and the Fry Art Gallery. The grant programme has continued to be managed by a Sub-Committee chaired by Philip Wise supported by Tony O'Connor (Epping Forest District Museum) and Caroline Pantling (Scouts Association) whose institutions are not eligible for grants whilst on the Sub-Committee. Museums Essex continues to believe these grants are an important benefit for its members and it is intended that a further round will be launched in the coming financial year.

Museums Essex will make representations on behalf of its members as the need arises. This year we wrote to Thurrock Council expressing concern about the future of Thurrock Museum and offered advice. An online meeting with a senior officer at the Council took place and we continue to observe the situation.

In 2021/22 we welcomed four new members: St Osyth Museum, Harwich Museum, Boxted Airfield Museum and Wivenhoe Museum, with the latter two re-joining after several years' absence. This takes the current membership to forty-eight. We will continue to recruit new members as the opportunity arise and via regular campaigns.

During the year Museums Essex has for the first time become a member of the Association for Independent Museums and we look forward to the benefits of membership including reduced price attendance at the AIM annual conference.

I am very grateful to Beth Wilkey for providing administrative support to Museums Essex, including preparing the agendas, producing the minutes and technical support during our online meetings. This assistance is much appreciated and has ensured that things have run smoothly during the year.

I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for their contribution to the work of the charity: Gordon Cummings, Tony O'Connor, Caroline Pantling, Nick Wickenden, Carolyn Wingfield, Polly Redman and Dr Sarah Demelo. I would particularly like to thank Tony O'Connor who is stepping down at this AGM for his many years of service as a trustee of Museums Essex and his contribution to museums in the region more generally, including as a past chair of Museums East of England. In addition I am grateful to Terry Joyce for his support in relation to our website. We are also very dependent upon the support of Jamie Everitt (SHARE Museums East) and Dr Frank Hargrave (Colchester and Ipswich Museums) to whom I am very grateful. Martin Gruselle has kindly undertaken the examination of the Accounts over several years.

Looking ahead to 2022, Museums Essex aims to continue to support and develop membership benefits through an affordable fee based on income; participate fully in the delivery mechanism for museum development in Essex including the funding of the Museum Development Officer post; continue to support the Heritage Engagement and Learning Group, provide advocacy for the heritage sector of Essex in partnership with SHARE Museums East; provide a Small Grants Scheme; enable free membership of the Harwell Disaster Recovery Service for small and medium-sized museums; create opportunities for networking and provide inspirational case studies of museum development at our meetings, whether virtual or at member museums.

Philip J Wise MA (Cantab) FSA MCIfA AMA  
Chair: Museums Essex

Museums Essex is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registration number: 1152493 and a member of the Association for Independent Museums, membership number 4738



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
MUSEUMS ESSEX

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

Period start date  
06-Aprl-21

Period end date  
05-Aprl-2022

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>				
Subscriptions	£3,800		£3,800	£125
Interest	£147		£147	£1,509
SHARE Training Grant		£2,000	£2,000	
Donations	£500		£500	
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>£4,447</b>	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>£6,447</b>	<b>£1,634</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>				
<b>Sub total</b>				
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>£4,447</b>	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>£6,447</b>	<b>£1,634</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>				
Training grant costs		(£2,000)	(£2,000)	(£400)
Harwell	(£834)		(£834)	(£810)
Training Scheme costs	(£500)		(£500)	
Website costs	(£272)		(£272)	(£12)
Small Grants Round 8		(£1,500)	(£1,500)	(£400)
Small Grants Round 9		(£2,253)	(£2,253)	
Colchester District Council - Salary contribution	(£9,200)		(£9,200)	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(£10,806)</b>	<b>(£5,753)</b>	<b>(£16,559)</b>	<b>(£1,622)</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>				
<b>Sub total</b>				

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period[illegible]


### Details

Amount due (optional)


When due  
(optional)


## B5 Liabilities

Signed by one or two trustees on  
behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Date of  
approval

	G CUMMINGS	29/05/2022