



Chairman's Report 2023/24

AGM 7 June 2024

This is the fourth, and final, year in which the Essex Museum Development Officer post has been hosted by Colchester City Council, through Colchester and Ipswich Museums, with support from Museums Essex and SHARE Museums East. Funding for the current hosting arrangement ended on 31 March 2024 after which the Essex MDO will be managed by a new organisation Museum Development South East (MDSE) based in Norwich. Your chair was heavily involved in the complex and lengthy negotiations around the new delivery arrangements for museum delivery in the county, ensuring that the interests of Museums Essex were taken into consideration. It is exceedingly good to be able to report to the AGM that it has been possible to retain Sarah Sinka as our MDO, ensuring continuity in this vital role for Essex museums.

During the last year Sarah has continued to establish links between the MDO and museums and heritage sites in Essex, having visited over 50 museums to meet staff, see the venue and provide support as needed. Visits have also been made by the chair in recent months to the University of Essex, Braintree Museum, St Osyth Museum and Manningtree Museum. Two letters have been sent to The National Lottery Heritage Fund in support of funding applications by two of our members.

One of the key tasks of the MDO is providing advice relating to Accreditation, whether to those considering becoming Accredited museums or those in the process of submitting an Accreditation return. During the year, several members have become Accredited including, for the first time, the Brewster Centre at Colne Valley Railway and, after a lapse of several years, Harlow Museum and Walled Garden. The Essex Police Museum, Braintree District Museum, the Warner Textile Archive, Brentwood Museum and Burnham-on-Crouch & District Museum have also achieved Full Accreditation and all are to be congratulated on their success.

There have been four members' meetings of Museums Essex during the year; at Copped Hall (AGM), Brightlingsea Museum, Southend Museum and online. The charity's trustees have met on two occasions in May and November. Dr Mark Curteis joined the trustees during the year.

Our membership is holding very steady and is currently at 53 organisations covering 69 sites. It is more than double the figure of five years ago.

Following Museums Essex becoming a member of the Association for Independent Museums in 2022, we again supported the Essex MDO's attendance at the AIM annual conference which was held in Edinburgh in June 2023.

During the year Museums Essex have funded the introduction of the 'Wheels of Time' project in Essex. This is an initiative to raise awareness of local history and heritage amongst children aged 5 to 11 through earning badges by visiting museums. The scheme originally began in Kent in 2015 and is now spreading to other English counties. Nineteen Essex museums have already signed up to the scheme which will be formally launched at an event at Brightlingsea Museum in June 2024.

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 contains sections on membership, individual members, the Grants Scheme, case studies and contacts. Further contributions from members are always welcome.

An eleventh round of the Small Grants Scheme was opened during the year with a focus on interpretation, learning and events. This round attracted the largest number of applications for several years. Grants were made to Chelmsford Museum, Ingatestone Museum, Ongar Millenium History Society, Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome and Boxted Airfield Museum. The grant programme has continued to be managed by a Sub-Committee chaired by Philip Wise supported by Carolyn Wingfield (Saffron Walden Museum) and Dr Sarah Demelo (University of Essex) 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 Autumn of 2024

During the year, the trustees took the decision to raise subscriptions by a small amount in recognition of the fact that there had been no rise since Museums Essex was established ten years ago. The charity's costs have increased recently, particularly our membership of Harwell which has doubled in the last 12 months. Subscription rates will be kept under review both to ensure that the fairest possible banding is used and also that we continue to broadly raise enough income to cover our running costs.

I am very grateful to Sarah Sinka 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: the Vice-chair Dr Sarah Demelo, the Treasurer Gordon Cummings, Rob Sharp, Carolyn Wingfield, Polly Redman and Dr Mark Curteis. I would particularly like to thank Carolyn Wingfield who is stepping down at this AGM after many years of service on the committee. Carolyn has made a very significant contribution to Museums Essex, in particular as a member of the Small Grants Sub-Committee and in relation to archaeological archives including our guidelines for the preparation and deposition of archaeological archives in the county. We are also very dependent upon the ongoing support of Jamie Everitt (formerly SHARE Museums East, now MDSE) and Dr Frank Hargrave (Colchester and Ipswich Museums) to whom I am very grateful.

Looking ahead to the coming year, Museums Essex aims to continue to support and develop membership benefits through an affordable fee based on income; participate fully in the new delivery mechanism for museum development in Essex, including working in close collaboration with the MDSE team and the Essex MDO; continue to support the 'Wheels of Time' project in the county; provide advocacy for the heritage sector of Essex in partnership with MDSE; 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.

Finally, I am planning to stand down as your Chair at the 2025 AGM and will be seeking, in conjunction with my fellow trustees, a successor during the coming year.

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

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2023


To

31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

| | Unrestricted funds | Restricted funds | Endowment funds | Total funds | Last year |
|---|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | to the nearest £ | to the nearest £ | to the nearest £ | to the nearest £ | to the nearest £ |
| A1 Receipts | | | | | |
| Subscriptions | 4,410 | - | - | 4,410 | 3,400 |
| Interest | 1,979 | - | - | 1,979 | 479 |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| <i>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</i> | 6,389 | - | - | 6,389 | 3,879 |
| A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table). | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| <i>Sub total</i> | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total receipts | 6,389 | - | - | 6,389 | 3,879 |
| A3 Payments | | | | | |
| AIM Conference | 338 | - | - | 338 | 284 |
| Harwell | 1,980 | - | - | 1,980 | 1,014 |
| Meetings | 28 | - | - | 28 | 111 |
| Training | - | - | - | - | 400 |
| Postage | 54 | - | - | 54 | 11 |
| Website Costs | 167 | - | - | 167 | 41 |
| Small Grants Round 8 | - | - | - | - | 600 |
| Small Grants Round 10 | 1,326 | - | - | 1,326 | - |
| Small Grants Round 11 | 2,200 | - | - | 2,200 | - |
| MDO Post Advertisement | - | - | - | - | 50 |
| Subscriptions | - | - | - | - | 70 |
| Wheels of Time Project | 432 | - | - | 432 | - |
| <i>Sub total</i> | 6,625 | - | - | 6,625 | 2,461 |
| A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table) | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| <i>Sub total</i> | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total payments | 6,625 | - | - | 6,625 | 2,461 |
| Net of receipts/(payments) | - 136 | - | - | - 136 | 1,418 |
| A5 Transfers between funds | - | - | - | - | - |
| A6 Cash funds last year end | 60,882 | - | - | 60,882 | 59,464 |
| Cash funds this year end | 60,746 | - | - | 60,746 | 60,882 |

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

| Categories | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|--|--|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| B1 Cash funds | Co-op Bank Current Account | 355 | - | - |
| | Hampshire Trust Bank | 60,391 | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | Total cash funds | 60,746 | - | - |
| | (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | | | |
| B2 Other monetary assets | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| B3 Investment assets | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| B5 Liabilities | Details | Fund to which liability relates | Amount due (optional) | When due (optional) |
| | | | - | |
| | | | - | |
| | | | - | |
| | | | - | |
| | | | - | |
| Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees | | Signature | Print Name | Date of approval |
| | |  | G.I. CUMMINGS PHILIP J. WISE | 29/7/24 5/8/24 |

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Museums Essex

I report on the accounts of Museums Essex for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on the attached pages.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Museum's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Museum's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Society and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Martin Gruselle FCA 25 Barley Road Great Chishill Royston SG8 8SB

29 July 2024