

THE SANDWICH MEDIEVAL TRUST



ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2022

THE SANDWICH MEDIEVAL TRUST

Registered Charity Number 1178864

TRUSTEES: Dave Batchelor, Julia Baxter, Paul Damon, Steve Laslett, Bob Martin, Lynne O'Donoghue www.sandwichmedieval.org

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It is with great sadness we report that our highly respected Patron, Admiral Lord Michael Boyce, passed away in November 2022. Lord Boyce has been our Patron from the inception of the Trust and an enthusiastic supporter of our work, visiting the Centre on a number of occasions. He was there to welcome the Nicholas when she arrived at the Quay, having completed the journey from Plymouth via an extended stay at Dover Marina. He will be very much missed by the Trustees.

The following sections in this annual report reflect on another very successful year for the Trust. The Centre continues to be a great attraction for visitors who regularly leave positive feedback confirming that our volunteers continue to educate and enthral in equal measure. It is clear that the appetite for an imaginative telling of the medieval history of Sandwich is huge, and that the Trust is limited only by the capacity of our volunteers to deliver, for free, in their spare time.

The Trustees are very proud of the volunteers and extremely grateful for their valuable and ongoing input. The visual impact of reenactors in medieval costume welcoming visitors is very positive and their subject knowledge impressive. Feedback includes such comments as: 'This is a must-visit place if you are in Sandwich'; 'Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful, what a fabulous educational experience'; 'What a little gem'.

The Centre is open to visitors most weeks from Thursday to Sunday and has recorded as many as 1,000 visits over the August Bank Holiday weekend. It is probably the most visited venue in Sandwich town.

The educational content of the Centre is consistently praised, with a number of crafts and skills being demonstrated. They include blacksmithing and metalworking, calligraphy and illumination, corn weaving, egg tempera painting, wood working and importantly, boat repair and reconstruction. The following sections on workshops and reenactors also record many visiting reenactors and their skills.

The project to create a life-sized cog, a medieval boat typical of the sort that would have been moored in Sandwich around 1400, continues. Thanks to a generous £10,000 grant from the Bernard Sunley Foundation and £5,000 from the Sandwich Shop, the project is well-funded and making good progress. A purpose-built cover has been installed to protect the boat from rain and also to allow volunteers to work on the deck in bad weather. The capstan and winch have been made in the workshop and work has started on the castles. The funding outlook for the Trust is positive and Trustees can look forward to healthy and active 2023.

Steve Laslett

Chair, Board of Trustees

ACTIVITIES

To simplify the workings of the organisation, the work of the Trust is divided into four sections: Maritime; Schools and Workshops; Re-enactment Programme; PR *Social Media) and Finance. These groups meet separately and regularly report back to the Trust.

MARITIME



Nicholas with the cover frame in place

The main focus of our work during the past year has continued to be on the Nicholas project. The presence of the Nicholas on its mooring at Sandwich Quay generates a great deal of interest in the project and in our work in the Centre. The hull is an asset to the Quay area and will contribute to the development of the historic maritime ambience along the banks of the river Stour as envisaged by the Sandwich Heritage Harbour Group.

The trustees and a small team of enthusiastic volunteers, including a group of Sea Cadets, have continued to work on the Nicholas, replacing rotten deck beams and planking. Work has also continued on removing the temporary caulking to the deck planking and replacing it with traditional oakum and pitch.



At work on the capstan in the Centre!

In the Centre's workshop we have fabricated the windlass using a section of Ash for the horizontal spindle and mounting it in an oak frame attached to the deck. We have also fabricated the capstan using a section of Ash for the vertical spindle, mounting it on an oak bearer on top of the keel structure and locating it with an oak collar at deck level. All the associated metalwork, including the ratchet mechanisms, have been fabricated by our blacksmith on the forge in the Centre.



Windlass made in the Centre now in place



All metalwork for the Nicholas is made at the Centre's forge

Our blacksmith has begun the fabrication of a second anchor in the forge in the Centre and hopes to be able to forge-weld the anchor arms to the shank which will demonstrate the heating capabilities of a medieval forge.

We have had a fabric cover installed on a temporary timber framework to protect the deck and hull from inclement weather. The framework provides sufficient headroom for us to be able to work underneath it in all weathers thus increasing our productivity during the Winter and Spring months.

Our aim from next year onwards will be to fabricate the fore and stern castles in the workshop and install them on the hull before moving on to erect a mast, install a sail and rigging and, in time, modify the internal hull area to allow visitors to sample medieval life below deck.

We remain in contact with Tommi Nielsen of T. Nielsen & Company, based in Gloucester. They have agreed to advise us on all aspects of design and maintenance as the Nicholas project progresses. Tommi and his colleague, Graham Westbrook, naval architect, will offer guidance on repairs to be carried out in the future and on the design of items such as the castles.

A section of our web site is dedicated to the Nicholas project see: <https://sandwichmedieval.org/the-saint-nicholas-project> .



SCHOOLS AND WORKSHOPS



Wheat weaving demands great concentration

Workshops

Workshops took place throughout the year and included Blacksmithing, Baking, Bookbinding, Calligraphy, Illumination, Wheat Weaving and Tablet Weaving. The choice has recently added circular netting to the list. Interest in the workshops continues to remain strong throughout the year.

Have-a-go crafts include Calligraphy, Wheat Weaving and Egg Tempera painting which were particularly successful during the Medieval Market in April and the Sandwich Festival weekend in August, with many children and adults alike enjoying themselves whilst gaining interest in the workshops offered at the Centre.



Calligraphy – popular with all age groups

The calligraphy tables were full both days with all ages, including some people who had never tried before but always wanted to. Others that had enjoyed this craft as a child and were delighted to have another opportunity.

Quills were used to try and practice a medieval book hand and the work of the scribes of the time were explained with examples and material reproductions. Children in particular tried their hand at some egg tempera painting onto woodcut prints depicting scenes of the seasons. Visitors were very excited to complete a corn dolly with the Wheat Weaver, who patiently led them through the various stages of weaving wheat.



Making a corn dolly



Egg tempura painting – one of the have-a-go crafts

School Visits

Our school leaflets have been printed (*see end of this report*) and include a breakdown of costs and our selection of visits, whether these be a one hour visit or a full day's hands-on experience. These are also available on our website and downloadable for printing, as well as at the Centre. Local schools have had in-person visits to introduce what we offer, plus the leaflets. Slightly further afield schools in Margate, Broadstairs and Deal have received the leaflets by email. Home schooling groups have also been informed via various websites.

Some schools have already expressed interest in visiting the Centre in 2023. There is even a booking for 25 students from a language school in Spain.

During the lantern-making workshops, which took place in late November, medieval boats were created by children and their families. These lanterns were then proudly illuminated and paraded in the Sandwich Lights procession through the town on 3rd December 2022.

Group Visits

A group of SEND children (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) visited the Centre in the summer as part of a week-long project culminating in a play about Thomas Becket and supported by Kent County Council Reconnect, aimed at enhancing well being through creative arts.

On 2nd and 3rd August, the children had lots of fun trying two medieval crafts. Using hand cut quills, they practiced some medieval style writing, as used in the original manuscripts of the time and then completed their own names with a decorated capital

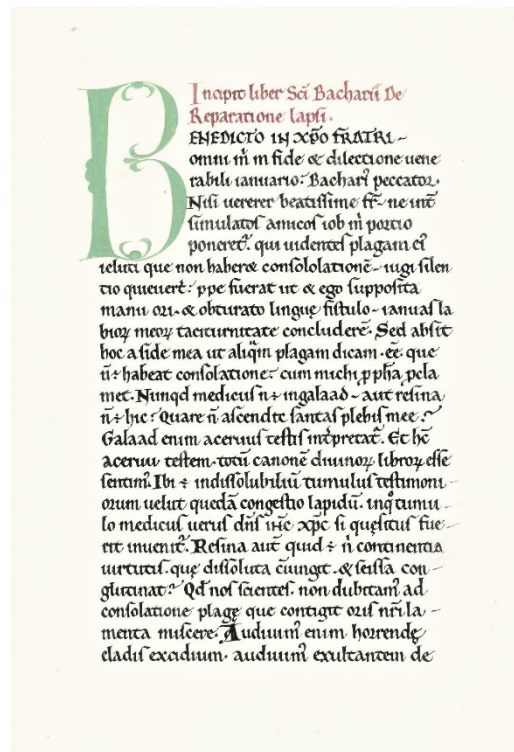
to colour in later. They were guided through step by step and made their own traditional corn dollies using wheat which they were most excited about. The groups were also introduced to the Centre and shown around to great enjoyment. It was particularly rewarding to see them all so immersed in crafts that none of them had ever tried before. The accompanying adults also tried their hands at the skills.

And on film ...



Calligraphy on film

Earlier this year, Julia Baxter (the Centre's scribe) was approached by a film company to take part in a film, working on behalf of the Llanthony Secunda Priory in Gloucestershire, an historic building, now a visitor centre. The task was to be filmed writing part of a page from a manuscript which was originally written at the Priory (now in Cambridge). This segment for the film was shot at the Centre and will be included as a visual explanation within the Priory. There was no charge made for this work with the understanding that the Trust has a copy of the film which is highly anticipated



The priory manuscript dating from the tenth century



Block print cutting

RE-ENACTMENTS AND EVENTS



The year 2022 was full of great events, medieval markets and open days.

It began with a series of February half term Open Days which included a Medieval Weapons Display, Medieval painting, Meet the Barber Surgeon and Silkwoman and a day in the life of a medieval housewife.

Over Easter we held a two-day Medieval Market where we were joined by an amazing selection of medieval makers and crafts people which included a have-a-go section for calligraphy and corn dolly making. The Centre welcomed hundreds of happy visitors and plan to take the Medieval market to the Quay Green in 2023.

In June we held our Le Weekend Medieval event on the Quay Green and in the Centre with a host of brilliant reenactors and demonstrators for the visitors to see. They were also able to enjoy and take part in music and dance, medieval theatre, living history displays, knight training and have-a-go archery.





Medieval Minstrel at Le Weekend



Stone carving – a new craft for 2022





Archery on the Butts in July

A new event for us in July was Archery on the Butts. The idea of the event was to show the public the effectiveness of archery in medieval times and to test the English longbow and a variety of arrow types against different armour such as a gambeson, link mail and plate armour. Arrow heads made by the Centre's Blacksmith, Steve Batchelor, were fitted to arrows made by local fletcher Sam Rummery, who also made and shot a crossbow. Local bowyer Nick Toy made and shot a warbow while explaining to the public the different arrows and armour. Archer Tom Jennings and a group of archers from a local re-enactment group also demonstrated the power of the English longbow.



Prize giving with the Mayor of Sandwich at the Archery Competition



Anglo Saxon knight ready for battle



Chain Mail dummy under attack (torso made by wheat weaver)

August Bank Holiday saw the return of the Sandwich Festival and for two days of the town-wide event we held another encampment on the Quay Green and the Centre including a food demonstration by a new member of the volunteer team - Patrick De-La-Mere – plus music, dance, theatre and even have-a-go axe throwing along with living history reenactors. A have-a go-marquee filled the area with fun and excitement.

In September we took part in 'Heritage Open Days' organised by The National Trust. With many different reenactors and demonstrators joining us for six days of free activities and demonstrations of medieval life in the Centre. The event was very well received by the public; the Heritage Open Days organisers even sent a film crew to capture the event.

In early October we held a mini medieval market at the Centre where the public could chat with some of the amazing crafts people including woodworkers, silkwoman, and a book binder. Carrie Horwood from Cats Eye Carving set up in the workshop to demonstrate and even let members of the public try their hand at stone carving.

During October half-term, games and model house building was another new free event for the Centre. Andrew Hall, another new volunteer, organised four days of medieval games and model house building; members of the public were invited to have a go at playing a selection of medieval (and earlier) games and build model medieval buildings out of recycled materials.

In December we took part in the Sandwich advent window event where we dress the main windows on the Quayside with a medieval festive display including paper and willow lanterns made into medieval cogs. We concluded with a medieval feast where many of the reenactors who have helped throughout the year enjoyed hot food and drink to celebrate.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Audience

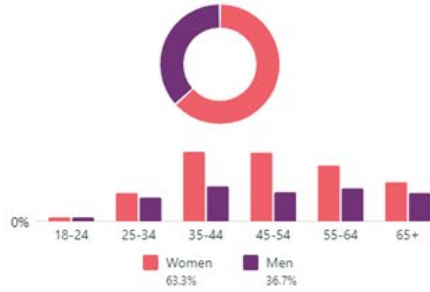
Current audience

Potential audience

Facebook Page followers ⓘ

1,327

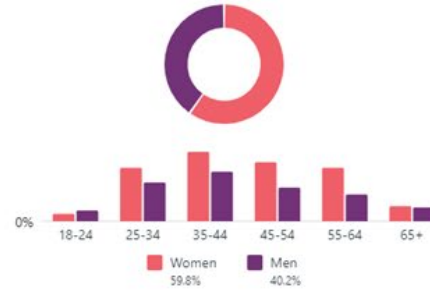
Age & gender ⓘ



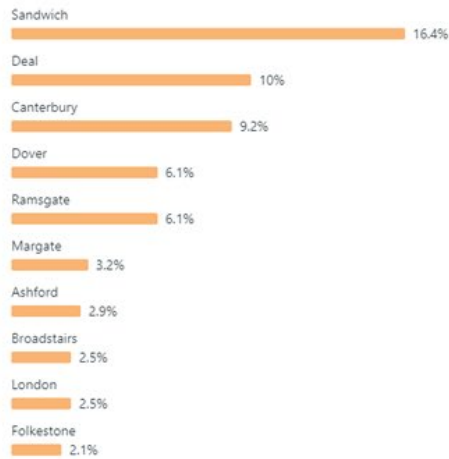
Instagram followers ⓘ

674

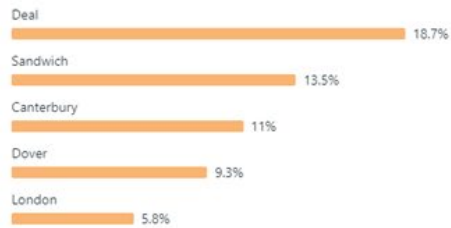
Age & gender ⓘ



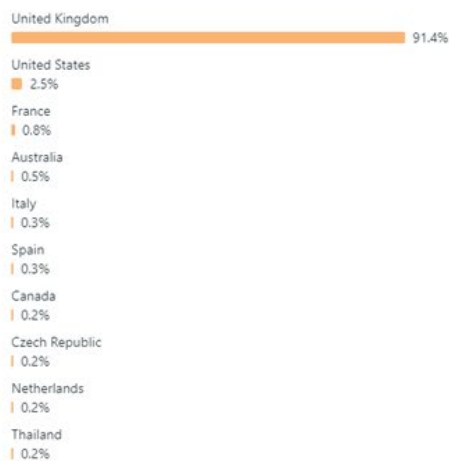
Top towns/cities



Top towns/cities



Top countries



Top countries



Contact new people

The more people who follow your Page, the easier it is for others to discover your brand. Send invitations to people who reacted to your Facebook posts to follow your Page. [Learn more](#)

Send invitations

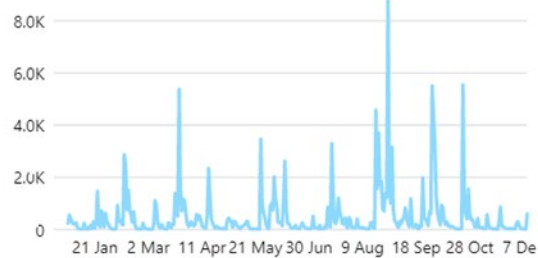
The graphs on the page above show the demographic of our Facebook and Instagram followers by town and country.

2. The graphs below show our page reach – the amount of Facebook and Instagram users who have seen a post or our page in the last 12 months.

Reach

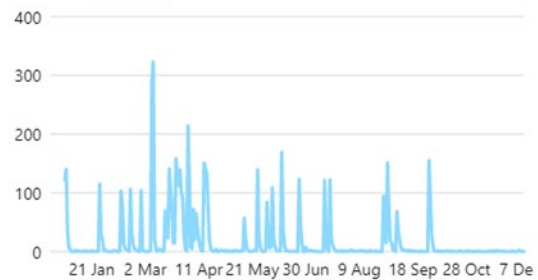
Facebook Page reach ⓘ

57,975 ↑ 70.4%



Instagram reach ⓘ

1,207 ↓ 62.7%



3. These graphs show our Facebook and Instagram page/profile visits – the amount of people who have directly looked at a post or our page.

Page and profile visits

Facebook Page visits ⓘ

4,749 ↑ 219.2%



Instagram profile visits ⓘ

409 ↓ 35.9%



REVIEWS

The Centre continues to receive glowing testimonials, a selection of which is given below:



Danny Williams

Local Guide · 19 reviews



★★★★★ 6 months ago

Went and did some medieval blacksmithing here for my birthday. Amazing and friendly staff. Very patient and engaging teacher. This is a must visit place if you're ever in Sandwich. Looking forward to seeing the completed boat they've been building



2

Response from the owner 6 months ago

Thanks for the great review, so pleased you had a good day 😊



Edit



Delete



Sally Tritton

Local Guide · 44 reviews · 9 photos



★★★★★ 4 months ago

Wonderful wonderful wonderful what a fabulous educational experience even for someone of my age in my 40s something for everyone of all ages a working ironmonger area where you can watch smelting and iron work in progress beautiful ... [More](#)



1

Response from the owner 4 months ago

Thank you so much for the great review



Edit



Delete



ShadowEmoLuv

6 reviews · 4 photos



★★★★★ 6 months ago

Amazing experience of blacksmithing! Very friendly staff and you are very hands on. Definitely would recommend if anyone wants to give blacksmithing a go! Also it's a charity so definitely go and visit 😊😊



2

Response from the owner 6 months ago

So pleased you had a good time. 🙌 thanks for coming along.

REVIEWS WITH RESPONSES



Paul Tomlin

4 reviews



★★★★★ 6 months ago

What a little gem. Fascinating talking to the enthusiastic volunteers talking about their skills and the amazing project they are working on.

Can't wait to go back sometime to view the progress.



2

Response from the owner 6 months ago

Thanks for the great review 😊



Edit



Delete



Josh
2 contributions



A Great Experience

Nov 2022

What an experience. The medieval center is a lovely place on its own to visit but they also offer experiences too. I was lucky enough to be given a day's experience blacksmithing for my birthday at Sandwich Medieval Centre and had previously been to look around.

The session I was given was a full day starting at 10 am and running until 4 pm. All the staff were extremely welcoming and made me feel so comfortable and the session was run by Steve. The blacksmithing forge was traditional with its bellows and fuel and you get a very traditional experience working with all the hand tools. What is there to say about Steve... he's brilliant: so informative and knowledgeable. He spoke through all the steps and explained processes well. Now, blacksmithing is quite physical but Steve offers to take over when you might need a break and obviously models certain steps but you can do as much as you want. I came out with the pieces that I had made but most importantly a great smile on my face.

I would say that this experience is well worth the money and I would recommend it to anyone. I certainly would like to do it again.

[Read less](#) ^

Written 20 November 2022

This review is the subjective opinion of a Tripadvisor member and not of Tripadvisor LLC. Tripadvisor performs checks on reviews.



A little gem

Jul 2022 • Family

Dropped in here just as we had parked and were off on a wander. They guy we spoke to was so interesting, knowledgeable and lovely. Our daughter who is twelve thought it was great. Some excellent work being done too. Recommend you drop in and ask questions and perhaps leave a donation as we did. Wonderful

Written 31 July 2022

This review is the subjective opinion of a Tripadvisor member and not of Tripadvisor LLC. Tripadvisor performs checks on reviews.



DanPMG
Broadstairs, UK • 43 contributions



Glad we stopped by

Jun 2022

Very knowledgeable and friendly team who are happy to talk to big kids and little kids alike. It was a very interesting visit with some interesting things to see. We were there about half an hour.

Written 20 June 2022

This review is the subjective opinion of a Tripadvisor member and not of Tripadvisor LLC. Tripadvisor performs checks on reviews.

FINANCE

The accounts overleaf show a positive financial position for the Trust with a surplus of income over expenditure of £9,443 for 2022. Grants from the Bernard Sunley Foundation of £10,000 and the Sandwich Shop of £5,000 were made to finance the remaining stages of the construction of the medieval cog, the Nicholas. The additional funds also facilitated the purchase of a purpose-built cover to protect the Nicholas from the elements and to allow work to continue on the deck in bad weather.

Income from small donations from the public totalled £5,482 which is considered to be a positive endorsement of how well the Medieval Centre is received by visitors. It is reassuring that recurring income is greater than the significant annual cost of over £4,000 for insurance.

Trustees continue to raise significant other funds by running successful outdoor annual events and indoor bars at St Marys Arts Centre when invited to do so. This income allows the Trust to continue to buy high quality equipment and costumes as and when needed.

A grant of £3,000 from Dover Council funded a one-off display of longbow archery held on the Butts in Sandwich in July. It was very well received and has led to additional educational items on permanent display in the Centre.

Just over £9,000 was spent on the Nicholas project as positive progress was made towards this most important contribution to Sandwich. The carried-forward positive bank balance of £26,621 will ensure continuing progress in 2023 and beyond.

Thanks are due to our generous sponsors:

The Sandwich Shop

The Bernard Sunley Foundation

The Sandwich Coop

The Roger de Haan Charitable Trust

The Garfield West Foundation.



The Sandwich Medieval Trust

Summary Accounts 2022

Income	2022	2021
Grants		
Sandwich Shop	5000.00	5000.00
Garfield Weston Foundation		10000.00
Bernard Sunley	10000.00	
Roger de Haan		2000.00
DDC Community/KCC Members Fund		1200.00
DDC Town centre Events	3000.00	
Drapers Charitable Fund		500.00
Scribes		250.00
Coop Duck Fund		700.00
	18000	19650.00
Events		
Easter Weekend, Archery, Le Weekend, Sandwich Festival	4591.67	1271.38
Donations from the public box	5502.63	4144.33
Sales after costs	26.09	1022.17
Workshops	621.63	680.56
DDC Lotto	79.50	108.00
St Mary's Bars	1309.85	0.00
Total Income	30131.37	26876.44
Expenditure		
(Net of VAT)		
Web	155.00	135.00
Boat and Tools	9295.91	12892.91
Building Costs	138.88	32.46
Learning Centre	0.00	195.89
Equipment - inc costumes, cups, batteries	4261.51	566.78
solar panels, generator		
Consumables	1804.11	414.64
Professional Services	126.75	
Insurance	4180.21	3124.83
AGM & Miscellaneous	40.00	915.84
Publicity	686.00	918.44
Total Expenditure	20688.37	19196.79
Net improvement	9443.00	7679.65
Adjusted Balance brought forward	17178.00	10204.58
Available Funds	26621.00	17884.23
Represented by Current Account	25096.69	17178.00
VAT Account	1524.31	706.23

