

THE MUSEUM OF DRUGS

England & Wales · Charity number 1181946

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2019-02-08

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 25 Great Eastern Court
Lower Clarence Road
Norwich
NR1 1EQ

Phone 07306802843

Email curator@museumofdrugs.com

Website www.museumofdrugs.com

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC ON THE SUBJECT OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, AND TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT GOOD HEALTH BY RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE RISKS OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AND HELPING THOSE WHOSE LIVES HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY DRUGS AND ALCOHOL IN PARTICULAR BY SIGNPOSTING THEM TO APPROPRIATE RESOURCES AND HELP.

Activities: The Museum of Drugs provides a fresh and innovative approach to addressing drug issues in society through the use of a unique collection of antiques and artefacts. The Museum provides public exhibitions, lectures and theatre to tackle social stigma, racism and inequality, and to challenge misinformation. The Museum provides improved access to support for people directly affected by drugs.

Classification

- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-28		£0	£0	-
2024-03-28		£120	£0	-
2023-03-28		£0	£0	-
2022-03-28		£0	£0	-
2021-03-28		£0	£0	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Emma Ratzer	Chair	2018-10-12
Daniel Mobbs		2018-10-12

THE MUSEUM OF DRUGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1181946

Accounts



The Museum of Drugs Annual Report

1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

Charity Number: 1181946

Operational Address: 25 Great Eastern Court, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1EQ

Trustees: Emma Ratzer MBE (Chair), Dan Mobbs

CEO/ Curator: Ben Curran

1. Overview

The Museum of Drugs was established in May 2008 as an online showcase for a unique and growing collection, and as a resource for those interested in the historical context of drug production, supply, use, and societal reaction.

Since its inception in 2008 the Museum of Drugs has provided consultancy on numerous projects and provided lectures to universities and the general public.

On 8th February 2019 the Museum of Drugs became a Registered Charity with the Charities Commission in England & Wales. This was the realisation of a longstanding aspiration to deliver on a range of charitable objectives as detailed below.

2. Objectives and Activities

2.1 Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in the governing document.

The objects of the CIO are, for the public benefit, to advance the education of the public on the subject of drug and alcohol use from a historical perspective, and to preserve and protect good health by raising public awareness of the risks of drug and alcohol use and helping those whose lives have been affected by drugs and alcohol in particular by signposting them to appropriate resources and help.

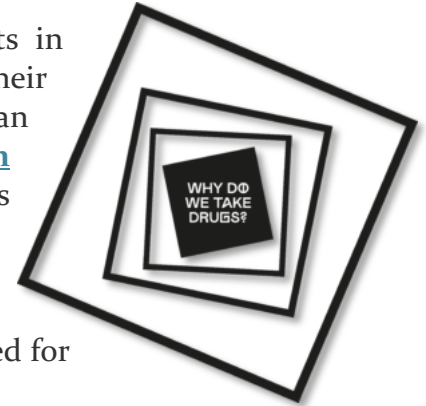
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- The collection and preservation of historical antiques and ephemera which will be made available to the public through:
 - the provision of cultural and educational resources, displayed publicly through 'pop-up' Museum exhibitions and more permanent Museum sites.
 - public lectures, presentations and events aimed at informing the public about society's relationship with drugs and alcohol and the associated risks.
 - provision of resources to college and university students through presentations and lectures and direct access to the Museum collection.

- Engage the wider public in open discussion and debate about the subject of drug and alcohol use from a historical perspective, linking in with local health and social care agencies to provide support to people whose lives have been affected by drugs and alcohol.

2.2 Summary of our main activities

A collaboration with the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich, went ahead in November 2024 in support of their ‘Should people take drugs?’ programme which featured an exhibition of photography intitled [Heroin Falls: Graham MacIndoe and Lindokuhle Sobekwa](#). The Museum was asked to review published materials for the event to ensure content was factually correct and anti-discriminatory. This work contributed to inclusivity of the event and the Museum was invited as a guest to the opening night and acknowledged for the support provided.



Also in November 2024, the Museum was contacted by Ben Smith, Professor of Latin American History, University of Warwick, regarding a possible collaboration with undergraduate students studying The Global History of the Drugs Trade.

These conversations progressed and in February 2025 the Museum’s collection were transported to Warwick University for the students to curate and exhibit as part of a Third-Year exhibition.

Students invited students, members of the faculty and others at the university to visit the exhibition and they presented on their work, which was displayed in cabinets.

Students reported how much they had enjoyed working with physical objects in the collection and how it had brought aspects of their course to life.



From the Museum's perspective it provided an opportunity to work in partnership with a university and engage with students on drugs history and themes of inherent discrimination in drugs legislation. The experience has led to further discussion with Warwick University, and the collection will be available for students in the next financial year, over the period January 2026 – April 2026 culminating in an exhibition 24th April – 22nd May 2026.

Other work anticipated in the next financial year 2025/ 26 includes online podcasts, lectures, and continued activity on social media.

2.3 Statement confirming that the trustees have had regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit

The Trustees are satisfied that the Museum of Drugs has acted in accordance with the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit for the period of this report.

2.4 Financial Review

As of 31st March 2025, the Museum of Drugs has reserves of £119.18

2.5 Governance

The Museum of Drugs was established in 2018, becoming a Registered Charity in February 2019. The Board meets four times a year, in March, July, November and January.

Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Museum of Drugs has a clear mission, vision, and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
- Being responsible for the performance of the Museum of Drugs and its 'corporate' behaviour.
- Ensuring that the Museum of Drugs complies with all legal and regulatory requirements
- Ensuring that the governance of the Museum of Drugs is of the highest standard.
- The Trustees delegate responsibility for the day-to-day operation and management of the Charity to the CEO/ Curator.
- The Trustees consider recruitment of new Trustees as the need arises. Applications from suitable candidates would be sought by identifying specific gaps in professional skills and seeking recommendations of professionally qualified candidates, if necessary, placing advertisements in suitable publications. Applicants would be provided with an information pack outlining the history of the organisation, its structure, activities and objectives, roles and expectations of Trustees, plus other supporting information. A new Trustee would be provided with information on the activities, financing and management structure of the Charity, together with Charity



Commission guidance and codes of conduct related to the roles and responsibilities of Trustees.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved this report.

Emma Ratzer (Gallant)

Chair of Trustees

Dated: 22nd December 2025



The Museum of Drugs Accounts

1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

Charity Number: 1181946

Operational Address: 25 Great Eastern Court, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1EQ

Income:

£0.00

Expenditure

£0.00

Balance

£0.00

Reserves

£119.18

Assets:

1. **The Arthur Houldershaw Collection** – A collection of diaries, pamphlets, posters and other ephemera from a proponent of the Temperance Movement during the 19th Century. Estimated at £500.00 value.
2. **The Yerbury Collection** – news articles, magazines, posters, training resources and paraphernalia from the collection of a former British Customs Officer, 1960 – 2000. Estimated at £350 value.

Total Asset Value:

£850.00



Assets loaned to the Museum of Drugs:

A collection of antique paraphernalia, medicinal items, newspaper and magazine articles, posters, and other ephemeras and historical artefacts, loaned to the Museum of Drugs from a private collector.

Donations to the Museum of Drugs:

Website – including annual subscription, domain and email functions.

Ben Curran
Chief Executive/ Curator

The Museum of Drugs

THE MUSEUM OF DRUGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1181946

Accounts



The Museum of Drugs Annual Report

1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

Charity Number: 1181946

Operational Address: 25 Great Eastern Court, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1EQ

Trustees: Emma Ratzer MBE (Chair), Dan Mobbs

CEO/ Curator: Ben Curran

1. Overview

The Museum of Drugs was established in May 2008 as an online showcase for a unique and growing collection, and as a resource for those interested in the historical context of drug production, supply, use, and societal reaction.

Since its inception in 2008 the Museum of Drugs has provided consultancy on numerous projects and provided lectures to universities and the general public.

On 8th February 2019 the Museum of Drugs became a Registered Charity with the Charities Commission in England & Wales. This was the realisation of a longstanding aspiration to deliver on a range of charitable objectives as detailed below.

2. Objectives and Activities

2.1 Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in the governing document.

The objects of the CIO are, for the public benefit, to advance the education of the public on the subject of drug and alcohol use from a historical perspective, and to preserve and protect good health by raising public awareness of the risks of drug and alcohol use and helping those whose lives have been affected by drugs and alcohol in particular by signposting them to appropriate resources and help.

In further of these objects the CIO may do all or any of the following:

- The collection and preservation of historical antiques and ephemera which will be made available to the public through:
 - o the provision of cultural and educational resources, displayed publicly through 'pop-up' Museum exhibitions and more permanent Museum sites.
 - o public lectures, presentations and events aimed at informing the public about society's relationship with drugs and alcohol and the associated risks.



o provision of resources to college and university students through presentations and lectures and direct access to the Museum collection.

- Engage the wider public in open discussion and debate about the subject of drug and alcohol use from a historical perspective; linking in with local health and social care agencies to provide support to people whose lives have been affected by drugs and alcohol.

2.2 Summary of our main activities

On the 17th May 2023, the Museum of Drugs provided an online lecture titled 'Under the Influence - A History of Drug Use' hosted by the Last Tuesday Society. The recording of this lecture can be found using the following link: [Under the Influence](#)

Using the Museum's extensive collection of antiques and artefacts, Under the Influence explored key historical events, myths, and moral panics resulting in shifting societal attitudes and ultimately the criminalisation of the production, supply, and possession of drugs throughout the world. Under the Influence was well attended with approximately sixty booked places. There was an opportunity for Q&A at the end.



Collaborating with the Last Tuesday Society brought the Museum to a wider international audience and provided recorded content that could be used on the Museum website and for other promotional purposes.

This led to several enquiries, most notably from the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia, who wanted to explore possibilities of a collaboration on their exhibition titled 'Why do we take drugs?', scheduled August 2024. The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts and the Museum of Drugs discussed options throughout 2023/ 24, and we presented a selection of exhibits with accompanying storyboards to a stakeholder panel in March 2024 with a view to inclusion in the 'Why do we take drugs?' exhibition.

During the period 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024 the Museum of Drugs continued to use social media as a way of connecting with the wider community, sharing historical content from our collection of antiques and artefacts, championing social justice, and joining in debate.

We are looking forward to the prospect of exhibiting collection items with the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in August 2024 and exploring other



opportunities to collaborate with museum and universities across the UK in 2024/25.

2.3 Statement confirming that the trustees have had regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit

The Trustees are satisfied that the Museum of Drugs has acted in accordance with the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit for the period of this report.

2.4 Financial Review

As of 31st March 2024, the Museum of Drugs has received.

2.5 Governance

The Museum of Drugs was established in 2018, becoming a Registered Charity in February 2019. The Board meets four times a year, in March, July, November and January.

Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Museum of Drugs has a clear mission, vision, and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
- Being responsible for the performance of the Museum of Drugs and its 'corporate' behaviour.
- Ensuring that the Museum of Drugs complies with all legal and regulatory requirements
- Ensuring that the governance of the Museum of Drugs is of the highest standard.
- The Trustees delegate responsibility for the day-to-day operation and management of the Charity to the CEO/ Curator.
- The Trustees consider recruitment of new Trustees as the need arises. Applications from suitable candidates would be sought by identifying specific gaps in professional skills and seeking recommendations of professionally qualified candidates, if necessary, placing advertisements in suitable publications. Applicants would be provided with an information pack outlining the history of the organisation, its structure, activities and objectives, roles and expectations of Trustees, plus other supporting information. A new Trustee would be provided with information on the activities, financing and management structure of the Charity, together with Charity Commission guidance and codes of conduct related to the roles and responsibilities of Trustees.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved this report.



Emma Ratzer (Gallant)

Chair of Trustees

Dated: 20th December 2024



The Museum of Drugs Accounts

1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

Charity Number: 1181946

Operational Address: 25 Great Eastern Court, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1EQ

Income:

£119.18

Expenditure

£0.00

Balance

£119.18

Reserves

£119.18

Assets:

1. **The Arthur Houldershaw Collection** – A collection of diaries, pamphlets, posters and other ephemera from a proponent of the Temperance Movement during the 19th Century. Estimated at £500.00 value.
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Ben Curran
Chief Executive/ Curator

The Museum of Drugs

THE MUSEUM OF DRUGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1181946

Accounts



3The Museum of Drugs Annual Report

1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

Charity Number: 1181946

Operational Address: 29 Carrow Hill, Norwich, Norfolk, NR12AA

Trustees: Emma Ratzer MBE (Chair), Dan Mobbs

CEO/ Curator: Ben Curran

1. Overview

The Museum of Drugs was established in May 2008 as an online showcase for a unique and growing collection, and as a resource for those interested in the historical context of drug production, supply, use, and societal reaction.

Since its inception in 2008 the Museum of Drugs has provided consultancy on numerous projects and provided lectures to universities and the general public.

On 8th February 2019 the Museum of Drugs became a Registered Charity with the Charities Commission in England & Wales. This was the realisation of a longstanding aspiration to deliver on a range of charitable objectives as detailed below.

2. Objectives and Activities

2.1 Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in the governing document.

The objects of the CIO are, for the public benefit, to advance the education of the public on the subject of drug and alcohol use from a historical perspective, and to preserve and protect good health by raising public awareness of the risks of drug and alcohol use and helping those whose lives have been affected by drugs and alcohol in particular by signposting them to appropriate resources and help.

In further of these objects the CIO may do all or any of the following:

- The collection and preservation of historical antiques and ephemera which will be made available to the public through:
 - the provision of cultural and educational resources, displayed publicly through ‘pop-up’ Museum exhibitions and more permanent Museum sites.
 - public lectures, presentations and events aimed at informing the public about society’s relationship with drugs and alcohol and the associated risks.
 - provision of resources to college and university students through presentations and lectures and direct access to the Museum collection.



- Engage the wider public in open discussion and debate about the subject of drug and alcohol use from a historical perspective; linking in with local health and social care agencies to provide support to people whose lives have been affected by drugs and alcohol.

2.2 Summary of our main activities

2022/ 23 focused on the transition of the Museum of Drugs Website to a modern and more user-friendly platform, requiring less coding and increased accessibility. This work progressed throughout the year, refreshing the brand, slimming down content, and ensuring that the website had a clear anti-discriminatory position in line with the Charity's expectations. In addition, the website now has a very clear statement about our desire as a charity to collaborate with other community organisations, including museums, galleries, and exhibition spaces. The website also details ways in which the collection can make a difference.

Throughout 2022/ 23 the Museum of Drugs continued to use social media as a way of connecting with the wider community, sharing historical content from our collection of antiques and artefacts, championing social justice, and joining in debate.

A key collaboration for 2022/ 23 was with the Viktor Wynd Museum, which hosts the Last Tuesday Society online lectures. This led to a scheduled talk by Ben Curran, CEO and Founder of the Museum of Drugs in November 2022, however this unfortunately had to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. This lecture was rescheduled to May 2023 and went ahead successfully. The recording of this lecture is available on our website. We will report on this in more detail in our annual return for the Financial Year 2023/ 24.

2.3 Statement confirming that the trustees have had regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit

The Trustees are satisfied that the Museum of Drugs has acted in accordance with the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit for the period of this report.

2.4 Financial Review

As of 31st March 2023, the Museum of Drugs has received no income.

2.5 Governance

The Museum of Drugs was established in 2018, becoming a Registered Charity in February 2019. The Board meets four times a year, in March, July, November and January.

Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Museum of Drugs has a clear mission, vision, and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
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Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved this report.

Emma Ratzer (Gallant)

Chair of Trustees

Dated: 6th January 2024

THE MUSEUM OF DRUGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1181946

Accounts



The Museum of Drugs Annual Report

29th March 2020 – 28th March 2021

Charity Number: 1181946

Operational Address: 29 Carrow Hill, Norwich, Norfolk, NR12AA

Trustees: Emma Ratzler MBE (Chair), Dan Mobbs

CEO/ Curator: Ben Curran

1. Overview

The Museum of Drugs was established in May 2008 as an online showcase for a unique and growing collection, and as a resource for those interested in the historical context of drug production, supply, use, and societal reaction.

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2.2 Summary of our main activities

As has been the case for so many charities, the continued global and national efforts to manage Covid19 and variants has significantly affected our aspirations to deliver public, open-access, exhibitions in the year 2020/ 21. Understandably the focus of grant funding in the main has been directed towards the impact of Covid19 and there has been limited scope for accessing funds for the activities of the Museum of Drugs.

Notwithstanding, the Museum of Drugs has sought ways to adapt to the prevailing situation and developed an online 'taster' exhibition using the virtual reality platform, 'artsteps' (<https://www.artsteps.com/view/5f6ce8d57f31777558433de9?currentUser>) which has received positive feedback from the general public.

The launch of the online virtual exhibition was supported by a competition to identify the answers to a number of questions based on the exhibits. The competition was actively promoted on social media, increased the exhibition footfall, and received a number of respondents.

The taster exhibition has created something of a blueprint for a physical exhibition, which will incorporate items from the collection, storyboards, music and film, alongside harm reduction support and signposting to relevant services.

The Museum of Drugs has continued to use social media platforms to actively promote its work, the collection and the social relevance.

We have been working on an application to the Heritage Lottery for grant funding to support an exhibition in 2022/ 23 and we will be submitting this in the first week of January 2022.

2.3 Statement confirming that the trustees have had regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit

The Trustees are satisfied that the Museum of Drugs has acted in accordance with the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit for the period of this report.

2.4 Financial Review

As of 31st March 2021, the Museum of Drugs has received no income. We are submitting an application to the Heritage Lottery in January 2022.

2.5 Governance

The Museum of Drugs was established in 2018, becoming a Registered Charity in February 2019. The Board meets four times a year, in March, July, November and January.



Trustees are responsible for:

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Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved this report.

Emma Ratzer (Gallant)

Chair of Trustees

Dated: 19th December 2021