



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.

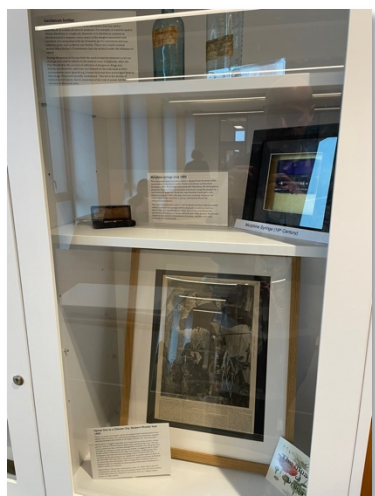
In further of these objects the CIO may do all or any of the following:

- 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

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