

Cromwell Museum

Forward Plan

January 2007 – December 2009



Cambridgeshire County Council
November 2006



1.0 Purpose

This Forward Plan for the next three years 2007 – 2009 is the third to be produced and follows the same format as previous plans. It aims to provide a clear route for the development of the Museum, taking into account the resources both currently and potentially available.

It is intended as a working document to provide strategy to guide day-to-day decisions and to inform colleagues and members of Cambridgeshire County Council, partners and external agencies of the Museum's intentions.

2.0 Revised Mission Statement

The Museum is provided by Cambridgeshire County Council to focus on the life and legacy of Oliver Cromwell, (1599 - 1658), by the collection, conservation, exhibition and interpretation of relevant material. It does so for the enjoyment and benefit, educational and economic, of the local community, and for all visitors and users, actual and virtual (with and without prior knowledge) in the belief that it helps to sustain a lively, well informed and wide ranging debate of Cromwell's significance.

3.0 Background information

- 3.1 Oliver Cromwell was born in Huntingdon in 1599, and lived in the town for over half his life. He died in 1658 whilst Lord Protector. He is one of the most frequently studied figures of British history, and his significance has been constantly reinterpreted by succeeding generations. Cromwell is a figure of national and international importance.

The denigration of Cromwell at the Restoration inhibited the development of any single collection of personalia immediately after his death. There was no Cromwell collection in the public domain until the acquisition of the Tangye Collection by the London Museum (now part of the Museum of London) early in the 20th century. The Tangye Collection is mainly of secondary sources with some items of doubtful provenance.

- 3.2 Following a successful, but brief, tercentenary exhibition in 1958, to mark the anniversary of Cromwell's death, the initiative was taken by Huntingdonshire County Council to establish a Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon.
- 3.3 The County Council occupied the old town Grammar School, a remnant of the monastic hospital of St John the Baptist, of the late 12th century, which had been heavily restored c. 1878. As Cromwell went to the Grammar School it was an obvious choice of location for the Museum.
- 3.4 The Museum opened in 1962 after major internal re-decoration. The building was a scheduled Ancient Monument, but was de-scheduled in 2003 following a review by English Heritage. It is listed as Grade 2*.

- 3.5 The Museum was managed by a sub-committee of the Archives Committee of Huntingdonshire County Council, and from 1965 it came under the control of the new Huntingdon and Peterborough County Council. Following changes to the management of the Archive Service in 1968 the Museum sub-committee reported to the General Purposes Committee of the County Council.
- 3.6 From 1974 the Museum was the responsibility of the Libraries Service (in various incarnations) of Cambridgeshire County Council. There was no professional curatorial input until the appointment of a County Museums Officer in 1985. The Cromwell Museum formed 25% of the post's responsibilities. Following the creation of the County Council's Heritage Service the Museum responsibility was transferred away from Libraries. When the Heritage Service was disbanded in 2005 the post of County Museums Officer was made redundant, and responsibility passed back to a new Libraries, Archives and Information Service. A new post (50%) of Curator of the Cromwell Museum was created and a Curator appointed with effect from 1.11.2005.
- 3.7 In 1988 the Museum was completely re-displayed for the first time since 1962. The Museum was significantly refurbished between November 2003 and late May 2004 when major building work was undertaken and a new heating and air-handling unit was installed. Some minor changes were made to the internal furniture at the same time.
- 3.8 The Museum is fully registered with the MGC under Phase2. Application has been made for Museum Accreditation and it will be determined early in 2007.
- 3.9 The Museum collection has grown and some items cannot be exhibited because of lack of space. The building, whilst a significant heritage asset in its own right, it does not provide ideal conditions for the storage and display of a mixed collection of the type that makes up the Cromwell Museum. The work undertaken recently has made considerable improvements. Space is severely constrained which inhibits the appreciation and interpretation of the collection by visitors.

4.0 Review of current activities - key dimensions of the Museum

- 4.1 Visitor figures
Visitor figures continue to vary. The total for 2003-04 was 7, 642; for 2004-05 8088; for 2005-06 9,677. The first year of the last three was significantly affected by the refurbishment closure, the second only less so and the third not at all. A high proportion of our visitors travel some distance to the Museum. The Museum has gathered a significant amount of data on users and has participated in benchmarking exercises both regionally and nationally.

4.2 Staffing

The curatorial and management input to the Museum is limited. The total amount of staff time available to the Museum is less than 1.3 full time equivalents, of which the Curator is 0.5fte. The Museum is staffed on a day to day basis by a Senior Museum Assistant, supported by Assistants, to provide coverage for planned absence, whilst maintaining the current opening hours. The Museum is open throughout the year daily Tuesday -Saturday, with reduced opening hours from November to March.

The Assistants' staff role is to ensure the safe opening of the Museum to the public, to answer enquiries which might arise from visitors, and to sell goods from the museum shop, and provide the daily administration. They are also key -holders for security purposes. The ability to utilise their time for curatorial purposes, without compromising their primary role, is very limited. Volunteers, to support the curatorial and other non-custodial work of the Museum, are taken from time to time. When possible students with a fixed block of time, who can be briefed to undertake a specific task, are used.

4.3 Budget

The Museum's budget is part of the Libraries, Archives and Information Service budget of the Council. The budget for 2006 - 07 is £40,769 (net) £50,919 (gross). Whilst all opportunities for income generation are taken they are limited. Admission to the Museum is free of charge. Previous considerations of this issue have consistently led to the conclusion that an admission charge would be counter-productive.

The budget is likely to remain static or to decline in real terms as pressure on the overall budget of the County Council increases.

4.4 Building resources

The Museum building is both the greatest strength and the greatest weakness. The costs of maintaining the building do not appear on the Museums Budget, as it is a corporate responsibility.

The building is less than 70 sq.m. overall. There are no lavatory facilities for staff or visitors, no office space, no activity or lecture space, and only one means of escape in the event of an emergency. Nevertheless it does have the direct association with Cromwell, which compensates to some degree. Combined office and limited storage space, of less than 10 sq.m. is currently provided in Huntingdon Library approximately 300m. away. It is planned that Huntingdon Library and the branch of the County Record Office in Grammar School Walk will, by the end of 2008 be relocated in a new building on the site of the existing library. The new building will also include office accommodation for the Cromwell Museum and high quality reserve storage as well as a lower grade store. The building will also have a meeting room that the Museum will be able to use for group visits and activities.

Coincident with the above the future of Huntingdon Town Hall is currently under review. A working group led by the District Council has met and the Museum Curator represents service interests.

4.5 Collections

The Museum collection is the best collection of 'Cromwelliana' in the UK, and the Museum is unaware of any significant collections in public or private ownership, other than those from which loans have already been negotiated. The Cromwell Museum collection at March 2003 comprises approx 600 items of varying quality. The Acquisition and Disposal Policy was reviewed in December 2004 and subsequently endorsed by Cabinet in March 2005.

The governing body owns approximately 70% of the collection. The Museum has significant loan collections. The largest of these is from the Bush family, descendants of Henry Cromwell the fourth son of Oliver Cromwell. The Bush loan includes significant pieces that are well provenanced to the Cromwell family. The Museum also has an inward loan from the Royal Armouries of 17th century military equipment, and an inward loan from the Museum of London of various pieces of Cromwelliana from their own Cromwell collection (formerly the Tangye Collection).

Of the current collection a large proportion of the print collection and the book and document collection is in store. The majority of the remainder of the collection is on display, although approximately half of the paintings are on loan to Hinchingsbrooke House.

The catalogue of the collection is documented on Catalist (museum specific documentation software). Parts of the collection have been digitised.

4.6 Services

Use of the Museum by schools totalled between 650 and 700 for each of the last two years, but in both cases included pupil contact in school (this measure is used for Best Value Performance Indicator 170c). The Museum has been very fortunate that staff, past and present, have been willing to undertake some direct teaching which is beyond their core job function. The work of the Huntingdonshire Heritage Project Outreach Officer has been highly valued. The absence of adequate facilities is a genuine inhibition. Use of the Museum web site www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cromwell by virtual visitors, including schools has increased and continues to develop. The joint web site www.olivercromwell.org run with the Cromwell Association is the successor to the site initially put up for the 400th anniversary in 1999. It consistently is ranked highly by the main search engines when 'Cromwell' is the search term.

The site developed in association with the Cromwell Collection www.cromwellcollection.org.uk has also been extensively used. All of the web sites generate a range of enquiries which vary from the frivolous to the seriously academic. Every attempt is made to reply to all in a timely fashion.

The Museum provides copies of, and permits reproduction of, images from the collection in return for negotiated fees.

4.7 Events and activities

During part of the period covered by the previous plan 2004-2006, the Museum was closed for the completion of building work. Small-scale events and activities have been run together with temporary exhibitions. The number of press releases issued has increased over the triennium.

5.0 Review of strategic objectives set for 2003-2006

The objectives set for the previous plan were presented as a table. They are presented here with a note on performance achieved against the indicators set:

Strategic aim 1: *delivery of education and outreach services to key audiences*

Objective	How to be achieved	Performance indicator - progress	Commentary
1.1 Promote existing resources more effectively to schools	Advisory visits to schools offered Circulation of information about Resource Book and CD ROM	% Increase in school visits	Completed Approximate 20% increase over 2002-03 in each of the last two years in return of BVPI 170c
1.2 Develop a model project with a local school at KS 2	Invitations to restricted number of local schools	Take up by schools	Training session fully booked – too early to notice effect on visits
1.3 Increase family based learning	Project on fame and image to be developed with targeted local group	% increase in family visits	Project successfully delivered but measure needs refining
1.4 Increase no of local first time visitors	Market research of local visitors/non-visitors and target promotion in response	% increase in no of first time local visits	Currently only have one years data to indicate level of repeat visits

Strategic aim 2: *provision of high quality accessible exhibitions and activities*

Objective	How to be achieved	Performance indicator	Commentary
2.1 Deliver programme of activities with broad appeal	Annually planned programme marketed to target audiences	Visitor numbers and satisfaction surveys	Visitor numbers marginally increased. Satisfaction surveys not implemented.
2.2 Develop temporary exhibitions	Planned programme of temporary exhibitions	Visitor numbers and satisfaction surveys	Programme of exhibitions in place
2.3 Make more of the collection accessible	Display higher % of collections Work more closely with HRO to display sensitive material for short periods	% of collection displayed	Not yet achieved
2.4 Provide access to relevant high quality material from elsewhere	Borrow high quality material from other institutions Work with hub museums and national. Review loan arrangements with Museum of London	Visitor numbers and satisfaction surveys	Performance indicator inappropriate. Loans negotiated for current exhibition

Strategic aim 3: *provision of high quality accessible exhibitions and activities*

Objective	How to be achieved	Performance indicator	Commentary
3.1 Provide access to collection information on www	Develop web based catalogue Digitisation of collection Utilise existing software	% of collection available on web	The development route has been identified but not progressed
3.2 Provide broadband public access pc in Museum to view our own and others	Implementation of Cambridgeshire Community Network in Museum	Usage of pc in the museum	Steady use made but not separately logged

resources			
3.3 Develop web content on existing sites	Plan all work with web publication in mind Establish consistent methodology for measuring web use	Use of web sites	Web site use has increased and web site stats are maintained for submission as part of BVPT 170a
3.4 Increase school take up of ICT resources	Develop content on the schools portal Promote Local Heroes content on e2b site	Use of web sites by schools	Web statistics of school use difficult to isolate

Strategic aim 4: *good stewardship of our resources*

Objective	How to be achieved	Performance indicator	Commentary
4.1 Implementation of refurbishment work	Installation of air conditioning, window blinds, window film	Measureable changes to museum environment	Completed
4.2 Full registration under the new standard	Completion of all outstanding areas ie. Disaster Plan, documentation backlogs	Registration now known as Accreditation	Application submitted by deadline – application pending
4.3 Improved storage of reserve collections	Reboxing and re-mounting collections as necessary	% adequately conserved and stored	Work progressing
4.4 Improved security	Use of security contractor as first line call-out	Contract in place	Completed

Strategic aim 5: *development of services off site*

Objective	How to be achieved	Performance indicator	Commentary
5.1 Provision of high quality secondary resources in	Continued development of the Cromwell Collection	Number of readers	Reader statistics not known Collection

Huntingdon	Cooperation with Cromwell Collection partners		significantly developed with partner organisation
5.2 Develop education space for Museum use	Joint development with HRO and Library of new joint use facilities Alternative options pursued if necessary	Additional space available	Planning application submitted and timetable in place

5.1 There has been progress towards achieving all of the strategic aims identified in the previous plan, but not all individual targets have been met. Some of those that were not achieved will roll forward into the next plan. The uncertainty caused by the budget led cuts to the Heritage Service and the deletion of the County Museum Officer's post were also a major distraction during 2004 and 2005, and included a three month period when no lead officer was in post.

5.2 The value of the plan as a management tool is proven, and it does provide for progress to be measured over time. As with all plans it is only of value when it can be adapted and varied as circumstances alter. The Museum must be flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities and circumstances as they arise.

6.0 Prospects issues and challenges for the next three years 2007-2009

6.1 The local government context within which the museum operates will continue to be subject to strict financial controls, and the County Council will continue to ensure that all areas of service deliver the corporate priorities and maintain the core values of the authority. (See Para 7 below). This financial stringency, whilst challenging, should not be perceived as a threat. The option of alternative means of delivery has been considered, as recommended by the Heritage Services Review (Kentwood 2005). The only practicable option of devolution to a charitable trust was considered and rejected for the time being. The Museum should continue to work closely wherever possible with other parts of the County Council, most especially the Museum Support Officer in Community Learning and Development. Uncertainties over possible changes to local government structures have diminished and it is most likely that the present three tiers of town, district and county will prevail until at least 2010. It is in the interests of the service that the Museum works wherever possible in partnership with the other two tiers of local government.

- 6.2 The success of the locally delivered Huntingdonshire Heritage Programme contributed a great deal to the Museum's ability to improve services to schools and families over the last three years. The budget limitations that have prevented a further bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a new programme to continue aspects of the work will reduce capacity in this vital area of work. The Museum should continue to look for new partners to collaborate with to sustain the initiative.
- 6.3 The emergence of a regional structure for the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has clarified the ambiguities that existed previously and museums will be required to deliver to MLA and other government strategies if their support is to be maintained. This necessitates adherence to the Accreditation Standard and for example utilising the published 'generic learning outcomes' to assess all learning activities.
- 6.4 The implementation of the Renaissance in the Regions programme to all regions on an equal basis is subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review in central government. Even if achieved the benefits to small museums are not wholly obvious. The potential of active collaborations with the regional museum hubs should be taken when offered and initiated when not.
- 6.5 The 'market' within which the Museum operates will continue to be very competitive, with public expectations being continually raised and pressure on leisure time from other 'attractions' expanding. The Museum cannot expect to maintain audience share without investment in marketing and services.
- 6.6 The continuing programme of development in Huntingdon town centre is both a threat and an opportunity. The shift in trading and consequent footfall away from the west-end of the High Street, Grammar School Walk and the Market Place does the Museum no favours. A sympathetic development and public use of the Town Hall is important to the Museum. The growing problem of the lack of appropriate medium to long-term car parking is a problem for the Museum.
On the positive side the development of the new library and record office on Princes Street, which will be completed by late 2008, is eagerly awaited.

7.0 Target Audiences and Strategic Aims

- 7.1 The Museum has a number of audiences, which reflect the nature of the collection and the national and international appeal of its content. The resources are limited and some categories of visitor and user will be more actively sought than others over the next three years. The key target groups will be children of school age, Cambridgeshire residents who have not visited the Museum before and tourists who may contribute to the local economy.

- 7.2 The priorities of Cambridgeshire County Council, the governing body of the Museum, for the years 2005-2009 are:

learning for life

promoting independence

building Cambridgeshire communities

The Museum's specific aims are each contributing to the fulfilment of these priorities by the provision of high quality learning activities in a neutral social space, whilst supporting the development of both individuals, groups and the local economy.

- 7.3 The Strategic Aims are broadly consistent with those identified in the previous Development Plan:

1. *delivery of education and outreach services to key audiences*

2. *provision of high quality accessible exhibitions and activities*

3. *provision of high quality accessible services via ICT*

4. *good stewardship of our resources*

5. *development of services off site.*

- 7.4.1 The factors critical to the successful implementation of the aims are:

adequate curatorial and management time

maintenance of the base budget

attraction of external funds corporate support.

8.0 Aims and objectives for the period 2007- 2009

- 8.1 The table that follows presents the key objectives, which are referenced back to the Strategic Aims outlined at 7.3 above.

- 8.2 It is proposed that the Forward Plan be subject to review over the three year period it covers, with a complete review in late 2009.

Strategic aim 1: *delivery of education and outreach services to key audiences*

Aim	Objective	How to be achieved	Resources available	Completion date	Performance indicator
1.1	Increase use by local schools at all phases	Promote the model project developed for KS 2 in 2006	Museum Assistant Learning materials Teaching plans Replica loan material	July 2009	% Increase in BVPI 170c – schools visits and contact in schools
1.2	Further develop family learning	Develop and deliver activity programme targeted at local families	Activity cabinet in Museum New learning space from end 2008 Project bid for staff	December 2009	% increase in use by families
1.3	Provide opportunities for personal development and study based on the Museum	Create routes for the study of the Museum's core content for life-long learners	New learning space Investigate possible partners eg. Regional College, U3A, WEA	December 2009	% increase in learning activity
1.4	Increase awareness of the Museum across key target audiences	Focus marketing activity on segmented potential audiences	Budget provision and relevant partners	April 2008	% increase in users from key target audiences

Strategic aim 2: provision of high quality accessible exhibitions and activities

2.1	Deliver programme of activities with broad appeal	Annually planned programme marketed to target audiences	Budget provision and additional external funding	November each year	Visitor numbers and satisfaction surveys
2.2	Develop temporary exhibitions	Planned programme of temporary exhibitions	As above High quality loans from other institutions	November each year	As above
2.3	Provide improved opportunities for volunteering	Developing projects of varying size in conjunction with potential volunteers	New learning space Staff time	December 2009	No of volunteers used
2.4	Ensure that the Museum is as accessible as possible	Improve visibility of the Museum in Huntingdon town centre through improved pedestrian signage	Huntingdon Town Council, Huntingdon District Council, Town Centre Partnership	December 2007	% increase in signs

Strategic aim 3: provision of high quality accessible services via ICT

3.1	Provide access to collection information on www	Develop web based catalogue Digitisation of collection Utilise existing software	CCN Network Hub expertise	December 2007	% of collection available on web
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3.2	Develop web based contact with museum users, current and potential	Initiate email based user newsletter to maintain contact, inform and advise of developments, initiate dialogue and comment	Staff time DIT support	June 2007	Number signed up
3.3	Develop web content on existing sites	Plan all work with web publication in mind	Internal resources	June 2008	Use of web sites see BVPI 170a

Strategic aim 4: *good stewardship of our resources*

4.1	Develop off-site store	Ensure that secure and environmentally controlled store, appropriate to the needs of the collection is available in the new building	Support of colleagues Additional funding where possible	December 2008	% of reserve in high quality store
4.2	Full accreditation under new standard	Submission of all additional information requested	Museums Officer	February 2007	Accreditation
4.3	Improved storage of reserve collections	Reboxing and re-mounting collections as necessary	Budget provision and additional external funding	December 2008	% adequately conserved and stored

Strategic aim 5: *development of services off site.*

5.1	Provision of high quality secondary resources in Huntingdon	Continued development of the Cromwell Collection Cooperation with Cromwell Collection partners	Budget provision and additional external funding	June 2008	Number of readers
5.2	Develop learning space for Museum use	Joint development with HRO and Library of new joint use facilities to incorporate display space where possible	Huntingdon central development, commercially led	December 2008	Additional space available
5.3	Access to collections/exhibitions in other locations	Plan temporary exhibitions with the potential for display elsewhere as a specific consideration	Museums Officer and third party income	December 2007	Number of external spaces used
5.4	Improved access to the collections and their interpretation in additional premises	To work closely with HTC and HDC over plans for Huntingdon Town Hall and its possible use as a venue for high quality, larger temporary exhibitions	Partnerships with other authorities External funding	December 2008	Agreed and funded proposals

Appendix

Spending Plan for the Cromwell Museum 2007 – 2009

It is a requirement of the Accreditation Scheme of the Museums , Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) that the Forward Plan of all museums should contain the projected spending plan for the current year and the year following.

The annual service budget for the Cromwell Museum is formulated in the late autumn of each year within the departmental budget making process. Year end budget figures will read slightly differently as centrally paid for insurance costs are shown, other than special insurance if required for incoming loan items.

The projected budget for 2007-08 is a net budget of £44,251 and a gross budget of £51,801. Staff buildings and utilities account for 85% of the budget, office and administration costs 5%, and collection care, development and activities including marketing 10%.

Expenditure	£	£
Staff	33269	
Building services and utilities	10721	
Office and admin costs	2411	
Collection care development & activities	5400	
Total		51801
Income		
Donations	2000	
Shop sales	3000	
Reproduction fees	600	
Grants & leases	1950	
Total		7550
Net cost		44251

It is anticipated, as far as local government finance can be projected with confidence, that the budget for the following year will increase in line with inflation using the same criteria that are applied across the whole of the County Council's budget.

Any expenditure beyond the budget will be the consequence of successful grant aid applications and will be primarily for collection care, development and activities.

Major building works are paid for from separate budgets with the revenue budget responsible for internal maintenance and decoration. No major building works are planned over the next two years following the programme of works completed in 2004.