



Bradford Museums at Christmas

Bradford Libraries, Museums and Galleries Volunteers' Newsletter



A message from Rosie Crook, Interim Museums Manager

Dear Volunteers

You're probably wishing you had a mince pie for every time someone has said "It's been a strange year...". I hope you have a supply of mince pies because I'm going to say it again! It's been an extremely challenging year for the whole world and obviously our corner of it in Museums and Galleries in Bradford has not been immune.

We extended the successful joint exhibitions *Precious and Rare* and *Kehillah* at Cartwright Hall Art Gallery; our events at Cliffe Castle Museum were going from strength to strength with our fantastic volunteers, Cliffe Castle Support Group. We will greatly miss our

pre Christmas fairs at the Industrial Museum and Bolling Hall this month.

When the pandemic struck I'm very proud that we closed the museums swiftly and safely with a programme of daily site security and condition checks that's never stopped to this day. Our content went online and we ramped up new audiences with our 'funny, engaging and informative' online posts. We provided wellbeing colouring sheets based on the collections, online photo displays, chat, quirky 'Things In Jars' podcasts... and we're still doing it. Our Learning team created and distributed 2,000 activity packs to disadvantaged families across the District.

At half term, volunteers from CCSG were invaluable in helping us to collate our popular Spider themed family packs – I suspect they can now make pipe cleaner spiders in their sleep!

Colleagues worked enthusiastically in some of Bradford's more high profile projects, including *Our Street Gallery* – young people's photos which appeared on advertising hoardings; *Bradford Revealed* – 509 Arts' project highlighting favourite and precious objects and, following Black Lives Matter, the important Monuments Review led by our colleague Christine May from Libraries and Charles Dacres, Director of the Bradford Hate Crime Alliance.

Museums staff volunteered for frontline roles supporting the pandemic emergency across the Council, did an amazing job and were very highly appreciated for their contribution.

As the summer progressed, we're immensely proud that we managed to get 3 of our 4 museums reopened – the 4th was only about a week from reopening when we hit lockdown 2. Each site takes between 4 to 6 weeks to get a Covid secure certificate and the paperwork is massive. This was a monumental effort by our front of house and conservation teams and our hardworking colleagues in Facilities Management. Visitor numbers are of course lower than last year but feedback has been really positive.

To put the tin hat on it, we were successful in obtaining a grant of £208,000 in October to support our Covid resilience, thanks to our in house bidding team. We're now busy spending this making our sites and services as future proof as we can.

And in all of this, we missed you, our volunteers, very much. We were very grateful to be able to have our lovely gardeners back in some sites, and missed our Monday Club regulars, weavers, Jowett club, gallery enablers and café volunteers who volunteer indoors.

We've spent the time putting some good volunteer support infrastructure in place and I do hope you're enjoying the newsletters, coffee mornings etc. We're still open to feedback on our consultation, reattached link to this newsletter. We're also really pleased to have your ideas and suggestions for the volunteering roles and how we can collaborate to improve it.

Christmas opening: we're awaiting Govt announcements on the Tier we're in after December 16th. If we move to Tier 2, we reopen on January 2nd. If we stay in Tier 3, I'm afraid we remain closed.

So...it has been a strange year (another pie!) but thank you so much for sticking with us. All our very best for Christmas, Hanukah and whatever you are celebrating. We hope to see you in person in the New Year.

Kind regards

Rosie

Can you complete this survey?

We are currently running a project to talk to local people to find out how to make the museums and art gallery better meet the needs of all the people who live and work in the Bradford District.

Can you spare a few of minutes to fill out our survey and help us plan for the future? If you already have filled it - thank you very much!

[Take the survey](#)



A Message from Christine May, Interim Head of Libraries

As we head into Winter and towards the end of the year, and with the delivery of a vaccine bringing us hope of a brighter 2021, now is the time to look back and reflect on this extraordinary year of 2020.

I am very proud to report that the Libraries Team won a national excellence award for their innovative work during the first national lockdown, responding swiftly with a fantastic range of new online and digital services, rapidly learning new skills along the way. They were particularly impressed with how we connected with communities, developed the service outside the library building and were innovative in our

approach in providing online access to material and activities.

Three things that stood out to the committee were our providing of books to food hubs, our connection and work with the health libraries to make sure patients - especially those in long term hospital stays - had access to library services, and finally how our Bookstart Bear hand wash song has received national attention as well as recognition from the NHS.

We have been able to continue a full programme of events and activities during the year, mostly online, including the ever popular Summer Reading Challenge and our Rhyme Challenge, which thousands of local children and families took part in. We also had a very successful Libraries Week during October, full of a variety of activities and events, including some excellent author talks. Our Rhyme Challenge Best Practice awards included two awards to the voluntary sector, with Clayton Baptist Church Baby & Toddler Group taking the first prize and runner up was St James Toddler Group.

Since the beginning of July, libraries across the District have been gradually reopening services in a phased and safe approach following national guidance. We have now settled into a 'steady state' of delivering Order & Collect and Home Library services, with public PC access opened up in our 3 largest libraries (ShIPLEY, Keighley and City) prior to going into Tier 3 and the national lockdown. Local Studies research sessions also resumed briefly before the second lockdown.

Our community managed libraries have done a brilliant job in adapting their services to deliver in new ways, with several starting up home deliveries as well as Order & Collect. I would like to thank them and all of the volunteers working with libraries across the District for your much valued work over the past year.

Looking forward to 2021, we are now focusing on plans to implement the new vision and model for the library service that was agreed by the Council's Executive back in March: <https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/ie/ListDocuments.aspx?Cid=143&Mid=7327&Ver=4> (item 14).

The **vision** for Bradford District library services for 2020 to 2025 is to: **'develop a 21st century library service that continues to provide a core library service, that is flexible and enables us to enhance the quality of life of people and communities, is inclusive and vibrant, , supports wider district priorities, enables all users to learn, engage and remain connected to their communities, and is outcomes focused at a local level'**.

This vision reflects a positive commitment from the Council to keep all our 29 libraries open across and recognises the huge potential for libraries to support the Council's priorities and deliver more services, working in partnership with others. This is in line with the national ambition for libraries to develop as hubs of their communities.

As well as defining a 'core library offer' that will be delivered in *all* libraries across the District we will explore what a 'tailored offer' could look like that is specific to the needs of each community, working with local stakeholders. This will take time to roll out over the course of the next 12 – 18 months and we'll keep you updated in this newsletter.

In the meantime, my very best wishes for the festive season and happy New Year.



Tier 3 reading: blog by Christine Halsall, Chair, Friends of Bradford Art Galleries and Museums

The **Friends of Bradford Art Galleries and Museums** is a charity which exists to promote and support the art, history and cultural life of our city. We are entirely run by volunteers who take on all the roles which ensure the organisation runs smoothly and acts in accordance with our constitution. The charity is managed by a board of Trustees and each trustee volunteers in a specific role such as chair, secretary, treasurer and membership secretary. We also have a comprehensive programme of activities which is led by trustees and members. This programme consists of regular trips to places of interest around the UK and a monthly art group who take inspiration from exhibitions and artefacts. You will have met several of our members working in the **Refreshment Room Café at Cartwright Hall**

Art Gallery events such as exhibition openings and lectures. My favourite volunteer activity is to 'meet and greet' the public as they arrive for an event at one of our sites. I have also enjoyed invigilating and providing guided tours of exhibitions. Next month we will give you more information about some of our regular events and activities. Watch this space!!

If you would like to join us you can become a Friend very easily by contacting Linda Bower, our membership secretary on lindabower42@yahoo.co.uk.

Hope to see you soon!!

The Friends have special links with Cartwright Hall Art Gallery, Bolling Hall Museum and Bradford Industrial Museum.

Contact fobagam1@gmail.com (registered charity 1108562, company limited by guarantee 5373709). <https://fobagam.wordpress.com>



More Reads With Volunteer Blogs:

A rediscovered Butterfield Christmas Gift

Ian is a volunteer documentation assistant, cataloguing the **Butterfield Archive** at **Cliffe Castle Museum**. Read all about his latest investigative findings.

There are more volunteer blogs on the **Get Involved** pages of the [website](#).



Cliffe Castle Support Group

Cliffe Castle can now proudly display a **Bees' Needs Champion Award** thanks to volunteers from the CCSG and ABKA who collated all the bee related activities and proposed the site for the award. To celebrate the achievement three of our volunteers proudly attended the online awards ceremony and collected the award. There was lots of



sharing of ideas and we have already started planning how to support our bees' needs activities for next year.

Outside the Glasshouses the doggie selfie station supporting Bradford Council's dogs on leads initiative continues to be very popular, and on social media, **Cliffe Castle Sketchbook** has been drawing birds, getting creative with Autumn leaves in the park, making Christmas Wish Tags and getting focused in the moment in a new Autumn version of our 'Click and Collect' activity.

We welcomed lots of new followers on social media and passed the 1000 milestone on Facebook! As our Christmas celebration will be online this year we're busy preparing our virtual event and some socially distant filming has already been going on in the park - a mysterious activity involving volunteers dressed in red and a brightly wrapped parcel..... all will be revealed shortly.

Look out for more information of CCSG's FB page coming soon!



Get Involved!

Paid Opportunities

Volunteering Facilitator

Applications for this role: **Monday 4 January**

[Job description \(PDF\)](#)

Volunteer Opportunities:

Our Street Gallery

We are seeking to recruit a team of volunteer to support an exciting project for the city. Are you willing to help with the following opportunities? Help us bring a Smile to Bradford. Do you have passion for the arts and its ability to makes changes in society? Applications for this role by **Friday 15 January** #ourstreetgallery/smile

Bolling Hall Gardener Role and Weaving Role at Bradford Industrial Museum

Image Credit: Our Street Gallery volunteer photographers with artist Carolyn Mendelsohn (image courtesy **Telegraph and Argus**). See the project outside **Cartwright Hall Art Gallery** in Lister Park too!

Volunteer Coffee Mornings on Zoom

If you are one of our current volunteers, join us on **Friday mornings**, 10.30am for our **Zoom Coffee Mornings**, fortnightly. Next one **11 December** with a presentation on the **BMG Online Photo Archive** by Assistant Archivist, John Ashton. Very informal, just drop in and out at your leisure, with a cuppa.

If you're new to **Zoom**, some guidance here:

https://www.bradfordmuseums.org/pdfs/Advice_on_using_Zoom.pdf

Wow, we made it through 2020 (online!)... So let's be together apart once again, and celebrate with some Christmas fun and games. Don your jumpers, dresses, paper hats. Bring your tippie and join library and museum staff in an end of year celebration for all your support, hard work and smiling faces. All current volunteers welcome.

Volunteer Christmas Fuddle on Zoom!

Wednesday 16 December, 1 – 2.30pm Zoom link will be sent.