

Blake Museum, Bridgwater Forward Plan 2015-2018

Name of museum: Blake Museum

Name of governing body: Bridgwater Town Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 16/3/2015

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Introduction

This Forward Plan has been compiled by the Blake Museum curatorial team. Its aim is to review the previous plan (2011 to 2015) give the current context of the Museum and to define the aims and objectives through the action plan (section 9 below). The plan was brought into draft stages in consultation with the Bridgwater Town Clerk, members of the museum's workforce and representatives from the Bridgwater Town Council.

The Forward Plan was formally adopted at the Bridgwater Town Council Museum Sub-Committee (BTC MSC) meeting held on Monday 16th March 2015 at the museum. This document was signed off by the Chairman of the MSC and is held in the minutes as of 16th March 2015. A review of this plan will take place annually with a full review in March 2018.

Statement of Purpose

The Blake Museum Bridgwater is established:

- to rescue from loss and destruction the relics of our ancestors;
- to collect, preserve, conserve and to show relics of history relating (principally but not exclusively) to Bridgwater and its immediate surroundings;
- to show visitors that Bridgwater is not indifferent to its own history;
- to interest visitors in what has happened in Bridgwater since it was granted its first Royal Charter in the reign of King John;
- to give the townspeople of Bridgwater pride in their past;
- to reveal that great events have taken place within the town and adjacent areas and set them in the context of the history of England;
- to honour the lives of great men and women who have lived or been associated with the town, and, in particular but not exclusively, Robert Blake.

Review of the Previous Plan

The Blake Museum Forward Plan 2009 - 2012

This was adopted by the Governing Body on 19th August 2009. Following the transition of ownership to Bridgwater Town Council, the Forward Plan sought to correct the adverse effects upon the Museum and of its collections from previous uncertainties. It provided solid foundations upon which to rebuild a fine Museum serving its stated purpose. There were twelve guiding practical objectives, all of which have been met in whole or part. The new plan took forward the Key Aims in new ways based upon the firm foundation that has been built.

See table for review.

Review January 2015

Since the previous plan was put into place, a number of the objectives have been achieved.

Strategic Objectives			
SO1	A1	Improve marketing and promotional activities	P1,2
Marketing and promotional activities have been improved with a tourist guide leaflet which was not available before. This guide is distributed to various attractions within the Somerset area including caravan and camping sites, other museums, tourist information centres and local shopping precincts. The guide is also available on-line at Tourism Leaflets Online (www.tourismleafletsonline.com). Other promotional material is added to this site throughout the year.			
SO2	A1,2,3	Build extension: exhibition spaces, work room, kitchen, toilets, cafe: funding not BTC	P1
The objective to build an extension with improved exhibition spaces, work room, kitchen and toilet have not been achievable. It is planned to address some of this in the next Forward Plan period.			
P3	SO3 A1,2,3	Use Town Hall for storage and possible display of negatives and photographs; website	P1
The second collection of Douglas Allen negatives has been put into storage at the Town Hall. There is no option to display negatives or photographs.			
SO4	A2,3	Mill - rebuild waterwheel and include turbine; roof over; increase undercover storage	P3
The Old Town Mill rebuilding is on hold due to funding constraints and the associated work required to prevent back flooding from the River Parrett into the Durleigh Brook.			
SO5	A4,5	Complete the cataloguing and location index	P3
Cataloguing and location index is still ongoing.			
SO6	A6	Improve succession Planning for Curators, web design & support, building maintenance	P1
Succession planning for Curators has to be improved.			
SO7	A6	Encourage and increase efforts to raise funds for projects and for the running of the Museum	P3
The Friends of Blake Museum continue to raise significant funds to aid the museum but this is not enough to be able to apply for grants that require match funding. There is currently no-one with the resource to seek out suitable grants for projects.			
Guiding Practical Objectives			
Museum, Collections & Learning			
O1	A1	Continue development of high-quality websites for main collection and for photographs	P3
Web design is currently an issue but it is anticipated that this will improve by the end of year one of this plan.			

O2	A2	Improve storage facilities for pictures	P1
Improved storage area for the museum's art collection has been achieved with new storage racking. The paintings have yet to be properly indexed into the racking.			
O3	A2	Improve regular cleaning	P1
Regular cleaning has been improved with a dedicated volunteer cleaner.			
O4	A3	Set up permanent display (rotatable) of Chubb pictures	P2
A permanent display of some of the Chubb pictures has been achieved. It is planned that the entire collection will be rescanned and printed onto suitable photo paper. These will then be mounted into suitable albums with annotations, for viewing by visitors or for research.			
O5	A3,4	Improve display of local industries	P2
A display of local industries has been improved. It is planned this will be further enhanced during the period of this forward plan.			
O6	A3	Purchase display cases for revised archaeology exhibits	P1
Display cases were purchased in 2012 for the Archaeology Room. The room underwent a major facelift, greatly improving the display of archaeological material and with more material being put on display.			
O7	A4	Refocus the Textile Collection in accordance with Policy	P1
A selection of textiles was put on display for the 2013 season and then rotated for the 2014 season. The future of the textile collection has yet to be agreed.			
O8	A4	Acquire selected material from the immediate surroundings/collecting area	P3
Material from the collecting area continues to be donated on a regular basis.			
O9	A5	Improve library; appoint volunteer librarian	P1
The museum library underwent some reorganisation in 2011/12 it still requires a regular volunteer to manage the collection of books etc.			
O10	A5	Increase the collection of Oral History	P2
The oral history collection has seen no increase.			
O11	A5	Encourage the use of archival material for the study of Local History	P3
Archival material is always available and has been used on numerous occasions.			
Management			
O12	A6	Improve the continuity of office support	P1
Office support is still lacking. Attracting volunteer secretarial support is difficult. It is planned to try and recruit a suitable volunteer for this role. Office work is being carried out by the Curators.			

O13	A6	Appoint regular volunteer secretarial support	P1
Office support is still lacking. Attracting volunteer secretarial support is difficult. It is planned to try and recruit a suitable volunteer for this role. Office work is being carried out by the curatorial team.			
Facilities			
O14	A1	Improve Car Parking for visitors and volunteers	P3
There are no on-site parking facilities available for visitors and volunteers. Limited parking is available close by and the museum is allocated two parking permits courtesy of Sedgemoor District Council. These are for the use of volunteers and allow for all day parking.			
O15	A1	Repair/rebuild garden walls, gates and railings	P2
The rebuilding of the garden walls, gates and railings has not been achieved.			
Volunteers			
O16	A6	Strengthen the volunteer base through well-structured inclusive initiatives to attract and retain volunteers for curatorial and custodial duties; provide sensitive appropriate high-quality training; widen the network of contacts that encourage volunteers; enhance the friendly and welcoming atmosphere; provide better facilities for volunteers through new build initiatives.	P3
The volunteer base is very strong with some 96 - 100 volunteers available for custodian and key-holder (responsible person) duties, and various other tasks. Recruitment, when required is done through a local Volunteer Recruitment Bureau or an open day where prospective volunteers can meet existing volunteers. Training is given to new recruits as required.			

4. Development of the 2015/2018 Forward Plan

Development of the plan began with the Bridgwater Town Council Museum Sub-committee (BTC MSC) on 17th November 2014 with a SWOT exercise. Consultation took place with the Friends of Blake Museum (FOBM), the Bridgwater & District Archaeology Society (BDAS), and the Learning Co-ordinator in the first week of February 2015.

5. Monitoring this Plan

Progress toward the actions identified in this plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis with an update report being prepared for the representatives of the Museum Sub-Committee at their meeting in March 2015. Milestones will be set for each of the objectives to assist with progress monitoring. A full review of the plan will be undertaken at the end of March 2016, and action taken accordingly. Implementation of this plan will be the responsibility of the Curatorial Team in conjunction with the Friends of Blake Museum, overseen and approved by the Museum Sub-Committee on behalf of Bridgwater Town Council.

6. Current Situation

Given the limited resources available, the museum has come a long way from how it was presented and managed pre 2009 when the Museum was transferred from Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) to Bridgwater Town Council (BTC). There is a Service Level Agreement between SDC and BTC. The museum is supported by The Friends of Blake Museum who oversee the day to day delivery of the museum service. The Friends hold quarterly meetings to discuss operational and fundraising matters.

Comments, both verbal, and those written in the visitor's book, have been both complimentary and encouraging. This can only be a reflection of how the visitor is treated and welcomed by the volunteer staff, and the presentation of the museum as a whole; this includes the displays, the building and the gardens, and the whole visitor experience.

a. Organisation Structure

The Blake Museum is owned by the Bridgwater Town Council and is managed by a team of volunteers. Bridgwater Town Council works closely with the Friends of Blake Museum to oversee the day to day operation of the museum.

The curators have regular weekly meetings to discuss plans for temporary exhibitions, gallery displays and management of the museum. Discussions also take place where necessary regarding the daily management undertaken by the Friends of Blake Museum.

The plan for transition to a Charitable Trust by 2013 failed to materialise. Despite the early enthusiasm and the initial setting up of a committee, the process stalled and interest diminished. The museum has continued to function under the previous arrangement with the Bridgwater Town Council, albeit without the matched funding from Sedgemoor District Council (SDC). With prudent trimming of the museum budget, an increase in the budget funding from the BTC was most welcome. With additional funding from the

Friends of Blake Museum, the museum is in a strong position to continue giving the same level of service as previously experienced.

b. Public Opening

The Blake Museum is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm from April to early November. It has a small on-site a shop, a small café area, a toilet and enquiry service.

Outside of these times the museum will open for pre-booked group visits which include tours of the museum and learning activities with schools. There is also access to research materials.

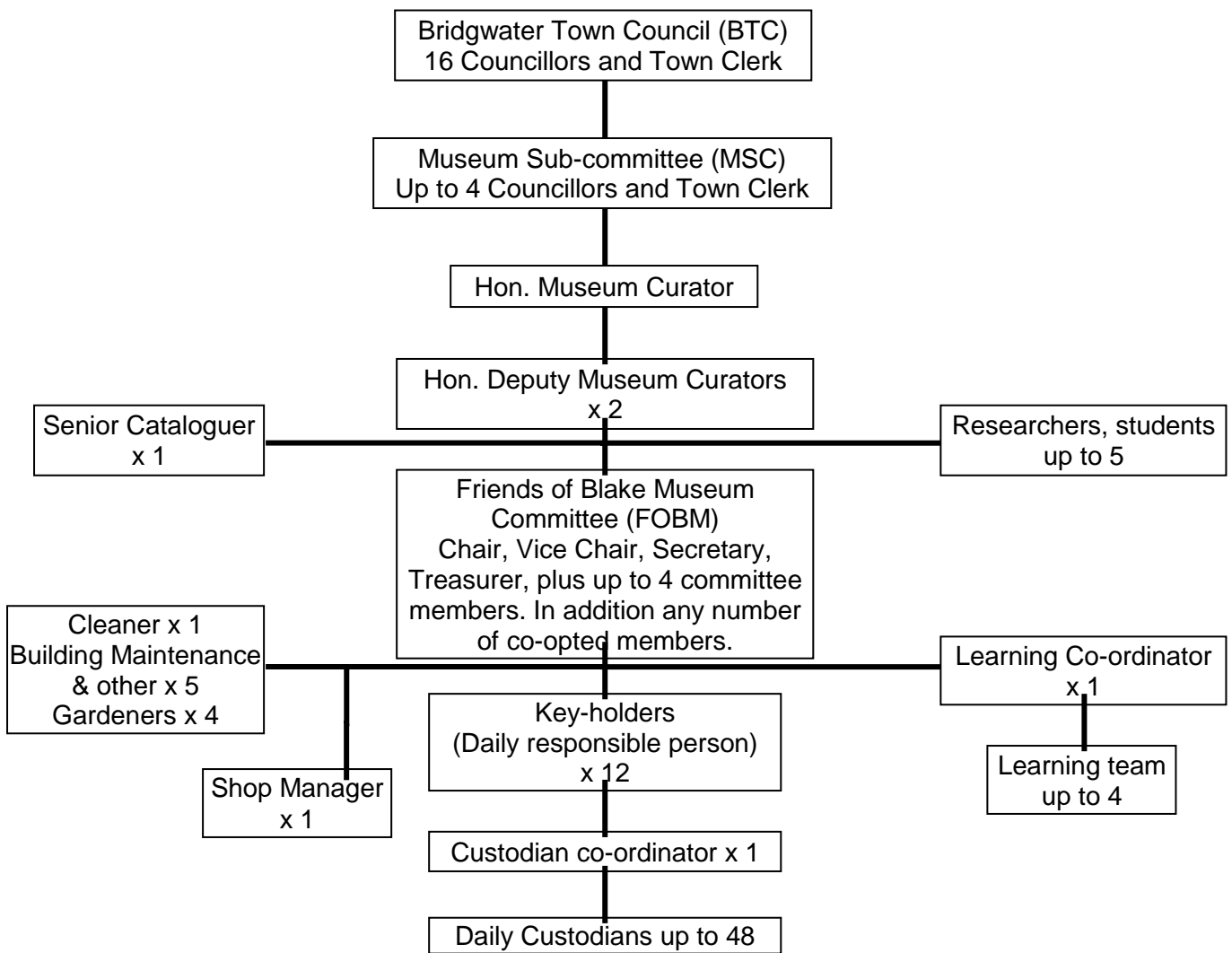
c. Workforce

The museum has no paid staff. Volunteers may fluctuate around 100. Volunteers undertake tasks of daily custodian, key-holder, electrical work, building maintenance, decorating, gardening, research, cataloguing, and cleaning. Recruitment can be achieved via the local Volunteer Recruitment Bureau or through museum open days. Upon interview the volunteer is given a tour of the museum and told what will be expected of them. If accepted the volunteer is given induction training. It is then arranged for the new volunteer to shadow an experienced person to learn the procedures.

Role	Volunteers
<p>Museum Sub-committee: This is constituted by up to four Elected Members of the Bridgwater Town Council and the Town Clerk. Sitting on this committee and with non voting powers: the Honorary Curator, Honorary Deputy Curators, Learning Co-ordinator, the Chair and Secretary of the Friends of Blake Museum, and the Museum Mentor who is also Somerset Museums Development Officer. This sub-committee has been approved by Bridgwater Town Council and advises on decisions relating to the Blake Museum. The Sub-committee meets up to four times a year</p>	NA
<p>Honorary Curator: Ensuring that the application of agreed policies & best practice is followed. Organising and effecting Museum Displays in conjunction with the Deputy Curators. Supervising volunteers dealing with research enquiries. Agreeing and overseeing student placements. Liaison with other stakeholders e.g. BDAS, BDCS. Organising building work programmes. Organising Strategies for the Old Mill. Maintaining Accreditation.</p>	1
<p>Honorary Deputy Museum Curators: Financial administration and budgetary control. Arranging IT Services including resources & admin websites. Holding and issuing keys to approved volunteer keyholders. Implementing agreed Collections Care Policy. Supervising documentation of collections. Monitoring Forward Plan and Action plan.</p>	2

Organising and monitoring publicity for the Museum. Providing training for volunteers.	
<p>Friends Committee: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Learning Co-ordinator (co-opted member), up to four committee members, and Talks Co-ordinator (co-opted member).</p> <p>FOBM strategic responsibilities: Regular reviews & reporting to BTC MSC (visitor numbers, volunteer support) Consultees for draft new policies & plans Monitoring safety (fire, accidents and other duties as laid out in CoP) External funding e.g. Your Heritage and HLF grants</p> <p>FOBM day-to-day responsibilities: Cleaning to Museum standards. Disposal of rubbish. Providing competent persons to carry out the daily duties of Museum Secretary. Opening/Closing Museum on the agreed opening days. Holding keys for same, including for security call-out. Greeting & caring for visitors. CCTV monitoring. Monitoring visitor numbers and composition. Co-ordinating volunteer involvement with external meetings at the Museum. Providing learning experiences in accordance with BTC policy. Effecting repairs under supervision of the Curatorial Team Maintaining garden (at FOBM expense) Recruitment, training and retention of volunteers for above. Supervising work experience placements (other than students) Operation and management of the franchised FOBM Sales area, and such other duties and responsibilities for the proper running of the Museum which the parties may from time to time jointly agree.</p>	10
<p>Shop Manager: Responsible for shop management, purchase of stock, stock control and shop budget.</p>	1
<p>Key-holders (responsible person): Responsible for the museum on a day to day basis. Unlocking and locking the museum. Security. Dealing with visitor enquiries.</p>	12
<p>Custodian Co-ordinator: Responsible for arranging custodian rotas. Interviewing and employing potential custodians to man the reception desk and shop.</p>	1
<p>Custodians: Provide a welcome to visitors and provide further information on the museum and its collections. Custodians also man the Friends' shop.</p>	48
<p>Senior Cataloguer: Responsible for the cataloguing and accessioning of items. Data input to Filemaker Pro</p>	1
<p>Learning Co-ordinator: Responsible for learning activities and learning events. Reports directly to the curators and the MSC.</p>	1

<p>Learning Team: Under the guidance of the Learning Co-ordinator, assist with the learning events and activities.</p>	Up to 4
<p>Researchers: Undertake a wide range of research under the guidance of the curators</p>	Up to 4
<p>Cleaner: A volunteer undertakes regular cleaning of the museum; vacuuming, dusting, polishing and cleaning of toilet. Cleaning of open display exhibits is done under supervision. Internal cleaning of exhibition cases and exhibits is carried out by the curatorial team or volunteers are supervised with training by the curatorial team.</p>	1
<p>Electricians: The museum has two volunteer, qualified electricians who carry out all small electrical work where possible. It may be necessary to employ an Electrical Contractor on large projects or where the volunteer feels the work may be beyond his scope.</p>	2
<p>Decorator: A volunteer painter decorator carries out any necessary decoration work. This usually takes place during the museum's closure period.</p>	1
<p>Carpenter: A volunteer carpenter carries out various small works. Larger more complex work if needed is carried out by an external contractor.</p>	1
<p>Builder: A volunteer builder carries out various work in relation to minor external building maintenance and other associated works. Larger works are undertaken by a building contractor employed by the Bridgwater Town Council.</p>	1
<p>Gardeners: The Friends of Blake Museum are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the museum gardens. This includes designing layouts, planting, weeding, pruning and watering.</p>	Up to 4



The Museum Sub-Committee is appointed annually and The Friends of Blake Museum Committee are elected annually.

d. Audience

The Blake Museum is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm from April to early November. It has a small on-site shop, a small cafe area, a toilet and enquiry service.

Outside of these times the museum will open for pre-booked group visits which include tours of the museum and learning activities with schools. There is also access to research materials held.

The museum is closed to the public during the winter season but is open for enquiries and research. During this period, essential maintenance work is undertaken, and new displays put in.

Visitors come from all over -- locals, education trips and tourists (both British and foreign)

Comments in the book are overwhelmingly favourable as to the visitor experience and satisfaction.

As well as the permanent displays, the museum arranges temporary exhibitions, usually monthly, to attract and broaden learning and discovery experiences.

Year	Adults	Children	Total Visitors
2011	1792	509	2307
2012	1109	252	1161
2013	1312	421	1733
2014	1947	345	2292

e. Access

See appendix c.

f. Environmental Sustainability

The Environmental Policy Statement has been rewritten and supersedes all previous references to environmental sustainability. See appendix b.

g. Finance

The Blake Museum is subsidised by the Bridgwater Town Council (BTC), and with financial support from the Friends of Blake Museum (FOBM). FOBM are limited in what can be raised in this respect and the museum relies on their generosity.

The Blake Museum enjoyed a 4 year transitional funding from Sedgemoor District Council from 2009 when it was handed over to the Bridgwater Town Council. This amounted to £25,000 per annum which was needed to bring the museum up to standard.

The Bridgwater Town Council added another £25,000 which gave an annual figure of £50,000. In 2013 the transitional funding ended and the Bridgwater Town Council were able to increase their funding grant by £1000 thus making £26,000. An additional £7,300 was carried over into the new financial year along with funding from FOBM of £3,000 giving a total for that year of £36,300.

With prudent trimming of the museum budget and careful management of the funds available, £7,471 was carried forward to the 2014/15 budget. With an increased funding grant by the BTC of £32,000 and funding support from FOBM of £4,000, a total of £43,472 was realised for 2014/15.

It is anticipated that for 2015/16 there will be carry forward of £10,000 with a possible £5,000 from FOBM. Coupled with a known funding grant of £30,000 from the BTC this will give a budget of £45,000. It is believed that FOBM have reached a peak at which it can give any high level support funding. From 2016 therefore, any funding will be variable, but it is anticipated that this will be in the range of £2,500 - £3,500.

Financial Year	Gross Income	Total Expenditure
April 12 - March 13	£50,988	£47,825.61
April 13 - March 14	£36,300	£28,827.43
April 14 - March 15	£43,472	£30,988E

E = Estimate

h. Collections

The Blake Museum has the following policies (subject to approval at the Museum Sub-Committee meeting on 16th March 2015):

- Collections Development Policy (replaces the Acquisitions and Disposal Policy)
- Documentation Policy
- Care and Conservation Policy

In addition there are:

- Collections Care Plan
- Collections Procedure Manual

The museum dates from 1926, and then concentrated almost entirely on General at Sea Robert Blake and the Battle of Sedgemoor to the exclusion of pretty well everything else. A report by Dr F.S. Wallis of Bristol Museum, dated 27 January 1958 and in the museum's archives, criticised this policy and urged its scope should be broadened to include more of social history. From then efforts were made to address this. See Acquisitions and Disposal Policy, 2009, pp 3-5 for details.

Probably under 3% of the collection is on display. Much of the collection includes multiple artefacts especially in the archaeology and photographic collections which can never be displayed as they are too numerous, and the museum lacks space. For this reason we regularly rotate displays and hold temporary exhibitions.

The museum has a policy of purchasing modern illuminated cases as finances permit. The displays are captioned in a consistent and professional-looking way.

Since 2009 all new acquisitions have been catalogued as they have been received. Since that date a good effort has been made at dealing with the backlog, and while some items still remain to be done, the number is very small compared with the totality of the collection.

Interpretation is by artefacts in cases, descriptive texts and illustrations on flat panels and through the learning team.

Research is encouraged by members of the museum team for displays, and also through casual enquirers

Description of Items	Number of Items	% of Collection
Gifts	3656	34
Purchases	400	4
Loans	394	4
Transfers	0	0
Unknown Source	7	0
Other	6191	58
Total	10648	100

The above figures do not include the second batch of the Douglas Allen negatives (Douglas Allen was a local photographer), obtained in 2011, totalling over 10,300 entries, (each entry being a job). Each entry may consist of a number of separate negatives (estimate 130,000 in total), these are recorded in a separate catalogue. It has taken 3 years to complete an inspection of the condition and the quantities contained against each entry (many are wedding photos). It is planned that they should be entered into the main database, but this is subject to a final decision on their future.

i. Security

The museum has an intruder alarm linked to a monitoring service. The intruder alarm system is serviced at six monthly periods. Most internal areas of the museum are covered by a CCTV system monitored by the reception custodian. The CCTV is also viewable on two other computers and is constantly recording images. Bar grilles are attached to ground floor windows with the exception of six windows, four of which have wooden shutters closed at night.

An independent security review took place on 19th February 2015 by a PCSO from the Avon and Somerset Police Force. The following recommendations were made:

- Fix bar grilles to the small window in room 4 overlooking Blake Street
- Fix bar grille to the office window overlooking the upper garden.
- Window alarms could be fitted to the upstairs windows.
- Give consideration to the installation of an external CCTV system.
- Consider raising the height of the fence/wall in the garden.

In addition, the PCSO will make sure that the CCTV situated in the adjoining Blake Gardens and overlooking the rear of the museum, is homed in on the museum at night. There is a street light not functioning in Blake Street opposite the museum which means the museum is in total darkness at night. The PCSO will chase up when this is to be fixed.

The above items will be taken to the Museum Sub-Committee for approval, and will be actioned over the course of the next three years.

j. Tourism

Marketing and promotional activities take place with a tourist guide leaflet. This guide is distributed to various attractions within the Somerset area including caravan and camping sites, other museums, tourist information centres and local shopping precincts. The guide is also available on-line at Tourism Leaflets Online (www.tourismleafletsonline.com). Other promotional material is added to this site throughout the year. Promotion of events is done by issuing advertising posters along with press releases via the Bridgwater Town Council secretary. These are sent out to various media and local advertising outlets.

Various temporary exhibitions are staged throughout the year focusing on topical and local events where appropriate. For example, in 2013 the Bridgwater Hospital closed and moved to new premises. An exhibition was staged to celebrate 200 years of the Bridgwater Infirmary. In 2014 a World War 1 commemoration was staged focusing mainly on how it affected Bridgwater. At the beginning of the season we stage a selection of photographs of Bridgwater in the past.

k. SWOT Analysis

To develop the forward plan for 2015 to 2018, the museum took the opportunity to consult with the Bridgwater Town Council Museum Sub-committee meeting on 17th November 2014. This consultation took the form of a SWOT exercise. See appendix a.

7. Vision

The vision is that over the next 5 - 10 year period the museum will have become a centre of excellence for the study of the local history of Bridgwater and its people. This will be achieved by creating greater learning opportunities for everyone, through research, interpretations and displays.

8. Aims & Objectives

A1. To improve the accessibility of the collections to visitors.

A1.1. To develop a video show so that wheelchair users and other less advantaged persons can view the upstairs gallery collections. The nature of the building is such that people with limited mobility are unable to view the upper floor galleries.

A2. To develop new interpretations and displays.

A2.1. To purchase more display cases so as to increase the number of exhibits on display. This will work in conjunction with re-arrangement of some of the ground floor rooms.

A3. To encourage volunteers to develop skills of benefit to the museum and thereby to enhance their enjoyment of their voluntary efforts; to work with others to increase the volunteer base.

A3.1. To offer development opportunities to volunteers through proper communication channels.

A4. To become the centre of excellence for the study of the local history of Bridgwater and its people.

A4.1. To seek funding for a prefabricated standalone extension which will provide facilities for learning opportunities and activities. The building will also act as a meeting and talks room thereby freeing up the current multiuse room for increased exhibition space. The new build will also be available for hire where appropriate.

A5. To refocus the content of the collections to reflect more accurately the purpose of the museum.

A5.1 To give careful consideration, and with consultation, for the disposal of items that are of no local interest, and of which we are unable to conserve and care for properly. This is to be undertaken using the criteria set out in the Care and Conservation policy.

A5.2 To seek funding for the digitisation of the Douglas Allen Collection, thereby preserving as many of the images as possible, and making it accessible for research.

The Learning Co-ordinator has set the following aims and objectives:

LA1. To increase the number of people on the Learning Team.

LA1.1. To increase the team by a minimum of four

LA1.2. To continue to welcome new volunteers to the team, and offer support and training.

LA2. To continue to facilitate groups and individuals of all ages to access the resources, knowledge and research opportunities available at Blake Museum.

LA2.1 To develop visits linking with the new National Curriculum (NC) by working with local schools.

LA2.2. To promote the value the unique learning experience of visiting the museum as a local resident, holidaymaker, student or personal quest.

LA2.3. To develop activities in relation to new exhibitions or local themes

9. Action Plan: Year One

The Blake Museum is already set up and operated with the above aims in mind; the purpose of the Action Plan is to define how to further develop and improve the service provided and to ensure its long-term future and financial viability.

The Actions are given priority categories and target completion dates in terms of financial years where appropriate. Many are classified as 'ongoing', in that they are continually kept under review, with progress assessed each year. 'Target dates' refer to our financial year, which runs from April to March.

Aim: A1. To improve the accessibility of the collections to visitors							
Objective	Action	People responsible	Resources needed	Budget and funding source	Completion date	Priority	Success criteria
A1.1.To develop a video show so that wheelchair users and other less advantaged persons can view the upstairs gallery collections. The nature of the building is such that people with limited mobility are unable to view the upper floor galleries.	Create video	Curatorial team	Source and purchase suitable Interactive video units.	£900 - £1000 From budget	2016	Medium	Two video units in the Blake Room
Aim: A2.To develop new interpretations and displays							
Objective	Action	People responsible	Resources needed	Budget and funding source	Completion date	Priority	Success criteria
A2.1. To purchase more display cases so as to increase the number of exhibits on display. This will work in conjunction with re-arrangement of some of the ground floor rooms.	Plan sizes of cases and obtain quotation.	Curatorial team/FOBM	None	Budget allowance for purchases/ FOBM funding.	2015	Medium	Display cabinets installed and artefacts on display.
Aim: A3. To encourage volunteers to develop skills of benefit to the museum and thereby to enhance their enjoyment of their voluntary efforts; to work with others to increase the volunteer base							
Objective	Action	People responsible	Resources needed	Budget and funding source	Completion date	Priority	Success criteria
A3.1.To offer development opportunities to volunteers through proper communication channels.	Issue notices as appropriate to the staff notice boards/word of mouth/email.	Curatorial team	None	None	2015/18	High	Volunteers taking up opportunities.

Learning Aims:							
LA1. To increase the number of people on the Learning Team							
Objective	Action	People responsible	Resources needed	Budget and funding source	Completion date	Priority	Success criteria
LA1.1. To increase the team by a minimum of four	Advertise for new volunteers, both internally and externally.	Learning Co-ord	In place	None	2015/16	High	New team appointed.
LA2. To continue to facilitate groups and individuals of all ages to access the resources, knowledge and research opportunities available at Blake Museum							
Objective	Action	People responsible	Resources needed	Budget and funding source	Completion date	Priority	Success criteria
LA2.1. To develop visits linking with the new National Curriculum (NC) by working with local schools.	Contact schools with promotional material.	Learning Co-ord	In place	None	2015/18	Medium	Schools taking up the opportunities offered.
LA2.2. To promote and value the unique learning experience of visiting Blake Museum as a local resident, holiday maker, student or on a personal quest.	All educational settings, adult groups and individuals will be made aware of new displays and exhibitions via e mail, letters and personal contact, the press and the museum website						Increased footfall.
LA2.3. To develop activities in relation to new exhibitions or local themes.							Places being taken up for new activities.

End of year review

To be completed at the end of the first year of the action plan.

Aim	Objective	Progress	Actions to carry forward

10. Action Plan: Year Two-Three

Aims: A4 To become the centre of excellence for the study of the local history of Bridgwater and its people							
Objective	Action	People responsible	Resources needed	Budget and funding source	Completion date	Priority	Success criteria
A4.1. To seek funding for a standalone extension which will provide facilities for learning opportunities and activities. The building will also act as a meeting and talks room thereby freeing up the current multiuse room for increased exhibition space. The new build will also be available for hire where appropriate.	Seek a suitable pre-fabricated building to meet requirements and access standards. Seek expert advice for the necessary groundwork and associated works. Acquire planning permission and any other related permissions and approvals. Recruit volunteer development role to focus on fund raising.	Curatorial team/ FOBM with support of the MDO.	Grant funding	None set.	2020	High	New facility installed and being used to full potential
Aim A5. To refocus the content of the collections to reflect more accurately the purpose of the museum							
A5.1 To give careful consideration, and with consultation, for the disposal of items that are of no local interest, and of which we are unable to conserve and care for properly. This is to be undertaken using the criteria set out in the Collection Development Plan and the Museums Association Toolkit.	Items identified for disposal to be approved by the Museum Sub-Committee. Each item to be given careful consideration.	Curatorial team	None	None	2018	Low	Items identified for disposal have been disposed of.
A5.2 To seek funding for the	Obtain quotations for the	Curatorial team	Previously used company are now based locally,	Grant aid required.	2018	High	

<p>digitisation of the Douglas Allen Collection, thereby preserving as many of the images as possible, and making it accessible for research.</p>	<p>digitisation of the collection.</p>		<p>therefore transportation costs are minimal. Secure and cold storage has been identified</p>	<p>From museum budget. Cost to be confirmed.</p>		<p>All of the collection scanned and held on computer. The negatives put into suitable negative storage.</p>
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End of year review

To be completed at the end of each year of the action plan.

Aim	Objective	Progress	Actions to carry forward

11. Resources

a. Spending plan

Spending Plan - 3 Year Profit and Loss Forecast

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Income			
<i>Funding from BTC</i>	£26,000	£32,000	£30,000
<i>Additional funding carried forward</i>	£7,300	£7,472	£10,000E
<i>Funding from FOBM</i>	£3000	£4,000	£5000
Total Gross Profit	£36,300	£43,472	£45,000E
Expenditure			
<i>Insurance</i>	£6,695	£6,830	£6,898E
<i>Telephone and Internet</i>	£720	£725	£735E
<i>Business rates</i>	£9,891	£10,122	£10,223E
<i>Electricity, water & sewerage</i>	£5398	£4,510	£4,472E
<i>Repair, maintenance and renewal: equipment</i>	£331	£150	£200E
<i>Repair, maintenance and renewal: building (internal)</i>	£630	£780	£800E
<i>Professional fees</i>	Nil	Nil	Nil
<i>Safety inspection/annual maintenance</i>	£994	£828	£1000E
<i>Publicity</i>	£45	£587	£700E
<i>Cleaning, includes waste collection charges</i>	£575	£655	£760E
<i>Miscellaneous (includes all other expenses not listed)</i>	£2402	£5,801	£6045E
Total expenditure	£27,681	£30,988	£31,133E
Net operating profit	£8619	£12,484	£13,867E

E = Estimate

Review of the Forward Plan

This plan will be reviewed every March and in 2018 a new plan will be developed.

Signature: Graham Granter
Chair of MSC

Date: 16 March 2015

Certified: Alan Hurford
Town Clerk

Date: 16 March 2015

a. SWOT Analysis

The Blake Museum, Monday 17 November 2014

Strengths - Internal	Weakness - Internal
<p><i>What is the museum good at? Think about the successes in terms of delivering the museum service, for example, collections, interpretation and visitor engagement.</i></p>	<p><i>Where could the museum improve? Think about the delivery of the museum service, where are there are challenges, for example, collections, interpretation and visitor engagement.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular changes of exhibitions • Quality of exhibitions (in comparison to the Museum of Somerset) • Visitor engagement by an engaging workforce • Quality captions in the galleries • Good learning experiences • Responding to peoples' enquiries and object donations • Good at fundraising • Finances are well documented • Nice garden • The management of the museum by Bridgwater Town Council and the support of staff and Councillors for the museum workforce since 2009. This is a good relationship • Upkeep of the building (always clean) • Structural checks and upkeep regularly happen • No financial worries • Good relationship with the Town Council • Trusting relationship with the Town Council – leave the running of the museum to the experts • It's a lovely museum • Quality of the volunteers, passionate, keen on making it a success • The website is kept up-to-date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting people through the door (average of 20 people per day) does this have an impact on the stewards? • Location – off the main street (though it is not too far off of the High Street) • Signage around the town (though this is improving) • Keeping detailed information on visitors (reference to the visitor survey, how often is it distributed and when and who analyses the information)? • Levels of donations are not consistent as a steady source of income • Inconsistency in asking visitors to sign the visitor book and to make a donation • Succession planning for example, young volunteers to take on roles including curatorial) • Calibre of volunteers vary • Having the resources to complete application for funding (this is across the Town Council. This could be achieved by accessing professional support however there is a cost)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity is good • It looks like it is a museum which is cared for • It is done well • Comments in the visitors book from non-local people are good • Reasonable level of donations (average £60 per month) • Sewing Group exhibition: a new partnership promoting the collections and the museum • Keen to try new ideas, eg a book sale • Produce and share leaflets 	
Opportunities - External	Threats - External
<p><i>What opportunities are open to the museum? Think about the potential of the museum to explore new ideas, for example, partnerships, funding and audiences.</i></p>	<p><i>What threats could harm the museum? Think about what is happening in the wider environment which can threaten the museum, for example, the economic environment, external funding issues, external perceptions of museums</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently exploring signage to promote Bridgwater as “The Home of Robert Blake” • To celebrate the rich history of Bridgwater • The new primary history curriculum • Schools are coming on a two year cycle. • High level of support by Bridgwater Town Council • Making the most of National events such as World War One • External funding such as HLF • Access to the South West Museum Development Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedgemoor District Council does not promote Bridgwater as a tourist destination. There is no tourism offer under the council • There is no Tourist Information Office and qualified people to help visitors to Bridgwater only a ‘micro’ TIC at the library which seems to be ineffective • Election in 2015 could change the composition of the council and therefore the response to the Museum
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Charged admission – pro and cons</div>	

b. Environmental Policy Statement



Blake Museum

Bridgwater Blake Museum

Environmental Policy Statement 2015

Statement of Purpose

The Blake Museum Bridgwater is established:

- to rescue from loss and destruction the relics of our ancestors;
- to collect, preserve, conserve and to show relics of history relating (principally but not exclusively) to Bridgwater and its immediate surroundings;
- to show visitors that Bridgwater is not indifferent to its own history;
- to interest visitors in what has happened in Bridgwater since it was granted its first Royal Charter in the reign of King John;
- to give the townspeople of Bridgwater pride in their past;
- to reveal that great events have taken place within the town and adjacent areas and set them in the context of the history of England;
- to honour the lives of great men and women who have lived or been associated with the town, and, in particular but not exclusively, Robert Blake.

1. Local Environment

The museum is committed to operate in such a way as to minimise its impact on the local environment.

2. Heating

The museum is only open to visitors from April to the end of October, and therefore heating is a minimal requirement. The heating is set to operate for very limited periods, but this can be overridden if the temperature becomes low. Heating is turned off during warmer periods.

3. Lighting

LED or energy saving lamps are to be fitted wherever practicable. Wherever practicable to install, lighting requirements in the galleries are to be activated automatically by body sensors, or is be activated manually by the pressing of time limited switches.

4. Winter Closure Period

During the Winter closure period - November to March, volunteers undertake maintenance work and exhibition changes. This usually occurs on just two days per week. Lighting, and if required, heating, is kept to minimal requirements.

5. Recycling

Recyclable materials are to be put into recyclable sacks or other receptacle for disposal by the museum's waste carrier. A list of recyclable material can be found on the staff notice board.

This policy statement is to be reviewed annually in March by the MSC (Museum Sub-Committee) Items may be added as appropriate, and be approved at a MSC meeting during the policy statement year.

Signature: Graham Granter
Chair of MSC

Date: 16 March 2015

Certified: Alan Hurford
Town Clerk

Date: 16 March 2015

c. Access Policy



Blake Museum

Blake Museum Access Policy

Name of governing body: Bridgwater Town Council

Date this Policy was approved by the governing body: 16th March 2015

Policy review procedure: This Access Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once each year.

Date at which this policy is due for review: March 2016

Statement of Purpose

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Policy Statement

The Blake museum is housed in a Grade 2* listed building, with the galleries covering two floors. The upper galleries have uneven floors and various changes of level. Access to the upper floor is by stairs only. Lifts or stair lifts cannot be installed due to the design of the stairs and the structure of the building. Wheelchair access is therefore restricted to the ground floor which is fully accessible by wheelchair users.

Access

The museum recognises that full access by all persons is essential. The museum will, where practicable:

- Give every assistance to wheelchair users and less advantaged persons, to view the collections.
- Upon request, and with sufficient notice, specific exhibits may be taken off of display or taken out of storage, and brought into a controlled viewing area. Such exhibits are to be handled in accordance with the Collections Care Policy. This is undertaken by a member of the curatorial team only.
- Requests for documents are to be handled in the same manner as previously stated.
- Upon request, allow viewing of the upper galleries by electronic means via the CCTV monitoring system. It should be noted that this viewing is limited and does not allow for the full viewing of the exhibits.
- Work towards installing a proper means of viewing the upper galleries, whereby access to all the exhibits will be available via an interactive display unit.

The following are available to view on-line:

Archaeology: Brooches

Archaeology: Medieval Tiles

Archaeology: Samian Ware *terra sigillata*

Archaeology: Spaxton Mosaic

Art: Oil portraits

Archives: Electors' Lists

Archives: War Records

Archives: Library

Entertainment: 1927 Pageant

Maritime: Docks and Irene

Numismatics: Coins

People: Chubb, Blake, Monmouth

Photographs: Photographers

Textiles: Baird Collection

Textiles: Banners

Textiles: 18th & 19th century Samplers

Textiles: Bridgwater Tapestry

Interpretations

The interpretations for exhibits use a standardised type face (Lydian BT) which is used throughout the galleries. Each is housed in a plastic holder and is placed in such a way as to make it easy to read from various angles. Larger type is used where the description has to be placed at low level, thus making it easier when standing, without the need to bend or crouch. Some interpretations are fixed to wall panels and display boards. Wherever possible exhibits and interpretations are placed at easy viewing heights.

There is a printed museum guide to take the visitor around the galleries. This describes what each gallery contains. Galleries are numbered and can be referred to on the included plan of the museum.

There is a printed information guide in relation to the Chubb collection, and from time to time other information leaflets are produced where required.

Guided tours can be arranged by request.

Visits by school parties are arranged by request and may include a themed topic.

A video show accompanies some of the temporary exhibitions. Not all temporary exhibitions allows for a video show.

A quiz for children is available and is offered to child visitors.

Themed activities for children are offered throughout the month of August, and this takes place on one day only of each week.

Access to the museum's library is by appointment only.

There is no public access to the object history store, photograph collection, photograph store, artefact storage or picture store.

Signature: Graham Granter
Chair of MSC

Date: 16 March 2015

Certified; Alan Hurford
Town Clerk

Date: 16 March 2015