

**Chard Museum  
Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> 2020  
19:00pm (via Zoom)**



**Communication and Marketing Report  
Supporting Information - Attachment 6**

ITEM 9.1

In February, before anyone anticipated our changing times, the Trustees agreed a three-phased, 2 year-plan to re-launch a full and comprehensive website, create the tools to engage with supporters and members through regular e-newsletters, use G-Suite to centralise all of our day-to-day management documents and not least create our digital archives. The Leisure and Hospitality grant awarded to the Museum at the beginning of April enabled us to be positive and active during what has been a challenging year. As a result of the grant we have achieved the two-year technology building plan in 6 months.

Many organisations have put their Leisure and Hospitality grant into reserves. Our Trustees used it for its intended purpose. I would like to thank the Trustees for their support and forward thinking in resourcing not only our IT infrastructure and communication, but 50 Years and Beyond, and equally as important the resources to implement Modes, an electronic Collections Data Management system.

Our IT infrastructure includes an on-line Booking System, Virtual Museum, On-Line shop, Forum, links into Facebook, Instagram, our You Tube Channel and hopefully coming on board early in the new year Pinterest. These tools are all planned to help us engage with different age groups and communities. On this note we are so proud to have translated the website into both Polish and Portuguese. Now we have to build some links with these communities and to share their stories and engage them in history of Chard.

Despite these achievements we have to recognise that only a small part of the job has been done. Next year our plans will include, using all these tools more effectively, getting more volunteers and supporters active in sharing our historical community, getting the museums research opportunities to a wider audience, engaging externally with others and 'killing' the myth that the Museum is just *'that building at the top of the High Street'*.

We re-opened when lockdown eased on August 01<sup>st</sup>. We were one of the few community museums, along with Axminster to open in quite a wide local area. Visitors had to book on-line or by phone and were restricted to groups of 6, and then 4 as Government guidelines changed. Visitor numbers were down by approximately 75% in August and September. Anecdotally, this seems to be consistent with other, and larger, museums. Full visitor numbers will be available in our 2020 Social Impact Report.

We need to say a special thank you to Georgina (Vye) who created the roster for our Stewards, and then to all of the Stewards who offered their help and flexibility when there where or where not bookings. A mention also to Harry (Jacobsen) who has really upped our game in terms of risk assessments, and not just filling in the form, but making sure we use them dynamically.

Visitor feedback, both through formal evaluations, and anecdotally indicated one specific trend during visits this year. This was the value visitors placed on being given a 'tour', and hearing all of the aligned stories behind the artefacts. When we plan for reopening on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021 a key question will be 'what is the Museum's new normal?'

This year our external communication activity has focused on electronic tools and activities. The Museum did have to a 'catch up' in this area. However, we have not forgotten, what have become 'lovingly' called the Chard 42. These are those supporters who do not actively use email. They have all received an AGM packet of papers plus some paper copy examples of the Newsletter. This year engaging with those, who prefer not to use email, has been a challenge. In February we had some tentative plans of ways to engage with our all of our members and supporters. We have not adequately achieved that aim. Any ideas anyone has to help us with this challenge please do share them.

Howard Bailey  
08<sup>th</sup> October 2020