

PREAMBLE

The Committee of the Purton Historical Society recognises the need for clear core objectives within the Forward Plan which would enable the Committee to respond to opportunities that may present themselves during the period covered by the Plan.

STATEMENT OF MUSEUM’S CENTRAL PURPOSE

Purton Museum exists to collect, document, safeguard, interpret and make accessible artefacts and specimens to provide a record of all aspects of life in the Parishes of Purton, the Lydiards and Braydon from the past and present. The Museum will enable the public to explore its collection for inspiration, learning and enjoyment.

SITUATION REVIEW

The Museum is wholly managed by the Purton Historical Society (Registered Charity No. 801295) and governed by the Historical Society Committee acting as the Museum Management Committee. For day to day purposes, the Committee has appointed an Honorary Curator to define and organise the Museums’ requirements.

The Museum is housed in the Workingmen’s Institute building in Purton where it occupies the first and second (gallery) floors of the building above Purton Library. The Museum rents these upper floors from Wiltshire County Council’s Libraries & Heritage Department and obtains free use of heating and lighting. In turn, WCC Libraries & Heritage rents the entire building from the Trustees of the Purton Charities.

Purton Museum is registered at Grade II with the Museums & Galleries Commission, registration no. 892 and is a member of the South West Area Museums Council. The Museum obtains curatorial advice from WCC Museums Service and Conservation Service..

Performance Indicators:

- Visitor figures based on Visitor Book returns (year April to end March):

1995/96	510
1996/97	473
1997/98	677
1998/99	335
1999/2000	111 (low figures due to part-year closure and ill-timed May Museums Week event)
2000/01	447 (provisional)

Visitor Figures for 2000/01 have been made up as follows – data to Jan 2001:

Grand Reopening	30	National Women’s Register	8
Festival of Village Life	105	Purton Artists Weekend	45
Buried Treasure	45	Other Visitors	138 (to confirm)
Purton Brownies	21		-----
1st Purton Cubs	22	Total	447
Dropping Names	33		

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- Staff and their roles
Museum staff are solely volunteers. Although there are about 8 regular volunteers, it has been difficult in the past year to co-ordinate activities and little has been done. A system by which the achievements of volunteers can be maximised needs to be developed.
- Budget – income shown in Museum Accounts

1997/98	£531	
1998/99	£641	
1999/2000	£793	
2000/01*	£768	(including £250 grant aid from WCC Museums Service for security system as internal transfer not shown in Museums Accounts)
- * provisional
- Size and range of collections. *State of documentation and systems used*
- Recent Events and Achievements:

Curatorship

On 1st January 1999, Alec Robbins (Curator since early 1980s) retired and handed over to the current Curator Rick Dixon.

Displays

1999 a programme of revitalising displays in the museum was begun, maximising use of space and improving access.

Exhibitions

1999: Purton's Glory Hole (in conjunction with Museums Week 1999 theme of 'Treasures'. Phillip Bramble Letters (letters from 1820s found in Gloucestershire relating to turnpikes in the Purton area)

2000: Purton's Millennium – to coincide with Purton Festival of Village Life
Buried Treasure – a panel and audience evening identifying unusual items
Dropping Names – WCC Museum Service's travelling exhibition

Grants

1999: £139.62 from WCC towards purchase of new screens
£152.64 from WCC as 100% grant for purchase of Mini Museum items
£200 from Purton Parish Council

2000 £250 from WCC as 100% grant for Museum contribution to Library security system
£200 from Purton Parish Council

Disability Discrimination Act

1999 A policy document was produced and agreed with the Museums Service, reinforcing plans already in place to improve access arrangements and readability of notices, increase outreach exhibitions and advertise the availability of assisted visits.

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Courses

- 1999 The Curator attended several courses and seminars arranged by WCC and by the SW Area Museums Council on aspects covering display, accessioning, conservation and security.

Building Environment

- 1999 In November 1999, the Museum was closed to allow treatment to rot in the loft space of the building. The collection was safeguarded during the work by constructing a protective polythene tent over it all, the Salisbury Conservation Service providing 30 metres of plastic sheeting.
- 2001 During the winter closure 2000/01, work has commenced on levelling the stepped floor of the upper gallery to allow the curator's desk and filing cabinet to be moved from the existing office area main Museum floor. This will allow additional floor space to be made available to areas accessible to the public.

Exhibit of the Month

As part of the outreach programme an exhibit has been featured each month in the Purton Magazine:

- the Philip Bramble letters
- the Spirit Guardian Doll found at The Close
- the Victorian postbox
- the Man Trap
- the "Kibblewhite" Cup
- the Kempster's Filing System
- the Haskins Cricket Ball
- Purton's Millennium
- Buried Treasure
- Dropping Names
- Recent Acquisitions
- an embroidered sheet dating to 1914
- Purton Floods 2000
- Victorian graffiti
- The Institute Building

Collection Surveys

During November 2000, the Museum Service's Conservation Section carried out a Collection Survey at the Museum and will be commenting on storage conditions and any conservation and restoration work that may be needed.

FORWARD PLAN FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Strategic Aims

- To collect in accordance with the museum's Acquisitions and Disposals Policy;
- To maintain the existing documentation system and to work with the Wiltshire County Council Museums Service to make as accessible as possible information about the museum's collections;
- To work with the Wiltshire County Council Conservation Service to help preserve the collections and provide storage and display conditions of a quality to enable preventive conservation of the museum collections;

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- To display and interpret the museum's collections in an accessible manner to inspire an interest in, and enthusiasm for, the history of Purton and surrounding areas and to encourage support for the museum;
- To co-operate with the Wiltshire CC Museum Service and other museums and art galleries in the County and elsewhere including the South West Area Museum Council and the County Record Office when appropriate;
- To seek co-operation with local schools and the Wiltshire County Council Education Department via the Libraries, Museums & Archives Service;
- To maintain full registration status with the MGC;
- To find the resources necessary to achieve the above, both in terms of finances and help in kind such as volunteers.

Key Aims

Status and Visitors

- Maintain and improve the Museum's profile in the community.
- Provide both interest and enjoyment for the visiting public.
- Increase the number of visitors by the interpretation of the growing collections of Purton's history and that of its districts.
- Maintain Registered status
- Support WCC Museums Service in its Best Value review in 2001/02.

Conservation, storage and security

- Fulfil Service Level Guidelines as agreed with the County Museums Service.
- To undertake year by year, as it can be afforded and on a prioritised basis the conservation work to be recommended in the awaited report from the WCC Museums Service's review conducted in November 2000.

Documentation

- To tackle the backlog of items which need accessioning and to send the data to the Museum Service for data entry;
- To continue with the preparation of a computer data-base to help with the finding of accessioned items.
- To introduce a computerised record of internal movement of objects within the museum in conjunction with the above database.;

Interpretation and Display

- To participate in Museums Week events bearing in mind the need to open in conjunction with other events in the village.

Outreach

- Maintain and improve outreach services including the Purton Magazine *Exhibit of the Month*, outside exhibitions and affiliated events such as *Buried Treasure*.
- Review possibilities of developing a Museum website.

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Revenue

- Seek and apply for grant aid to support the activities of the Museum
- Maximise revenue by sales of books (*Records & Recollections* and the *Purton Workhouses*)
- Consider the merits of producing new books on Purton's history based on the Museum's collection

Volunteer support

- Encourage more members of the Purton Historical Society and other interested people to supervise the museum during opening hours for the purposes of Health & Safety and museum security. This will take into account the safety of volunteers themselves.
- Use the skills and enthusiasms of volunteers to their best potential by developing lists of duties to include:
 - co-ordination of volunteer activities
 - accessioning
 - filing museum administrative paperwork
 - cleaning the museum, store, stairs and gallery
 - stocktaking boxes in store and items on display
 - construction work including design of future shop layout
 - design of displays
 - research activities

OTHER KEY CROSS-REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

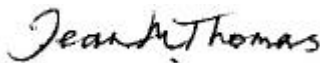
- Purton Museum Policy Statement
- Acquisitions & Disposals Policy
- Purton Museum's Approach to the Disability Discrimination Act

Prepared by:



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Approved by:



Jean Thomas, Chairman, Purton Historical Society

Date:

30th March 2001