



Joint Committee for the North of England Open  
Air Museum

Date Friday 13 January 2012  
Time 10.00 am  
Venue Collections Study Room, Regional Resource Centre,  
Beamish Museum, Beamish

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**Business**

**Part A**

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 November 2011  
(Pages 1 - 4)
2. Museum Update - Report of Museum Director (Pages 5 -  
8)
3. Presentation on Visitor Trends & Segmentation
4. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of  
the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant  
consideration.
5. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public  
during the discussion of items containing exempt  
information.

**Part B**

Items during which it is considered the meeting is not likely to be  
open to the public (consideration of exempt or confidential  
information).

6. Business and Operation Improvement Plan - Capital  
Programme Project Report No. 8 - Report of the Museum  
Director (Pages 9 - 26)

7. Long Term Business Plan Development - Report of the  
Museum Director (Pages 27 - 32)

**Colette Longbottom**  
Secretary to the Joint Committee

County Hall  
Durham  
5 January 2012

**To: The Members of the Joint Committee**

Councillors Bailey, J Bell, Blakey, Boyes, C Carr, Farry, Gittins, Iveson, C Marshall, D Marshall, May, Naylor, Shuttleworth, Stoker, L Thomson, Todd, Wilkinson, J Wilson and Wright (Durham County Council), Councillors S Craig, B Goldsworthy and Green (Gateshead MBC), Councillor Mortimer (North Tyneside MBC), Councillors Cunningham, Dixon, Kerr and Maxwell (South Tyneside MBC), Councillors Bell, Foster, Kelly, Richardson, J Scott, Speding, and Walker (Sunderland City Council)

**Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)**

*Beamish Development Trust – Mrs E Hunter, Mr S Skipsey and Mrs S Stewart*

*Friends of Beamish – Mr A Ashburner and Mr M Dix*

**JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE NORTH OF ENGLAND  
OPEN-AIR MUSEUM**

**At a Meeting of the Joint Committee for the North of England Open-Air Museum held in the Collections Study Room, Regional Resource Centre, Beamish Museum on Friday 18 November 2011 at 10.00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillor D Marshall in the Chair**

**Members of the Joint Committee**

Councillors Bailey, J Bell, Boyes, Carr, Gittins, May, Naylor, Shuttleworth, Thomson, Todd, Wilkinson and Wright (Durham County Council) Goldsworthy and Green (Gateshead MBC), Mortimer (North Tyneside MBC) Cunningham and Kerr (South Tyneside MBC) and R Bell and Kelly (Sunderland City Council)

**Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)**

Friends – Mr M Dix

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blakey, Farry, Iveson, C Marshall, Stoker, J Wilson and Wright (Durham County Council), Craig (Gateshead MBC), Dixon (South Tyneside MBC) Foster, Richardson, Scott, Speding and Walker (Sunderland City Council), Mrs E Hunter, Mr S Skipsey and Mrs S Stewart (Beamish Development Trust) and Mr A Ashburner (Friends)

**1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 September 2011**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2 Museum Update**

The Joint Committee received a report from the Museum Director giving an update on Museum business (for copy see file of Minutes).

Members were informed that October has been very busy with a successful Halloween event that had sold out on both nights. The Museum was on target to achieve over 450,000 at the year end. Over 3,500 people were expected to attend the BBC Children in Need event

and it was hoped to have a busy Christmas season including two additional evening events. Investments made on the Fairground and Fish and Chip Shop had proved successful and were very popular with visitors. The Museum had recently won a North East Tourism Award for the large visitor attraction of the year and will go on to represent the North East region at the national awards.

Members were advised about capital projects underway at the Museum including plans for a bakery.

**Resolved:-**

That the report be noted.

### **3 Revenue Budget Review 2011/12**

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Museum Director and Treasurer reviewing the Revenue Budget for 2011/12 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Treasurer informed Members that a reduction in both Audit fees and associated advertising costs (because the Joint Committee qualifies as a smaller public body) would help to reduce the amount of funding necessary to be drawn from the Surplus in 2011/12 by £18,300 which had the effect of increasing the projected Surplus at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 to £93,000. It was also reported that the Surplus funds held by the Joint Committee would be fully utilised by 2015/2016 if existing constituent authorities maintained their current contributions and that the BML company would then have to contribute to meet any deficit from this point. The main reason for this position was the fact that the Joint Committee was meeting the capital costs of the £500,000 loan taken out to fund the Edwardian Fun Fair attractions. If current contributions were to be reduced then this would have the effect of bringing forward the period the deficit will have to be met by the BML company.

Members were hopeful that other authorities in the region would make a contribution especially following talks and events held throughout the region and the amount of community work undertaken by the Museum.

**Resolved:-**

That the revised Revenue Budget for 2011/12 shown at Appendix A, be approved.

### **4 Exclusion of the Public**

**Resolved:-**

That under Section 100 A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

**5 Major Museum Application to the Arts Council**

The Joint Committee received a report from the Museum Director that outlined the key aspects of the Beamish led bid for Major Museum grant funding (for copy see file of Minutes).

The bid is led by Beamish working in partnership with Bowes Museum and if successful would support a programme of projects for a three year period.

**Resolved:-**

That the report be noted.

**6 2013-2025 Development Plan**

The Joint Committee received a report from the Museum Director that outlined the key areas and concepts of a new development and business plan for Beamish covering the period 2013-2025 (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the report be noted.

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JOINT COMMITTEE OF BEAMISH

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM – 13<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2012

UPDATE ON MUSEUM’S BUSINESS  
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: RICHARD EVANS

1. Performance for the period 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 (11 months)

	Actual YTD 2011/12	Revised Budget YTD 2011/12	Previous Year 2010/11
Visitor numbers	485,832	445,262	413,595
Variance (%)		9%	17%
Beamish Museum Ltd income (excluding grants/donations)	£4,194,761	£4,039,089	£3,854,968
Variance (%)		4%	9%
Beamish Museum Trading Ltd income (catering/retail)	£1,641,089	£1,545,975	£1,462,264
Variance (%)		6%	12%
Total BML/BMTL income <sup>1</sup>	£5,835,850	£5,585,064	£5,317,232
Variance (%)		4%	10%

1.1 Beamish has enjoyed an incredibly busy festive period, with 41,034 people attending the Christmas at Beamish season in the month of December and a further 22,795 during November. Both Christmas evenings at the museum in December were sold out with 2,000 pre-bought tickets per night.

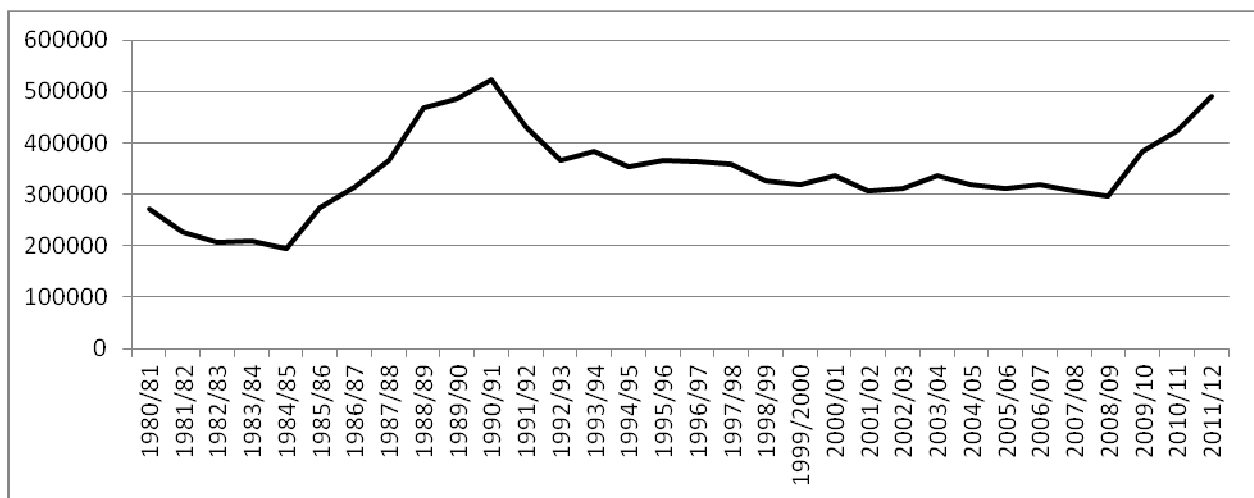
1.2 The autumn and winter of 2011 has been particularly successful, the busiest on record at Beamish. 158,403 visitors attended the museum in the four month period September to December 2011, attracted to a range of seasonal events. By way of comparison, prior to the development of an autumn/winter events

<sup>1</sup> All income is shown net of VAT and excludes revenue grants from HLF, and MLA/Renaissance. BML income includes all admissions, education activities, sales of guide books and income from gift aid.

programme, just 72,675 people attended the museum in the period September – December 2008.

1.3 The strong growth in visitor numbers experienced in the 2011/12 year is particularly marked when it is seen in context, looking right back to the early 1980s. Total visitor numbers in 2011/12 are now expected to be in the region of 490,000. This result shows an encouraging increase from 422,000 in 2010/11, 385,000 in 2009/10 and 298,000 in 2008/9.

1.4 Beamish is currently growing its audience at a rate not seen since its dramatic development in the 1980s. It has sustained a rate of growth in excess of 10%/annum consistently over the past three years, as the museum's Business and Operational Improvement Plan has been delivered. The graph below shows the total number of visitors to the museum mapped out over the period 1980 – 2011.



1.5 There are a number of interesting trends in the 2011 results that are worthy of note. There will be a short presentation at the Joint Committee meeting examining these trends and the early results from our market research/visitor survey work completed in 2011. Highlights from 2011 include:

- The number of Beamish Unlimited tickets sold has increased by 46%.
- The number of free tickets issued to visitors under 5 years old has increased by 38%. This result reflects an increase in family visitors during 2011, which we have also recorded in our survey results for the season.
- One of the fastest growing segments of the Beamish's audience in 2011 has been local, low-income families.
- At least 60 - 65% of Beamish's audience continues to come to the museum from outside the North East region. The majority of these tourist visitors stay overnight in the region, mostly in serviced accommodation. More than half of these tourist visitors tell us they are coming to the North East specifically to visit Beamish.
- The number of Beamish Unlimited return visitors has increased by 41% in 2011, reflecting the increasing use of the museum's annual ticket. There is a growing base of 'loyal' Beamish visitors who use the museum regularly.



- The number of group visitors has continued to decline in 2011, suggesting older visitors are increasingly preferring to visit independently rather than in an organised tour.
- The number of educational group visits has declined slightly by 3% in 2011. This seems to reflect a national trend experienced in other major museums. The museum's marketing plan for educational groups is being reviewed for 2011, informed by a teacher focus group held in December.

### Approval sought

- Note the progress report above including an update on the museum's key performance indicators.

### Priorities for next period

- Business and Operational Improvement plan delivery for 2012/13
- Staff and volunteer training January/February 2012
- Prioritisation of capital projects for 2012/13 (for JC approval at next meeting)
- End of Year Accounts for BML and BMTL 2011/12
- Long term development plans 2013 - 2025 (outline due March 2012)
- Biomass heating project development
- Refurbishment of visitor toilets around site
- ACE application/decision on major museums bid due 26 Jan

RICHARD EVANS  
Director  
4<sup>th</sup> January, 2012

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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