



**JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM
21st September 2012**

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

1. Performance for the period 1st February to 31st August 2012

	Actual YTD 2012/13	Budget Forecast 2012/13	Previous Year 2011/12
Visitor numbers	337,800	282,000	327,429
Variance (%)		20%	3%
Admissions income	£2,339,006	£2,246,242	£2,438,549
Variance (%)		4%	-4%
Catering income	£633,635	£574,441	£650,444
Variance (%)		10%	-3%
Fish & Chip Shop income	£197,698	£169,500	£53,878
Variance (%)		17%	267%
Retail income	£373,391	£382,800	£379,989
Variance (%)		-2%	-2%
Total earned income excluding VAT, donations & grants	£3,848,133	£3,712,996	£3,859,622
Variance (%)		4%	-0.3%

- 1.1 Beamish has continued to experience higher than forecast visitor numbers during the period to the end of August 2012, with attendances 4% up on last year and 20% up on budget. Summer holiday activities and events including the regional Paralympic Flame Celebration in August have helped boost visitor numbers, despite the generally poor summer weather. 86,193 visitors attended the museum in August 2012, up 5% on the previous year.
- 1.2 The NE Paralympic Flame Celebration on 24th August 2012 was a real highlight, with the museum working with ANEC and welcoming thousands of local people. 12 demonstration sports represented all the Local Authorities in the region. The museum also began its Festival of Agriculture in late August 2012, with a successful Power from the Past event that attracted 12,355 people over four days. The event included road steam operations for the first time since they were voluntarily ceased in July 2012.

- 1.3 The results for the period to the end of August 2012 continue to demonstrate what has become a consistent trend in this financial year: an increasing number of visitors resulting in static income on the previous year, reflecting increasing pressure on UK household budgets. Although visitor numbers in the period are 4% up on the previous year, admissions income has declined by 4%. The shortfall is made up through increasing income from trading, such as the Fish and Chip Shop.
- 1.4 The Museum's events and festivals programme continues to be developed. Major events in the coming month focus around a six week long 'Festival of Agriculture' featuring:
- 'Power from the Past' 30 August – 2 September
 - Special Photo evening 1 September
 - 'Growing Your Own' 8/9 September
 - Show of Agriculture 13–16 September
 - Hands on Heritage Skills 22/23 September
 - Harvest Festival 29/30 September
 - Harvest Home 6/7 October

Members are asked to note

- Beamish's key performance indicators for the 2012/13 year to date.

2. Business Plan Review/Update

- 2.1 The management team will meet in October to review progress delivering the current business plan to 2012/13, and agree the outline future development plan for Beamish to cover the period 2013- 2025. This will include a review of recent critical success factors, the prioritisation of developments for the first five years of the future plan, and a detailed action plan for the 2013/14 season.
- 2.2 Once this management review has been completed, the future development plan will be ready for discussion with the Joint Committee this autumn/winter. During discussions/consultation in the autumn/winter it is anticipated that the plan will be further refined and improved. Ideally, management are aiming to be in a position to submit funding bids from November 2012.
- 2.3 The Board of Beamish Museum Ltd (BML) met in September 2012 to review the 2012/13 revenue budget position, taking into account actual performance to the end of August. BML's operating surplus in 2012/13 is now forecast to total **£255,589**, an increase from the previous estimate of £140,046. At their meeting on 7th September 2012 the BML Board approved an allocation of £200,000 from the 2011/12 surplus for capital developments in the museum's current capital programme for 2012/13.

3. Fundraising Update

3.1 Working with the Friends of the Museum and the Beamish Development Trust, staff at the museum are reviewing the current fundraising priorities. Work underway includes:

- A campaign to increase the number of Friends of Beamish, selling membership at the Main Entrance. This is part of a strategy to encourage more individual donors/supporters from some Beamish Unlimited members. A refresh of the benefits offered to Friends has been completed, with a view to increasing membership from c.1500 to 5,000 over the next three years. Friends will continue to enjoy free access to the museum and discounts at the shop/cafe. For an additional donation over and above the basic membership fee (£28), the museum will also now offer half price entry for up to 2 guests when they visit with a Friend. It is also proposed to produce a new museum quarterly magazine, incorporating the existing Friends newsletter, which will be sent to all Friends as a benefit.
- Hetton Silver Band Hall appeal – target is £70,000, working with the Friends.
- A co-ordinated museum campaign to encourage legacy giving, working with the Friends and the Beamish Development Trust and highlighting previous generous donations;
- Fundraising within the region to support school transport and activity costs, targeting schools who do not typically visit museums;
- Fundraising for the sponsorship of trams and buses, to help support their ongoing maintenance/restoration;
- Promoting the Corporate Partnership Scheme to local businesses.

Approval sought

- Fundraising priorities as highlighted, including working with the Friends to boost their membership.

Priorities for next period

- Beamish future plan 2013 – 2025
- Biomass heating project development
- HLF Stage 1 Bid – Beamish Future Plan Phase One 2014 - 2019
- Major Partner Museum Programme Delivery for ACE 2012/13
- Capital project report and ongoing management
- Business and Operational Improvement Plan ongoing delivery 2012/13
- Staff training plan & IIP review
- Bakery project development
- Regional Heritage Engineering Centre project development

RICHARD EVANS

Director

10th September 2012