



JOINT COMMITTEE OF BEAMISH,  
THE NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM - 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013

MUSEUM UPDATE: REPORT OF THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

1. Performance for the period 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013

Key performance indicators (2 month period)

	Actual YTD 2013/14	Budget Forecast 2013/14	Previous Year 2012/13
Visitor numbers	44,402	35,000	47,923
Variance (%)		27%	-7%
Admissions income	£234,285	£198,163	£220,440
Variance (%)		18%	6%
Catering income	£81,640	£68,250	£80,344
Variance (%)		20%	1%
Fish & Chip Shop income	£27,933	£21,000	£19,210
Variance (%)		33%	45%
Retail income	£39,214	£43,750	£39,807
Variance (%)		-10%	-1%
Total operating income <sup>1</sup>	£427,326	£369,116	£398,051
Variance (%)		15%	7%

- 1.1 Since the beginning of the financial year (1<sup>st</sup> February) Beamish has experienced higher visitor numbers than anticipated, which is a particularly pleasing result given the very cold and wintry weather we experienced in March. 44,402 visitors came to Beamish in February and March, slightly down on the previous year but 27% higher than the budget forecast for the period. Beamish remained open throughout the period of cold weather.
- 1.2 Trading performance in the two month period has also been solid, a good sign for the season ahead. The Fish and Chip Shop has had a particularly good start to the year, 33% up on budget and a spectacular 45% up on the same period last

<sup>1</sup> Includes Beamish Museum Ltd Charitable income for Admissions; Fairground; Gift Aid and Education combined with its wholly owned subsidiary Beamish Museum Trading Ltd income from Catering, Functions and Retail. Excludes all grants, donations and VAT.

year. Overall, earned income across the museum is 15% up on budget forecast and 7% up on the previous year. A review of retail and catering is underway to make sure that improvements continue to be made across the site during the season ahead, taking into account recent performance and feedback from our visitors.

- 1.3 Beamish has continued to experience high visitor numbers during April with the Easter holidays and in particular the Festival of Transport, a new development for 2013 that has been a tremendous success. The festival includes three weekends of transport events showcasing an incredible range of period trams, vehicles and engines, whenever possible working in context as they would originally have done. Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April was one of the busiest days on record – with an amazing 5,255 visitors. In the period to 1<sup>st</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> April Beamish welcomed 39,941 visitors. The budget forecast for the whole month of April is 41,000.

Members are asked to note:

- Beamish's key performance indicators for the 2013/14 year to date

**2. Brief update on Museum business**

- 2.1 Beamish attended an interview with the Arts Council in March 2013 regarding its bid for Creative People and Places funding in East Durham. Beamish is leading a consortium including Durham County Council/AAP, East Durham Trust and Forma Arts/Media. If successful, ACE funding will support an arts community programme directed by local people to increase levels of engagement in East Durham over the next 3 years, worth up to £2.9 million. A decision is expected in April 2013.
- 2.2 Beamish continues to work well with its partners at The Bowes Museum delivering the Arts Council's Major Partner Museum programme. An annual review will take place in May with the Arts Council and a report from this will be brought to a future meeting of the Joint Committee. Recent activity includes the development of schools activities/programmes at both the DLI Museum and Killhope.
- 2.3 The official opening of the Hetton Band Hall will take place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May. An invitation will be sent to all members of the Joint Committee and we hope many members will be able to come, for what promises to be a fantastic event.
- 2.4 Beamish is updating the policy document that governs the Accreditation of the museum and details how it manages and develops its collections. A new Collections Development Plan has been drafted and is nearing completion. A report will be presented to a future meeting of the Joint Committee for approval detailing the updated policy and any changes, such as those required by the Future Plan for Beamish from 2013-2025 that includes more contemporary collecting up to 1990. The deadline for completion of a new policy is April 2014. It is a requirement of Accreditation that a revised policy is in place by this time.

2.5 Work continues with the development of the Future Plan for the period 2013 – 2025, in particular the Engagement Action Plan that sets out the priority capital projects and operational improvements. A number of priorities have been set for 2013/14 and recent progress includes:

- HLF Stage I bid submitted in February 2013 for the first phase of capital works costing an estimated £5.2 million. A decision is expected in June.
- Risk Register updated to take into account the impact of the Future Plan.
- Plan to begin constructing a Pit Pony Stable from spring 2013 developed. Work will commence after the completion of the Hetton Band Hall using the museum's own building team. A small gang of ponies has been purchased and are performing well in the Colliery Village.
- Meetings with the Treasurer and beginning to draft a Fundraising Strategy to outline how the estimated funding shortfalls in the Future Plan will be raised, including £1 million towards the first phase of capital works (£5.2 million) and £3.9 million towards the second phase of capital works (2015 – 2019).
- Developing the three projects that form the first part of the capital scheme: Home Farm, Colliery Terraces and dedicated Schools Entrance, with staff working in development teams.
- Developing a formal environmental action plan to try and affect/change behaviour, improve monitoring of energy use; reduce consumption and waste; increase renewable energy production through biomass heating from renewable museum timber sources.

#### **Priorities for next period**

- Review Engagement Action Plan in the Future Plan 2013 – 2025 and prioritise improvements for the 2013/14 year with staff.
- Issue Executive Summary of the Future Plan 2013-2025 for partners.
- Prepare Funding Strategy for capital programmes.
- Develop HLF Stage 1 Bid – Beamish Future Plan Phase Two 2014 – 2019.
- Major Partner Museum Programme Delivery for ACE 2013/14.
- Capital programme: completion of Bakery and Hetton Band Hall projects, ongoing management of Transport & Industry projects including Dunrobin.

RICHARD EVANS

Director

17<sup>th</sup> April 2013