

ROYSTON MUSEUM TRUST CHARITY NUMBER 1196386 PRESS RELEASE

Royston Town Council and Royston & District Local History Society (RDLHS) are pleased to announce the creation of the Royston Museum Trust Charity Number 1196386. It is our joint intention that the Trust will take over the management of the museum from the Town Council in April 2022. With the opportunity for external funding from organisations such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Trust's objective is to develop the museum to better serve the community.

The Museum, known today as Royston & District Museum and Art Gallery, is located on Lower King Street, has been funded and managed by the Town Council, supported with many grants and donations from groups, organisations and visitors. It has enjoyed wide support from RDLHS (who own the collection), the Friends of Royston Museum, many volunteers and the local community. The Museum has just under 20,000 objects in its collection that help tell the stories of the past people and places in and around Royston. Collections include photographs, paintings, costume, toys, social and industrial history items and bound copies of the Royston Crow, not forgetting the Royston Tapestry.

A board of Trustees has been established who will manage the Museum. Trustees have been nominated by the Town Council, RDLHS and Friends. In addition, the Trust will appoint members of the public with specific skill sets that will help the Museum into the future. The Town Council will continue to provide core funding under a Service Level Agreement. Many local authorities have taken this step with their museums. With external funding, the Royston Museum Trust can have more ambitious plans to re-develop the Museum as a centre for the local community, celebrating Royston's stories and its people, past and present, through new displays and interpretation, supported by a programme of events and exhibitions.

Town Councillor John Davison, Chair of Trustees, said, "The last two years have been a difficult time for the museum with very limited opening hours. The Trust will now recruit a full-time Museum Development Manager to drive the plans forward, and it is hoped that they will be in post early in 2022. Additional staff will be recruited soon after. With this in mind, the Museum will remain closed to the public until the early spring of 2022. This will give the volunteer team time to do much-needed housekeeping behind the scenes and create a temporary exhibition of local photographs in preparation for re-opening. We will, of course, be keeping everyone updated on social media throughout this period."

Rosemary Bateman, Treasurer of the Friends and Trustee, said, "We would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the local community and beyond who have supported the museum over the years, and we are very much looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the museum in the spring."

Despite the Museum being closed to visitors for this period, everyone will have an opportunity to view the unique Royston Tapestry in all its splendour online. All 25 metres of this remarkable embroidery has been professionally photographed, and viewers can see the beautiful stitch work and colours from the comfort of their own homes. It is available to view on the Museum's website at www.roystonmuseum.org.uk.

