



Elmbridge
Borough Council

... bridging the communities ...

Museum Non-User Survey Results December 2016

Elmbridge Museum is currently undertaking an exciting development programme aiming to offer a more accessible, relevant, cost-effective and comprehensive 21st Century service to residents and users. A museum non-user survey ran from 17 October to 16 December to find out what could be done to attract new audiences for the museum services. Overall 194 respondents completed the questionnaire.

61% of respondents were female and 39% male. The age groups were as follows:

65-74	33%
45-54	26%
55-64	26%
35-44	8%
75+	7%
26-34	2%
Under 25	0%

66% of respondents had children within the following age groups:

13 and over	83%
2 to 5	10%
6 to 8	7%
9 to 12	5%
Under 2	4%

64% of respondents were aware of Elmbridge Museum. They knew about the following museum services:

Temporary exhibitions/displays at local libraries and at the Civic Centre	74%
Website: elmbridgemuseum.org.uk	39%
School learning sessions	24%
Family Fun Events	20%
Museum discovery boxes	11%
Online collection search	9%

When asked what were their reasons for not using the museum services, respondents gave the following factors:

Never heard of Elmbridge Museum	87%
Don't know what Elmbridge Museum services are	50%
Don't know how to access Elmbridge Museum services	31%
Other	9%
Just have not got around to using them	6%
Lack of time/too busy	4%
Poor transport links to where exhibitions are held	3%
Children not interested	1%
Difficult to get out due to health issues	1%
Not interested in local history	0%

Other reasons

- Knew where the museum was when it was in Weybridge but no idea what services they provide now.
- I knew of Elmbridge Museum whilst it was based above the library in Weybridge but since its closure, it is disappointing that you are unable to view all the items that were on display as there is no Museum building to visit.
- I was unaware that the museum had left its permanent premises; the last time I visited it was in place in Weybridge.
- I don't know what's at the Elmbridge Museum & whether it would be of interest to me.
- The museum closed in Weybridge
- I am going to be staying in Weybridge and was looking for things to do in the town, which is how I found out that the museum exists.

What would encourage respondents to use the museum services or use them more often

Better information / publicity	76%
Guided tours to historical sites around the borough	54%
Talks and lectures	42%
Research facilities for local history	30%
More temporary exhibitions	26%
Listening to a talk relating to the exhibitions/displays	25%
Provide themes/subjects which are of interest to me	19%
Exciting website	19%
Social and cultural events	17%
Demonstrations and handling sessions	13%
More family activities and workshops	12%
Activities relating to temporary exhibitions	7%

Other factors:

- A permanent museum building – 10 mentions
- Free parking – 2 mentions
- Accessible by public transport
- More promotion
- Twitter and facebook account

- Exhibitions available at more libraries
- Bigger exhibitions – not small displays
- Museum needs to be more inspiring
- Talks relating to exhibitions
- Interactive displays
- Ability to peruse collections, not being shown items of limited interest
- Access to historic maps
- Elmbridge Hundred project to be relaunched

What are the themes and topics that you would like to see at the museum:

Local historic buildings	82%
Historic events (both local and national)	75%
Domestic past (the way we used to live)	66%
Archeology (from the local area)	60%
Famous local personalities	48%
Traditions (such as pageants and other celebrations)	45%
Art and artists	42%
War (or various battles throughout the ages)	37%
Commerce and trades (local businesses and markets)	26%
Civic Services (such as the County, Borough Council, police, fire brigade)	24%
Clubs, societies and organisations	24%
Education	22%

Other topics of interest:

- Collections of world artefacts; manuscript collection relevant to the local area
- War - in so far as it is broad brush local or had local influence. (ex: Coronation of Aethelred at Kingston upon Thames)
- The origin of local place and street names.
- Countryside, environmental, wildlife, etc.
- Genealogy
- The historical development of Esher
- History of the local Post Offices
- Temporary exhibitions offered by local societies such as 150th anniversary of Molesey Boat Club by Molesey Historic Soc. or story of local mail services put on by local philatelic societies who would offer volunteers as it could increase their membership or display of local postcards by Postcard Society.
- Development of the local area, such as urban spread and industrial history, accessibility of local tythe maps, impact of Black Death and other major geopolitical events
- Needs to reflect local history similar to Readings Museum.
- Transport.
- History of people and places in the borough

When asked if they had used any services provided by other museums in the last year, 42% of respondents said they had. They had visited the following museums:

- Alexander McQueen
- Amberley
- Archaeological items in the local library (WoT)
- Ashmolean Museum in Oxford
- Bastogne Museum
- Beamish Museum
- British museum
- Brooklands Museum
- Cabinet War Room
- Chertsey Museum
- Civic Centre, The Wrens Pottery display in Cobham The website
- Diggers Trail boards
- Docklands Museum
- Dorchester Museum
- Display at Walton Library
- Edinburgh Museum
- Elmbridge museum
- Florence Nightingale Museum
- Foundling Hospital Museum
- Geoffrey Museum
- Orleans House
- Hampton Court
- Haselmere Museum
- Imperial war museum
- John Soane's Collection
- Kingston Museum
- Lavenham Guildhall
- Leighton House Museum
- Liverpool museum
- Somerset Heritage Centre. Forest of Dean.
- London Beverley Museum
- London Transport Museum
- Looked at the display in the Civic Centre
- Highclere Castle
- Met New York online
- Museum of London
- National Archives
- National Waterfront Museum.
- National Motorcycle Museum
- Natural History Museum
- National Maritime Museum
- National Portrait Museum
- National Trust Properties

- Oxford Museum
- Picasso Museum, Andalusia
- Pitt Rivers Museum
- Prague, various Krakow, mostly archaeological
- RAF Museum Croome
- Richmond Museum in Yorkshire
- Salisbury, Bridport, Exeter, Lyme Regis, Bude, Andover, Amesbury.
- Sammy Miller Museum
- Ship Museum in Stockholm
- Shrewsbury Museum
- Stained Glass Museum, Ely
- Surrey Heath Museum
- Surrey History Centre Lectures eg Molesey Antiques, Royston Pike, Richmond History Society
- Sussex Farm Museum
- Tal-y-LLyn railway
- Tate Modern
- Tinguely Museum
- Tregaron Museum
- Turin Museum
- Victoria & Albert Museum
- Various museums in Australia & NZ
- Walking tour of Dartmouth town, Devon and tour of the naval college; overseas (Belgium) WWII
- G F Watts Museum

Features respondents enjoyed most at visited museums:

- Interactive displays, especially telling stories behind the exhibits (5 mentions)
- Learning about local life – history of the area - Special exhibitions and range of objects learning about local life (including archaeology, art, way of life, natural disasters, sport, food, local personalities, geology). (4 mentions)
- All exhibits within one site + permanent museums in a building (4 mentions)
- Variety - vast range of things to see (3 mentions)
(ex: quote from respondent: 'The amazing range, quality and rarity of artefacts; beautifully organised displays; detailed explanations; availability of further information and reading, enabling the visitor to appreciate the wider not just local context'.
- Engaging and fascinating contents (3 mentions)
- Audio function (3 mentions)
- A mix of exhibitions, films and hands on use of documents – use of film (3 mentions)
- Family/kids oriented displays; kids routes and trails ; accompanying apps; enhancing school curriculum (3 mentions)
- Free lectures to go with the exhibits (British Museum – V&A) (3 mentions)
- Knowledgeable staff – (2 mentions) (National Archives – British Museum)
- Temporary exhibitions on topical subjects (2 mentions)
- Special exhibitions activities and workshops (2 mentions)
- A café (2 mentions)
- Good information accompanying the items: what is, what it was used for, age; where it was found; how it was made etc.

- Clearly displayed exhibits with well documented information
- Learning about events/people related to the exhibits admiring beautiful objects
- Objects on display rather than photos
- Placing exhibits in their cultural context (international trade, conflict, religious tension) and telling a story through the artefacts; good audio guides; clear presentation of maps, reconstructions of building phases and plans
- Accessibility and good catalogue/web site/ access at the centres to free website facilities.
- A distinct physical centre with reasonable facilities.
- Wide sense of space

If they wanted to find information about Elmbridge Museum, respondents would look at the following:

Elmbridge Museum website	59%
Libraries	56%
Elmbridge Borough Council website	47%
Free community magazines	26%
Elmbridge noticeboards	23%
Friends	11%
Other	7%
Community facebook pages	7%
Schools	6%
Twitter @elmbridgeBC or @DiscoverElmb	6%
Elmbridge Borough Council facebook page	5%

Other sources of information:

- Internet - Google
- Essential Esher/About Thames Ditton magazines.
- About Thames Ditton facebook page,
- Molesey Mums Facebook page
- Local newspapers and their websites and social media
- Streelife web page
- Your Elmbridge, Surrey Life
- Free newspapers
- Surrey News
- Elmbridge magazine and the Surrey magazine
- The Elmbridge newsletter
- Surrey Matters
- Darling magazine
- In a regular newsletter or an e-mail from EBC to say what's going on.
- Darling by magazine
- wouldn't bother now I'd go to Surrey History Centre and meet actual people.
- Libraries ,doctors surgeries, community centres places where people gather
- Shops

Comments and suggestions on how to make Elmbridge Museum services better known to residents:

- Re-open the museum (9 mentions)
- Better publicity
- More and better communication with and publicity to the general public
- Flyers and social media updates
- Leaflet drops
- Advertise on local radio
- Community facebook pages
- A museum facebook page – ideal way to be updated not only by the museum but also by the council
- Community magazines
- Streetlife
- Through local libraries in notices and displays.
- Articles in Elmbridge Review magazines
- Articles in free magazines that come through the door
- Articles in the local newspapers
- Article in Surrey Matters or The Courier (Claygate Parish Council newsletter)
- Information in Surrey magazine
- Stickers on bins
- Roadshows in town centres and retail areas on a Saturday
- Particular event aimed at the residents
- A pop-up stand at local supermarkets
- Emails – fast and cheap. Permission for access via email could be requested when public uses library
- Better publicity on the Elmbridge BC website, local paper and magazines and advertising
- Elmbridge Review
- Working with schools on projects relevant to the national curriculum
- Through schools – leaflets handed out at local schools or via school newsletters
- Twitter
- More effective marketing/public presentation; more energy and commitment from councillors in supporting museum activities; fuller cataloguing online. Political commitment and additional resources. Restoration of a museum presence actually on a high street frontage.
- When communicating with the public for any other purpose, consider whether there may a museum angle and mention that as well (i.e. the history of the subject affected, especially relatively recent).
- More use of local libraries.
- More information available online
- Better online presence. Use other local museum's newsletters/websites, i.e., Brooklands. Use Elmbridge BC, Surrey CC or other local newsletters/mailings
- Not having a clear idea as to what the museum actually 'is' means it's very hard to firstly locate and engage with.
- Mailing lists
- Poster in local shops including charity shops and cafes
- Regular slot in St George's Hill Residents Newsletter and other community news outlets
- Include information about the Museum and Elmbridge websites on any correspondence sent to local residents, e.g., rates notices sent out each year
- Twitter and the Elmbridge Review

- Once there is a clearly defined and compelling purpose then: representative at key talks in the borough or contact relevant organisations and request it to be included on membership news bulletins.
- Representatives to go into schools links with Kingston Museum, Surrey History centre, other neighbouring museums and R C Sherriff.
- Mention to all Residents Associations and Streetlife
- Picking the subjects and delving into proper local history
- Have an outreach programme for all Libraries. Work with Friends Groups where they exist. If certain schools in the borough do not use the Museum as a resource find out why as it might be because they just do not know about the facility as staff are very often not local.
- Retired people are another group who sometimes have time to attend events but very often transport is a problem if it is not local.
- Give residents a reason to go to the museum - e.g. displays relating to the community (history of the WI or Scouts?) with a social evening (find a local sponsor to help provide refreshments).
- Better advertising of event-specific exhibitions (e.g. if there's something at the museum relating to the anniversary of the Somme).
- Advertise facilities at the museum that residents might be interested in (e.g. , local history or genealogy services) or living history accounts (e.g. old soldiers living in Elmbridge who might have accounts of WW2).
- Publicise old photos on Twitter (this already happens in Claygate although there is no reference to the Museum).