**Day 1: The Cathedral Centre, Lincoln**

**Keynote – ‘Everyday Ethics: from Evolution to Practice’**

‘Museums are public-facing, collections-based institutions that preserve and transmit knowledge, culture and history, for past, present and future generations. This places museums in an important position of trust in relation to their audiences, local communities, donors, source communities, partner organisations, sponsors and funders. Museums must make sound ethical judgments in all areas of work in order to maintain this trust.’ Code of Ethics for Museums, 2016.

The MA has acted as the guardian of UK museum ethics since the first Codes of Practice and Conduct were introduced in 1977. Following updates in 1987, 1991, 2002 and 2007, a new Code has been developed in conjunction with a wide stakeholder community espousing three essential principles of public engagement and public benefit; stewardship of collections; and individual and institutional integrity.

I shall outline the context for the new code and the collaborative process which framed it, before discussing the methodology developed by the Ethics Committee to shape guidance materials and support the sector in adopting modern ethical practice.

**Rowan Brown**

As Director of the Alfred Gillett Trust, Rowan’s role entails delivering a new governance structure and new museum and archive on behalf of Clarks - the nearly 200-year-old company with Quaker origins which is now a world-renowned brand, and navigating the path of commercial and charitable practice. Rowan’s previous roles include Director of National Mining Museum Scotland, Senior Curator of Technology at National Museums Scotland and Curator of Transport & Technology at Glasgow Museums. A committed museologist, Rowan devotes much of her time to serving as a Board Member for the Museums Association and as a member of the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund. Rowan is also the current Chair of the Museums Association Ethics Committee and the Beecroft Bequest.

***Refugee Wales* at Oasis Cardiff**

The ‘refugee crisis’ or ‘migrant crisis’ has been *the* hot topic in the media for the past year. During that time I’ve been based at Oasis Cardiff, a centre for refugees and asylum seekers, as Coordinator for *Refugee Wales*. Over the course of a year I’ve seen visitor numbers rise, donations pile up (literally), and an increase in visits from the media. And somewhere in all that I’ve been quietly collecting material whilst sticking firmly to my ethical guns. This paper will address the conference’s key themes of collecting, addressing challenging subjects and community voice, mostly through personal anecdotes from my time at Oasis Cardiff.

*Refugee Wales* is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the main aims are to collect a series of oral histories from refugees and asylum seekers and create a touring exhibition. Importantly, it is also a participatory project, with volunteer opportunities throughout. The input has been huge but the amount of material collected has been quite small, mostly because I refused to be ‘grabby’ and journalistic in my approach. I have also become fully entrenched at the drop-in centre which has brought its own challenges. In terms of the voice of the exhibition I’m not sure yet whether the final product will be mine, or the community’s and if so, I’m not quite sure what community I’d be referring to.

I would like to share my experience including: how not to panic when the media are better at collecting than you; why oral history is particularly problematic for vulnerable groups; on doubting whether being ‘in the community’ really makes any difference. In a wider context I hope that this will prompt discussion on what direction we would like to take community projects in the future.

**Mari Lowe**

Mari Lowe is Coordinator for Refugee Wales, a project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and partnered with National Museum Wales. She previously worked at The Cardiff Story during its research and development phase including a digital storytelling project, collecting perspectives from the valleys around Cardiff. Her main interests are issues surrounding representation and also community engagement practice. She is keen to continue to develop her digital media skills and in the future would love to work on creative interpretation of existing collections.

**Four Meals Away**

This paper will present a case study of the Four Meals Away exhibition at Discovery Museum and the wider collecting project around poverty and inequality in Tyneside. We collected material working with a partner organisation and used artists to interpret the material. The issue we are representing is a contemporary concern which is topical, political and emotive.

The Discovery audience was apathetic towards the family food parcel when it was initially displayed. When consulted, people expressed negative perceptions of people who were using food banks and many didn’t know about the issues on their doorstep. We set up a temporary food donation collection point but had sparse contributions. TWAM colleagues were also invited to donate selection boxes for a Christmas appeal.

Our challenge was to represent issues around poverty and inequality and to attempt to provoke empathy and understanding with our audience, changing attitudes and challenging stereotypes. We had to do this in an accessible and engaging way in a family museum. We commissioned artists to work with the food parcel and will share the evaluation from this work. The Food bank Manager was involved in decision making throughout. The exhibition was funded as part of the MA Transformers programme.

We expect delegates to learn how and why we tackled these difficult subjects and what our evaluation showed in terms of the impact the exhibition had on museum visitors/ colleagues/ food bank staff and volunteers and food bank clients.

**Kylea Little and Sarah Cotton**

Kylea Little is Keeper of Social History and Sarah Cotton is Keeper of Contemporary Collecting at Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums.

**Building resilient museums and museum workers through values…(or things I’ve learnt safeguarding the Cardiff Story)**

There is no doubt that museums are undergoing an unprecedented amount of change, be that cuts to budgets and services or finding new ways of operating. How do you keep sane and keep your organisation true to its ethos in the face of such challenges?

This paper is, in many respects, a work in progress. It is an honest reflection of a two year (and continuing) roller coaster of survival and adaption, encompassing themes such as demonstrating and widening impact, income generating and advocacy. It will examine how to keep personal and organisational values and ethos at the centre of responding to challenges, finding new solutions and alternative deliveries.

Using recent experiences, it will apply practical lessons learnt from one museum’s journey, and learning from participation in the Museums Association’s Transformers programme. It will explore how delegates may build their personal and organisational resilience, always remaining true to the values they hold and the communities they serve. It will suggest ways of ensuring, when responding to political and economic decisions, that any change undertaken, and, is values and ethically-based.

**Victoria Rogers**

Victoria has worked in museums for the past 17 years, across independent and local authority (large and small) sectors. She is currently the Museum Manager of the Cardiff Story Museum, the Welsh capital city’s social history museum. Throughout her career she has been committed to ensuring the community is at the absolute core of all museums do, specialising in cultural diversity and contemporary collecting. A former SHCG committee member and Chair, she still sits on SHCG’s firstBASE Editorial Committee. Victoria is currently Secretary of the Federation of Welsh Museums and is part of this year’s Museums Association Transformers programme.

**Ethics Quick Fire Round**

**Jenny Brown**

In 2014 Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums applied to take part in MGS’s Heritage Horizons programme to encourage non-graduates into the sector. Our best candidate at interview was working as a freelance antiques dealer: our efforts to diversify our workforce had created a potential threat to our institutional integrity. Should we choose to offer him the traineeship, especially at a time when the sale of collections threatens public trust in museums? This presentation will explore how we overcame the issues and challenge delegates to consider the benefits of working with the trade.

I lead the history team at Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums, which covers everything from archaeology to the oil industry. I am currently working towards my AMA and developing my interest in collections based engagement and workforce development. Previously Curator of Industrial History at Aberdeen (2008-2014), I began my career as curatorial assistant at Beamish Museum after completing my MA Museum Studies at Newcastle University (2006).

**Jemma Conway**

I have some questions….

Museums tell the truth. Fact?

Is a replica not a ‘true’ object?

Is it ok to display a replica? Or because it’s not the real thing, are we presenting a lie?

Can visitors connect emotionally to a replica?

Do the public even care?

Recently I have been faced with an interesting decision to make. With an increasingly reduced budget, should I spend thousands on loaning an object from another museum for display this summer, or is it ok to display a replica? This presentation is connected to the theme ‘Staying relevant- how the public engage with displays’ and I’d like to explore some more questions in a fast paced 3 minute presentation.

Jemma Conway is Audience Development Officer at Barnsley, Arts, Museums and Archives Service, having worked there for the previous 5 years as Community Heritage Curator. Jemma has recently been awarded her AMA, is the Museums Association Representative for Yorkshire and a Trustee of the Social History Curators Group.

**Michelle Lees**

This presentation will reflect upon the ethics of having a nationally significant document residing in private hands. The Dean & Chapter of Rochester Cathedral own a book called *Textus Roffensis*, which contains some of the only known copies of pre-Magna Carta law codes. It was written in the 1120s by Rochester monks and has been quoted as the most important book in English history by Dr. Michael Wood.

Displaying it can be tricky as funds and security are always an issue and I face some interesting proposed solutions – such as the community feeling that it has survived 850 years in fluctuating temperatures etc. so why be precious about it now? Who has the biggest say about how and when *Textus Roffensis* is displayed because it’s not in public ownership, it’s not regulated by the British Library or Museums Association (my institution are not members), the Dean currently makes the final decision on anything to do with *Textus Roffensis*.

My quick fire ethical presentation will use our recent *Magna Carta Rediscovered* exhibition to present one of my dilemmas and its various solutions. I often wondered what I would do if I felt the agreed solution was unethical. My presentation will outline my thought process in 3 minutes.

Michelle Lees has been working with museum collections and interpretation for 11 years. She is Community Engagement & Interpretation Officer on the HLF funded Hidden Treasures: Fresh Expressions project at Rochester Cathedral where *Textus Roffensis* will be on permanent display in a new crypt exhibition space opening in June 2016.

**Catherine Newley**

My ethical dilemma concerns contentious objects and the role of museums as impartial arbiters. About two years ago, I received an unproven accusation about a crime committed by the subject of one of our paintings, together with a request to remove an image of the painting from our website. The subject of the painting was something of a local celebrity and, although he died in 2008, he is still fondly recalled by a large number of local people. His name and images of him often provoke fond reminiscences but in this case, it was causing a member of the public to become very upset and there was the possibility that, although unproven, what they said could be true. During the presentation, I will briefly explain how I chose to deal with this very sensitive scenario but I’d also like to hear how others might have responded.

Catherine Newley is Audience Development Manager at St Albans Museums, having previously worked there for almost four years as Curator of Collections. Before that, she worked as Assistant Curator of Community History at Colchester and Ipswich Museums. Catherine is currently Chair of the Social History Curators Group.

**Kitty Ross**

Leeds Museums and Galleries took the decision to sell a set of Peruvian furniture which was being disposed of because of its size and lack of relevance to the decorative art collections (and had been originally acquired by sale post-war to fill empty galleries at Temple Newsam). The decision to sell only came after all attempts to transfer the furniture to another museum had failed.  It attracted adverse coverage in the press who accused the council of selling collections and this coverage led a number of people to contact the museum concerned that items that they had donated or lent might be at risk and sometimes asking for them to be returned. This included objects in the social history collections which would never have been considered for disposal (let alone sale) and shows the impact that sale of collections can have on public trust, even when all procedures and ethical guidelines have been followed to the letter.

Kitty Ross is Curator of Leeds History/Social History for Leeds Museums and Galleries, based primarily at Abbey House Museum for over 18 years. I also served on the SHCG committee for several years.

**Lauren Ryall-Stockton**

This presentation explores contemporary collecting within medical collections, exploring the ethical issues when working with trade companies and benefactors. The main theme here will obligatory donation-how do you say no to people who fund the collections or impact the industry you represent? How do curators handle a situation when a funder requests objects placed on display, or to take objects off display? Although there may be no right or wrong answer, these issues may become more prevalent in heritage settings due to the pressure to seek supplementary funding for core activities. I hope that delegates will consider the impact when working with profit making companies and rationalise what is best for the collections and museum service. Money making is of prime importance in most institutions affected by funding cuts and a downturn in visitors, and it's likely these issues will make a regular appearance in museums and galleries in the future. Potentially trustees and senior managers making decisions about sponsorship opportunities are not always in the best positions to know how they may impact the collections, so considering how you can make the collections a priority in the eyes of funders and senior decision makers can only be an advantage.

Lauren Ryall-Stockton is Curator at Thackray Medical Museum, working with the large collection of medical trade instruments and pharmacological collections, as well as the archival and ephemeral collections. At Thackray she leads on collections management and collections development, and is presently working to prepare the collections for a whole redevelopment plan for the museum. Prior to working at Thackray, Lauren worked at Leeds Museums and Galleries.

**Day 2: The Collection and The Cathedral Centre, Lincoln**

**The right stuff?**

As museums everywhere consider their long-term sustainability, it could be argued that the greatest threat to collections is irrelevance. Looking ahead, it is hard to imagine how the material culture of the next few decades will be integrated into our collections. Many museums find it hard enough to manage the stuff they already have, let alone collect in any proactive sense, if at all. Kevin Gosling reflects on the shifts in collections development practice over recent years, and considers the ‘opportunity cost’ of not collecting.

**Kevin Gosling**

Kevin Gosling joined Collections Trust (CT) as its Chief Executive in 2015, having previously worked for its predecessor, MDA, in the mid-1990s. He started his museum career doing collections-based research in Norway, and has also worked for the Museum of London, as a VSO volunteer in St Lucia, and as a consultant for the museum-planning firm LORD Cultural Resources. Most recently he was Director of Communications for the award-winning centenary of Benjamin Britten, based at the composer’s Aldeburgh home, The Red House.

**The Crime Museum Uncovered**

This paper will take *The Crime Museum Uncovered* exhibition at the Museum of London as a case study to explore how museums can exhibit difficult subjects, and how the public engage with those subjects.

The Metropolitan Police has been collecting objects relating to the detection of London’s most significant and notorious crimes since the 1870s. Previously the Crime Museum (sometimes referred to as the Black Museum) has only been accessible to police officers and specially invited guests. *The Crime Museum Uncovered* reveals these objects to the public for the first time. One aim of the exhibition was to explore the ethical issues surrounding bringing such objects to the public domain and to ensure we were not glamorising crime and criminals. Throughout the process of exhibition development we strove to ensure these objects and the people and stories they represent were treated sensitively, and most importantly that the victims were not forgotten. In the exhibition we challenge our visitors to consider these issues and provide ways for them to feedback their own thoughts.

This presentation will describe the processes involved in developing the display: the formative evaluation to test visitors’ potential reactions to the material; working with the Metropolitan Police and the London Policing Ethics Panel to agree the object list; the Metropolitan Police’s approaches to the victims’ families for their consent (where appropriate), and the curatorial and design decisions taken to ensure personal stories were brought to the fore. The presentation will also explore the public’s reaction to the exhibition through the summative evaluation conducted by Morris Hargreaves MacIntyre and an analysis of the comments made by visitors at the exhibition’s feedback stations.

**Louise Doughty**

Louise is a Major Exhibitions Project Manager at the Museum of London and was project manager for *The Crime Museum Uncovered*. Louise started her museum career as manager of the Museum of Oxford in 1998, and joined the Museum of London in 2006.

**The Antislavery Useable Past**

Legacies of difficult historical events, like slavery, have become key tools used by museums to engage with contemporary issues. With the legacies of slavery often tackling negative themes like racism and human trafficking, this research is investigating the affect that this has on museum visitors. Could it be that engagement with these issues could be enhanced if interpreted in the opposite view? For example, if museums were to engage with the positives of antislavery movements, emphasising the way these initiatives have developed historically to counter racist sympathies and extend the cause for individual human rights, would this help increase visitor engagement with the topic? This paper will review the historic techniques of museums engaging with antislavery, and the way this has changed in line with wider historiographical and museological trends. It will also suggest, using case studies of exhibitions, ways in which museums may take the legacies of antislavery further in an effort to maximise the engagement visitors have with the modern impacts of the slave trade. Hopefully this paper will encourage delegates to reconsider the ways in which they tackle the contemporary legacies of difficult histories, within their institutions.

This discussion will also examine the role of the museum in the twenty-first century, particularly noting the progression from authoritative educator, to the arena for conversation and debate they are becoming now. The power of the museum and the sway it holds over shaping memories, both public and individual makes the issue of engaging with contemporary social and political activities increasingly pressing. Curators are vital in leading this transformation, and their ability to use historic antislavery collections to showcase the current movement against racism and trafficking provides a valuable insight to the new way museums can tackle difficult histories in both a positive and engaging light.

**Rebecca Nelson**

Rebecca has a BA (Hons) degree in history from York, and a MA in museum studies from Newcastle. She is currently studying for a PhD, having secured an AHRC scholarship. Rebecca has always been interested in museums, pursuing this throughout her academic study, with several research projects looking at museums and the British Empire before her most recent work on museums and antislavery. Rebecca has worked at several heritage institutions including the National Trust, York Castle Museum, and Beamish Open Air Museum. She hopes that this inside knowledge will ensure her work is relevant and applicable to the wider sector.

**Remembering the First World War**

The paper will focus on the subject of the First World War and how IWM approaches its challenging history, teaching it, discussing the wider issues surrounding it and the possibility of then commemorating it through its activities and programmes such as the First World War Centenary Partnership our digital resources and family activities.

This paper will use the following case study. Over the Christmas period, the Learning team at IWM London hosted a family Christmas activity which explored the origins of Christmas traditions as linked to faith, symbols, superstitions and conflict. Focusing on Christmas 1915, we discussed the lovers tokens and lucky charms that were exchanged as gifts from the Home Front to those on active service while referencing the early 20th century (based largely on 19th Century Victorian resurgence of Spirituality) and ideas about the history of symbols, superstition, Spiritualism, faith, ethnicity, all in the context of the First World War.

Ethical challenges brought about by the activity included; how to engage existing and new and diverse audiences in a subject matter that discussed early 20th century mind-sets relating to faith and Imperialism, how to engender respect for the subject matter, and potentially commemorate those persons of the First World War while providing an activity that interested and inspired the family audiences.

I expect delegates to be made aware as to the sensitivities of the subject of war and learn the wider discussions that can result from approaching it within a museum context and to gain a better understanding and consideration of whether it is a museum’s place to commemorate war or merely disseminate knowledge.

**Lucy Harris**

Lucy Harris has eight years’ experience of working in museums and arts organisations. She has primarily worked in museum learning both in informal and formal learning. She has a Masters from the University of Exeter in War and Society, specialising in the First World War, and a Bachelors from the University of Warwick in French and History. She is currently a Learning Officer at Imperial War Museums and prior to this worked on the First World War Centenary Partnership and Programme at IWM. She has also project managed an exhibition and archive on the First World War at Kingston Museum.

**For King and Country?**

Focusing on the Jewish Museum exhibition ‘For King and Country?’, I will explore the challenges I encountered in telling hidden stories of the Jewish First World War.

My original brief, from the trustees of the Jewish Military Museum, was to open up the story of Jewish service to a wider audience. However, as soon as I began to research in more depth, the story of Jewish non-service, the challenge of service for recent Jewish immigrants from Russia and the schism in the Jewish community came to the fore. This directly contradicted many of my stakeholders’ pre-conceived notions of Jewish service. In addition, and maybe more importantly, one of the reasons for the exhibition was to combat anti-Semitism caused by the idea that Jewish people have split loyalties and aren’t really British.

I’m not Jewish; could I presume to tell a story of Jewish communities deliberately unexplored for years? As shown by the somewhat controversial question mark, I ended up going down the warts-and-all route. In this session I’d aim to examine in more depth the different arguments for and against telling these stories and how, in the end, I felt I had no choice but to give all parts of the story an equal weighting.

**Roz Currie**

Roz Currie worked at the Fusiliers Museum London and Chertsey Museum before becoming the curator-manager of the Jewish Military Museum in 2011. She led the merger of the Jewish Military Museum with the Jewish Museum London from mid-2013, moving collections, integrating gallery displays and merging programmes. As a curator at Jewish Museum London she put on exhibitions including ‘For King and Country? The Jewish story of the First World War’ and ‘Blackguards in Bonnets’ while working with front of house and learning to encourage cross-departmental collaboration. As of April 2016 she moved to be the curator at Islington Museum.

**Canterbury Quakes**

On 22 February 2012, Canterbury Museum opened *Canterbury Quakes,* an exhibition relating to the 2010-11 series of earthquakes in Canterbury, New Zealand. In telling the human stories, the science behind the seismic events and sharing information about aspects of the region’s recovery, *Canterbury Quakes* was the first in a series of community led earthquake exhibitions curated by Canterbury Museum’s team. While some objects displayed in these exhibitions were drawn from the community, many more are shown from a small but significant earthquake related collection acquired by the Museum’s curators.

More than five years on from the devastating series of earthquakes which began on 4 September 2010, it is timely to reflect on the ways in which Canterbury’s local museum has collected and exhibited these significant events. In a situation of curating under pressure, how did the Museum’s curatorial team balance their obligations to collect and preserve elements of these events while still living in a broken city, working with a collection (and a heritage building) which required remediation and, for some, coping with the personal implications of the loss of homes, family, friends and livelihoods?

Drawing on an international literature surrounding the collecting of material culture following disruptive events, this paper examines the process behind Canterbury Museum’s earthquake collecting and exhibitions. It touches on the ways in which museum curators identified which stories to tell and the methods used to engage with the wider community to ensure activities were socially responsible and satisfied a public need. It goes on to consider the ethics of collecting and exhibiting by focusing, in particular, on the *momento mori* or objects of remembrance left at sites of significance in the city. In conclusion, it reflects on the value of these displays and the contribution of both the collections and the series of exhibitions to a community in recovery.

**Sarah Murray**

Sarah Murray is Curatorial Manager at Canterbury Museum, Christchurch and Adjunct Fellow in History at the University of Canterbury. Over the last nine years, she has curated over twenty exhibitions including such favourites as Fred and Myrtle’s Paua Shell House and Rise: Street Art. More recently, she has been principal curator for several earthquake related displays including Quake City, Canterbury Quakes and Beyond the Cordon: New Zealand Police Photographers. Her publications have focused on the history of New Zealand during the First World War, sport and identity while her current research project relates to collecting and exhibiting the Canterbury earthquakes.

**The Stories of our Stations - centrally planned, community led**

This paper ‘The stories of our stations – centrally planned, community led’, explores the theme of community voices vs. curatorial authority, focusing on how the RNLI is using a centrally planned, collaboratively managed and community led model to ensure that our communities are reflected and represented in our exhibitions, interpretation, education and structure across our heritage sites and the wider organisation. Our unique and varied collections represent almost 200 years of ordinary people doing extraordinary things to save lives at sea and in 2015 we embarked on a new way of working to better reflect our communities at our sites.

The key theme will be how we are representing the voice of our communities through our volunteer community curator’s programme. This programme enables us to ensure curatorial authority but allows our communities to work within our parameters to record the information about our collections they see as important and share the story of their station. This means that if a new object is acquired in our stations, we will be able to represent the voice of the donor and community in our interpretation which can be then complemented by our curatorial expertise. Through doing this, we are able to build up a repository of appropriate and community based stories to embed our heritage across the wider organisation to share the lifesaving work of our volunteers.

I will explain this model in the paper, how we have implemented it and how it ensures we are able to maintain our curatorial authenticity contributes to making our Museums and stations an essential and sustainable part of the lifesaving community. I will share our key learning about how we have this rolled out and the benefits it has brought not just to the heritage element of our work, but wider organisation.

**Katie Ann Smith**

Katie Ann Smith is Heritage Engagement Manager for the RNLI, the charity which saves lives at sea. Having previously worked for the Collections Trust, she is passionate about enabling people to have meaningful engagements with collections and now heads up the six Museums at the RNLI, acts as the RNLI’s heritage expert and develops new ways to ensure that the history of the RNLI is both preserved and used in a sustainable way across the organisation, raising awareness, telling the story of our stations and engage new audiences with the lifesaving work of the RNLI.

**Review and Rationalisation**

The interactive workshop will offer the opportunity of sharing the Museum of London’s experience of implementing a curatorial led major collections review and rationalisation. Whilst the focus will be on how the Museum developed a robust, considered and ethical methodology for review and disposal it will also offer practical advice and guidance on overcoming the challenges of managing and resourcing such a major project.

Having already shared our experience with other museum professionals, through both formal skills-sharing workshops and more informal group discussions it has become clear that all social history museums are facing difficult decisions with regards disposal and rationalisation. It is hoped our positive experience will encourage Curators currently considering such a potentially controversial project to ‘take the plunge’ and provide reassurance that disposal and refinement is not only an essential form of housekeeping but vital for effective collections management. The workshop will also explore how, perhaps surprisingly, rationalisation can result in a much deeper understanding of a museum’s collection and inform future collecting and how the refined collection achieved at the end of the process will be better managed and better stored, facilitating greater access for both display and research purposes.

Delegates attending the workshop will learn the following:

* How to develop a methodology for assessing the significance of social history collections under review
* How to develop an ethical, transparent and robust disposals procedure that has support both within and outside the organisation
* How to initiate creative and innovative methods of disposal that will benefit the wider community
* How to respond to the ethical issues around disposal and how to justify the ‘case’ for such a project both within and outside the organisation

It is intended that the workshop will encourage lively debate and discussion.

**Beverley Cook**

Having worked as a Curator of Social History at the Museum of London since 1986 I have experience across all areas of the collections although my current key areas of responsibility are the printed ephemera collections, the toy, and Suffragette collections. I specialise in London's history from the 1880s-1918 and was lead curator for the People’s City gallery that opened in 2010. I have also curated and co-curated a number of temporary exhibitions at the Museum including *Dickens & London* and *Michael Caine at 80*. I am currently managing the Review & Rationalisation of the Social & Working History Collections.

**Access Artefacts**

Access Artefacts is the handling collection service at Nottingham City Museums and Galleries. We have a collection of around 11,000 non-accessioned objects which are all suitable for handling and available for loan. The collection is predominantly a social history collection but covers a huge range of themes, including archaeology, geology, industrial history, the natural sciences and others.

From the collection we develop themed resource boxes. These contain a group of 10 – 20 objects alongside a written information pack, containing planned activities, background information and an information card for each object. These have been developed to meet the needs of the national curriculum or of a specific theme or user group. The collection is used by around 9,000 people a year in schools and community groups across the east midlands. The service is funded by Arts Council England as part of NCMG and Derby Museum Trust’s Major Partner Museum programme.

This workshop will introduce the collection and the ways in which it is used in the community in Nottingham and the wider region. This will be followed by a short activity with one of our resource boxes, illustrating how the collection is used in schools and community groups. There will then be time for questions and discussion.

Delegates will learn about how an effective handling collection can enhance and compliment all areas of work in your museum.

**Simon Brown**

I am the Artefact Loans Officer for Nottingham City Museums and Galleries, managing the Access Artefacts handling collection based at Wollaton Park. I manage the collection and develop its use within the service and with outside partners. I grew up in Leeds and moved to Nottingham in 2001 to study Heritage Studies with Human Geography at Nottingham Trent University, graduating in 2004. I am the Museums Association member’s representative for the East Midlands. I have worked in many different roles in museums, including as a museum assistant, as a curator of social history and world cultures, and in education, exhibitions and documentation.