

Kew News



Left to right: Young participants of our *Imagining Challenge* building their own version of the stand pipe tower; audience at the screening of *The Living Thames* documentary; Milin Patel, *Water Sommelier*, giving his water tasting workshops to visitors this summer

Hello

Hannah Harte, Museum Director

Hello everyone, this is my first introduction to Kew News and I'm very excited to be bringing it to you. It's been a rollercoaster first three months in the Director role and I am absolutely loving the London Museum of Water and Steam! So far, I've leapt into everything from pulling together and presenting a new vision, values, mission and objectives for the Museum, meeting and contracting many of our artists and tenants, getting elbow deep in the splash zone sorting out pebble blockages, finding us a new museum cat to take over from Wicksteed (welcome Piper!), finding out that we were awarded our NLHF grant of £249,000 to Steam us into Sustainability, meeting our community partners, our local Councillors, our funders and working out a successful and achievable budget for 2024. It's been a bit of a whirlwind and I'm embracing it all! I've met the staff team, most of our volunteers and many of our members and I have been so impressed and inspired by you all. Sometimes it's a tough job and you all seem to be putting your heart and soul into making us a success, so thank you. I've found that everyone here is really committed to the story told by our site, our engines and our other collections and putting that into a new way forward for us has been really rewarding and full of promise and ambition.

Even after all this though, it's still been a tough year and that's being reflected in our remaining funds available to deliver day to day. You are going to see an appeal for help, and it is heartfelt. There is so much potential in the London Museum of Water and Steam and we can do great things. We just need some extra support to get us to that next new stage. Please have a look at the appeal in the newsletter and on our website and support us if you can. And if you ever want to talk to me, please do reach out on email.

Urgent LMWS Appeal

Our Story

Since 1974, the Museum has been the guardian of the history of the Kew Bridge Waterworks and our amazing collection of engines. We were built on the determination and ingenuity of a group of volunteers and many of those volunteers then went on to form the nucleus of our Member's program that exists today. Your support is crucial to the future of the London Museum of Water and Steam – to our ongoing survival.

It's been a difficult few years and our finances are now stretched almost to breaking point. Covid 19 changed the face of cultural heritage visiting and visitor numbers have still not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. To compound this high inflation has increased many of our core costs, in particular utilities, insurances and cleaning.

Whilst we have been successful at attracting capital and project funding, this is restricted. Our unrestricted reserves, money we can spend on operating costs, is very low and we face the possibility this will run out if we don't act fast and the museum will be forced to close.

We are making an Urgent Appeal

We've got a strong forward plan and a new vision that's been signed off by our Board of Trustees which brings back steam and refocuses the museum on achieving a balanced budget. We recognise that we need to develop a much more sustainable operating mode that gets the balance right between generating visitor income and being a community resource. We've shared that with you and it outlines an exciting future. But it will take time to get there. Time we don't have without extra funds to survive. So we're asking for your help.

What next?

Our 50th anniversary is just around the corner, celebrating the achievements of those first volunteers and all who have followed! Help us make it a reality. Steam forward into history, and become a part of London's Water & Steam story!

Please donate whatever amount you feel able to.

On our website: <http://bit.ly/LMWSdonate>

Or support our campaign on Crowdfunder at: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/lmws>

If you are a UK taxpayer, increase your donation by 25% through Giftaid, at no extra cost.

Back in Steam!

Hannah Harte, Director

As many of you will know, the Museum has been given a significant restricted sum by a very generous donor. We were given this with the express objective of getting the museum back into steam and we are coming on leaps and bounds! George Houstoun has been kindly giving his time to project manage the works to the Lancashire boiler and we have successfully chosen a company to come and do the required works. There will be a bit more work to do, insulating and preparing, but we feel that we can commit to a New Year's Steam Up. We are hugely excited about this as one of the first steps toward recovery, so watch this space!



Richard Returns!

Hannah Harte, Director

As many of you will already know, the Museum was successful in the latest National Heritage Lottery Fund (NLHF) applications round, and we have been awarded £249,000 for our project "Steaming into Sustainability". This is a project looking at how industrial heritage like ours can be used, understood and accessed with as little impact on the natural environment as possible and how we inspire people to that cause.

It's an exciting time for this work and it puts LMWS at the front of this new research because of our unique opportunity for practical application. It's a big responsibility and carries much influence and acclaim in the sector. So, I'm really pleased to announce that Richard Albanese is the Project Manager who's going to spearhead this campaign for us, and we can't think of anyone who could do it better!

Welcome Richard!



Richard at work as engineer on steam boat VIC32, which this year has successfully gone over to bio fuel as an alternative to coal.

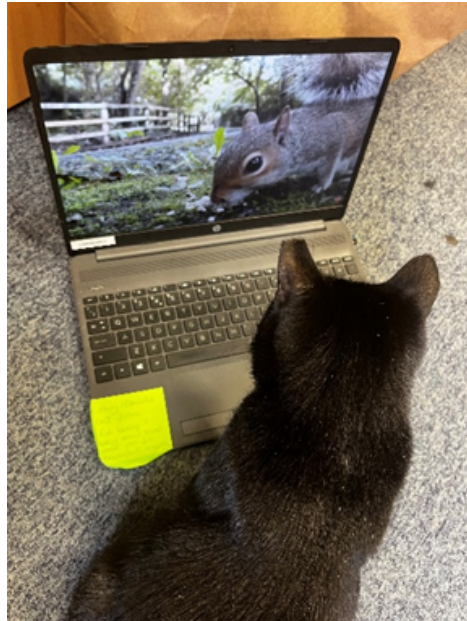
Richard says:

I'm delighted in returning to help take the "Steaming into Sustainability" project forward, which will develop new ways of reducing energy and water use, modernise our steam raising, heating, general energy and water use systems. New displays, spaces and interpretation will inform our visitors; explaining how these improvements reduce impact on our environment on our first steps to net carbon zero. A most important project, LMWS will again be seen to lead the way for many other similar museums following behind.



An Introduction

Piper - Mouse Co-Ordinator



Meow,

Hi everyone, I've now been at the museum for around 7 weeks and I'm settling in really well. I'm a very nervous cat, but my confidence is growing every day.

Some of you know my story already, but for those of you who don't, I'm Piper. I'm around one year old so still very young. I'm a semi-feral stray who was found in a local carpark with my kittens. The RSPCA took us in, and rehomed the kittens to new families, and I was lucky to be found by the museum.

Due to a couple of health issues, and my nervousness, I've been kept in the office for now, but will soon be venturing into the workshop and exploring the museum which I'm really looking forward to.

I've been doing some important training recently, learning about the movements and behaviours of squirrels, which as many of you will know, are a big pest for the museum, and hope to put this new training to good use soon. I can't wait to meet you all soon and get to know you.

A little more about me:

Likes: head scratches, laser pens, Dreamies (duck is my favourite)

Dislikes: loud noises, sudden movements, going to the vets



Maintenance & Volunteers Update

Glen Williams, Volunteer

When I was asked to contribute to this edition of Kew New and let the members know what we'd been up I had to stop and think for a little while, not for lack of something to write of course, but because we've been up to so much!

July was mainly taken up with preparations for the Lancashire Boiler's second round of NDT testing. This involved grinding all rivet heads across the entire boiler shell, together with an additional 20% of the rivets on the internal furnace tubes, in order to provide a small flat surface for the inspector's probe.



A close up of the cracked piston from the Allen Diesel engine

Contorting one's body around the underside of the boiler shell, gantry and boiler fittings was not an easy task and involved a lot of sweat, a tiny amount of blood, and maybe some tears whilst no-one was looking! Special mention should be given to Ian and Jamie who undertook a lot of hot, noisy and dirty work inside the boiler to prepare the furnace tubes. Thanks to all involved, the tests were completed on time to all rivets and following receipt of the insurer's report, planning for repairs is underway.

Following completion of the boiler testing, attention returned to the compressor for the Allen diesel engine's air start system. Routine maintenance undertaken earlier this year had revealed water to be present in the oil sump, the cause of which was found to be failed cylinder head gasket, and more worryingly, further disassembly revealed a crack in one of the pistons. This crack threatened to put the compressor permanently out of service, however, following an expert repair by specialist engineering contractors, and a lot of hard work from the volunteers, the compressor is now back together again. After some finishing off works to improve the coolant pipework, and a fresh coat of paint, it'll be good to return to service.

Thomas Wicksteed has been stripped down ready for his annual insurance inspections, and whilst these are ongoing we're going to take the opportunity to address a few issues that have built up over the last year. Repairs to Alister are also ongoing to address a small leak on one of the injectors.

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John Stone, hard at work



Repaired plasterwork in the cafe

The museum's buildings are also looking a lot fresher, thanks to Dave, as the south elevation windows have had much-needed redecoration and the cracked section of plasterwork in the café has been repaired, which is a great improvement. In the next few weeks we hope to repaint the walls throughout the café and finally return the missing display items! Noel has also been hard at work upgrading the old fluorescent light fittings underneath the mezzanine gallery to more efficient LED units which really do show off the Waddon Engine a treat.

In the Electric House, we are progressing on the final works to the mercury arc rectifier. This entails the installation of the wiring and collection of lightbulbs that will act as the rectifier's electrical load, allowing the bulb to fire up properly, together with the safety checks necessary to run and a final clean of the bulb.

The Magneta clock is also now back together and ran properly for the first time in many years back in June. Unfortunately, celebrations proved to be a little premature as the movement is proving to be rather fussy - it will run happily for hours until the release arm decides to stick without apparent reason in just the wrong place, causing the clock to jam. Investigations and adjustments in conjunction with the conservator are ongoing and we hope to have these resolved soon. Despite being a bit annoying its still good to see it back and looking a million dollars!

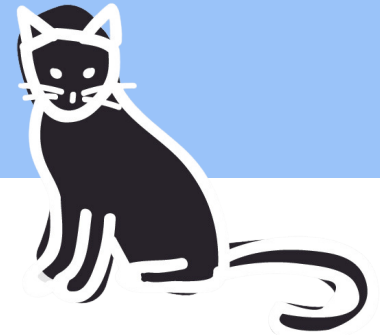
Minor repairs have been also undertaken to the workshop compressor wiring, Benham engine electric drive, splash zone piping, Laleham venturi meter weight, and even the roller shutter alarms.

If you would like to volunteer for the Thursday crew, please do get in contact! We're always in need of an extra pair of hands and any help is appreciated - you don't need to be an expert in steam engines!

A very warm welcome

A very warm welcome to our new volunteers.

- Tim Evans Collections and FoH
- Iain Bingham Engineer
- Dominic de Speville FoH
- Yousif Abdelwahab FoH
- Mark Wheeler Engagement and FoH
- Marcus Merritt FoH
- Divji Grover FoH
- Mariana Pires Gardens
- Jon-Matthew Donahue Gardens
- Sana Jafri Engagement
- Rachael Beatty Engagement
- Minoo Court FoH
- Caris Jaffe Gardens



Volunteering Update

Jade Husseyin, Volunteer Coordinator

July was a very successful work experience month, as we had two students every week. All of whom thoroughly enjoyed their time here completing tasks such as welcoming visitors, helping in the shop, social media post creation, and cleaning the Splash Zone.

GSK completed a corporate day in the garden, they cleared all the paths and cleaned the mud kitchen. They enjoyed their day so much that they hope to come again, some of the group even visited the museum in the summer with their children. We are hoping to extend our corporate days and get some much-needed projects around the gardens and the museum completed.

Over the summer days we have luckily had many students that have volunteered for FoH, and their help has been greatly appreciated in this busy period.

Interested in Engineering? Know someone who is? We are always looking for volunteers! Send over an email to Jade.Husseyin@waterandsteam.org.uk with interest and any question.

Easy Fundraising



The London Museum of Water & Steam is registered with Easy Fundraising!

This means over 7,000 brands will now donate to the museum for FREE every time you use easyfundraising to shop with them. Shop directly through the app or download the browser extension to be reminded every time you shop with an eligible brand.

Sign up through the QR code on the left, or head to [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and search for The London Museum of Water & Steam.

Pashley bikes for staff and volunteer use

Amy Dobson, Engagement Co-Ordinator (Communities & Families)

In July we were fortunate to receive a donation of three Pashley bikes, all in perfect condition, from our neighbours at Chiswick Business Park.

These bikes will allow us to travel around the local area much faster for meetings and community events, and more importantly will allow us to do so in an environmentally friendly way. We will be developing a simple policy for use of these bikes soon.

The bikes have been serviced by Winston Gordon from the London Bike Hub. Winston ran a 5-week scheme from the Economiser this summer called 'Earn a Bike' which he hopes to run again following its success.

The aim of the programme was to teach refugees, that are interested and committed to learning, bike maintenance skills with a view to Earn-A-Bike at the end of the programme. Please do get in touch if you'd like to learn more about the bikes.



Winston Gordon from London Bike Hub, Amy Dobson, and Ingrid Ho from Chiswick Park

The museum is central to our communities.

Speak Out: If [the Museum] was to close, our members with learning disabilities and/or autism and their parents/carers would be absolutely devastated. For them the museum is a safe place where they feel welcomed and included and for several members, the only time they leave their homes is when they attend our activities there. This is due to the accessibility and the facilities that meet their needs. They are proud to be part of the museum community and physically change when they realise that it is a place that they can come to without judgement.

Local resident Eamonn, who meets at the museum as part of an independent community mental health support group called it a life line and said: *'[The London Museum of Water & Steam] is a space we have come to love and rely on. It is an important source of support...'*

Our vital community partner Our Barn who provide our food and beverage offer said: *[closure of the museum] would disrupt the critical work that we do in empowering young adults with learning difficulties and autism, supporting families, and fostering community bonds. The loss of this invaluable space would be felt deeply by those who depend on it for growth, inclusion, and a sense of belonging'*

Peter Oliver, Site Co-Ordinator

My first entry into Kew News. I wanted to start with a “thank you” to those who stepped in whilst I recovered from my broken arm, subsequent operations & rehab. It hasn't been a very enjoyable experience.

We have had movement with the artisans in the units at the front of site. Neil Brown in the forge has moved to the Rural Life Museum in Tilford (near Farnham.) Hopefully he should be coming back to do his teaching sessions and so we will get to see him a number of times in the year. Neil Lemaire has since moved into the forge and has plans for both foundry and blacksmithing works. So the continuity of the working forge will be kept.

We have plans to redesign the internal layout of the Diesel House and will be looking to take on more tenants once works have been done.

The steam train has had an annual service with Allianz and the Thursday team are busy preparing the train for its second service in October.

On a final note - if you do get to site - head up to the garden and see the recently installed bird bath by the pond. It's a memorial installation for John Porter, and was donated to the museum by his wife Margaret.

I'd also like to thank Margaret and the rest of the Garden team for keeping the garden and grounds looking great for our visitors.

Summer of PLAY!



We had a really successful family programme this summer. We split the holidays into three themes, Water, Imagineering, and Nature. During Imagineering week children learned about the stand pipe tower and were challenged to build their own version and explain how it works. In Water week we learned about the water cycle and how the Boulton & Watt engine works to move water. During Nature week we explored the museum gardens. Although the theme throughout summer was 'play', it was important to us that there was also a focus on learning and inspiring young people throughout our programming.

In addition to our family programming, we ran events, including a film screening of The Living Thames documentary in partnership with the Thames Estuary Partnership. The film was followed by a Q&A session with director/producer Dorothy Leiper, archaeologist Dr Fiona Haughey and hydraulics expert Rob Casey and was a really successful event that we'd look to run again.

Upcoming events

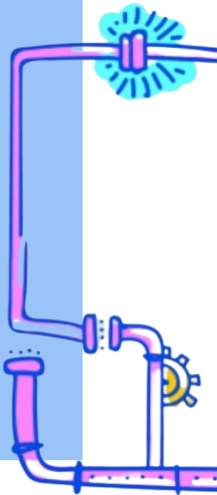


VICTORIAN LONDON'S HEALTH CRISIS - THE CHOLERA EPIDEMICS AND THEIR RESOLUTION

Thursday 16 November, 7pm

Join Rob Casey for the first of a series of history talks.

"In 1831 a terrifying new epidemic arrived in London, there was no cure and doctors had no idea how the disease was spread. Rob Casey discusses how the water supply and sanitation infrastructure made London particularly susceptible to the cholera disease and the drastic transformation that took place to resolve the crisis. These reforms still form the basis of London's current water supply and sewerage systems."



And I Caused It To Rain Upon One City - Temporary Display

This exhibition brings together a body of work by artist Matthew Dowell who participated in a residency conducting research and developed their practice in response to the Museum's collections.

Boulton and Watt Engine House from 20 Sept - 15 October

And I Caused It To Rain Upon One City

Matthew Dowell
20 September - 15 October

London Museum of Water and Steam,
Green Dragon Lane, London, TW8 OED

For a full list of upcoming events, please visit:

<https://waterandsteam.org.uk/events>



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