



# APPENDIX 1 - SPECIFICATION FOR THE DESIGN & FIT-OUT OF THOMAS HARDY EXHIBITION FOR WESSEX MUSEUMS

## Destination & Culture

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# **Thomas Hardy Exhibition**

## **Specification for Exhibition Designer Fit-out**



## 1. Background to Wessex Museums

- 1.1. Wessex Museums comprises the four museums which best tell the stories of Dorset and Wiltshire from Prehistoric times to the present day – Dorset Museum, Poole Museums, The Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum. This is a natural partnership of museums covering the geographical spread of Dorset and Wiltshire, and with world class collections spanning archaeology, fine and decorative art, ethnography, literature, social history, costume and textiles. As such, the Wessex Museums are perfectly placed to share the story of Wessex and its relationship with the rest of the world.
- 1.2. The partnership's ambition is to inspire more people to explore and enjoy the outstanding art and heritage of the region and to understand its significance to their lives. The partnership will share the amazing story of the region in new and exciting ways and make a major contribution to the cultural, social and tourism economies of Dorset and Wiltshire.
- 1.3. The partnership has formed a charity, the Wessex Museums Trust, to support the accredited museums in Dorset and Wiltshire for the benefit of the public.
- 1.4. Wessex Museums (and its constituent museums) is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation 2018-22. As part of our ambitious programme, Wessex Museums will deliver a partnership exhibition on the life and work of Thomas Hardy 28 May – 30 October 2022.



## 2. The Brief

### 2.1. Purpose of the brief

This design brief relates to Wessex Museums' Thomas Hardy exhibition, which will open simultaneously in all four partner museum sites in May 2022. A design company is required to collaborate with the Project Curator on the design and delivery of the exhibition, as well as management of any external contractors and the exhibition construction.

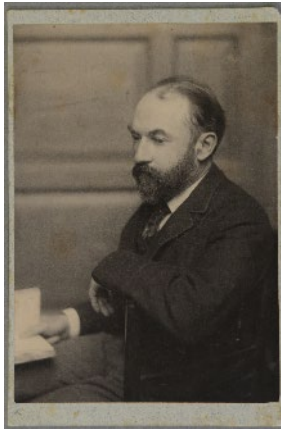
### 2.2. Background

The Wessex region was central to Thomas Hardy's life and work. It is impossible to research him and not be struck by the profound links between the worlds he depicted in his work and his own life story. His experiences and the experiences of his friends, family and acquaintances clearly provided rich material for all his creative output – poetry, novels and short stories.

Hardy's work was also strongly influenced by his own personal political and moral beliefs. He held surprisingly 'modern' and progressive views in a lot of areas but also held on to more traditional beliefs – a dichotomy which reflects wider changes in Victorian society and tensions between old and new.

These four museums are perfectly placed to deliver an exhibition on Thomas Hardy of this scale and ambition, uniting both Hardy's fictional and real Wessex with political and moral themes in his works. Their individual collections together create a unique opportunity. In particular, the extensive Hardy collections held at Dorset Museum, including a collection of Hardy papers inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

The exhibition aims to showcase these incredible collections alongside launching the Wessex Museums brand and engaging new audiences.





## 2.3. Audiences

The exhibition aims to reach more diverse audiences by representing Hardy in new and more accessible ways, and by highlighting themes in his life and work that are relevant to a contemporary audience. The target audiences for the exhibition are as follows:

- Young Adults (18 - 35-year olds)
  - Young families
  - 18 – 24-year old students in FE or HE
- Visiting tourists

Some formative evaluation has been undertaken with the Young Adults target groups. The findings of this evaluation will be shared with the appointed contractor and should be considered throughout the design of the exhibition.

As part of our NHLF-funded Bridging the Gap project, we are delivering a range of pioneering initiatives to engage children and young people with our museums. As part of the Bridging the Gap project, two elements of the Thomas Hardy exhibition will be created in collaboration with schoolchildren and young adults – Hardy Shorts and Moment of Inspiration (see appendix 2).

## 2.4. Exhibition Location

The exhibition will be held simultaneously in all four of the partner museums in 2022 (see appendix 3 for floor plans):

- Dorset Museum, Dorchester (125m<sup>2</sup>)
- Poole Museum, Poole (130m<sup>2</sup>)
- The Salisbury Museum, Salisbury (84m<sup>2</sup>)
- Wiltshire Museum, Devizes (84m<sup>2</sup>)

- National and international tour – the aim is to bring the four exhibitions together into a single touring exhibition that will tour four venues in the UK, USA and Asia from 2022. The designs should therefore facilitate a single touring exhibition.

## 2.5. Exhibition Concept



The four exhibitions will explore the life and work of writer Thomas Hardy in the context of the landscapes in which he was raised and lived – the country (Dorset Museum), the town (The Salisbury Museum), the sea (Poole Museum) and the ancient landscape (Wiltshire Museum).

Each exhibition is organised around one of these themes, exploring stories from his work in these settings and uncovering how Hardy both created Wessex, and how the environments he lived in shaped his views and character. Each landscape exhibition theme will also link to sub-themes in Hardy's work that have a contemporary resonance.

Wessex Museums commissioned a draft Interpretation Strategy, which is outlined in 'Appendix 5 – Wessex Museums Interpretation Strategy'. This piece of work identified that there are potential barriers to engagement with Hardy, whether through perceptions that his work is too inaccessible or that it is irrelevant to modern life. The proposed exhibition structure aims to overcome these barriers through fresh interpretation, contemporary relevance, interactive and AV elements and thought-provoking displays.

The exhibition was conceived so that the four exhibitions follow the same structure. This is to allow for the uniting of the four exhibitions for future touring. Although they are unified in structure, each exhibition must be unique and will address different landscapes and different themes.



**A** A sense of place



**B** Graphic timeline



**C** New views of life



**D** A moment of vision



**E** Hardy shorts



**F** A moment of inspiration

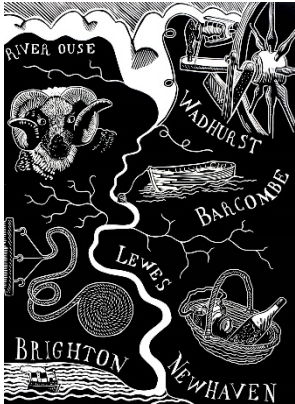


**G** What inspires you?

## 2.6. Exhibition themes and suggested structure

Preliminary work has been done to create an exhibition concept, interpretation plan, object lists and interpretation text, which broke down the exhibition into these suggested themes and structure (see appendix 2 for detail):

- a) *A sense of place* – geographically situating the visitor in Hardy's landscape
- b) *Graphic timeline* – temporally situating the visitor in Hardy's world
- c) *New views of life* – looking at how Hardy's view of the world was changed by the landscapes he was writing in. This section will look at subthemes in each of the museums:
  - i) Dorset Museum – 'Animal welfare' and 'Social Tensions'
  - ii) Wiltshire Museum – 'Environment' and 'Superstition'
  - iii) The Salisbury Museum – 'Women's equality' and 'Religion'
  - iv) Poole Museum – 'Love' and 'Conflict'
- d) *A moment of vision* – a selfie station depicting a famous scene from Hardy, with costumes
- e) *Hardy shorts* – animations of scenes from Hardy's novels and short stories (the production of these is funded through an NHLF project, and they do not need to be included in costings for this tender)
- f) *A moment of inspiration* – an AV experience of the landscape (the production of these is funded through an NHLF project, and they do not need to be included in costings for this tender )
- g) *What inspires you?* – a chance for reflection



## 2.7. Exhibitions tone and interpretative approach

The exhibitions will be immersive, friendly, accessible, unthreatening and interactive spaces, with objects from the collections bringing authenticity and depth to the stories being told. The environment will be informative, but not overly academic.

We want to take inspiration for the look and feel from the work of local wood engraver Robin Mackenzie, who will be commissioned to produce the lead images for the exhibition (see inset images and <https://robinmackenzie.co.uk/>).

We aim to have manual interactives alongside the objects, traditional text panels and AV elements, to engage visitors with the deeper themes of the *New Views of Life*.

We want the AV elements to be an integral fun and surprising element woven into the overall design.

## 2.8. Wellbeing

Wellbeing has been highlighted as a key element to be incorporated into the exhibition and wider public programme.

Woven through the exhibitions we will seek to use the language of the New Economic Forum's Five Ways to Wellbeing, to highlight ways that the visitor can interact with the exhibition through:

- Get Active
- Keep Learning
- Connect

- Give
- Take Notice

Within the museum we would like the manual interactives within the exhibition to draw upon these five behaviours.

In addition to this will be a small handout booklet on 'Hardy's 5 Ways to Wellbeing'. This can be taken away by the visitor and will include inspiration from the exhibition and its themes to get people thinking about their wellbeing.

## 2.9. The Project so Far

Work has already been undertaken to:

- compile object lists for the four exhibitions
- scope potential layouts for the cases (see appendix 8)
- draft text for the *New Views of Life* section (see appendix 9)

The project team look forward to workshopping these with the appointed design team.

## 2.10. Design services required

### 2.9.1 *The designer's services:*

- The design, planning, cost planning, fabrication, delivery, management of sub-contractors (including liaising with AV producers of 'Hardy Shorts' and 'Moment of Inspiration' engagement projects) and installation of the fit-out scheme for the exhibition spaces.
- Project co-ordination of mechanical and electrical engineering including:
  - lighting in the gallery spaces;
  - purchase and installation of any AV hardware equipment needed (including liaising with the AV producers of 'Hardy Shorts' and 'Moment of Inspiration' to supply their needs; see appendix 7)

All design elements must take into consideration the infrastructure of the exhibition spaces, including available space, existing AV hardware, lighting systems, listed building requirements, existing museum cases, environmental conditions for object conservation and power supplies.

### 2.9.2 *Wessex Museums will provide:*

- Display cases (see appendix 4)
- Preparation of narrative and copy
- Provision of digital images with permissions
- Object installation
- Conservation (including conservation work, framing and mount-making)
- Lighting (exhibition tracked lighting in all galleries)

## 2.9.3 *The process will include:*

- ***Stage 1: Planning***

- Review museums' facilities (M&E, cases, exhibition spaces, hardware)
- Work with client to review themes, subthemes, and develop an approach to displaying these and the objects within the existing museum spaces and facilities
- Understand target audiences and how their needs and the evaluation findings can be incorporated into the concept
- Agree budgets for each display discipline within the scheme
- Agree mechanisms for cost planning and control
- Agree schedule for design development, production and display installation
- Run creative sessions between designers and the exhibition team

- ***Stage 2: Concept design***

- Full development of the exhibition content, in collaboration with the exhibition team
- Lead on Hardy exhibition 'look and feel' – lead imagery, colour palette, fonts for title and strapline – for use in wider marketing (posters, leaflets, websites, etc.). The printing and distribution of marketing materials will be produced and budgeted for by the Marketing Team.
- Prepare concept designs (3D, graphics, interactives, lighting)
- Prepare cost estimates for design proposals
- Consultations with project team and, where appropriate, other working groups

- ***Stage 3: Detail design***

- Detailed design drawings and perspective drawings should be to be sent to Wessex Museums in a digital format that can be circulated.
- Once the detailed design work has been signed off the designer will produce detailed specifications for construction and final construction/fabrication drawings, which should be supplied in a digital format that allows them to be easily viewed and circulated.

- ***Stage 4: Implementation & completion***

- Collaboration with AV production teams
- Supervision of off-site fabrication and liaison with contractors (including printers and specialist interactive suppliers), where necessary
- Suitable contractors will be chosen in conjunction with Wessex Museums. Wessex Museums already has some long-term partnerships with contractors which may be of use for this project.
- The designer will supervise in conjunction with museum staff the installation of all elements of the exhibition, including graphics, showcase dressing, 3D build, AV, lighting, etc.
- Snagging

2.9.4 The below table outlines the split of responsibilities between the Contractor and Wessex Museums:

What the supplier is required to do/provide for each of the four sites	What Wessex Museums will do/provide for each of the four sites
Undertake cost planning and be responsible for ongoing budget management	Supply and move display cases (see appendix 4).
Produce a schedule for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• design development</li> <li>• production</li> <li>• exhibition installation</li> </ul>	Research and preparation of narrative and copy
Develop exhibition design in collaboration with Exhibition Curator and exhibition teams	Provision of digital images with permissions
Create a look and feel for the exhibition in line with the new Wessex Museums brand, which can be carried forward into marketing materials to be produced by the museum marketing teams	Transport and installation of objects from the museum collections
Liaise with AV producers of 'Hardy Shorts' and 'Moment of Inspiration' engagement projects to build these into the wider exhibition	Conservation (including conservation work, framing and mount-making) of objects
Purchase and install AV hardware equipment needed (including liaising with the AV producers of 'Hardy Shorts' and 'Moment of Inspiration' to supply these elements)	Adjustment of light levels and angles of the existing tracked lighting systems in the galleries (exhibition tracked lighting in all galleries). This does not include any lighting of projections that the contractor may choose to build into the exhibition.
Appointment and management of any sub-contractors needed for the design, fabrication and installation phases	Appoint AV producers for the production of 'Hardy Shorts' and 'Moment of Inspiration' engagement projects.

Prepare design drawings (3D, graphics and interactives)	
Prepare detailed specifications for construction and final drawings	
The supplier will be responsible for the fabrication and build of the exhibition, including interpretation panels, graphics, 3D build, printing	
The supplier will be responsible for the installation of all graphics, 3D build, interpretation panels and AV at each site	
Snagging	

## 2.11. **Other Information**

### 2.9.1. **Project team**

- Kristina Broughton - Wessex Museums Partnership Manager
- Jon Murden – Thomas Hardy Exhibition Project Sponsor
- Harriet Still – Thomas Hardy Exhibition Project Curator
- Other members of the team will be brought into the project when required as it progresses

### 2.9.2. **Accessibility**

The exhibition must comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, by taking full consideration of all access needs throughout the design process. Wessex Museums is committed to creating exhibitions that take into account the diverse physical and intellectual needs of all its visitors, including children, wheelchair users, those with disabilities, learning difficulties, the visually impaired and hard of hearing. There is an existing Dorset-based access consultation group who we would be consulting throughout the design process.

### 2.9.3. **Health and Safety**

The exhibition must comply with all relevant legislation, Health and Safety Regulations, emergency evacuation plans, fire safety and seek to implement good practice.

The Consultant will be responsible for managing their own health and safety and those they work with, complying with all relevant legislation.

#### **2.9.4. *Environmental Sustainability***

We recognise our unique role in protecting the environment as stewards of the cultural heritage of our beautiful region. Environmental sustainability is therefore a key priority for our consortium and in each of our partner museums. We therefore expect suppliers whom we work with to support the principles of our environmental sustainability policy through their own policy and practice.

The exhibition designer will be expected to select materials for the exhibition that have the minimum environmental impact in terms of their manufacture and supply wherever possible and in line with the available budget. Materials used should be recyclable / reusable wherever possible. This will include consideration of the longevity of the design for the duration of the exhibition and future touring, and ease of maintenance.

#### **2.12. *Timetable***

**The timetable is driven by the opening date of the exhibition: 28 May 2022**

- |                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| • Contract Start     | April 2021  |
| • Exhibition install | May 2022    |
| • Exhibition opens   | 28 May 2022 |

#### **2.13. *Contract Arrangements***

The contract will be between Bournemouth Christchurch & Poole (BCP) Council and the contractor. The contractor will be bound by the council's terms and conditions for the supply of goods and services, which will form part of the contract.

#### **2.14. *Remuneration for the Contract***

A maximum budget of £55,000, inclusive of travel expenses has been agreed to cover design fees, exhibition build (3D and graphic) and installation. The budget must cover all costs associated with the exhibition construction, display, graphic production, props, furniture, AV hardware and any other special features. Any tender submitted where the price is higher than £55,000 will be rejected and not considered further.

To reiterate, the following will be provided by the museums and should not be included in costings:

- Display cases (see appendix 4)
- Preparation of narrative and copy
- Provision of digital images with permissions
- Object installation
- Conservation (including conservation work, framing and mount-making)
- Lighting (exhibition tracked lighting in all galleries)

### **2.15. *Financial Arrangements***

BCP Council will manage the financial arrangements for the contract. The contractor will be responsible for their own pay, tax, National Insurance and pension contributions and all other payments required as required by law.

BCP Council operates 30-day payment terms. All invoices will be paid by 30 days from the date of issue of a valid and undisputed electronic invoice. Payments will be made by BACS.

### **2.16. *Insurance***

The Consultant will be required to have professional indemnity insurance (min. £2m), public liability insurance (min. £10m) and Employers (compulsory) Liability Insurance (min. £5m, not required if contractor is a sole trader). The Consultant will be asked to produce copies of their current insurance certificates.