

Accreditation Mentoring Agreement for Beaminster Museum Trust – April 2026

This agreement is between Beaminster Museum Trust (accreditation number 1647) and Vicky de Wit, Museums Advisor for BCP & Dorset Councils.

Name of Museum contact person:
Richard Smith,
Chairman – Operating committee

Name of Mentor:
Vicky de Wit

Museum Address:
Beaminster Museum
Whitcombe Road
Beaminster
Dorset
DT8 3DZ

Mentor Address:
Dorset History Centre
Bridport Road
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1RP

Museum Telephone Number:
01308 863623

Mentor Telephone Number:
07876 790641

Email Address:
Info@beaminstermuseum.co.uk

Email Address:
Vicky.dewit@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Museum

Overview of collection:

The collection encompasses all periods of the history of Beaminster and the surrounding area and objects include geological specimens, archaeological finds through to items from the 21st century. There are approximately 8,000 items in the collection and this includes Jurassic Ammonites, palaeolithic hand axes, bronze age gold, 18 century fire engine and clocks, and Henry the hoovers. All our collection is from the local parishes, with the addition of a couple of items with local links from nearby in Dorset, on loan from Dorchester Museum and Art Gallery.

The museum's website hosts a small collection gallery which can be viewed at:

[Selected artefacts on display at the Museum – Beaminster Museum](#)

The Main services the museum provides are:

To collect, conserve and exhibit artefacts and to collect and conserve items for the museum archive that reflect the history of Beaminster and its environs for the purposes of research and for education.

To offer opportunities to local schools and schoolchildren to practise skills, learn facts and develop their understanding of historical concepts.

To offer a programme of all-age events to present the history of Beaminster and the local area in an interesting and fun way.

To own and maintain a library of books, papers, maps and photographs for the purpose of research.

To provide opportunities for private research and to undertake research projects, if possible, on request.

To organise and hold lectures on historical subjects during the winter months.

To undertake oral history and reminiscence initiatives within the local community

Vicky de Wit - Museum Mentor

My Background and experience is:

I have a Masters degree (with Distinction) in Museum Studies and more recently acquired a Certificate in Cultural Leadership (with Merit) from City University London. I have 30 years museum experience and have worked in very contrasting organisations from the V&A to the Museum of the Moving Image to the National Museum of Singapore to the Cuming Museum in South London. I have subject specialisms in fine art and social history and a strong track record of major project management and was responsible for the restoration of Valentines Mansion, the creation of Redbridge Museum and the development of Sea City Museum in Southampton.

My key skills are:

- Fundraising and developing grant bids
- Conceptual and design development of museum interpretation schemes
- Working with build and design contractors
- Developing museum learning services
- Creating temporary exhibitions
- Initiating and developing partnership projects

Accreditation status of the museum

Date museum entered Accreditation:	Last Accredited 2016
Current Status:	Full Accreditation

The Museum Mentor will:

I will advise the museum on obtaining Accreditation and from then on support the museum in maintaining the standard. In order to provide a framework for this activity I will:

- Carry out an annual Accreditation review with the museum, looking at the forward plan and discussing the museum's advice needs for the coming years and help the museum source that advice.
- Endorse and sign Accreditation applications and returns.
- Visit the museum a minimum of twice a year of which one visit will be a governing body meeting.

In order to support the museum I will:

- Make contact details available and communicate with the museum
- Be available or let the museum know if my availability changes.
- Keep up to date with current professional standards or know how to access further advice and information.
- Be an advocate for the museum.
- Support the museum in accessing networks and engaging with the wider museum community.
- Not advise outside my areas of expertise but direct the museum to other sources of advice.
- Act professionally and maintain confidentiality at all times.

Responsibilities of the Museum

We are committed to being an Accredited Museum and recognise the need for the support of a museum professional. To gain full benefit from this relationship we will:

- Work within the Accreditation standard. Our governance is very transparent and can be seen at [Governance – Beaminster Museum](#)
- Work on the Accreditation review with the mentor, looking at the forward plan and discussing the museum's advice needs for the coming years.
- Consult the mentor regularly and use their expertise.
- Involve the mentor in drawing up our Forward/Business plan as agreed.
- Invite the mentor to Trustee meetings with due notice and allow her to comment on issues under discussion or of concern.
- Advise the mentor of any change in circumstances relating to Accreditation
- Allow the mentor access to all areas of the museum's work and all the people working for the museum
- Keep the mentor informed through:
 - All Trustee board papers and minutes, circulated in a timely manner before and after the meetings
 - Other relevant committee minutes as agreed
 - General mailings and information

Review and termination

Both the museum and the mentor recognise that circumstances change and that either party has a right to withdraw from this agreement. Either party will give a minimum of one calendar months' notice of their intention to terminate the agreement.

Disagreements

Every effort will be made to clear up any misunderstanding or grievance through dialogue in the first instance.

If this or formal written complaints do not clear the matter up, with the agreement of both parties, a third party can be approached to support finding a resolution. This may be a Trustee not involved in the matter or a nominee from South West Museum Development, as agreed by both parties to the dispute.

Declaration

Both the museum and the mentor will strive to develop a positive on-going working relationship.

Signed: 

Chair of the Museum Trust:

Print Name: Matthew Kirkman

Museum Mentor

Print Name: Vicky de Wit

Signed:



Date: 15/04/2026