

## **Cambridge MP backs Local Museum's fundraising campaign 'Your Museum Needs You'**

Daniel Zeichner MP has backed the Museum of Cambridge's fundraising campaign 'Your Museum Needs You', which launched today (13<sup>th</sup> November).

The Museum has launched the fundraising campaign in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has seen the Museum forced to close for much of 2020 and a huge reduction in tourism in Cambridge.

The Museum normally welcomes over 10,000 visitors each year as well as working with many local schools, families and community groups to tell the stories of Cambridge and the surrounding area, but the pandemic has put its survival at risk.

The aim of the fundraising campaign is to raise £50,000 by March 2021 to cover the lost revenue from 2020, with the expectation that admissions will pick up again in the spring, particularly if a Covid vaccine is ready.

Daniel Zeichner, MP for Cambridge, said:

'Covid-19 has badly impacted the culture and heritage sector, and small independent charities like the Museum of Cambridge have been hit hard by the necessary social distancing and lockdown measures – as well as by a marked reduction in tourism – over recent months.

The Museum of Cambridge has explored the histories of Cambridge since 1936. 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges, and we must work together to ensure the future of this local institution.

I am very supportive of the Museum of Cambridge's work with local schools and community groups. I was proud to oversee the official opening of the Museum's Pride and Place exhibition in early 2019, which explored the lived experience of the local LGBTQ+ community.

By telling the stories of everyday Cambridge life, the Museum of Cambridge offers something truly characterful and distinctive to visitors to Cambridge. For the people of Cambridge and the surrounding area, the Museum is a safe space where everyone is welcomed, and their stories are valued.'

Lucy Walker, Chair of the Museum's Trustees, said:

'The Museum faces an unprecedented financial challenge. Covid-19, and the restrictions it has led to, has dealt the Museum a huge financial blow. While the Museum has received some emergency funding, it simply won't make up for the lack of visitors over the last 6 months.

While we've been able to open on a limited basis for some of the year, this still isn't enough to cover the costs of running the Museum, which remain the same whether we're open or closed.

The Museum is an independent charity. This means we rely on admissions income and donations to cover the costs of caring for our collections and paying our staff.

We're incredibly grateful for Daniel's support in raising awareness of our fundraising campaign. He's always been a wonderful champion for the Museum.'

Matt Hann, Fundraising Trustee, said:

‘It costs around £200,000 each year to keep the Museum open – and our costs are pretty much the same whether we’re open or shut. We are aiming to raise £50,000 by March 2021 to help us meet our running costs into next summer, when we hope visitor numbers will pick up again.

We’ve never embarked on a fundraising campaign like this before, but we’re counting on the people of Cambridge to rally round and support us – having the backing of the local MP is fantastic! This is a really difficult time for arts and heritage organisations around the country; like many other organisations, we’ve never needed people’s support and generosity more than we do now. But we’re confident that if the Museum can make it through the present crisis, it will have a really exciting future.

Every donation, no matter what size, makes an important difference, and it only takes a minute to donate via our website, [www.museumofcambridge.org.uk](http://www.museumofcambridge.org.uk).’

## **Notes to Editors**

### **About the Museum of Cambridge**

The Museum of Cambridge is a unique institution that tells the social history of Cambridge and the surrounding region. Set in the Grade II-listed 17th-Century White Horse Inn, on the important Roman street that links castle, river and university, the museum has told the fascinating stories of local people since it ceased trading as a pub in 1936.

You can find the Giant’s Boot, see the prize belt of the long-distance champion of the world, examine witches’ bottles, and discover the real Muffin Man. Under the curatorship of Enid Porter, from 1947-1976, the Museum pioneered oral history, recording the rich history, customs, stories and beliefs of the everyday people of Cambridge, a tradition the Museum preserves today, especially in our work with communities across Cambridge.

Notable recent exhibitions include ‘Pride and Place’, co-curated with Encompass Network and dedicated to exploring the lives of the local LGBTQ+ community; and ‘Barnwell At War’, in partnership with Cambridge United’s fan community, 100 Years of Coconuts, which explored everyday lives of working-class people in East Cambridge during the First World War.

The Museum is currently closed due to the Government’s lockdown restrictions, but plans to reopen in December, once the lockdown is over. COVID-safe procedures are in place, and the Museum has received the Visit England’s ‘We’re Good to Go’ mark of approval.

### **Further Information**

For further information, interviews and images please contact:

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