



Rural Museums Network

Building Relevance Programme

Report on the Susie Fisher Research Programme

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Prepared for:

Rural Museums Network
MERL
University of Reading
Redlands Road
Reading RG1 5EX

Prepared by:

Susie Fisher
The Susie Fisher Group
44 St. Leonards Road
London SW17 7NA
Tel: 020 8392 2343
Fax: 020 8392 2096
susie@thesusiefishergroup.co.uk

Four Sources Of Input

Audience Views

- Relationship with the countryside
- Visitor experience
- Product

Desk Research

- Recent trends
- Audience breakdown
- Performance of related sectors

Intention

To use these ideas as a platform

To ask 'How could this benefit Rural Museums?'



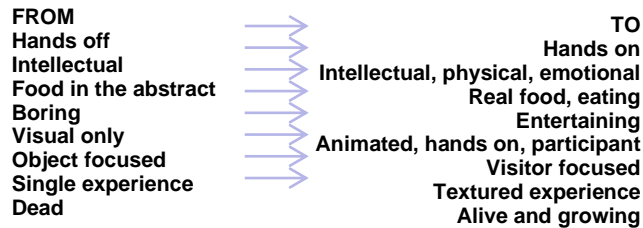
Creative forum of professionals

- Directions for development
- Parallel experiences
- Perspective of fellow professionals

RMN

- Specialists
- Collections expertise
- Guardians of the tradition
- Implementers

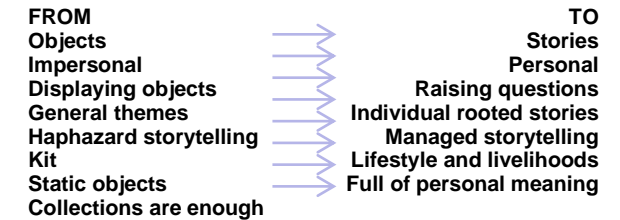
A RICHER VISITOR EXPERIENCE USING PHYSICAL INVOLVEMENT



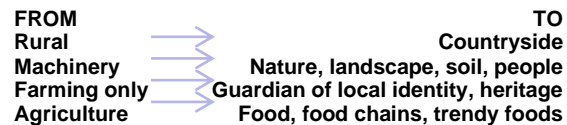
MORE WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE FOR URBAN VISITORS



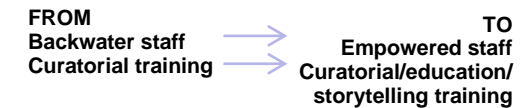
WILLINGNESS TO GET INVOLVED IN PEOPLES' STORIES



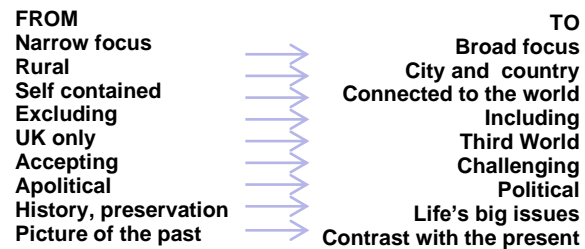
A WIDER ROLE A CENTRE FOR COUNTRYSIDE NATURE, LANDSCAPE, FOOD, HERITAGE



WIDER STAFF SKILLS TRAINING



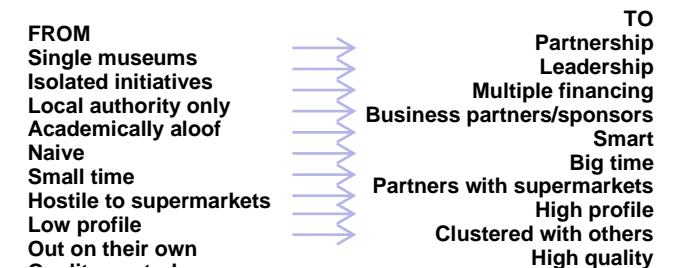
MORE ENGAGED WITH THE WORLD AT LARGE



TECHNOLOGY CONFIDENT



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EACH OTHER AND THE COMMERCIAL WORLD



MODERN, EXCITING, SURPRISING

FROM		TO
Staid	→	Edgy, shocking
Old relics	→	More kick
Bland	→	Contrasting
Dull	→	Exciting, Wow!
Safe	→	Danger
Closed in	→	Fresh air
Anonymous	→	Celebrity
Poky	→	Spacious
Still	→	Moving

MORE FUN ON THE DAY

FROM		TO
Glum	→	Smiling
Serious	→	Fun
Dull	→	Bright
Arid	→	A treat

AUDIENCE WISH LIST

MORE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

FROM		TO
Hands off	→	Hands on
Factual	→	Foody
Inactive	→	Active, demonstrations
Looking	→	Experiencing

MORE MODERN TECHNOLOGICALLY AND FINANCIALLY ASTUTE

FROM		TO
Old fashioned	→	Modern
Old	→	Young
No technology	→	Technology confident
Yesteryear	→	Up to date
Willow weaving	→	Talking to banks
Myth	→	Reality
Expensive	→	Hot deals

ANIMALS, NATURE

Close to animals and plants
Seeing and recognising them.
Relationships and feelings
Spiritual belonging to the land
Who depends on whom?

TOWN & COUNTRY

How do their ways of life compare?
What does each assume?
What don't they know about each other?
Townpeople buying up the countryside,
country ways being marginalised
Wars, power struggles, success stories.



**WHAT
THEMES
INTEREST
THIS
AUDIENCE?**

CONTRASTS THEN & NOW

Parallel worlds, the unknown.
Then and now, farming life, town life.
Surprises, changes, differences.
The unexpected, evolution.

PERSONAL CHALLENGE

Reality check. Back to our roots
People have grown too insulated, soft
Could we make a living from the soil if we had to?
Could we do the heroic things they did?
After the Apocalypse?

FOOD

Where does it come from, how do you grow it?
How does it get to us?
What does it taste like?
Tasting the best

Waitrose Food Fairs

UK, post apocalypse

**How much of a
reality is the City/
Country divide?**

**Travelling exhibitions
in town**

**Sustainable
living**

**Zones of different
characters in the Museum**

SOME IDEAS TO PLAY WITH

**Subsistence
farming in Africa**

**Horse dentistry
in France**

**Ray Mears, the voice
of the interpreter**

**Children's play area
designed as a rolling mill**

**Museum brand
Ice-cream**

Probiotics

Sponsorship

**Taste 20 rare
varieties of apple**

Questions To Ask Yourself

FUNDAMENTALS

What is unique in my collection?
Whose stories am I the guardian of?
How is my account connected to the wider world?
Where is my funding coming from?
Who are the partners who could help me?
How can our operation be made sustainable?

AUDIENCE PROPOSITION

Which audiences?
What is my audience proposition?
(How much is core, how much is individual?)
Which people are involved?
Which stories will I tell?
What is the most evocative name for my site?
How will I let my audiences know?

IMPLEMENTATION

What mix of visitor experience?
How can modern media help?
What should I measure?
What is the best role for each of my staff?
What training will my staff need?

