

Case Study: Goes for a Pint



Outline

Museum Goes for a Pint was an eight-week project running between October-December 2013 as a spin-off from the Goes To Town closure project (see separate case study). The Education team popped-up in eight different pubs, hosting a natural history-themed pub quiz, with real specimens from the collection.

Background

The Museum was closed throughout 2013 for extensive work on the roof. During this time, the Education team explored innovative ways of engaging with audiences, who could no longer visit the building itself.

As a way to reach young adults, particularly those who have not visited the Museum before, Education staff approached pubs in Oxford, to discuss taking part in their weekly pub quiz, or running a special one-off event. Eight pubs in the city centre and East Oxford signed up to take part.



Audiences

Evaluation for the Oxford University Museums showed a low visitor rate for ages 16-24 compared to other age groups. It also revealed a desire for the public to see museums engaged in specific social events. Goes for a Pint was intended to address these two issues. A total of 413 people took part in the eight quizzes: 25 – 29 year olds (37%); 30 – 39 year olds (28%); 18 – 24 year olds (21%). 38% of participants had never visited the museum.

Aims

Museum Goes for a Pint was part of a range of activities during the Museum's closure year, which were intended to maintain the profile of the Museum and show the playful side of our public engagement. We also aimed to engage audiences who rarely visit the Museum and provide a genuine social experience around natural history themes and specimens. We were particularly keen to encourage students and young people to visit after re-opening.



Museum of
Natural
History



Delivery

Each event was run by one museum staff member, supported by three or four volunteers. The team all wore bright pink, branded t-shirts and they handed out specially designed beer mats to promote future events. Volunteers gave out sheets and pencils, but also engaged the public with real museum specimens, which they could handle as part of a Mystery Object round. This was sometimes done on a static stall, but often they carried the specimens around for each team to see.

Outcomes

“ **It's good to see things out of glass cases – sometimes you forget they are real.**
Goes for a Pint participant

Feedback from the quizzes showed that we were successful in presenting the museum in a light-hearted, playful way. The majority of participants were keen to visit in the future and wanted more events of this style.

As a result, upon re-opening in February 2014, we hosted a late night event aimed at students, which continued the theme of the pub quiz.



A bar and a quiz trail around the museum, as well as picture rounds and film clips, recreated this familiar experience, in a special setting. In total, 2590 people attended, including 1813 who were bracketed as 'young people'.

Reflection

Hosting a round or two alongside a normal pub quiz attracted a far wider audience, and also helped engender a partnership between the establishment and Museum. Museum staff sometimes took part in the quizzes in their leisure time. This made balancing the difficulty level

of the quiz tricky. In the future we would clarify with staff ahead of the events that this is intended for the public rather than subject specialists. T shirts were fantastic at highlighting staff / volunteers involved.

Project contact

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