



PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 23 June 2021

Ripon Museum Trust Welcomes New Community Curator

Ripon Museum Trust is delighted to welcome a new member to its team, as Dr. Laura Allan joins the organisation as Community Curator. Her role will involve working with local organisations, community groups and residents to increase engagement with the museums, to promote creativity, a sense of place and improved mental health and wellbeing.

Laura joins the RMT team from Severndroog Castle in London, where she was employed as Heritage Manager. The castle is a community run organisation and Laura was originally brought on board to reopen the building to the public after 30 years of closure. She was responsible for creating and implementing the visitor journey, an interpretation and community engagement strategy and continued to oversee a changing programme of community events, exhibitions and activities.

Laura has also worked and volunteered at various museums including the Durham Light Infantry Museum, Leeds Museums and Galleries, the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich and Whitehall (a Tudor house) in London.

She undertook her BA in History at Sunderland University, MA in Art Gallery and Museum Studies at Leeds University completed her PhD in the Public History of the Criminal Justice System with the Open University. Her PhD was related to her work as Collections Assistant at the National Justice Museum and led her to present at conferences in New Zealand, Vienna and Scotland, discussing the differences between academic and museum interpretations of criminal justice history. Her time at the Open University built within her a core value of making historic knowledge open and accessible to all.

Helen Thornton, Director at Ripon Museum Trust, said: "We're delighted to welcome Laura to our team. She brings a wealth of experience and ideas to her new role, and her skills in community engagement will be a huge asset to us at the Trust, and to Ripon generally, as we work together with local people and organisations to recover from the pandemic. We hope she will enjoy working at Ripon Museums and become a vital part of the community."

Dr. Laura Allan, Community Curator said: "I grew up in County Durham and have been looking forward to moving back up north to be closer to my family. I can't wait to explore the North Yorkshire countryside through walking and other outdoor activities. Combining this love of nature and the arts is really important to my work, promoting positive wellbeing in our local community."

Ripon Museums are open Tuesday to Sunday. All tickets are valid for repeat visits over a 12-month period. Visit riponmuseums.co.uk for bookings or telephone 01765 690799. Ripon Museums have COVID-19 safety measures in place and have been awarded the Visit Britain We're Good to Go industry standard.

-ENDS-

Notes to editor

Image caption: Laura Allan, Community Curator at Ripon Museum Trust

For more information or interviews, please contact Amy Lord, Marketing Manager at Ripon Museum Trust, email amy.lord@riponmuseums.co.uk.

About Ripon Museum Trust

Ripon Museum Trust manages three museums: the Workhouse Museum & Garden, the Prison & Police Museum and the Courthouse Museum.

The Trust is a volunteer driven organisation with volunteering at the heart of everything we do. Our team of over 140 dedicated, enthusiastic and skilled volunteers look after the three unique heritage buildings, their collections and visitors.

Ripon Museum Trust has National Portfolio Funding from Arts Council England (ACE) for its exhibitions and learning programmes.

Opening hours

Our regular opening hours are:

- The Workhouse Museum & Garden is open six days a week (closed Mondays) 11am - 4pm.
- The Prison & Police Museum is open six days a week (closed Mondays) 1pm - 4pm.
- The Courthouse Museum is open six days a week (closed Mondays) 1pm - 4pm.