



**Report to: Joint Museums Committee, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**Report of: Senior Curator**

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**Subject: CANALETTO EXHIBITION AT WORCESTER ART GALLERY & MUSEUM**

**1. Recommendation**

**1.1 That the Joint Committee note the progress in development of the Canaletto exhibition and its associated community impact.**

**2. Background**

2.1 Museums Worcestershire seeks to bring high quality art to people's doorsteps and, in 2022, has negotiated a unique opportunity to borrow a hugely significant collection of Canaletto paintings for display at the Art Gallery & Museum, along with works from Worcester's own collection in an exhibition exploring Canaletto's artistic practice and influence.

2.2 Museums Worcestershire plans to curate an exhibition from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and accompanying programme celebrating the work of Canaletto, his Midlands tour and his influence on English artists through works in Worcester City's Fine Art Collection by borrowing

- 20 Canaletto paintings from Woburn Abbey
- 2 Canaletto, 1 Leader and 1 Marlow painting from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
- 1 Marlow painting and 1 Farrington sketch from Tate
- 1 Canaletto painting from Compton Verney

2.3 The service understands the opportunities that this project can bring to the city and aims to showcase the work of Canaletto and harness the opportunity to engage with his works through our formal and informal learning programme - supporting Museums Worcestershire's objective to support those who most struggle to see and engage with such works in national and private collections.

**3. Information**

3.1 This exhibition and associated programme represent the most ambitious and expensive ever developed at Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum and the service has been successful in bids for external funding from Art Fund, Elmley Foundation and Arts Worcestershire of £20500 in addition to specific additional support from Worcester City Council.

3.2 Earned income via ticket, event and catalogue sales are a key element of the business plan for this ambitious pilot but free and reduced-price access to the exhibition and programme has been carefully targeted to ensure local communities are well supported and welcomed.

- Tickets for children under 16 are free of charge
- Worcester City residents can visit at a 50% reduced price
- Free learning sessions are available for schools, colleges and home educator groups.
- Barriers to access are more than the costs of admission, so we will be working with community groups such as Sight Concern and Worcestershire's local community of Ukrainian refugees to offer targeted free-admission vouchers. This approach will also be used to reach sixth formers studying art.
- Bursaries have been funded by the Elmley Foundation for university level students at the University of Worcester and Hereford College of Art, who are specialising in the arts, to participate in a specialist-supported field trip to Venice to visit the Biennale and plan work in response to the City's Canaletto exhibition. Selection will be through competitive application designed to target those who would benefit the most and be least likely to access the opportunity without financial assistance.
- The service is working with groups who benefit from further support to access the exhibition in developing free audio tours, sensory bags and quiet sessions.

3.3 Learning from the pilot exhibition and its associated programme will inform planning for the future development of Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum. A summary of the outcomes and evaluation will be presented to Joint Museum Committee at a future meeting date.

**Ward(s):** All wards  
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**Background Papers:** None