



THE HODDESDON SOCIETY

Charity No 234800

15 December 2019

By email

Dear Councillor Cocking

The Hoddesdon Society is disappointed to hear that the Cabinet will on Monday be considering the recommendation to close the Lowewood Museum in 2020.

Lowewood's closure would be an immeasurable cultural loss for Hoddesdon and the Borough.

The Borough will be left with no other repository for local history and heritage. The loss of Lowewood - in Hertfordshire's Year of Culture, no less - would impoverish the Borough's cultural heritage. We will lose the ability to engage residents, the younger generation and new arrivals to the area in our rich local history and culture, and help give them a sense of place, history and local identity.

Lowewood Museum increasingly works with young people, both in the Museum and with local schools. It delivers workshops to children in the Museum and at their schools. There are activities to engage, interest and inspire children within the museum. Toddler groups take place there.

It is equally of interest to adults. It hosts exhibitions which have an interest beyond the Borough – for example, the latest James Ward exhibition. Local history talks are organised by the local community, centred around the Museum. There are art and craft workshops for adults held there. The Museum has also been a valuable community space where local artists display their work.

Lowewood attracts grant funds to the area and would continue to do so.

The Museum's offering has only recently been improved. The recent refurbishment of the downstairs areas (which won the Transformation Award from Hertfordshire Association of Museums in 2018) has been a real improvement and the results of this will not yet have been realised.

The previous Leader of the Council said, in November 2018, "*The award is a great achievement for the hard work done in transforming Lowewood Museum as part of the No Borders project. It is testimony to our drive and commitment to making Lowewood Museum the best in Hertfordshire.*"

Lowewood is currently a significant jewel in the Borough's crown – and its very real value cannot be expressed in numbers. The Museum tells the story of our Borough before our time and should be there to tell this story to future generations – but once it is lost, it is lost forever.

Broxbourne Council are the custodians of Broxbourne's heritage and we have to look to you, the Councillors, to protect it on our behalf. For the reasons above, we urge you to decide to retain Lowewood Museum.

Yours sincerely

Guy Lipyeat
Chair

Nicola Cowan
Secretary