

Report: Recommending Accreditation for the Faversham Charters Exhibition

Introduction

The Faversham Charters Exhibition, dedicated to showcasing the town's rich heritage and historic charters, is a significant cultural asset for the community.

The Accreditation Standard is a handbook for running a successful museum. It ensures participants have essential policies, plans and procedures in place.

Pursuing accreditation through the [UK Museum Accreditation Scheme](#), administered by Arts Council England, would bring numerous advantages. This report outlines the key benefits of accreditation and provides a roadmap for achieving this status.

Benefits of Accreditation

- 1. Increased Credibility and Trust** Accreditation establishes the exhibition as meeting nationally agreed standards in governance, collections care, and public engagement. This formal recognition enhances its reputation locally, regionally, and nationally.
- 2. Enhanced Access to Funding** Accredited museums gain eligibility for a wider range of funding opportunities, including grants from Arts Council England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and other cultural bodies. These funds can support exhibition development, conservation projects, and community engagement initiatives.
- 3. Improved Collections Management** The accreditation process involves implementing best practices in the care and documentation of collections. This ensures the long-term preservation of the charters and related artifacts, securing their legacy for future generations.
- 4. Broader Audience Engagement** Accreditation opens doors to collaboration with other museums and cultural organisations. It can attract loans of significant artifacts, enhance marketing reach, and improve educational offerings, increasing visitor numbers and enriching the cultural experience.
- 5. Stronger Governance and Operational Framework** The accreditation process encourages the adoption of robust governance structures and policies. This strengthens the organisation's sustainability and resilience, ensuring it is well-positioned to achieve its mission.
- 6. Community and Volunteer Engagement** Accredited status raises the profile of the exhibition, attracting more volunteers and community support. It also

demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility, fostering greater community pride and participation.

Steps Toward Accreditation

1. **Initial Stages** The Accreditation Scheme has a two-stage application process. Organisations first complete an offline Eligibility Questionnaire to demonstrate they meet the eligibility criteria. If we are eligible it will be confirmed as 'Working Towards Accreditation'. We will then have up to three years to apply ensuring we evidence that we meet each of the Requirements of the Standard.
2. **Review Current Operations** Conduct a thorough review of the exhibition's governance, staffing, policies, and collections management to identify areas requiring improvement.
3. **Develop Governance Framework** Ensure the organisation operates under a clear governance structure with defined roles, responsibilities, and policies that align with the Museum Accreditation Scheme.
4. **Enhance Collections Care** Implement and document procedures for the care, conservation, and documentation of the charters and other items in the collection.
5. **Create a Forward Plan** Develop a strategic forward plan that outlines objectives, priorities, and actions over the next three to five years, focusing on audience development and sustainability.
6. **Engage with Stakeholders** Work closely with local stakeholders, including Faversham Town Council, heritage groups, and the local community, to build support and align objectives.
7. **Submit Application** Apply to the Museum Accreditation Scheme, demonstrating how the exhibition meets the required standards. There is no fee involved in applying for Accreditation.

Conclusion

Achieving accreditation would position the Faversham Charters Exhibition as a leading heritage institution in Kent. The benefits of increased funding, enhanced public engagement, and long-term sustainability make this an essential goal. By committing to the Museum Accreditation Scheme, the exhibition can ensure the preservation and celebration of Faversham's unique heritage for generations to come.

Louise Bareham
Town Clerk