

# Rescue

**The British Archaeological Trust**

**15a Bull Plain, Hertford  
Hertfordshire, SG14 1DX**

**Telephone: 01992 553377**

Office hours: Tuesday and Friday mornings.  
Otherwise please leave a message on the  
answerphone.

*rescue@rescue-archaeology.freereserve.co.uk*

[www.rescue-archaeology.org.uk](http://www.rescue-archaeology.org.uk)

Councillor Graham Turner  
20 Beechfield Avenue  
Skelmanthorpe  
Huddersfield,  
HD8 9BZ

6<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Dear Councillor Turner,

I am writing to you on behalf of RESCUE – The British Archaeological Trust in your capacity as the councillor with responsibility for Creative Kirklees (Arts) which we understand to include responsibility for museums and galleries.

RESCUE is an entirely independent non-party political charity which works to promote archaeology and the historic environment as an important part of both local and national economies and of our shared cultural life. It is with this remit in mind that we are gravely concerned to learn of plans to close three museums (Tolson House Museum, Dewsbury Museum and Red House Museum) as a direct result of cuts to the funding of the local authority by central government. While we understand the pressures on local authorities from central government, we would urge you to abandon these plans which will inevitably involve the loss of valued assets to the people of Kirklees and to visitors to the area. We are certain that such a loss will have a negative impact on Kirklees and its people and particularly on those, including children, young people and students who benefit from the educational aspects of the work of the staff of these museums. There is, in addition, good evidence to indicate that a vibrant cultural sector is a positive asset to the local economy and may actually contribute to local revenues by enhancing local character and distinctiveness and attracting visitors whose contribution includes their use of local businesses. We hope that the Council has carried out a robust and wide-ranging assessment of such indirect benefits which may well outweigh the costs of maintaining such cultural assets.

As you may be aware, both the present government and previous administrations have advocated the benefits which accrue to regions with a robust cultural institutions,

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including museums. We shall be writing to John Whittingdale and Ed Vaizey to argue for more support for Kirklees Museums and we hope that you will feel able to assure us that all possible avenues will be explored to ensure that the museums remain open and with their locally and nationally important collections intact and safeguarded for the benefit of the present and future generations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jude Plouviez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'P'.

Jude Plouviez

Chair, Rescue, The British Archaeological Trust