

Institution: University of East Anglia
Unit of Assessment: 30 History
Title of case study: The Great Hospital Online
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Drawing upon her monograph and other (Wellcome Trust supported) publications on the Norwich Great Hospital, Rawcliffe provided the material for a website (www.thegreathospital.ac.uk) designed to bring this unique institution to the attention of a wider public and to enable the Hospital's Trustees to promote and preserve their Grade One listed buildings. Of the various English medieval hospital to have survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries, this is the only one that continues to discharge a charitable function to the present day with its archives and fabric almost intact. Through the AHRC Knowledge Catalyst Scheme, and in partnership with the Trustees of the Great Hospital and the Norwich Heritage and Regeneration Trust (HEART), over £26,800 was raised for the creation of an online resource, complete with video models, to interest and inform schools, tourists, local history groups and to bring the Hospital's unique attraction to the attention of the General public. The project has reached an international audience and has contributed significantly to UNESCO recognition for one of Norwich's iconic buildings.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>In 1992 the Wellcome Trust awarded Rawcliffe a three-year research fellowship at the University of East Anglia's Centre of East Anglian Studies, to write an institutional history covering the first three centuries of the Norwich Great Hospital. The grant also enabled her to produce a short book on hospitals and poor relief in pre-Reformation Norwich, published in 1995. By good fortune, not only did the Great Hospital, Norwich (founded in 1249) continue to function as a charitable institution after it was acquired by the city in 1547, but a substantial proportion of its magnificent archive was preserved together with many of its medieval buildings. The Hospital archive (stored in the Norwich Archives Centre) is now a unique example of its kind, offering unparalleled insight into life in what was England's second city, as well as into the provision of institutional care, both physical and spiritual, to pre-modern English society. Notwithstanding their importance, until Rawcliffe's work, the Hospital and its muniments were little known, even to historians.</p> <p>By the time that her book, <i>Medicine for the Soul: The Life, Death and Resurrection of an English Medieval Hospital</i>, appeared for the Hospital's 700th anniversary in 1999, Rawcliffe had been promoted to a readership, subsequently a chair in the University of East Anglia (UEA) School of History. Her work, although aimed primarily at an academic audience, attracted considerable local interest, with the Great Hospital becoming a focus of media attention, featuring on such mainstream programmes as <i>Time Team</i> (Channel Four) and <i>Start the Week</i> (BBC Radio Four).</p> <p>Two of the strengths of this work were its sense of context and its emphasis on the centrality of hospitals to urban life. Such strengths were themselves dependent upon the use of Norwich's outstanding medieval records, long underutilised by scholars. In 1998, Rawcliffe and her colleague in the School of History, Professor Richard Wilson, secured a grant from the Norwich Town Close Charity for the production of a multi-authored history of Norwich intended to do justice to the city's neglected archival resources. The work appeared in two volumes in 2004 under their joint editorship, reprinted in paperback two years later. It generated a further demand for information about the city's past and most notably about the Hospital, which was by then commonly being described as 'the hidden jewel in Norwich's crown'. It became obvious that much of the material used by Rawcliffe, and a good deal of other readily available documentary and architectural evidence, could be presented so as to appeal to a wider public, ranging from schoolchildren to adult education groups, tourists and, not least, the Hospital's elderly residents, their families and carers, who are proud of their institution's long and fascinating history.</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)**3. References to the research***Key Outputs:*

Carole Rawcliffe, *The Hospitals of Medieval Norwich* (Centre of East Anglian Studies, Studies in East Anglian History, 2, 1995), pp. 191

Carole Rawcliffe, *Medicine for the Soul: The Life, Death and Resurrection of a Medieval English Hospital* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999), pp. xvii + 334

Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson, eds, *Medieval Norwich* (London and New York: Hambledon and London Books, 2004), pp. xxxvii + 440; paperback edition, Hambledon and London Books, 2006.

Justification of Quality:

Through bidding to research funds, Rawcliffe obtained two key grants: a Wellcome Trust research fellowship for 'The History of the Great Hospital, Norwich, 1249—1547', May 1992 - April 1995, to the value of £92,000, and a grant to Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson for the production of a two-volume *History of Norwich* by The Town Close Charity, Norwich, 1998, to the value of £59,530. Rawcliffe's three published volumes listed above were subject to a refereeing process and have each received laudatory reviews. *Medicine for the Soul* was described as 'a magisterial study' (*Medical History*) and is now regarded as a classic account of a medieval hospital. The grant-awarding procedure adopted by the Wellcome Trust is intensely competitive and is subject to stringent peer review (by at least three expert referees and a medical history panel). It also involves monitoring through an end of grant report. Rawcliffe has since received two further research grants from the Trust, totalling £189,000, which testify to their satisfaction with her work. The Town Close, Norwich, adopts a system of refereeing, and awards very few grants of this size.

4. Details of the impact*The Process:*

Rawcliffe, the Hospital Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer of the Norwich Heritage, Economic and Regeneration Trust (HEART) and the Norfolk County Archivist (who has custody of the Hospital records), decided that a website would prove the most appropriate format to inspire wider awareness of the Hospital's medieval history, manuscripts and buildings. It would meet the expectations of funding bodies - including English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund - from which the Trustees had hitherto obtained essential support for the upkeep of the medieval fabric, while facilitating further appeals for assistance. It would also secure the Hospital's recognition alongside better-known continental peers such as St John's Bruges, the Hospices de Beaune, and Santa Maria Nuova in Florence. The problems posed by permitting unrestricted public access to a site that continues to provide residential accommodation for the elderly could, moreover, be solved through the use of an online 'virtual' guide. This had the additional advantage of simplifying an architecturally complex palimpsest of buildings. Such a guide would also enable scholars around the world to 'visit' the site and study its buildings.

Because the Hospital has undergone constant redevelopment from the 1240s onwards, the first step was to create a series of computerised models that would depict crucial stages of its evolution, in an intelligible fashion. To this end, in 2007 Norwich HEART offered a bursary of £3,000 to pay an MA student in the School of Computing Sciences at UEA to work under Rawcliffe's direction. The successful candidate, John Williams, also produced a video model of the interior of the infirmary and church as they would have appeared in the late fifteenth century (complete with décor, staff and patients). Meanwhile, Rawcliffe secured a grant of £14,301 through the AHRC's Knowledge Catalyst Scheme, together with an additional £9,534 from the Hospital Trust, as enterprise partner, for the production of the website. Between August and

October 2007, Dr Christopher Bonfield, one of her former research postgraduates, was employed to design the website, draft the text, select a range of maps and images, and photograph manuscripts and buildings. Rawcliffe supplied translations and transcripts of relevant documents, edited Bonfield's text and directed the project. Bonfield's activities here are described in the paper he delivered to the fifth conference of the International Network for the History of Hospitals, held in Barcelona, listed amongst the testimonials below. Technical support was provided by the UEA School of Computing Sciences. The website went live in January 2008, after consultations with user groups from local schools and adult education classes. It was carefully structured to cater to the needs of a variety of users, ranging from those who knew little or nothing about the Middle Ages, to others who might require more specialist information. A private launch was held in March 2008 at the Great Hospital for residents, staff and trustees, and a public one at the Norfolk County Record Office.

Impacts and Benefits:

Thanks to the project, the Great Hospital now has a website (more than 100,000 hits) which is invaluable in generating publicity and helping to raise the profile of the institution, a process already begun by the publication of Rawcliffe's work. The Hospital now holds several open days every year with guided tours, attracting large numbers of visitors from the city and beyond who can depend on an excellent online source of information rather than an outdated guidebook. The Hospital's Master (Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt) has opened a centre on the premises, where visitors can learn more about the Hospital's more recent history, as well as its medieval past. Sixth-formers from Norwich School are currently being trained by Rawcliffe to act as centre guides, thereby consolidating the Hospital's new educational role. Thanks to the project, the Trustees have made far greater use of the medieval refectory, which is hired out for select functions as a means of augmenting the preservation fund.

Norwich HEART has acquired a valuable tool for the promotion of Norwich's heritage, and the success of the project has led to further collaboration between HEART and the School, initially in 2008 for the creation by Rawcliffe and Bonfield of the AHRC-funded website, Norwich Blackfriars Online (www.norwichblackfriars.co.uk), thereafter in other ways detailed in the overall statement for Impact (REF3a).

Following the submission of an end of grant report in 2008, the project was recognised by the AHRC as a model of best practice and offered as a case study for the guidance of future applicants. In the meantime, it has brought the School of History into innovative collaboration with computer modellers, supplying employment for at least three individuals.

The website was adopted in 2009 as a recommended resource in teaching GCSE Medical History (see the teaching website listed below). User groups in local schools had been consulted in the construction process, ensuring that the material suited their needs.

Drawing upon the information offered by the website, the County Archivist submitted a successful application in 2011 for the Great Hospital archive to obtain accredited international status on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. It is, to date, the only hospital archive in the world to achieve such recognition. As the county archivist writes in his testimonial below, 'The concept of a website about the hospital's history was a brilliant idea ... the existence of the website and its contents was powerful ammunition in support of the bid and I do not doubt that it contributed significantly to the success of our application'.

Within the criteria permitted by REF2014, the project undoubtedly interprets cultural capital, serves as a stimulus to tourism, informs and influences education, creates wealth, informs policy debate and contributes to a public sense of wellbeing. What began as a spin-off from research into medieval medical history has not only had impact in revitalizing the image and appeal of one of medieval England's greatest surviving monuments, but has culminated in UNESCO recognition for a building and archive now ranked as globally significant.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

The website: www.thegreathospital.co.uk

AHRC case study: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Documents/hospital.pdf>

GCSE teaching: <http://www.edexcel.com/search/pages/results.aspx?k=GCSE%202009%20History%20B%20Schools%20History%20Project%20Medicine%20and%20Treatment>

An academic article by the website creator, Dr Christopher Bonfield, describing the creation of the website (first given as a paper at the fifth conference of the International Network for the History of Hospitals, held in Barcelona in 2009):

'An Online Community: A Case Study of the 3D Reconstruction and Web-Based Guide to the Great Hospital, Norwich', in Bonfield, Jonathan Reinartz and Teresa Huguet Termes, eds, *Hospitals and Communities, 1100-1960* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013) (ISBN 978-3-0343-0244-9), pp. 389-411

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