

# The Box On the Box



Museum  
Gallery  
Archive

Case Study



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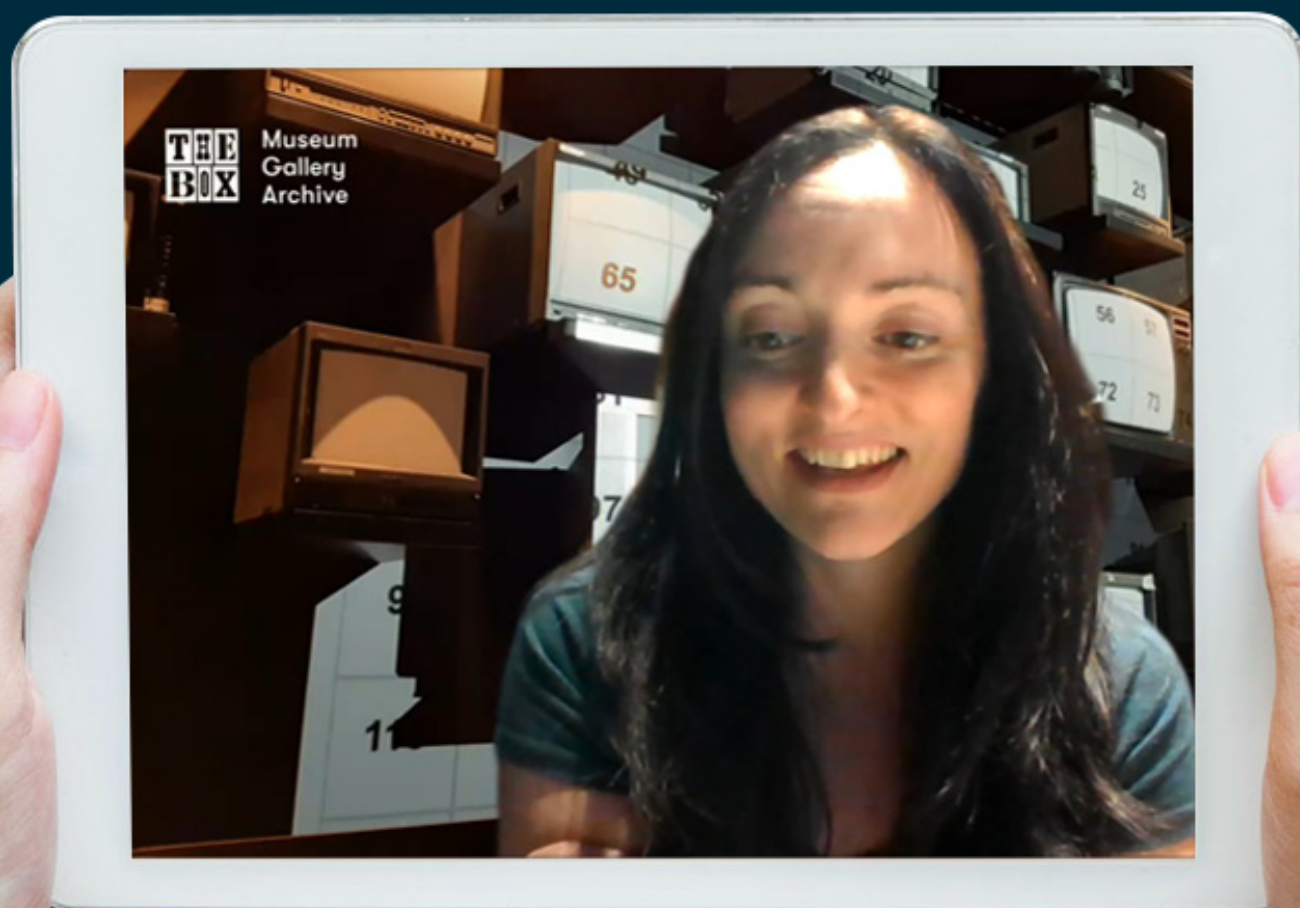
# Introduction

During the global Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, at a time when The Box had yet to open its door to the public, we wanted to explore new ways of engaging audiences that had been particularly badly hit by the effect of the virus.

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Around one in four care homes in the area had suspected or confirmed cases and sadly at least one care worker in the city died of the disease in this period.

We considered a number of options for how to deliver a high quality service that made use of our collections, settling on a conversational approach and the screening of archive film and images.



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# Planning

**The Box on the Box** was a collaboration between colleagues in the Engagement Programmes Team and Collections Team.

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Drawing on 10,000 hours of footage available from our archive film collection, a series of collaborative episodes were designed to cover a variety of interest areas.

The primary audience for **The Box on the Box** were residents within care homes. We worked closely with colleagues in Plymouth City Council's Adult Social Care team to ensure visibility in newsletters and other communications and to provide a high quality service with relevance to residents and care professionals. Care Home Practitioners in Strategic Co-operative Commissioning and the CQC Inspection Manager were involved in shaping the service and inputting during the testing a piloting stage.

We also extended the offer into other care settings, including specialist dementia care units at Mount Gould, NHS wards at Derriford Hospital and also into the homes of isolated older people, through contacts in various agencies and existing groups.

Colleagues in The Box's Marketing Team were involved from the start of this project. High visibility was crucial to the impact of the offer, while understanding the limitations of our existing digital offer with the team helped us to quickly move beyond our initial ideas for streaming.

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# Testing

This programme was tested and delivered during the Covid-19 lockdown, meaning that all staff involved from The Box were at that point working from home.

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This meant our ability to have face-to-face discussions with was not possible – all planning and testing was conducted via conference calls.

Initially we tested YouTube Live using OBS Open Broadcast Software as our streaming platform. We had some limited success with this internally, but had reliability issues with our personal internet connections so sought another option.

Finally, after the implementation of Microsoft 365 and discussions with Lisa Waldock, Project Manager from Transformation and Tim Binding from Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, we settled upon using the Live Event possibilities of Microsoft Teams using multiple presenters, while also live-streaming archive film and images.

A series of informal tests were carried out both internally and with external email addresses, before engaging care homes to take part. We tested it on two occasions with care homes, following some small scale consultation with Activity Coordinators.

We piloted a full episode with a limited number of care homes to ensure they could sign-up, follow our joining instructions and watch on a variety of devices.

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# Live streaming

Eight weeks of live episodes were planned for Series 1. To access these, care settings and others were required to sign-up with us to allow us to send a bespoke URL each week.

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Our eight week programme consisted of:

|        |           |                          |
|--------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Pilot  | 3rd June  | Dockyard Traditions      |
| Week 1 | 10th June | Blitz and Reconstruction |
| Week 2 | 17th June | Transport                |
| Week 3 | 24th June | Dockyard Traditions      |
| Week 4 | 1st July  | Food                     |
| Week 5 | 8th July  | Plymouth After Dark      |
| Week 6 | 15th July | Factories and Work       |
| Week 7 | 22nd July | Fashion and Shopping     |
| Week 8 | 29th July | Seaside and Holidays     |

Many staff members contributed their time and energy to ensure these episodes were presented professionally, including Project Lead and presenter Julia Watkinson (Engagement Officer), presenter Stacey Anderson (Media Archivist), presenter Joanne Gray (Engagement Officer), presenter Tony Davey (Engagement Officer), film editor James Gibbs (Media Technician) and producer Adam Milford (Senior Engagement and Learning Officer).

Chloe Hughes (Engagement Programmes Manager) was instrumental in ensuring a quality offer throughout the process and many others contributed time through critical reflection and support.

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# Impact

Counting the number of viewers per episode was difficult. We took an average of 15 viewers per setting as the basis for our data collection.

|                      |           |                          |                    |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Pilot                | 3rd June  | Dockyard Traditions      | 75 (est.)          |
| Week 1               | 10th June | Blitz and Reconstruction | 180 (est.)         |
| Week 2               | 17th June | Transport                | 210 (est.)         |
| Week 3               | 24th June | Dockyard Traditions      | 240 (est.)         |
| Week 4               | 1st July  | Food                     | 240 (est.)         |
| Week 5               | 8th July  | Plymouth After Dark      | 105 (est.)         |
| Week 6               | 15th July | Factories and Work       | 195 (est.)         |
| Week 7               | 22nd July | Fashion and Shopping     | 150 (est.)         |
| Week 8               | 29th July | Seaside and Holidays     | 195 (est.)         |
| <b>Total viewers</b> |           |                          | <b>1590 (est.)</b> |

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Post-episode surveys were sent out to each subscriber.

We received support from our Marketing Team to ensure heavy coverage on our various social media channels.

A trailer was produced to support colleagues in Adult Social Care which was subsequently shared on our own Facebook channel, attracting 71 likes, 16 comments, 61 shares and receiving over 4,100 views. This trailer was shared a number of times with further 'calls to action' posts.

We took part in a BBC Radio Devon interview to help promote the offer on a regional platform, which did generate a number of sign-ups.

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# Impact

We've had some great quotes and responses from viewers and supporters. A selection are included below.

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*"I have learned so much from the films and I went home to Google more information. I can now engage with my clients more"*

- Jo

*'Oh, this is a godsend. We are trapped at home and now we have something wonderful to look forward to each week and talk about. The films are wonderful. More please!'*

- Annie and Nick

*'We have 20 of us watching on Zoom every week, so we can discuss and reminisce together. The participants in our groups are currently isolating at home. They thought it was brilliant, really fascinating stuff. So, thank you from all of us!'*

- Anne

*All the residents immediately started to chat and reminisce following the session. We learned a lot. Some had worked in the victualling yard - it was great because now I know what they are talking about because I have seen it in the old film"*

- Abbeyfield Care Homes

*"It was really interesting, what a wonderful idea. Lots of talking points for the residents, memories, fantastic. Got a relative's FaceTime tomorrow, so telling them about it"*

- Meadowside and St Francis Residential Homes

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# What we've learned

The main learning point - setting up a new service during a global pandemic isn't the easiest thing to do!

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- Cross-departmental support and collaboration leads to stronger, more focused project vision
- 40-45 minute episodes did hold viewers' attention, with little drop off in viewers.
- Social media and press coverage increased sign-up, as did direct emails to care settings.





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# What's next?

Series 2 will extend the presenter duties and thematic content to other collections areas, with curators and managers joining as presenters.

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We will make use of any evaluation recommendations to improve our offer and extend our reach.

We will explore various options for equipment to improve the visual aspects of the programme – starting with microphones and lighting options, but potentially using a DSLR to stream content at a higher quality than our laptop cameras allow.

We will also implement our learning from this series to develop a virtual offer for schools.





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