History of Forum

During the 1980’s and 1990’s many small museums were founded by groups of dedicated volunteers. These museums were supported through East Midlands Museums Service (EMMS).

In February 2002 a government document was published called ‘Renaissance in the Regions: A new vision for England’s Museums’. A meeting was organised in Oundle to which all interested parties were invited. A decision was made to set up a Northamptonshire Museums’ Forum and the inaugural meeting was held on 26th September 2002 at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

At this meeting it was proposed that the Forum should meet biannually and plans were made to produce a leaflet giving publicity for all members of the forum. The advantages of the membership of the forum became evident to all members and numbers increased. The forum received information and advice from Renaissance and funding to support the publication of a leaflet. The appointment of a County Development officer in 2007 was a great help but ceased when funding ended.

The forum has adopted a more formal structure due to its increased success and size. The annual Museum Heritage Awards have gone from strength to strength attracting a lot of interest and publicity.

In 2015 the Forum merged with Northamptonshire Association of Local History (NALH) which brought additional benefits to the Forum. Two clear benefits are the publication ‘Hindsight’ and the annual History Day. The name of the forum has changed twice to reflect the more diverse representation that it now offers. It is now known at Northamptonshire Heritage Forum.