

Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter, a briefing on our activities and developments in the museum sector in the UK and beyond.

NMDC's members are the leaders of the UK's national collections and leading regional museums, operating in over 100 sites across the country.

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

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NMDC News

Environmental Sustainability

NMDC's response to the Museum Association's consultation on sustainability focuses on environmental sustainability and, in particular, environmental conditions for collections and loans.

NMDC believes imaginative new solutions are needed to resolve the dichotomy between long-term collections care and expensive environmental conditions. This issue requires not just national, but international cooperation. Sir Nicholas Serota raised this issue with international colleagues at a meeting of the Bizot Group of international art museum directors in May. Following this, NMDC has convened a group of conservators from across its membership to begin initial work on a project to develop international consensus on the need for standards for care of collections that are sustainable in the long term. The group will meet for the first time in early September. They will develop plans to work with a wider group of international conservators with a view to presenting a full proposal for consideration by international art museums directors in 2009.

Related News

The Carbon Trust says museums could save up to 30% of lighting costs with simple lighting efficiency initiatives. The Trust has launched a free *Display Lighting Technology Guide* offering advice on how museums can reduce energy costs.
www.carbontrust.co.uk/Publications/publicationdetail.htm?productid=CTG010&metaNoCache=1

The British Museum is hosting a conference in April 2009 on reducing the environmental impact of conservation and broader aspects of collections care.
www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/events_calendar/going_green.aspx?dm_i=351607198

NMDC's consultation response - Key Points

- Discussion of conditions must go in tandem with a consideration of what museum collections are for, and how long they should last.
- Care of our collections should be expressed in a way that does not assume air-conditioning or any other current solutions. The results of air-conditioning have been effective, but in depending on the one solution that could be implemented in the latter half of the twentieth century we have lost sight of the original debate. In the meantime that solution has become more expensive to implement and maintain and in future will become even more so.
- There are less energy intensive alternatives to air conditioning systems. For example, if air change is kept to a minimum, as it was and is in traditional stores, relative humidity and temperature remain naturally stable. Most objects have much simpler requirements and some, for example ceramics, are tolerant of most conditions. Where objects are genuinely vulnerable, cupboards, cases or paintings under glass can easily and cheaply be locally conditioned, for example by using silica gel.
- Guidelines or standards should be developed to underpin imaginative solutions for future new buildings and operations. In the meantime we have to consider the running costs of existing air-conditioning systems. With this in mind, some NMDC members are devising workable solutions involving broader annual parameters for relative humidity and temperature.
- Discussions on new guidelines should include all the stakeholders who collectively share responsibility for display, use and care of collections, as well as having a responsibility for the wider environment.

NMDC's consultation response will be available shortly at:
www.nationalmuseums.org.uk
More details on the MA's consultation can be found at:
www.museumsassociation.org/sustainability

Launch of Cultural Olympiad 27-28 September

Cultural organisations around the UK are planning events to mark the launch of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad over the weekend of 27-28 September. "Open Up" is the theme for the programme with cultural venues across the country opening up areas and activities to the public that are normally kept behind-the-scenes. Many NMDC member institutions will be providing special access to their collection stores.

Here are just some of the events that are planned:

Tate Store in Southwark will be open on 27 Sept for guided tours. Tate will also present the first ever commission in the oil tanks at Tate Modern on 27 Sept with performances by artists Bonnie Camplin and Paulina Olowka taking the form of a guided tour. www.tate.org.uk

National Museums Liverpool's activities include tours of the entomology store and research centre at the World Museum and the National Conservation Centre on 26 Sept, and access to drawers with thousands of human cultures and natural history objects at the Weston Discovery Centre and Clore Natural History Centre. www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

The **Royal Naval Museum** will be offering a chance to explore its model boat collection on 27-28 Sept. The Museum also celebrates the 250th anniversary of Nelson's birth on 29th September 1758. www.royalnavalmuseum.org.uk

National Museums Northern Ireland is offering guided tours of the **Ulster Folk and Transport Museum** on 28 Sept. www.nmni.com

The **British Museum** is opening the Prints and Drawings Students' Room on the 27 Sept for a series of six guided visits by Frances Carey. www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

V&A will offer tours of the furniture stores at Blythe House. www.vam.ac.uk

The **Imperial War Museum's** events include behind-the-scene tours of the Dome reading room, Documents and Printed Books stores, plus a short talk on the Art Collection. There will also be opportunities to meet veterans at a special question and answer session and drop-in sessions enabling visitors to touch exhibits normally displayed behind glass. There will also be a Harvest Fair at the Dig for Victory garden in St James's Park and children's events on HMS Belfast and a chance to get closer to collections at IWM North and explore the architecture of the building. www.iwm.org.uk

The **British Library** has talks giving an overview of the work and collections of the Sound Archive and tours giving unique access to the state-of-the-art technical studios used for every aspect of managing the sound collection on 28 Sept. www.bl.uk

Tyne & Wear Museums is offering behind-the-scenes tours of the Discovery Museum, Shipley Art Gallery and the Laing Art Gallery on 27 and 28 September. There will also be an in-depth tour of the workshops at the Stephenson Railway Museum on 27 Sept and a chance to visit the geology and fossil collections at the Sunderland Museums and Winter Gardens on 26 Sept. www.twmuseums.org.uk

The **Museum of London** has a Roman treasure hunt and opportunity to help create a photographic exhibition. The **Museum in Docklands** has creative writing taster workshops and an evening of performance poetry on 27 September. www.museumoflondon.org.uk

The **British Museum** and **Sir John Soane's Museum** are also among 41 museums, libraries and archives taking part in MLA's *Festival of Storytelling* on 26-28 September to mark the launch of the Cultural Olympiad. Secondary schoolchildren will be writing their own gothic horror story at the Soane using the Museum as inspiration. Storytellers and guest readers in the British Museum's galleries will tell tales inspired by the collections. www.mla.gov.uk/programmes/settingthepace/Festival_Storytelling

For more information on the Open Weekend visit: www.london2012.com/get-involved/cultural-olympiad/open-weekend.php

Related News

The London Museums Hub, lead by the **Museum of London**, has appointed Dr Carol Scott as Programme Manager for 2012. Dr Scott was previously at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney and has evaluated the impact of the 2000 games on museums in Sydney. Her role will focus on the contribution of London's non-national museums to the Cultural Olympiad. Dr Scott attended the most recent meeting of the NMDC London 2012 Committee. www.museumoflondon.org.uk

National Museum Jobs

NMDC's jobs website has details of over 35 vacancies around the UK, including:

- Collections Care Manager, Museum of London
- Loans Manager, National Museums Scotland
- Assistant Exhibition Curator, National Museums Liverpool
- Head of Fundraising, The Ashmolean
- Learning Officer, Tyne & Wear Museums
- Producer, Tate Media

For details of all the current vacancies visit www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk

Forthcoming meetings

HR Forum

11am -1pm, Fri 5th Sept,
Science Museum

Operations Committee

2-4pm, Tues 7 Oct
Science Museum

Learning & Access Committee

1-3pm, Weds 29 Oct
National Gallery

Directors in the News

The Independent has a number of comment pieces and articles following the news that Tate's Board of Trustees have agreed a permanent contract for Sir Nicholas Serota. www.independent.co.uk/opinion/leading-articles/leading-article-artistic-endeavour-898996.html

Sandy Nairne has written an article in September edition of *The Art Newspaper* exploring *The fine line between curating and promoting* (p27). www.theartnewspaper.org.uk

Current Issues

Galleries Seek to Acquire Titians

The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) and National Gallery are working together with the Duke of Sutherland to secure the long-term future of the Bridgewater loan of Old Master paintings - the most important private collection of Old Master paintings on loan to an institution in the UK. The collection of masterpieces has been on loan to the NGS since 1945 and forms the core of the National Gallery's of Scotland's displays of European of Art. The NGS acquired four paintings from the Loan in 1984 and Titian's *Venus Anadyomene* in 2003. The Galleries have now been offered Titian's *Diana and Actaeon* at a net price of £50m, with the option to acquire a second picture, *Diana and Callisto* in four years time for a similar amount. If the effort to acquire these works is successful the other 25 works in the Bridgewater Collection will remain on long-term loan (21 years) to the NGS.

www.nationalgalleries.org/aboutus/news/1:171/5879

International Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

Museums across the country marked the *UNESCO day for International Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition* on 23 August. Events included the opening of a new permanent display about the life of Olaudah Equiano at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, special performances and handling sessions at the National Maritime Museum, a trail at the Royal Naval Museum exploring the Royal Navy's role in the trade and its suppression, guest poets at the Museum in Docklands, and a performance on *Being Black in Britain* at the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool.

www.direct.gov.uk/en/slavery/index.htm

To mark the day of commemoration, DCMS announced the listing of four historic buildings and monuments linked to the slave trade, and amended the listing of 21 other buildings to highlight their link to slavery and its abolition.

www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/default_4.aspx

£3.2m Investment in Museum Research

Thirteen research projects involving UK museums, archives and libraries have been awarded over £3m from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Museums and Galleries Research Programme. The quality of applications was so high that additional funding was found for more awards than originally envisaged. The AHRC recognises the role of museums, galleries, libraries and archives act as key intermediaries between the UK research base and the wider public. These new projects will also involve the institutions collaborating with local authorities, NHS hospitals and art institutes. The recipients of grants up to £350,000 include research projects involving the British Museums, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, British Library, National Railway Museum and Tyne & Wear Museums, among others.

www.ahrc.ac.uk/news/news_pr/2008/3m_museums.asp

Esmée Fairbairn Funding

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is encouraging applications for grants of up to £100,000 from its £3m Museums & Heritage Collections strand. This strand, launched in January 2008, focuses on time-limited collections work including research, documentation and conservation that is outside the scope of an organisation's core resources.

www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk/funding/museums-heritage.html

English Heritage Chair

Lord Bruce-Lockhart, Chair of English Heritage (EH), and former Chair of the Local Government Association, died on 14th August. Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of EH, has paid tribute to Lord Bruce-Lockhart and described how during his one year as Chair of EH, he secured a reversal the real-term cash decline in English Heritage's funding in the spending review and achieved a major breakthrough in plans for Stonehenge, convincing Ministers that a new, affordable scheme was worth Government backing. An acting Chair of English Heritage will be appointed until a successor can be found.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.14264

Future of Museum Accreditation

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council has announced future plans for the accreditation scheme. MLA's new Quality and Standards team, located in Birmingham will manage the standard throughout the UK. In England, Renaissance hubs will be increasingly involved with the accreditation process, advising and supporting museums before their applications are submitted, and after they have been considered. The assessment of applications prior to them being put before the Accreditation Panel for decision will be undertaken by independent expert consultants in England contracted by the MLA. The Accreditation Panel will continue to make the final decisions on behalf of the MLA Board.

www.mla.gov.uk/news/press_releases/Future_of_Museum_Accreditation_takes_shape

Conservative Arts Policy

Following Jeremy Hunt's speech in June, Shadow Arts Minister, Ed Vaizey MP, has written an article in *The Guardian* in response to criticism from the Artistic Director of the Royal Court theatre that the Conservative Party was being evasive on future arts funding.

Mr Vaizey argues that the Conservatives "are now the party for the arts." He stressed that while the Conservative party does want to encourage more private giving, new money from private donors will not be used by the Conservatives to cut government funding.

www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/aug/13/conservatives

Margaret Hodge MP

Culture Minister, Margaret Hodge MP, has updated her blog on the DCMS website. The Minister describes her visit to Tate Britain's *Lure of the East* exhibition, and mentions difficult decisions on export licences and listed buildings.

<http://ministers.culture.gov.uk/margarethodgediary/>

Welsh local authorities to be legally required to promote culture

Alun Ffred Jones has made a number of speeches outlining his vision for his new role as Wales's Heritage Minister. In a lecture at the Institute of Welsh Affairs, Mr Jones said all departments of the Assembly Government as well as Local Authorities should have a role in promoting the arts and culture in Wales. During a keynote speech at the National Eisteddfod in Cardiff, Mr Jones is reported to have pledged to make the promotion of culture a legal obligation for local authorities, in a bid to ensure that everyone in the country has equal access to the arts.

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/presrelesearchive/2464815/?lang=en>

EC Consultation on Copyright in the Knowledge Economy

The European Commission has published a Green Paper entitled *Copyright in the Knowledge Economy*. The Green paper focuses not only on the dissemination of knowledge for research, science and education but also on the current legal framework in the area of copyright and the possibilities it can currently offer to a variety of users including museums. The purpose of the consultation document is to foster a debate on how knowledge for research, science and education can best be disseminated in the online environment. In particular, it is an attempt to structure the copyright debate as it relates to scientific publishing, the digital preservation of Europe's cultural heritage, orphan works, consumer access to protected works and the needs of disabled people participating in the information society. The deadline for responses is 30 November.

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/copyright-info/copyright-info_en.htm

New Agreement Cuts Cost of Subscription Services

Museums across England can now benefit from nationally negotiated agreements for a range of selected and high quality online subscription services as a result of a new initiative funded by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). The MLA has funded JISC Collections to negotiate licence agreements direct with publishers for selected online resources on behalf of the London Museum Librarians and Archivist Group (LMLAG). The licence terms allow unlimited number of users at subscribing museums to use the resources and museums can also offer on-site access to the resources to researchers and other visitors.

www.jisc.ac.uk/Home/news/stories/2008/07/museums.aspx

Impact of Recession on Charities

NfpSynergy has been working on a new project which looks at what happens to charities in a recession, in particular charity income. They have found that it takes a while for the impact of recession to filter through to the charity sector. There is generally a 10-month delay between the start of an economic downturn and its subsequent effect on voluntary income.

www.nfpsynergy.net/downloads/CharitiesInADownturnSlides.pdf

Libraries and Archives Attendance Falls

Data from the 2006/07 Taking Part survey produced by DCMS were released on 21 August. Overall, adult engagement with culture and sport remained broadly consistent between 2005/06 and 2006/07. There were, however, statistically significant decreases in library and archive attendance. Overall library attendance is down from 48.2% to 46.1% of the population visiting at least once a year and archive attendance is down from 5.9% to 5%.

www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/5396.aspx

Heritage and Britishness

Liz Forgan, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is giving a speech at the Royal Society of Arts on 9 September entitled 'Britishness - a values-based approach is not enough'. She will be looking back on over her seven years at HLF and discussing why heritage, rather than a values-based concept of Britishness has the power to bring communities together and foster a strong, inclusive national identity.

www.thersa.org/events/our-events/britishness-a-values-based-approach-is-not-enough

Heritage Lottery Fund Expert Panel

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is refocusing its Expert Panel and appointing 11 new member to advise on applications. HLF would welcome applications from individuals of senior standing with substantial experience in their heritage sector, and those who have expertise in learning, interpretation, training and skills; community participation, audience development and volunteering; and environmental and financial sustainability. The closing date for applications is 15 September.

www.hlf.org.uk/English/AboutUs/Vacancies

Development of New Humanities Diploma

Representatives from museums and the cultural sector are playing a part in the development of the new Humanities Diploma which will be introduced in England in 2011. Nichola Johnson, Director of the Sainsbury Centre at UEA and Chair of the University Museums Group; Jane Glaiser, Strategic Director, Culture, Tourism and Sport, Bradford; and Chris May, National Director, Creative Partnerships, are members of the Humanities Diploma Development Partnership chaired by Sir Keith Ajegbo. Whereas Diplomas so far have been themed around employment sectors, including Creative and Media, Society and Engineering, the latest three will be subject based: Science, Languages and Humanities.

www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0171

National Trust and ACE Annual Reports

The National Trust 2007-8 annual report reveals that the income of the Trust has rose by 10 per cent last year. The main sources of increased income were membership fees, which rose from £100m to £112m, and legacies, which rose from £47m to £58m. However, higher costs of maintenance and new capital projects, especially in historic buildings, meant the Trust's year-on-year surplus dropped from £44m to £37m. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/annualreport

Arts Council England's annual report includes details of how it invested £529m of government and lottery funding in 2007-8, and progress towards meeting funding agreement targets.

www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication_detail.php?bro_wse=recent&id=627

Trustee Appointments

The Prime Minister has made the following appointments:

- **Elisabeth Murdoch as a Trustee of Tate.** Ms Murdoch is Chair and Chief Executive of The Shine Group, an independent media company and former Managing Director of BSKyB.
- **Lieutenant-General Sir John Kiszely as a Trustee of the Imperial War Museum.** Sir John has served at the highest levels of the Armed forces in overseas operations and Whitehall. He was Deputy Commander of Coalition Forces in Iraq from 2004-5.
- **Caroline Thomson as a Trustee of the National Gallery.** Ms Thomson is Chief Operating Officer at the BBC.

The Prime Minister has also reappointed **Zeinab Badaw and Lady Douro** as reappointed as Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery.

www.number10.gov.uk/news/press-notices

ACE Chair

Arts Council England is advertising for a new Chair to replace Sir Christopher Frayling whose term ends in January 2009. The remuneration is £40,000 (tbc) and it is estimated that a time commitment of 60 days a year is required.

www.artscouncil.org.uk/pressnews/news_detail.php?browse=recent&id=990

Other Appointments

Godfrey Worsdale has been appointed as the new **Director of the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art**. Godfrey Worsdale is founding Director of mima, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, and was previously Director of Southampton City Art Gallery. He will take up his new post in November 2008. www.balticmill.com

Kathleen Soriano has been appointed as **Director of Exhibitions at the Royal Academy**. Kathleen is currently Director of Compton Verney, and was previously Head of Exhibition and Collections at the National Portrait Gallery. She began her career at the Royal Academy in the late 1980s.
<http://static.royalacademy.org.uk/secure/files/director-of-exhibitions-appointment-312.pdf>

Dr Oliver Watson has been appointed as **Director of the Museum of Islamic Art in Qatar**, where he was Chief Curator between 2003-5. Dr Watson has been Keeper of the Department of Eastern Art at the Ashmolean Museum for the past three years and was previously at the Victoria & Albert Museum.
www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=8650

Dr Marek Kukula has been appointed as the new **Public Astronomer at the Royal Observatory Greenwich**. Dr Marek's specialism is the study of supermassive black holes and the evolution of galaxies. The appointment, assisted by the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), is part of a continuous programme by the Museum and STFC to develop its astronomy and public engagement activity.
www.nmm.ac.uk/server.php?show=ConWebDoc.22811

Older People's Day, 1 October

The Department for Work and Pensions is promoting events to celebrate Older People's Day on 1 October as part of the *Full of Life* programme. The Department has published a toolkit for those thinking of running events, and are keen to receive details of any planned events so that they can be widely publicised. www.dwp.gov.uk/fulloflife

International Issues

New Standards for Archaeological Acquisitions in US

The American Association of Museums (AAM) has announced the establishment of new standards regarding museum acquisition of archaeological material and ancient art, to discourage illicit excavation of archaeological sites or monuments. The standards recommend that museums require documentation that an object was out of its probable country of origin before November 1970 or was legally exported after 1970, in line with the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. The move follows a similar announcement by the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) in June. Like the AAMD, the AAM recognises that there are cases in which it may be in the public's interest for a museum to acquire an object when there is not full documentation that the provenance meets the conditions outlined above. It recommends that if a museum accepts material in such cases however, it should be transparent about the decision making process. www.aam-us.org/pressreleases.cfm?mode=list&id=147

Stronger Penalties for Destruction of Cultural Property

French Minister of Culture, Christine Albanel, has announced the introduction of prison sentences of up to seven years and fines of up to €100,000, for those convicted of causing destruction, degradation or deterioration to public cultural property. The move follows vandalism of Marc Chagall's stained glass windows at Metz cathedral in July. Intruders stole a few objects from the cathedral and left a hole about 24 by 16 inches in the stained glass depiction of Adam and Eve, created in 1963.
www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/index.htm

Guggenheim Bilbao loses €4.2m

The Art Newspaper reports that the Director of the Guggenheim Bilbao, Juan Ignacio Vidarte, has told the Spanish Parliament's Committee on Basque Culture that the Museum lost €4.2m of public money when it purchased Richard Serra's *The Matter of Time* using US dollars rather than euros to buy the work. The Museum entered into a "forward exchange contract" speculating that the dollar would rise against the Euro. The sculpture installation cost over \$20m in three installments paid between 2004-5. The details came to light in a report by the Basque Court Auditors in 2007, which also revealed embezzlement by the Director of Finance. This was the first time there had been an audit at the Museum since 1997. www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=8639

Guggenheim Bilbao's statement (in Spanish) on the investigation into financial irregularities can be found at: www.guggenheim-bilbao.es/uploads/area_prensa/notas/es/np_dictamen_pericial_es.pdf

Art Galleries Use Bluetooth Advertising

Two Smithsonian art galleries are launching a marketing campaign using Bluetooth technology, sending free downloadable adverts to mobile phones. The Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M Sackler Gallery hope the new technology will help them to attract new and younger audiences to their exhibition of *Royal paintings of Jodhpur*. Bluetooth-enabled bus shelters located in Washington D.C.'s major pedestrian areas will deploy a silent prompt to mobile users with Bluetooth within a 30-foot radius. A message from the Smithsonian will appear on their screens and those who accept the message will receive an image from the exhibition and a message urging them to visit the exhibition. http://newsdesk.si.edu/releases/fsg_bluetooth.htm

Museums and Monuments Under Moonlight

The Ministry of Culture in Greece opened 72 archaeological sites, monuments and museums at night on 16 August. The event on the night of a full moon was called "Under the Moonlight" and was part of efforts to familiarise the public with archaeological sites and the country's cultural heritage. www.xpatathens.com/news/18651

New Cultural Quarter for Oslo

The Art Newspaper reports that the city of Oslo has announced plans to create a new cultural district by moving several museums and its main library to a location near the harbour, opposite the new National Opera House. The Munch Museum, Stenersen Museum, Museum of Modern Art, National Gallery and the Design Museum will all move in a project due to be completed by 2014.

www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=8638

Culture Minister Resigns to Pursue Music Career

The Brazilian musician and Minister of Culture, Gilberto Gil, says he is standing down from the government to concentrate on his music career. Mr Gil, 66, has been a member of the government since 2003, but said for some time that he was finding it difficult to pursue two demanding roles.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/7534323.stm>

National Museums' News Round Up

DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund

Thirty one museums and galleries in England have been awarded grants totalling £4m by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Wolfson Foundation to improve displays and enhance the experience for visitors. This is the seventh year of the current DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund, which has awarded a total of £24 million to institutions around the country since it was set up in 2002. The latest round of grants included funding for:

- Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery's Gallery of Birmingham History 1700-1830 (£300,000)
- Improvements to the Western Art Galleries at the Ashmolean Museum (£230,000)
- The Imperial War Museum's new Your History Discovery Gallery (£190,000)
- The National Maritime Museum's new 'Asian Seas' Gallery (£134,000)
- The National Media Museum's interactive foyer (£150,000)
- The Lady Lever Art Gallery's Learning Base (£50,000)
- Creation of 'Orienteur' (Pathfinder) at the Royal Armouries in Fort Nelson (£150,000)
- Welcome to Tate St Ives (£100,000)
- The Creative City gallery at the Laing Art Gallery (£225,000)
- Improved visitor services at the Wallace Collection (£200,000)
- The V&A's Factory Ceramics gallery (£250,000)

www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/5410.aspx

Museum of London archaeologists have unearthed the remains of what is believed to be one of London's earliest playhouses, in Shoreditch, East London. The open air playhouse, built in 1576, was known to be in the area but its precise location proved elusive. It was here that a young William Shakespeare trod the boards as part of The Lord Chamberlain's Men company of players, and had his first plays performed. The discovery was made during excavations on a site being prepared for the building of a new theatre. www.museumoflondon.org.uk

The **Museum of London** and *The Times* have published an online map showing burial sites under the streets of London dating from the Roman period to 19th century.

www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/science/article4228215.ece

Tate Modern and the **Imperial War Museum**, along with other major organisations in the South Bank and Bankside Cultural Quarter, are offering creative placements for 16-19 year olds from the local area as part of the Street Genius programme. The scheme aims to put young people at the heart of the Cultural Quarter as creators, producers and advocates. www.sowf.co.uk/index.html

To commemorate the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War, the **Imperial War Museum**, in association with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission is looking for 24 young people from across the UK, to travel on an all expenses paid visit to France and Belgium for Remembrance Day, from 7-12 November 2008. For details visit www.tpyf.com

Tate Liverpool's Gustav Klimt exhibition featured the UK's first gallery tour for iPod touch and iPhones. Visitors to the exhibition were able to access the multi-media tour via a Wi-Fi network at the gallery, download it before visiting from Tate's website or iTunes or hire an iPod touch at the gallery with the content pre-loaded.

www.tate.org.uk/liverpool/exhibitions/gustavklimt/tour.shtm

The **British Museum** has launched a project to involve deaf children in the interpretation of objects and exhibitions. The Museum worked with teachers and students from Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children in Camden, London and the production company, Remark!, to produce a second strand to the already well-established BSL interpretation of 'highlight objects' available on the British Museum's website.

www.24hourmuseum.org.uk/nwh_gfx_en/ART59889.html

The **British Museum** has published a detailed assessment of archaeological sites in Iraq, as part of the Iraqi-British project to protect and promote cultural heritage in Southern Iraq.

www.britishmuseum.org/the_museum/museum_in_the_world/middle_east_programme/iraq_project.aspx

The **Royal Air Force Museum Cosford** and its award winning National Cold War Exhibition received a 10 out of 10 rating in Central TV's News *Best Value Kids Attraction* as seen by viewers on 12th August.

www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/news/article.cfm?news_id=96

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www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

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