



Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter, which contains a supplement on the role of NMDC's working groups and committees and information on government changes since the election.

NMDC News

Laurence Stracey

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the sudden death at age 45 of Laurence Stracey, Director of Personnel and Visitor Services at the Victoria and Albert Museum and member of the NMDC HR Forum.

Laurence joined the V&A in 1992 and had been Director of Personnel and Visitor Services since June 2004. Laurence achieved so much during his time at the Museum, not least his involvement in the development and introduction of an innovative and creative three year pay deal in 2001, (the architecture of which has formed the basis for a further three year pay deal) and the modernisation of the Museum's front of house and visitor services functions. Energetic, enthusiastic and passionate about getting the best deal for staff, Laurence will be missed both as a work colleague and friend.

Those who wish to contribute to a collection for Laurence's widow and young family may do so by contacting John Rider in the V&A Directorate on 020 7942 2161.

Learning & Access Sub-Committee

Michael Stevenson, Director of Communications at DfES joined the group meeting on 17 May to discuss how museums can contribute fully to the DfES 10 year strategy to promote the use of digital and interactive technologies within all areas of education as set out in *Harnessing Technology: Transforming Learning and Children's Services*. Christopher Naylor, Director of Engage, gave an update on Engage's work particularly with regard to continuing professional development.

Executive Committee Meeting

The NMDC Executive Committee met on 26th May. The Committee discussed recent research by AEA Consulting on establishing an international dataset of key indicators of activity and resources for a peer group of museums around the world. Sir Christopher Frayling and Peter Hewitt also joined the meeting to discuss areas of common interest, including the need to better articulate the contribution national cultural bodies make to the creative economy and wider government agenda.

Forthcoming Meetings

HR Forum

Friday, 17 June, 10.30am Leadership Sub-Group, 1pm Main Meeting, National Portrait Gallery

UK Affairs Sub-Committee

Wednesday, 22 June, 3pm, British Museum

Joint Advocacy Group

Friday, 24 June, 11am, Imperial War Museum

National Museum Directors' Conference

Friday, 1 July, 11am, Imperial War Museum

Marketing Group

Monday, 11 July, 2pm, Museum of London Sub-Group - Thursday 23 June, 2pm, British Museum

PR Group Meeting

Friday, 29 July, 11.30am, National Archives, Kew

Members News

Court Ruling on British Museum Spoliation Claim

The Court has ruled that the Trustees of the British Museum cannot return objects found to have been stolen from by the Nazis during the holocaust without the authority of an Act of Parliament.

The British Museum received a claim in May 2002 for four drawings from the pre-war collection of Old Master drawings owned by Dr Arthur Feldmann of Brno, Czechoslovakia. The Trustees of the British Museum decided in July 2002 that four drawings in their collection once belonged to the late Dr A Feldmann, that they were wrongfully taken from him by the Gestapo on 15 March 1939 and that the claim, which was for their return, ought to be acceded to if and to the extent permissible by law. However, the Trustees recognised that they are bound by duties of charitable trust and the terms of the British Museum 1963 not to dispose of objects comprised in the Museum's collection, and therefore applied for the guidance of the Attorney General on the question whether he had the legal power in the exceptional circumstances of holocaust-spoliation to authorise the Trustees to meet moral claims pursuant to the rule in the case of *Re Snowden*, which is codified in s.27 Charities Act 1993.

The Attorney General decided that the question required a ruling of the High Court and the case was heard on 24 May before Lord Justice Morritt VC, whose judgement, announced on 27 May, was that the Attorney General was not able to authorise the British Museum Trustees to meet a moral claim against an object vested in their collection under the existing law.

The Museum will now refer the claim to the four drawings in its collection to the DCMS Spoliation Advisory Panel and seek its advice as to the most appropriate action to take in response to the claim.

Further details of these drawings and on-going research by UK museums and galleries into provenance of works in their collections during the 1933-45 period can be found on the NMDC website at www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/spoliation.html

Big Pit wins Gulbenkian Prize

Big Pit: National Mining Museum of Wales (www.nmgw.ac.uk/www.php/bigpit/) has won this year's £100,000 Gulbenkian Prize for Museum of the Year. Big Pit, as part of the Blaenafon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site, is key to telling the story of the industrial heritage of South Wales, where visitors are able to explore a real coal mine and colliery buildings as well as museum exhibitions.

The three other finalists were Coventry Transport Museum (www.transport-museum.com), Time and Tide, Museum of Great Yarmouth Life (www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/default.asp?Document=200.44x1) and Locomotion: The National Railway Museum at Shildon, Co Durham (www.nrm.org.uk/html/locomotion_pb/main.asp).

Sir Richard Sykes, Chairman of the judges, commented "Any one of our four finalists would have been a worthy winner of this year's Gulbenkian Prize for Museum of the Year but Big Pit offers an exceptional emotional and intellectual experience."

For further information about the prize go to: www.thegulbenkianprize.org.uk

'Living Museum' to commemorate WWII

Many national museums are contributing to a 'Living Museum' in St. James's park as one of a number of events to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of World War Two, presented by Defence Secretary John Reid at the launch of the events held at the Cabinet War Rooms on 25 May.

The Museum - part temporary exhibition, part interactive educational facility- will offer an opportunity for the public to see highlights from many of the Nation's major wartime collections simultaneously with exhibits ranging from aeroplanes to a Nissan Hut. The Imperial War Museum will be bringing *Their Past Your Future* (www.theirpastyourfuture.org.uk) to the Living Museum as part of the touring programme. HRH the Prince of Wales will open the week-long event on 4th July.

For further information about this, and other commemorative events, visit the MoD website at: http://news.mod.uk/news_headline_story.asp?newsItem_id=3253

Tate Countdown to Olympic Announcement

Forty celebrated artists have contributed works to be revealed daily in an online cultural countdown to the announcement of who will host the 2012 Olympic Games entitled '40 artists, 40 days'. Contributors include Sam Taylor-Wood, Anthony Gormly and Mario Testini. To view the countdown and for more details go to: www.tate.org.uk/40artists40days/

UK Web Archive - Now Online

The first phase of the searchable archive of Web sites - selected for their scholarly, cultural and scientific value - is now available at the address below. Developed by the UK Web Archiving Consortium (UKWAC) the archive is aimed at the broad research community and marks the first systematic attempt to create an archive of social, historic and culturally significant web-based material from the UK domain. The project has been archiving material for six months and the archive contains 299 titles and 1090 individual web sites. 84 GB of data has been collected, all of which can be searched and viewed through the online archive.
UK Web Archive: <http://www.webarchive.org.uk>.

Tate's Kahlo exhibition free to under 18s

Tate Modern has announced free entry to under 18s for this year's major summer exhibition Frida Kahlo. If the initiative proves popular, the Tate may make more exhibitions free to under 18s in the future. www.tate.org.uk

Vote on Britain's Greatest Painting

The National Gallery and BBC Radio Four's Today Programme are inviting everyone in the UK to vote on what they believe to be the country's greatest painting. The poll, believed to be the first ever national poll of paintings, will provide individuals with a unique opportunity to air their views. The event will launch in July 2005 and will broadcast over six weeks on the 'Today Programme', whose website at: www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/ will be the forum for nominations, discussions and voting for shortlisted paintings, with the results to be announced live at the NG in September. For further information go to: www.nationalgallery.org.uk/what/news/gpib.htm

Doris Duke collection acquired by Nationals

Highlights from Doris Duke's collection of Thai and Burmese art, one of the world's finest collections, have been acquired by three of the UK's national museums. Items from the collection – a spectacular array of exotic and decorative artefacts assembled by the American heiress during the course of her lifetime – have been donated to the British Museum (www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk), the Victoria and Albert Museum (www.vam.ac.uk) and the British Library (www.bl.uk). Selected items will go on display at each institution during May and June.

Phillimore Prize 2005

Phillimore publishers, in conjunction with The National Archives, have awarded The Children's Society the Phillimore Prize for 2005, for excellence in the field of historical archiving. The Children's Society website Hidden Lives Revealed (www.hiddenlives.org.uk) claimed the thirteenth annual award for unveiling the charity work of its predecessor - The Waifs and Strays Society.

With the focus of this year's award being web content, Hidden Lives Revealed beat The Churchill Era by the Churchill Archives Centre (www.chu.cam.ac.uk/churchill_era); the Learning Zone, created by Durham County Record Office (www.durham.gov.uk/recordoffice/usp.nsf/pws/Durham+Record+Office+-+The+Learning+Zone) and Shropshire Routes to Roots by Shropshire Archives and Oswestry Library (www.shropshireroots.org.uk). For further information go to: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/press/pdf/9may2005.pdf

Tate Modern's 5th Birthday

Tate Modern is celebrating its 5th birthday with a publication *Tate Modern: The First Five Years* with essays by the writers Martin Gayford, John Holden, Rowan Moore, Rt Hon Chris Smith, Jon Snow and Tony Travers and includes a reprint of a poem by James Fenton written on the occasion of the opening of Tate Modern. The publication can be downloaded from the Tate website at: www.tate.org.uk/modern/tm_5yearspublication.pdf

RAF Museum Collection to Mobiles

The RAF Museum have made over 40 images of their collection available for mobile phone users to download as 'wallpaper' for £1.50 each. For more information go to www.rafmuseum.org

Current Issues

DCMS Creative Research Network

Emily Candler from NMDC and Vivien Bell from National Museums Liverpool attended a meeting of Research managers from across the DCMS Sponsored bodies on 26 May. The meeting included a presentation by Wing Chang University of Oxford on his research into relationship between cultural participation, social class and social status (more info. at: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~sfos0006/status.html>). The Future Foundation also gave a presentation looking at the interaction of demographic, socio-economic and technological changes, and how these are affecting the expectations and opportunities that people have with regard to their 'free' time. They also gave details of *nVision*, an online resource, telephone consultancy, seminars and workshops providing comprehensive understanding of social, cultural and economic trends as well as focused analysis and raw data. DCMS has just taken out a subscription to *nVision* and there is an opportunity for sponsored-bodies to join at a discounted rate. The Creative Research Network also received an update on the cultural participation survey. The questionnaire is currently being piloted and data collection will begin in July.

Scottish Museums Council publish Museum impact study

The Scottish Museums Council (SMC) has released the first ever report to highlight the key contribution that museums and galleries make to Scotland's tourism industry. *Realising the True Impact of Museums and Galleries in Scottish Tourism*, which was prepared by the Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism, highlights the fact that more people visit museums than any other type of tourist attraction in Scotland, and that visiting museums and galleries consistently appears among the top three activities undertaken by tourists. For further information and to download the report go to: www.scottishmuseums.org.uk/news/2005/economic_impact.asp

Audiences NI

A new organisation called Audiences NI has been launched to 'transform the relationship between the arts and audiences in Northern Ireland'. The organisation's key funder is the Arts Council Northern Ireland. For further information go to: www.artscouncil-ni.org/audience/

Museums Copyright Group

The Museums Copyright Group (MCG) will be holding their wider group meeting on 21 June at the National Maritime Museum. Issues to be covered include IP Policies for Museums, MDA and copyright, the WATCH Project and a DACS update. If you are interested in attending, please contact Naomi Korn, Secretary at naomi@naomikorn.com.

The MCG in partnership with the MDA is currently offering a special joint membership discount for individual members. For further information visit the MGC website at: www.museumscopyright.org.uk/news.htm

New Directions in Social Policy - Researching the impact

MLA has published the findings of research that has assessed the evidence base for museums, libraries and archives' contribution to key social policy targets including regeneration, health and cultural diversity. The research was launched at a policy seminar, at which Chris Batt announced MLA's commitment to developing Generic Social Outcome measures, mirroring the development of Generic Learning Outcomes - part of the Inspiring Learning for All framework. The Generic Learning Outcomes have allowed the sector's impact on learners to be identified. The new outcomes which will be developed over the coming year aim to demonstrate the sector's contribution to key themes such as healthy communities, social capital and cultural identity. The research was undertaken for MLA by Burns Owens Partnership is available on the MLA website at: www.mla.gov.uk/documents/ndsp_developing_evidence.doc

MLA launches LONGITUDE toolkit

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has launched LONGITUDE: a toolkit of resources for public library staff to evaluate the long-term impact of IT-based services on users. The toolkit has been developed by the Centre for Research in Library & Information Management (CERLIM) at the Manchester Metropolitan University, in partnership with Birmingham Public Libraries and Cheshire County Libraries, where the toolkit was piloted. LONGITUDE is available at: www.mla.gov.uk/action/pn/longitude.asp

MDA publishes revised SPECTRUM

MDA, the UK's lead organisation on the management of information about museum collections, has published the revised edition of SPECTRUM, the documentation standard for museums. The revised edition has been updated, and features three new procedures including information on Rights Management. Other updates to the standard include a new, more accessible format, and updates to the sources of help and advice that are referenced throughout. The new edition of SPECTRUM is now available free of charge for non-commercial use by museums. It can be downloaded from the MDA website at: www.mda.org.uk/spectrum.htm

Collections for the Future

The Museums Association's Collections for the Future report will be available on their website from 14 June at www.museumsassociation.org. The publication is the result of an 18-month inquiry into the state of collections in the UK. The report is to make a number of key recommendations under three headings: Engagement; the Dynamic Collection; and Strengthening the Museum Sector. In a preview of the report in this month's Museums Journal Jane Glaister, the director of arts, heritage and leisure in Bradford and chairwoman of the inquiry, said that museums needed more people looking at collections, assessing their value and actively going into the marketplace and collecting.

Record Library Usage

The Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) have welcomed a new report published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) which shows a record rise in public library usage across the UK. In 2003/04, visits to public libraries increased by nearly 14 million, over 250,000 extra visits a week. This is the second consecutive annual rise and builds on an additional 5 million visits made in 2002/03 - the first upturn in usage since the early 1990s. The sea change in popularity coincides with the introduction of computers and internet access into all 4200 of the UK's public libraries. Because of the lottery-funded People's Network project there are 32,000 computer terminals offering broadband internet access in public libraries, and all library staff have been trained to provide help and advice for users.

For further information visit the MLA website at: www.mla.gov.uk/news/press_article.asp?articleid=808

Should We Junk Collections?

An Institute of Ideas debate on the theme 'Should We Junk Collections' was hosted by the Wallace Collection on 16 May as part of Museums and Galleries Month. Panellists broadly agreed that collections should not generally be 'junked' - although one audience member commented that a society that could not destroy art could not appreciate it. The Museum Association's Maurice Davies asserted that museums should perhaps worry a little less about the future and concentrate on the present, with the single most important goal being to get displays and exhibitions good and visited by people. Other panel members were more cautious about the possibility of damaging collections through use, with the British Museum's Deputy Director Andrew Burnett arguing that the public trusted museums to hold and care for important objects. Poet and essayist, James Fenton raised concerns that politically driven instrumentalist arguments for the usefulness of collections had overtaken understanding of their value.

Anna Somers Cocks of Umberto Allemandi & Co. raised the possibility of having a new 'heroic age' for museum collecting rather than solely preserving the integrity of Victorian collections. For a list of speakers and theme synopsis go to:

www.instituteofideas.com/events/mgm2005.html

Meaningful Measures

The Visitor Studies Group held a forum on 12 May 'Meaningful Measures' to look at the significance of performance measurement in museums and how different methods of evaluation can contribute to effective performance monitoring. Andrew McIntyre of Morris, Hargreaves, McIntyre looked at measuring engagement and making meaning from visitor studies, Anne Pennington of National Museums Liverpool presented the NML visitor profiling survey and Glen Lawes of Ironbridge discussed non-visitor research by the museum.

A report of the forum will be available on the Visitor Studies Group website shortly at:

www.visitors.org.uk/events/meaningful.shtml

If you have any comments on the NMDC Newsletter or would like to contribute to a future edition, please contact Claire Henry – chenry@iwm.org.uk

MA Hold Cultural Diversity Conference

The Museums Association held the conference 'On Reflection: Representing cultural diversity in museums' on 18 May in Birmingham. Speakers covered a wide variety of topics and included Augustus Casely-Hayford, Programme Director of Africa 05 and member of the NMDC Cultural Diversity Group, who gave a presentation on the successes and lessons from the Africa 05 programme. Makeda Coaston of the GLA and independent consultant, Beverley Mason explored the business case for developing new audiences, supporters and sponsors through representation of cultural diversity. Nona Martin of the Smithsonian Institution gave an insight into the role of Ethnic Museums in the USA which sparked a debate with the audience as to why there are so few specifically ethnic museums in the UK. For information about upcoming MA events go to: www.museumsassociation.org

AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards

The AHRC has awarded grants to a number of Higher Education Institutions to fund collaborative PhD studentships. Many of the studentships offered are from collaborations between museums and HEI's such as 'Intangible heritage: the case of theatrical performance' at UCL with the V&A (the deadline for prospective students to apply passed on 30 May). The AHRC are encouraging further collaborations for the next round of awards to be announced in September. For further information go to: www.ahrb.ac.uk/university_staff/

Director Leaving engage

Christopher Naylor, engage (www.engage.org) Director since 1995, is to leave for a post in the new City University Cultural Policy team in September 2005. In his new post Christopher will be working with new Professor Sara Selwood as a Knowledge Transfer Director, to develop new training and CPD opportunities, and to lead action-research such as an EU-funded EQUAL project on carnivals and festivals in regeneration. Previously Christopher was Director of Charleston in Sussex, and co-founder of the Almeida Theatre.

More information about City University Cultural Policy team can be found at: www.city.ac.uk/artspolicy/

New AHRC Chief Executive

The AHRC has announced the appointment of Professor Philip Esler as Chief Executive. Philip Esler is currently Professor of Biblical Criticism at St Andrew's University where he was recently Vice-Principal for Research. Professor Esler will take up his post on 1 September 2005. In the meantime Ms Frances Marsden will be interim Chief Executive of the AHRC, following the departure of Professor Geoffrey Crossick, who left in April to become Warden of Goldsmiths College. For further information go to: www.ahrb.ac.uk/news/news_pr/2005/appoint_chief_executive.asp

New International Agency for Cultural Development

A new philanthropic agency working internationally in the field of cultural development held its inauguration in New York on 2 May. The Louise T Blouin Foundation is to be based in London with a presence in New York and Paris. Over \$30 million has been pledged for the Foundation, including the cost of a major new international arts centre in London (over \$20 million) and a first year programme budget of at least \$6 million. One of the Foundation's early initiatives will be to carry out a wide-ranging research project, commissioned from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), into the economic importance of the arts, aimed at encouraging governments to increase investment in arts education and cultural tourism. The Foundation will also make awards to honour 'exceptional contributions to the art and science of creativity'. The first awards, given at the inauguration went to a diverse range of recipients including President Bill Clinton and Anish Kapoor. Members of the Foundation's international advisory council include Sir Christopher Frayling, Anthony Gormley, Damien Hirst and Charles Saumarez Smith. For further information about the Foundation go to: www.ltbfoundation.org

What Good Are the Arts?

To coincide with the publication of John Carey's book 'What Good Are the Arts?', the Royal Festival Hall is hosting a discussion, chaired by Sir Christopher Frayling, looking at issues raised by the book. The author will be joined by psychoanalytic writer Adam Phillips and writer and critic Lola Young at the event at 7.30pm on 8 June in the Purcell Room. Tickets can be purchased from the Royal Festival Hall website at www.rfh.org.uk.

SMC consult on Significance Recognition Scheme

The Scottish Museums Council (SMC) have initiated a museum and gallery sector consultation into the development of a Significance Recognition Scheme for Scotland. The consultation launched by Patricia Ferguson, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport, highlights a need for significant collections held in non-national museums and galleries throughout Scotland to be formally recognised. All Scottish museums and galleries are invited to be part of the consultation process. The closing date for comments is Friday, 8 July. Further details and the consultation document can be downloaded at: www.scottishmuseums.org.uk/news/2005/sig_cons.asp

New Office of Public Sector Information

The UK's new Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) with responsibility for co-ordinating policy standards on the re-use of public sector information has been launched. OPSI, formed from the resource of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HSO) will lead the public sector to provide consistent and transparent processes for potential re-users to gain access to public sector information. OPSI is an integral part of the UK implementation of the EU Directive on re-use of public sector information that will take effect on 1 July this year.

To view the Cabinet Office press release go to: www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=156576&NewsAreaID=2

CaSE gives DCMS -10 for Science

CaSE, the Campaign for Science and Engineering in the UK has published a 'scorecard' for the scientific Departments of State for the four years since the 2001 General Election. The report scored the overall attitude to science and the level of research funding, as well as the scientific high points and low points of policies over the course of the Parliament. DCMS came at the bottom of the league with an overall score of minus ten out of a potential forty. The Department is criticised by CaSE for its lack of commitment to science funding, claiming that museums and libraries are 'brilliant parts of the country's scientific landscape. But they seem to achieve what they do despite their parent body rather than because of it'. The Department for Education and Skills scored 1 point and the overall government average was 15 points. To view the full report and results for other departments go to: www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/documents/2005/CaSE0509.pdf

Export Bars

Following a recommendation by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art, Minister for Culture David Lammy has placed a temporary export bar on two works of art - a Meissen porcelain armorial vase made in 1740 and a drawing of Mary Hamilton by Sir Thomas Lawrence. The export of the works has been deferred until after 17 July 2005 with the possibility of extension until 17 October 2005 if there is serious intention to buy. For further information go to: www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2005

Parliamentary Report

Changes at DCMS

Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell has confirmed a revised list of Ministerial responsibilities within DCMS as follows:

Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP

Overall responsibility for all Departmental strategy policy and expenditure and in particular:
The London 2012 Olympic bid
The creative economy
BBC Charter review and digital switchover
International policy
Modernisation
School sport and sports facilities
Minister for Women
Spending review

David Lammy MP- Minister for Culture

Arts
Heritage
Museums and Galleries
Libraries

**Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP –
Minister for Sport**

Sport
London 2012 Olympic bid
Gambling
Horse racing and the Tote
National lottery policy

**James Purnell MP – Minister for Media and
Tourism**

Broadcasting
Creative industries, including film and music
Tourism
Licensing

List taken from DCMS website at :

www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2005/dcms064_05.htm

Other appointments of interest to members include David Milliband as Minister for Communities. The DCMS spokesperson in the Lords is the Lord Davies of Oldham. The Secretary of State's Special Advisors are Nick Bent, who's areas of responsibility include heritage matters, Creative Partnerships, the Lottery Bill and the Olympics Bill and Roger Sharp, who's areas include national arts policy and the Olympics.

Theresa May is now Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport and the Family, replacing John Whittingdale. Hugo Swire remains Shadow Arts Minister. Don Foster remains culture spokesperson for the Liberal Democrats. Select Committee membership is expected to be announced shortly.

If members require further information please contact Claire Henry at chenry@iwm.org.uk.

New Responsibilities for DCMS

10 Downing Street (www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page7534.asp) has announced that responsibility for fashion design and the arts market will be moved to DCMS across from the DTI. New arrangements will also be put in place for DCMS to sponsor jointly with the DTI the Design Council, advertising, computer games and publishing. DCMS will also assume oversight of the arrangements for Remembrance Sunday which currently rests with the DCA

New Legislation

The Queen's Speech on 17 May outlined the Government's upcoming legislative programme. Bills of particular interest to the sector include the Olympics Bill which addresses the management of the Games should the UK bid be successful

(www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2005/dcms069_05.htm), the Charities Bill requiring organisations to comply with a 'public benefit' test

(www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/charitylaw/index.html#2d) and the National Lottery Bill (not mentioned in the speech but part of the legislative programme). A transcript of the full speech can be viewed at: www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page7488.asp. The National Lottery Bill can be downloaded from: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmbills/006/2006006.htm

National Lottery Bill

The National Lottery Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 24 May. Under the Bill lottery distributors will be able to carry out public consultations to decide where money is spent - possibly leading to television voting like that seen in the BBC programme Restoration. The bill also proposes a new system of allocating investment income from funds held in the National Lottery Distribution Fund which, according to the DCMS press release, 'would encourage lower balances by ensuring that distributors successful in getting their balances down to not suffer a loss of investment income, and that those maintaining high balances do not benefit' (www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2005/DCMS071_2005.htm). In response to the Bill the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) have said they are delighted with the Secretary of State's commitment to heritage as a Lottery good cause after 2009. HLF have also said that they welcome the increased emphasis given to public involvement, having led the way on this with citizen juries, their commitment to the *Restoration* programme and further plans for public consultation on future priorities. In response to the proposed changes to the National Lottery Distribution Fund HLF have said 'HLF is committed to reducing our balances in the national Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF) and so is confident that the clause relating to the reallocation of funds (Clause 8) would never be used in relation to HLF. We welcome the amendment (to Clause 8) to make clear that funds allocated to one sector will not be moved to another. Clause 9 continues to be a concern as the heritage sector would lose out if interest on the heritage share of the NLDF is redistributed. The National Audit Office (NAO) estimated that this would have cost us £15million in 2003-4'. HLF have stressed that it will be important for the sector to demonstrate the needs and benefits of continued heritage funding during the DCMS consultation in Autumn. www.hlf.org.uk

NMDC's Working Groups and Committees

In addition to the main National Museum Directors' Conferences, held three times a year at the Imperial War Museum, NMDC coordinates and provides a secretariat for several working groups and committees. These groups deal with specific areas of museum work and consist of staff from member institutions. Some groups also include members from other NDPBs and cultural sector bodies.

This supplement gives a brief update on the role of these groups and the work they are currently undertaking. For further information contact Claire Henry, Research and Communication Manager at NMDC at chenry@iwm.org.uk.

NMDC Executive Committee

Chair: Robert Crawford CBE Esq, Director, Imperial War Museum

The NMDC Executive Committee is a group of eight directors elected from within and by NMDC members to discuss current issues and forward NMDC business between major Conference meetings.

Learning & Access Sub-Committee

Chair: Sandy Nairne Esq, Director, National Portrait Gallery

The NMDC established the Learning & Access Sub-Committee to highlight the value of the national collections as a learning resource, building on the foundations laid by the NMDC's 1999 publication *Netful of Jewels*.

The Sub-Committee is currently developing a research proposal, in close collaboration with the MLA, to highlight the learning impact of national museums, identifying what more could be achieved if more resources were available.

Valuing Museums Working Group

Chair: Mark Jones Esq, Director, V&A

This group is leading research on the economic and social impact of museums, including measures of public value. This work builds on the *Valuing Museums* report published in 2004.

UK Affairs Sub-Committee

Chair: Dr David Fleming OBE, Director, National Museums of Liverpool.

NMDC's UK Affairs Sub-Committee met for the first time on 14 March. The role of the Sub-Committee will be to brief NMDC on developments in the wider museum sector, and ensure that national museums are properly built into nationwide programmes. Sub-Committee members include representatives of national and regional museums, the MA, MLA and the regional agencies

Leadership Working Group

Chair: Roy Clare Esq, National Maritime Museum

The purpose of the Leadership Working Group is to ensure coordination with initiatives being pursued by others in the sector and to raise the profile of management and leadership issues with Ministers, civil servants and funding bodies.

Joint Advocacy Group

Chair: Mark Wood Esq, MLA

This group, which includes representatives from the leading museum sector bodies, is taking forward the work begun with the *Manifesto for Museums* in 2004. By working together, the group aims to make the strongest possible case for museum funding in the next Spending Round.

Cultural Diversity Working Group

Chair: Sandy Nairne Esq

The Cultural Diversity Working Group was set up in the spring of 2004 to advise the National Museum Directors' Conference on ways forward in relation to the growing diversity of our culture as a vital issue for the national museums and galleries. Membership is drawn from the national museums, the Museums Association and the MLA.

HR Forum

Co -Chairs: Andy Bodle Esq, Director, Operations & HR, National Maritime Museum
Janet Atkinson, Head of Personnel, Imperial War Museum

The HR Forum is the largest of NMDC's working groups. Membership includes Heads of HR from across the cultural sector including museums, arts and heritage. The group meets quarterly to discuss a variety of issues including pay, leadership, succession planning, training and workforce diversity

Spoliation Working Group

Chair: Sir Nicholas Serota, Director, Tate

The Spoliation Working Group was established by NMDC in 1998 to examine the issues surrounding the spoliation of art during the Holocaust and World War II period and draw up a Statement of Principles and proposed actions for member institutions. The group continues to oversee research into provenance during the 1933-45 period. For further information go to the Spoliation area on the NMDC website at:

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/spoliation.html

National Museums Marketing Group

Chair: Will Gompertz Esq, Director of Communications, Tate

The National Museums Marketing Group consists of the Heads of Marketing at the national museums, and other institutions upon the invitation of the Chair. The Group was established this year, in order to make recommendations to NMDC on areas where co-ordinated action would benefit member institutions. Current work includes a review of visitor tracker surveys and research into the profiling of 'non-user' groups for museums.

PR Group

Chair: Rotating

The PR Group consists of Press Officers from member institutions and other cultural organisations. The group meets quarterly to discuss current issues, exhibitions and events.

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

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