

Partnerships: an NMDC briefing

Museums of all sizes and types regularly work in partnership to deliver collaborative projects with other museums, educational establishments, and heritage and community organisations across the country. Many of these partnerships are based around the loan of objects, including from national museums, but others focus on developing new public programming, sharing skills and expertise, education and learning, and working with communities. Museums continue to adapt the focus and nature of partnership working as a way of managing the impact of cuts to public funding and developing greater resilience.

Museums loan thousands of objects to other museums across the UK every year as part of mutually beneficial collaborative projects. In 2012/13, DCMS-sponsored museums lent objects to **2727 venues** in the UK (a marked increase from 1530 in 2008/09).ⁱ Examples include:

- **Star object loans:** National Gallery Masterpiece tour (sponsored by Christie's) opened with Manet's *The Execution of Maximilian* at The Beaney in Canterbury. It was seen by nearly 21,000 people before moving on to Barnard Castle and Coventry. Until 2016, one major National Gallery painting will tour each year.
- **Loans of local significance:** the loan of the Lindisfarne Gospels from the British Library to Durham Cathedral in 2012 generated £8.3m in economic benefit and was visited by 100,000 peopleⁱⁱ;
- **Long-term loans to provide content for a museum or historic house:** apart from one locomotive, the entire collection of locomotives and stock on display at STEAM in Swindon is a long-term loan from the National Railway Museum.

Larger museums and specialist collections tour complete exhibitions to venues around the country. The Natural History Museum's *Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2013* has been to ten UK venues including Bristol's MShed, Cumbria's Rheged Centre and Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery.

There are internationally significant collections across the UK, including the 140 Designated Collections and 36 national museum sites located outside of London. Regional museum collections are rich and diverse, leading to imaginative partnership projects. Tate borrowed over 100 objects for *British Folk Art* (June – September 2014), including a horse vertebrae painted to look like John Wesley and a giant leather boot, from regional collections including Northampton and Peterborough Museums, Norfolk Museums Service and Beamish. Beamish worked at the request of the people of Hetton to save their 101-year old Band Hall. The local community raised money to enable the brick-by-brick transfer of the building to the museum in May 2014, where it now holds concerts and displays the history of the Hetton Silver Band.

Regional museums, galleries and historic houses drive local tourism, and their partnerships with national museums assist with this. The Great Bed of Ware, probably the single best-known object in the V&A collections, went on a year-long loan to Ware Museum where it was seen by over 34,000 people (almost tripling Ware's normal visitor figures).

The speed and depth of public funding cuts, felt most by local authority-supported museums, will have an adverse impact on museums' ability to participate in ambitious partnership projects. Cuts inevitably lead to a reduction in the capacity of all partners to manage more complex projects and fundraise for programmes. Much of the activity detailed in this briefing was developed before significant cuts to public funding were made.

1 Long term loans

To ensure greatest public access, museums with large collections regularly place objects on long-term loan to venues across the UK. These loans are usually supported by curatorial exchanges and frequently have a local connection.

- Turton Tower in Lancashire, Cliffe Castle in Keighley and Sizergh Castle near Kendal are just some of the historic houses furnished with objects from the V&A collection. The panelling in the Inlaid Room at Sizergh Castle is now displayed in the room it was originally intended for.
- The Royal Armouries has lent 325 objects to the Maison Dieu Hall and Dover Museum thus providing the bulk of their display;
- The National Portrait Gallery has more than 1150 objects on long-term loan to 173 venues including Gawthorpe Hall in Burnley, Culloden Battlefield Centre in Inverness and Lawrence House Museum in Launceston.
- In January 2014, the Horniman Museum and Gardens opened *At Home with Music* which includes keyboards from the past five centuries on long-term loan from the V&A. These instruments may not otherwise be seen, or heard, by the public. The loan led to a competition for young composers to create a piece to play on the historic instruments.
- Royal Museums Greenwich has a policy of beneficial dispersal of its archaeology collection to local museums where the objects have greater significance. The Brigg Raff is installed at Brigg Heritage Centre and the Southwold side rudders are on display at the Southwold Museum and Historical Society.

2 Large scale loans and long-term partnerships

Museums develop long-term partnerships and arrangements with museums and historic sites and houses across the UK to ensure greater public access to the collections and display objects in the appropriate historical context.

- National Museums at Chatham was opened in May 2011. Responding to a need to improve storage facilities for their collection of ships models, Royal Museums Greenwich let No 1 Smithery from Chatham Historic Dockyard (and then sublet space to IWM). The £12.5m capital project restored the Grade II-listed Ancient Monument to provide storage for 3500 ships models, research space and permanent and temporary galleries to display objects from the two national collections at Chatham (and other collections, including Seven Stories in Newcastle). This has resulted in a 32% increase in paying visitors to the Historic Dockyard.
- The National Railway Museum currently has 50 locomotives, 10 carriages and 16 wagons on long-term loan at 35 separate locations including STEAM in Swindon, the Scottish Railway Preservation Society in West Lothian and the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire. The Museum has worked with Leeds Museums to assess the Leeds major large engine collection. The process has meant eight of the Leeds engines have been moved to more suitable homes with other museums or restoration groups.
- University of Oxford Museums and Worcestershire County Council worked in partnership with the Keil family and local heritage groups to create a new independent museum, Ashmolean Broadway, in a 17th century coaching house in the Cotswold village of Broadway. All objects on display are from the Ashmolean Museum, including works by Millais and William Morris, as well as objects from Elias Ashmole's 1683 founding bequest to the Ashmolean. There is also a temporary exhibition space.
- National Galleries Scotland provides much of artwork on display at Duff House in Banff and Paxton House in Berwick-on-Tweed. It circulates masterpieces from the collection, including portraits by Sir Henry Raeburn and Thomas Gainsborough, to both venues. El Greco's *St. Jerome in Penitence* is on permanent display at Duff House.
- Wrexham County Borough Museum has a temporary exhibition space dedicated to showing objects from National Museum Wales and National Library of Wales.
- Since 1992, Leeds Museums has owned and supported the Burton Constable Foundation's collection displayed at Burton Constable House in Holderness, near Hull.

3 Star object loans

National museums ensure that star objects tour the UK to ensure those who are unable to travel to their permanent home can see them.

- The famously over-stuffed Horniman Walrus left the museum for the first time in 112 years in 2013 to be part of the Hayward Gallery's *Curiosity* exhibition at the Turner Contemporary in Margate, where he met 136,000 visitors.
- Touring exhibitions and star objects is also a way of giving greater access to new acquisitions. The National Portrait Gallery has recently acquired a self-portrait of Van Dyke, and after being displayed at the Gallery will embark on a UK tour.
- National Museums Scotland lent the Skailie Hoard to Shetland Museum and Archives for the Viking Congress.
- *Five collections* – Tate, National Galleries of Scotland, National Museum Wales, Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museums, and Colchester and Ipswich Museums – will all display the newly acquired Constable *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows* and support the display with a programme of events.
- The Royal Armouries is lending two pieces of Henry VIII's armour to Leeds Castle for *Medieval Festival 2014* – a summer-long event jointly organised by both institutions.
- To coincide with their 2014 Ming exhibition, the British Museum is touring the largest Ming vase in their collection to The Burrell Collection, Weston Park in Sheffield, Bristol Museum and the Willis Museum in Basingstoke (supported by The Art Fund).

4 Loans of local significance

Museums will loan objects of local significance to an institution in that area. This can drive visitors to those institutions and place a greater focus on objects which may otherwise be in storage. Examples of loaning objects, either singularly or a complete exhibition, of local significance include:

- Sir John Soane's Museum commissioned artist Clare Twomey to create *Everyman's Dream* in 2013. After the exhibition, the piece was divided into two and distributed to two of Soane's country houses: *Pitzhanger Manor* in Ealing and *Port Eliot* in Cornwall;
- The National Portrait Gallery has lent a portrait of James Cook to the *Captain Cook Birthplace Museum* in Middlesbrough, and will invoke the spirit of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* with the touring exhibition *Authors of Murder* to *Darlington Railway Museum – Head of Steam* in Autumn 2014;
- The V&A lent a 17th century silver-gilt toilet service to *Belton House* in Lincolnshire as the service features the coat-of-arms of the family associated with this stately home;
- The British Museum, Potteries Museum Stoke and Tullie House Museum jointly acquired the *Staffordshire Moorlands Pan*. It is presently in the Roman Frontiers Gallery at Tullie House alongside a significant number of objects on long-term loan from the British Museum's Roman collection; and
- The Royal Museums Greenwich exhibition *The Last of the Tall Ships: photographs by Alan Villiers, 1903-82* was shown at Greenwich, and then to Falmouth and Aberdeen.
- An Iron Age torc and bowl from Lochar Moss in the National Museum of Scotland collection made a return to the area for the first time in 150 years for *The Great Moss* exhibition in Dumfries and Annan in 2013.

5 Touring exhibitions

Exhibitions infrequently have one life, but are turned into touring exhibitions and shown in venues across the UK.

Japanese Cloisonné

In 2012/2013, 10 exhibitions organised by the V&A were shown at 21 venues throughout the UK, attracting 752,400 visitors. *Japanese Cloisonné* featured the Edwin Davies bequest to the V&A and the gift included provision to take the exhibition to small and medium-sized museums. These included to Davies' hometown of Bolton, Winchester Discovery Centre, Potteries Museum in Stoke and Maidstone Museum. The exhibition had 57,140 visitors whilst on show at the Weston Park Museum, Sheffield.

National Portrait Gallery regional partners and touring exhibitions

Over 651,000 people visited National Portrait Gallery's touring exhibitions and galleries at their country house partners in 2013. The Gallery seeks to display artworks in an appropriate historic context with objects from their collection being permanently displayed at Beningbrough Hall in York, Bodelwyddan Castle in North Wales and Montacute House near Yeovil. Many National Portrait Gallery exhibitions are first shown in London then tour the UK. These include *George Catlin* (in partnership with the Smithsonian Institute) to Birmingham, *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize* to Cheltenham and Bristol, and *BP Portrait Award 2013* to Aberdeen and Wolverhampton.

ARTIST ROOMS

ARTIST ROOMS is a collection of international modern and contemporary art, donated jointly to Tate and National Galleries of Scotland by Anthony d'Offay. Funding from The Art Fund enables the collection to be shared with museums and galleries across the whole of the UK, with a special emphasis on inspiring young people. By the end of its sixth year, 132 displays and exhibitions in 66 regional museums and galleries will have taken place, including the first exhibition of the work of Andy Warhol in Northern Ireland (at the MAC). The ARTIST ROOMS collection has been seen by 29 million people, including over 235,000 to see a Damian Hirst exhibition at the New Art Gallery, Walsall.

Roman Empire: Power and People

Bristol Museums and Art Gallery regularly host exhibitions which have been first shown at London-based national institutions, such as NHM's *Extinction* and the Royal Collection's *Leonardo da Vinci's Drawings*. The British Museum touring exhibition *Roman Empire: Power and People* was created in partnership with Bristol Museum, and then continued to Norwich Castle and onto Coventry, Leeds, Dundee and Segedunum. The exhibition was responsible for Norwich Castle receiving record visitor numbers on Tuesday 18th February 2014.

The First Cut

Manchester City Galleries created *The First Cut* exhibition (attracting 139,912 visits), which featured special commissions, as well as loans from artists and other museums including Tate and the Bronte Parsonage. The exhibition then toured to the Djanogly Arts Gallery in Nottingham (where it was the second most popular exhibition the Gallery has staged) and Southampton SeaCity Museum.

Display in non-traditional venues

Museums work with non-traditional venues to provide greater access to their collections.

- When the University of Oxford Museum of Natural History and the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester closed for capital works, objects from their collections appeared in unusual locations across Oxford and Manchester respectively. In Oxford, a penguin was lent to a fishmonger, a bank vole to a bank, and eight pubs took part in themed quiz nights complete with specimens. *Pop-up Whitworth* was installed at Manchester's Selfridges store and showcased works by Picasso, Marc Quinn, Tracy Emin and Turner.
- The British Library's *Islam, Trade and Politics across the Indian Ocean* was a product of a major research project, and a digital photographic exhibition utilising the scholarship developed from this. The exhibition went to the Oriental Museum in Durham, Highfields Community Library in Leicester, the Ancient India and Iran Trust in Cambridge, the University of Leeds and the Street Gallery in Exeter.
- The V&A has worked with *Paintings in Hospitals* for ten years, and in 2012 exhibited digital prints from the V&A's Computer Art collection at the Great Western Hospital in Wiltshire. A comments box by the display allowed patients and staff to give their feedback: "*These beautiful artworks brighten the corridor and help cheer me up on difficult days*" [staff] and "*It is wonderful to stop and see. It stops you being absorbed in your world of health and worry*" [patient].ⁱⁱⁱ Similarly, Leeds Museums mount an annual exhibition in the Atrium of the Bexley Oncology Wing of St. James Hospital.

6 The dispersed exhibition

Wall Face, launched August 2013, is an exhibition project funded by Arts Council England. The project is a partnership between the National Portrait Gallery, Vindolanda Trust, English Heritage, National Trust, Senhouse Museum Trust, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, Tullie House Museum and the Hadrian's Wall Trust. Each of eleven museums and galleries along the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site display a portrait - either a painting or a high quality facsimile depending on the environmental conditions within each museum/gallery. Two interpretive panels will accompany each portrait, one providing an overview, the second providing information about the particular portrait on display. This partnership has brought national loans and engagement not just for large regional services, but to some of the smallest museums who may not normally work in this way.

7 Lending to exhibitions

Objects are lent to be part of temporary exhibitions at museums across the country. This is a good way for museums to ensure greater public access to their collections, show them in different contexts and work in collaboration across the sector.

- Hertford Museum's *World of Wallace* exhibition, supported by Arts Council England, was curated by Hertford Museum using objects on loan from national and non-national collections including the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Natural History Museum (NHM). The exhibition then toured to Wisbech, Dagenham, Woodstock, Chelmsford, Leicester and Poole.
- *Artists Make Faces* at Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery was guest curated by Monika Kinley and produced in partnership with Peninsula Arts. It included 50 loans from national and regional collections across the UK (including National Galleries of Scotland, Tate and the Whitworth Art Gallery).
- Auckland Castle's *The Power and the Glory* includes four portraits from the National Portrait Gallery. The National Portrait Gallery also contributed six works, including self-portraits of Heron and Hepworth, to Harrogate's Mercer Art Gallery's ambitious exhibition *Art and Yorkshire: From Turner to Hockney*, staged to mark Le Grand Depart of the Tour de France.
- *Your Country Calls: Enlistment to Embarkation* at Folkestone Town Hall combines objects from the National Army Museum and locally held objects and stories to tell the story of both military personnel leaving and refugees arriving in Folkestone during the First World War. It is a partnership between the National Army Museum, Folkestone Town Council and Step Short.

8 Leading national cultural events and commemoration

National museums or subject-specific collections play a lead role in national occasions. As the national institution which was founded specifically to mark the contribution of those involved in the First World War, Imperial War Museums (IWM) is leading the commemoration of the centenary of the conflict. Through the Centenary Partnership, IWM has provided a comprehensive set of resources - for digital, marketing, teaching and exhibition purposes - a single website and logo, promotion, advice and leadership to the UK cultural heritage sector. As of August 2014, there are 3003 organisations in the Centenary Partnership, representing 50 countries. IWM has also launched *Lives of the First World War* - an enormous online project to collect the stories of millions who lived during the First World War. Similarly, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust will play a leading role in marking the 650th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth in 2016.

9 Strength of regional collections

Regional museums have won the annual Museum of the Year prize for 8 of the last 11 years. The 2013 winner, the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow, was chosen from a 10-strong shortlist which included no national museums. There are 140 Designated Collections across the UK, which are nationally significant collections not based in national collections and cover a huge range of subjects, from the whole collection at the Wordsworth Museum and Dove Cottage in Grasmere, to the core collection at the Porthcurno Telegraph Museum in Cornwall, to the Archaic Chinese Bronzes at Compton Verney. These collections regularly

lend objects to partners across the UK, such as the loan of the Blackpool 167 tram from the National Tramways Museum in Crich to Beamish for the 2014 Great North Festival of Transport. Leeds Museums lent 1118 objects to 178 venues worldwide in 2013, to be viewed by 4 million people.

Regional collections regularly lend to national museums:

- Tate's popular *Pre-Raphaelites* exhibition included a significant number of loans from regional collections including Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Norfolk Museums Service, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums and Manchester City Gallery. The exhibition, with the loans, toured to Washington, Moscow and Tokyo.
- As part of an ACE-funded programme of showcasing regional collections in London, *Discoveries: Art and Science* was a large exhibition of objects from across the University of Cambridge's museums at Two Temple Place in London in 2014. This followed the 2013 exhibition of artworks from Cornish collections. Programmes like this are important as over 80% of philanthropy to the arts sector is generated in London.
- *Turner and the Sea* at the National Maritime Museum included loans from Manchester City Gallery, Southampton SeaCity Museum and the Barber Institute in Birmingham. The latter was a simultaneous reciprocal loan, with Royal Museums Greenwich lending Willem van der Velde the Elder's *Attack on Harwich*.
- The Conservation Department at the National Gallery has restored Wtewael's *The Raising of Lazarus*, which will remain on long term loan from High Wycombe Museum.

Supporting artists

The quality of public programming, and the visitor numbers, is testament to the richness of regional collections. Large regional museum services attract very high profile artists and with them record-breaking attendances. *New Expressions 3* is an alliance of six Major Partner Museums - Bristol Museums, Royal Albert Memorial Museum (Exeter), Birmingham Museums Trust, York Museums Trust and the Cumbria Museums Consortium - with the National Trust and the Contemporary Visual Arts Network. The alliance will deliver nine major new artist and museum collaborations between 2013 and 2015 (and with them, audience engagement activity and a substantial capacity building programme), provide funding for six other museums to develop partnerships with artists.^{iv}

Tourism

Museums, galleries and historic houses drive local tourism, and their partnerships with national museums assist with this. Turner Contemporary in Margate attracted 450,000 visitors and contributed £3m to the local economy in its first year of opening. It does not have a collection and a substantial proportion of the objects displayed in that time, including Rodin's *The Kiss* and over 80 works by Turner, were lent by Tate.

The Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle is a multi-functional partnership between Leeds Art Gallery, Henry Moore Institute, Yorkshire Sculpture Park & Hepworth Wakefield. The partnership has attracted more than £800k of support from various sources for projects including a Thomas Houseago sculpture commission (as part of the Tour de France Cultural Festival) and the loan of a Henry Moore sculpture in the revamped Kings Cross Station in Autumn 2014 to promote the collections.

Efficient use of resources

Local partnerships with larger regional museums or universities are also critical to ensure local resources are used as efficiently as possible and opportunities fully explored. In Oxford there is a formal partnership and programme of activity between Oxfordshire County Museums Service and the University of Oxford Museums – Oxford Aspire. Oxford Aspire provides peer support, sharing of good practice, improved co-ordination and some programming. They supported Banbury Museum's move to trust and brokered the loan of *Natural Histories*. Similarly, the Cumbrian Museums Consortium (Wordsworth Trust, Tullie House Museum and Lakeland Arts Trust) are jointly funded by Arts Council England to share some core museum functions, including learning, apprenticeships and local museum development.

Museum Development

A number of Arts Council England's Major Partner Museums (MPMs) are also responsible for Museum Development in their region. The MPMs provide regional sector leadership and are able to bridge between the national museums and university museums, and the wider museum sector. Events such as the free *Power of Partnerships* conference organized by the Cumbrian Museums Consortium showcased a variety of partnerships involving museums of all types and size. *Share East*, led by Norfolk Museums Service, is a successful approach to delivering museum development across the East region and in doing so shares good practice, knowledge and resources across the region.

10 National networks

Subject Specialist Networks (SSNs) are groups of museum professionals with special expertise in a given area, and are supported by Arts Council England. This is particularly important for collections where museums may not have dedicated specialist expertise, such as musical instruments or natural history, and makes good use of the experts at national museums and designated collections. There are 42 SSNs, covering areas as diverse as plastics, sport and natural history, and the networks provide a platform for projects, professional development and a repository of knowledge about the collections in UK museums (crucial at a time of declining funding and consequent loss of specialist knowledge). Curators from national museums are involved in numerous SSNs, and lead some (including with dedicated staff). The British Museum leads the *Money and Medals Network*, the V&A leads the *Association of Performing Arts Collections*, the National Portrait Gallery leads *Understanding British Portraiture*, Tate leads the *British Art Network*, and the National Gallery leads *European Painting pre-1900*. Funding from The Pilgrim Trust allows the National Gallery to organise study days, research bursaries and meetings through the SSN.

The NHM is addressing the decline in specialist stewardship of natural history collections by holding workshops for non-natural history curators aimed at illustrating how the collections can be used and cared for. They are working with NatSCA to understand where significant specimens and collections are, and where there is expertise. This is part of a larger programme of national partnerships the NHM is developing in consultation with other significant UK natural history collections.

The Plus Tate network has 19 members (including Tate) and is designed to enable some of the liveliest visual arts organisations in the UK, with a focus on modern and contemporary visual art, to share ideas and expertise as well as programmes and collections. These include Mostyn in Llandudno, Grizedale Arts in Cumbria and Towner in Eastbourne. Partners have collaborated on joint initiatives such as the Plus Tate Learning Programme and jointly develop a programme of events to enable networking, inspiration and shared development.

The National Army Museum works with the Army Museums Ogilby Trust to support the 136-plus Regimental and Corps museums in the UK. The Museum employs a Regimental Museums Liaison Officer and provides advice, loans and training. The National Army Museum is working with six regimental museums across the UK on the exhibition *Outbreak 1914!*^{iv} The six simultaneous exhibitions tell a local story using objects from the National Army Museum. Similarly, National Museums Scotland will work in partnership with the eight venues for their First World War national touring exhibition *Next of Kin* between 2015 and 2018.

11 Sector development projects

Museums of all sizes collaborate together on projects aimed at improving the health of the museum sector.

- The recent HLF Skills for the Future programme provided funding for groups of museums to offer long-term training for new entrants into the sector. The British Museum worked with five regional museums to provide five trainee curator posts, and will repeat this from 2014, focusing on collections management. Similarly, Leeds Museums and Royal Armouries work with the University of Leeds to offer a Registrar trainee programme, and the National Museum of Scotland is piloting a new method

of training curators where other experts in the sector provide their training through shadowing, project work and mentoring.

- The National Archives has responsibility for archive sector development and have sought to broaden the sorts of partnerships archives enter into, including with scientists and artists. They are also working in partnership with the Institute of Fundraising and others to embed strategic fundraising as a core activity within the archive sector.
- In partnership with English Heritage, the Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust leads the England-wide *Industrial Heritage Support Project*. This builds capacity within 250+ identified industrial heritage sites through mentoring, advice, networking and training, meaning the sites will improve management structures, produce their own conservation and interpretation plans, and relevant funding applications.
- Cyfoeth Cymru Gyfan - Sharing Treasures supports the loan of national collections across Wales and encourages sustainable relationships between local museums, Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales and other national institutions. Welsh Government grants enable local museums to raise gallery standards and encourage collaboration on activities associated with an exhibition.
- The National Museum of Scotland organises 15 *Collections Basics* courses each year covering a range of subjects, from *Object Handling* to *Introduction to Firearms* to *Introduction to Wet Collections*.

12 Education and learning

The *Museums and Schools Programme*, funded by the Department for Education and co-ordinated by Arts Council England, partners London-based national museums with smaller museums across England. This has led to celebrated collaborations, such as those between Royal Museums Greenwich and Time and Tide Museum in Great Yarmouth, and the Science Museum and SS Great Britain in Bristol. The partnership between the V&A and the Herbert and Transport Museums in Coventry has been supported by the loan of objects from the V&A.

Circuit is a four-year national programme connecting 15–25 year olds to art galleries and museums working in partnership with the youth and cultural sector. Led by Tate and funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, it provides opportunities for young people to steer their own learning and create cultural activity across art disciplines. Circuit involves all four Tate galleries and five partners from the Plus Tate network: firstsite, Colchester; MOSTYN, Llandudno; Nottingham Contemporary; Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; and Wysing Arts Centre and Kettle's Yard, Cambridgeshire.

13 Research and digital

The encyclopedic nature of some of the larger museum collections mean they are a vital tool in scientific and humanities research, and it is not just university museums who have high profile research and public programme partnerships with Higher Education Institutions. Furthermore, not all collections held by national and larger museums are suitable (or intended) for public display, but instead form the basis of ground-breaking research. The NHM loans c.36,000 specimens per year for this purpose.

Digitisation has allowed museums to work in partnership by linking collections together and providing an accessible way of studying the collections, either through high resolution photography of single objects or by mass digitization. The University of Oxford Museum of Natural History, Manchester Museum, National Museum Wales, Sedgwick Museum (University of Cambridge) and the British Geological Survey have collaborated on GB/3D Type Fossils Online, a JISC funded project to create a collaborative online database of high resolution photographs, stereo anaglyphs and 3D models of around 25,000 British type fossil specimens. It has created a highly valuable resource for taxonomic research.

A number of museums, including NMNI and IWM, work in partnership with HE institutions to offer post-doctoral awards (using funding from AHRC) to develop scholarship using the collections. Along with their five collaborative PhDs, Leeds Museums has created a local research consortium for the Leeds-based collections.

14 Supporting community engagement

Pride in our Past was an award winning HLF-funded project between Plymouth City Council's Arts & Heritage Service and Plymouth Pride Forum, a local support and advice service for Plymouth's LGBT community. The project took a new look the city's collections to find LGBT stories associated with those objects (such as a painting by Beryl Cook of a pub frequented by gay servicemen, which prompted memories of frequent police raids), and also worked with community members to record oral histories and build a community archive of Plymouth LGBT experiences. The project culminated in the creation of this new archive collection for Plymouth Archives and a major exhibition at Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery. The exhibition was supported by a star object loan from the British Museum – the *Warren Cup*.

IWM North and Manchester Museum run an award winning volunteer programme that has a significant qualitative impact on the lives of participants. It targets those at risk of social exclusion and supports individuals in building their skills and confidence.

The British Museum is using object loans and events to work with Sikh communities. The British Museum, supported by The Art Fund, has toured a replica of the Sikh Fortress Turban to Derry, Coventry, Bradford, Birmingham, Leicester, Sunderland and Preston.

Piece Makers at the Museum of Army Flying is the artistic results of a two-year collaboration between the National Army Museum, soldiers from rehabilitation and support centres, and contemporary artist Susan Stockwell. A large-scale, textile-based work by Stockwell draws together pieces made by soldiers and stories captured during the course of the project.

Museums of all sizes are increasingly working in partnership with mental health charities and provide a service for those with specific needs. The Manchester Museum Partnership's work with Central Manchester University Hospitals won two Royal Society of Public Health Awards in 2012, the RAF Museum is the first museum to be recognised with an award from the National Autism Society, and Beamish has secured funding for a therapeutic day centre for people living with dementia.

15 Providing public access to archives or private collections

National and larger regional museums provide a means for the public to have access to private collections – and these time-limited exhibitions can prove to be extremely popular.

- In 2010, the Crosby Garret Helmet, a rare Roman helmet, was discovered in Cumbria and sold to a private collector in 2011. They outbid Carlisle's Tullie House Museum, but following negotiations between the collector, the Museum and the British Museum, the helmet went on public display at Tullie House in 2013. It was seen by 20,000 people in three months and the accompanying book sold out.
- From October 2014, Sir John Soane's Museum will provide a rare opportunity for the public to see one of the best collections of 20th century British prints, the Clifford Chance Collection. It will include works by Chris Ofili, Tracy Emin and Rex Whistler.
- Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust provides public access to the work of local artists and makers, including co-management of the *Jackfield Tile Museum*, with manufacturer Craven Dunnill), and at Blists Hill Victorian Town has provided display space for the British Postal Archive. The 2014 exhibition *Last Post* also includes loans from the British Library.
- *Jack Vettriano: A Retrospective* was the most popular exhibition ever held at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow, seen by over 130,000 visitors in five months. The exhibition was a partnership with Vettriano's studio who helped arrange the loan of a large number of works from private collectors, including Sir Alex Ferguson and Jack Nicholson (as there are no Vettriano works in public collections). The exhibition was also a commercial success for Glasgow Museums, generating an income of £1.82m from retail, of which £682k was from limited edition Vettriano prints.

16 Business as usual

The museum sector is by nature collaborative, and much of what is considered to be business as usual is delivered in partnership. The National Gallery supported Ferens Art Gallery in Hull in their purchase of Pietro Lorenzetti's *Christ between Saints Paul and Peter* by giving curatorial advice and holding a press briefing in London to launch the acquisition appeal. The painting will undergo conservation at the National Gallery before being displayed in Hull.

Art & Life was a touring exhibition co-curated by Kettles Yard, Dulwich Picture Gallery and Leeds Museums and shown at each venue. Brighton Pavilion and Museum and Brighton Dome and Festival work closely together to manage the cultural offer in the city centre.

Specialists and curators share their expertise freely within the sector: to HLF and Arts Council England when considering acquisitions; to DCMS with regards to cultural exports; and daily to enthusiasts, students and the public through general enquiries. The V&A, British Museum and National Museums Scotland have formal responsibilities with the administration of the Purchase Grant, the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the Scottish National Fund for Acquisitions respectively. Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust manages the World Heritage Site within which it is located.

Senior representatives of regional museums have wider remits in the cultural, creative and intellectual life of the region, either formally as part of their role or because as members of university or council bodies. Museums actively embed themselves in service delivery across the region to ensure they serve their communities. The Beamish Regional Stakeholder Group comprises of the lead officer for culture and the council leader for all the North East local authorities (as well as experts) and discusses Beamish's role in learning programmes for schools, working with people living with dementia, cultural tourism and business planning.

17 Importance of investment by local authorities and charitable bodies in museum services

Much of this partnership work is only sustainable in the future if a stable or predictable level of funding can be maintained for both the lenders and, crucially, borrowing institutions. National museums can only lend star objects, touring exhibitions or objects with local significance if there is the capacity within the borrowing institution to administer these. For regional and smaller local museums to survive and thrive, they need to be maintained at a "fighting weight" and this will be increasingly difficult if they have to absorb significant cuts at short notice. Some non-national museum services have started to charge for inter-museum loans, or significantly reduced the number of objects they loan because they no longer have the capacity to manage this.

Despite the cuts to their core funding, national museums have chosen to maintain much of their partnership work. They already seek external funding to support this activity. Christies, the Esme Fairburn Foundation, the Dorset Foundation, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England, The Art Fund and the Pilgrim Trust all support high profile partnership activity, and this funding rarely only covers the cost of the loan in isolation but also supports capacity building, gallery refurbishment, training, events and academic study as part of the same project.

Museums supported by local authorities have absorbed cuts of up to 20% in a period of just 4 years. However, Brighton Museums has had cuts in their local funding of c.41%, Birmingham Museums Trust has seen a reduction in their public funding of c.40-45%, and York Museums Trust has seen their revenue support from the council reduce by c.63% since 2012. Cuts of this magnitude make it difficult to plan for the future and to effectively alter operating model – to become more entrepreneurial – and ensure maintenance of partnerships.

Inter-museum loans are important facets of partnership work and provide significant public access to national collections. However, some objects require specific environmental conditions and consequently not every museum is suitable for displaying every sort of object. As the sector adjusts to a much-changed financial situation, other elements of partnership work – particularly around collections care and the sharing of expertise – make a great contribution to the longer-term resilience of the sector, although much of this depends on third party funding.

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sponsored-museums-annual-performance-indicators-2012-13>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.visitcountydurham.org/media-room/gospels-impact>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.paintingsinhospitals.org.uk/downloads/2012-V&A-exhibition-Great-Western-Hospital.pdf>

^{iv} Penryn Town Museum, Bridport Museum, Newstead Abbey, Strutt's North Mill, Leeds Industrial Museum and Touchstones Rochdale.

^v Firing Line at Cardiff Castle Museum of the Welsh Soldier, Royal Engineers Museums and Library (Gillingham, Kent), Museum of the King's Own Hussars in Lancashire (Preston), Durham Light Infantry Museum, Staffordshire Regiment Museum (Lichfield) and The Fusilier Museum at the Tower of London.