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Cultural policy



Conservator Thilo BURGEL cleans up the nose cone of an Avro Anson aircraft at the newly redeveloped civil aviation hangar at the National Museum of Flight, East Fortune Airfield © Paul Dodds.

White Paper for Culture

The Government has published the first White Paper on culture in fifty years, outlining its strategy for the sector. Much of the focus is on broadening access to culture and diversifying the workforce, as well as encouraging new forms of funding for the sector. Culture Minister Ed Vaizey described it as 'not a revolution but an evolution' of past cultural policy.

Issues and plans highlighted by the paper include:

- There will be a review of the museum sector, the first in a decade, to report in 2017. There will also be a 'tailored review' of Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Measures to ensure that children and young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have cultural opportunities. ACE will lead a new Cultural Citizenship programme in 70 areas where arts participation is lowest, aiming to reach 14,000 young people in its first year.
- A new 'Great Place' scheme will be piloted in 12 areas to encourage local authorities to put culture at the heart of their planning.
- Culture should contribute to the regeneration of the regions. Cultural Action Zones will be created to advise communities on making the best of their historic buildings.
- The report acknowledges the large contribution of culture to the UK's status as a soft power leader. It pledges to 'create new opportunities for our cultural sectors to promote trade, exports and cultural exchanges.'
- Funded bodies must work to encourage a more diverse workforce. Disabled and BME groups are particularly under-represented – ACE will commission new research into disabled people's experience of culture. ACE, Historic England and national museums will also be asked to develop strategies and report on approaches to making leadership more diverse.
- The report reiterates existing schemes to help diversify fundraising in the sector. The government will work with funding bodies to '*explore the benefits and risks of these new models and encourage a more diverse range of cultural organisations to consider whether and how they might be able to attract funding from new sources*'.
- A new Commercial Academy for Culture will bring ideas from business into the cultural sector.

The report ends with a series of outcome indicators which will be used to measure whether the ambitions of the White Paper become reality. [Gov.uk](#) (whole text), [Gov.uk](#) (case studies), [Gov.uk](#) (Ed Vaizey's launch speech)

NMDC and its members worked closely with DCMS during the development of the White Paper, taking part in numerous roundtable events and submitting a joint written response to the consultation coordinated by NMDC on behalf of The Art Fund, Association of Independent Museums, Collections Trust, Museums Association and the University Museums Group. The joint submission can be downloaded from the NMDC website [here](#).

Responses to the White Paper

The reaction from the sector has been broadly positive. NMDC Chair Diane Lees said: "*NMDC welcomes the White Paper's recognition of the essential role culture plays in our society and economy. We fully support the focus on ensuring culture is accessible to all and the importance of culture in place-making.*" She also welcomed the planned museums review, especially the strand on regional museums, as "*NMDC remains deeply concerned for the sustainability of the UK's civic museums as local authority funding continues to rapidly decline.*"

The Cultural Learning Alliance praised many aspects of the White Paper including its commitment to diversity and the fact that DCMS is holding itself to account against targets. It expressed concern however at the lack of cross-working between government departments – for example, the National Citizenship Service just announced in the Education White Paper has considerable overlap with the Cultural Citizenship Programme in its attempts to reach young people, but the two initiatives are quite separate. CLA adds that although DCMS plans to support many desirable outcomes, there is 'very little in the way of a delivery mechanism'.

Arts Council England broadly welcomed the White Paper, describing it as a 'vote of confidence in the arts and cultural sector' but adding 'however, the Paper also highlights challenges to funding, especially outside London.' The Guardian criticised the report for downplaying 'the threat to England's cultural landscape from local authority cutbacks' and for reiterating existing schemes. Shadow Culture Secretary Maria Eagle gave a brief response focused on cuts.

Finally, a slightly tongue in cheek Althea Efunshile took a long view of Jennie Lee's first Culture White Paper, written at a time of deep economic crisis and cuts to the railways: "*against that*

backdrop her paper, rather audaciously, proposed a 30% increase to the Arts Council grant. I must say that I like that woman's style!" [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [Arts Professional](#), [ACE Blog](#), [ACE](#), [Cultural Learning Alliance](#), [NMDC](#), [Heritage Alliance](#), [Maria Eagle](#), [The Stage](#)

White Paper announces museums review

The museums review announced in the Culture White Paper is expected to take place in the next financial year. It will have a broad remit covering three strands - the national infrastructure for museums; museums directly funded by government; and local and regional museums - and including a focus on:

- Cross-cutting themes including shared services and storage, digitisation and resilience;
- How DCMS sponsored museums can work more effectively together;
- Increasing touring of objects currently held in storage in London;
- How the infrastructure for England relates to the devolved nations;
- How ACE and HLF (which will also be reviewed) can support local museums.

[Museums Journal](#), [ALVA](#)

Select Committee Inquiry into funding culture in the regions

The Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee has launched a new 'Countries of Culture' inquiry. The inquiry has a broad remit and the Committee is seeking written submissions before 22nd April on issues including:

- Current funding for culture in the regions;
- The effect of the local authority settlement on regional culture;
- Cultural partnerships and new funding models;
- Physical and virtual accessibility of culture in the regions.

[Parliament.uk](#)

AHRC publishes Cultural Value report

The Arts and Humanities Research Council has published its detailed report on cultural value, the result of a three year project it describes as 'one of the most in-depth attempts yet made to understand the value of the arts and culture – the difference that they make to individuals and to society'. 70 new pieces of work made up the report, from new research to critical reviews and workshops. At its heart the study aims to discover the components of cultural value and then look for robust mechanisms which demonstrate it. The report explores how culture:

- Produces reflective individuals with empathy and respect for others. Case studies include engagement with culture amongst prisoners and by professional and informal carers.
- Produces engaged citizens who vote and volunteer - it can help minority groups find a voice and help people engage with issues such as climate change.
- Contributes to health and well-being - the report gives evidence that long-term arts engagement has positive health outcomes, and shows how it can be utilised in health issues from mental illness to old age.
- Can play a role in peace initiatives, such as in Northern Ireland.

The report also examines arguments which justify arts funding on the grounds of economic benefit, and states that some datasets don't stand up to scrutiny. Instead it calls for more research into the way the creative industries and funded cultural sector feed each other, and demonstrates that both of these manifestations of culture are a single ecosystem and should not be separate policy decisions. The report also asks questions about which cultural interventions have the most impact – for example the possibility that small-scale arts work in cities has a greater impact on people's lives than major regeneration schemes. [AHRC](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Future plans for Taking Part

DCMS has published its plans for the future of the Taking Part statistical tracking of the cultural sector, libraries and sport. Changes include:

- Mori and NatCen have won the contract to deliver Taking Part for the next three years.
- Headline estimates of participation will be based on face to face interviews with 8,000 adults each year, but longitudinal data will now be via web based interviews.

- From 2016-17 there will be new questions on digital participation, and existing libraries and sport questions will be developed.
- From July 2016 an online data analysis tool will allow registrants to interrogate the data for themselves. A simpler dataset will be available to the public without registration.
- There will continue to be an annual event for users of Taking Part.

The next release will be on 28th April, with a particular focus on libraries, cross-sectoral participation and social media users. Taking Part is on twitter at @DCMSInsight. [DCMS](#)

Sadiq Khan publishes Manifesto for London

Labour candidate for London mayor Sadiq Khan has published a 'Manifesto for London' which includes a dedicated section on arts and culture. Praising the richness of the capital's offer, he said 'too many Londoners don't get to make the most of our city's cultural assets' and that spiraling rents are driving out music venues, artists studios and changing the character of Soho. Khan's manifesto pledges include:

- Spreading the activity of museums, galleries and theatres across the city.
- Developing a cultural infrastructure plan for 2030.
- Creating a 'London Borough of Culture' scheme, echoing the City of Culture programme.
- Setting up Creative Enterprise Zones to encourage the creative industries.

Conservative candidate Zac Goldsmith has said that he will not be producing a separate culture manifesto. [Sadiq Khan](#), (arts and culture from pg 78), [The Stage](#)

Budget 2016

The Chancellor George Osborne announced his 2016 budget on 16th March. Headlines for museums include:

- The tax relief scheme for temporary and touring exhibitions first mentioned in the Autumn statement last year has been confirmed. A public consultation will launch in the summer as the Treasury considers how the scheme will work.
- The VAT refund scheme for museums and galleries has been extended, and any museum meeting the basic criteria (including free entry) will now be eligible to apply for the VAT exemption.
- Drawing on £20m announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review last year, the Government is inviting bids from northern cities and towns to host a Great Exhibition of the North. DCMS will be publishing further details and application criteria shortly.

There were announcements of numerous individual grants for museums and cultural projects, including:

- £5m contribution to the V&A Dundee's fundraising campaign.
- £27k per year from 2017-18 to 2019-20 for the Lloyd George Museum in Gwynedd, which was at risk of closure.
- £13m to Hull City of Culture 2017: £5m for Hull New Theatre and £8m for various other projects.
- £200k to 'We'll Meet Again' for a permanent interactive WW2 museum in Lincolnshire.
- £659k to the Scottish Submarine Trust to establish a Museum of the Submarine Service in Scotland.
- £1m to Brooklands Museum for the Brooklands Aircraft Factory and Race Track Revival Project.
- £1.23m to the British Mercantile Marine Memorial Collection, to establish a unique collection of international maritime art in Hull.
- £1m to support S1 Artspace in Sheffield, to create a new arts complex.
- £620,000 to support 'Being Brunel', the National Brunel Project in Bristol at ss Great Britain.
- £1m to Bletchley Park.

Arts Council England broadly welcomed the Budget, but said that some visual arts venues which had campaigned for the changes to VAT were not included in the exemptions: ACE will be working with DCMS on this issue in coming months. It also expressed concern at the 'significant financial challenges' facing local authorities. [Gov.uk](#) (for details of VAT exemptions scheme), [Gov.uk](#) (full budget document, culture announcements page 121), [Museums Journal](#), [ACE](#)

EU vote: the effect on culture

Cultural sector professionals on both sides of the debate about whether to stay in or leave the EU have been giving their views. Harriet Bridgeman, managing director of the Artists' Collecting Society and a trustee of Vote Leave, says some of the £350m given by the UK to the EU each week could be redirected to culture. Katherine Heid of Culture Action Europe points to substantial European funding given to culture, including €11.3m of Creative Europe money, which has benefitted National Museums Scotland and Tate Liverpool among others. Other programmes such as the €14.7bn Erasmus+ facilitate student exchanges. Heid adds that leaving the EU would be a 'huge loss for the culture of the mind in the UK in terms of diversity and openness'. [Museums Journal](#)

Members' news



John Richmond, great grandson of A E Pearce whose most important work was the colossal Doulton Fountain. Featured in the new permanent On The Green gallery at the People's Palace.

Prehistoric Society grant helps explore human remains

The Royal Pavilion & Museums in Brighton is hosting the first winner of the Prehistoric Society's new Collections Study Award. PhD researcher Dawn Cansfield and osteoarchaeologist Dr Paola Ponce will be cataloguing and assessing the museums' human remains, including a number excavated in the 1930s during a house and road building programme. [Prehistoric Society](#), [Brighton Museums](#)

Beamish receives £500k foundation funding

The Garfield Weston Foundation has donated £500k to Beamish Museum towards its £17m Remaking Beamish project, which will help create a Georgian coaching inn and 1950s town. The donation is the largest to date given as match funding for the £10m given by the HLF. Philippa Charles, Chief Executive of the Garfield Weston Foundation, said *"what's so exciting about the scheme is the wide-ranging social and economic benefits it will create for communities in the North East – from involving local people in the design and development of the new exhibits to creating 95 new jobs on completion and supporting 50 apprenticeships. We are proud to be supporting such an innovative and impactful scheme."* [Beamish](#)

World War II hangers reopen at the National Museum of Flight

Aircraft hangers built between 1940 and 1941 and which were only expected to last a few years have been restored in a £3.6m programme at the National Museum of Flight. They have also been heated for the first time using an environmentally friendly ground-source underfloor heating system. Thirty aircraft are on display including an RAF supersonic jet, which was as fast as Concorde. National Museums Scotland Director Dr Gordon Rintoul described the museum as one of Scotland's top days out, displaying a century of flight history. [HLF](#)

Tesco carrier bag scheme revives Roman Garden

Tesco has been using money collected from the new compulsory 5p charge for carrier bags to fund a series of environmental and greenspace projects. The National Roman Legion Museum, part of Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales, has received £10k from the £11.5m 'Bags of Help' fund, and will be using it to restore part of its Roman Garden. The plan includes Roman style picnic areas for schoolchildren and a garden design featuring plants grown in Britain in the Roman period. [Tesco](#)

Leadership

Glass ceilings and glass cliffs: women in leadership

The Guardian covered the recent 'Space Invaders' conference held at the Imperial War Museum on 18th March, which discussed the low number of women directors in the museum sector. The conference discussed the effects of 'social cloning' where leaders recruit in their own image and the concept of the 'glass cliff' where women are recruited to the riskiest positions and turnover is high. It was also suggested the board members should take 'subconscious bias tests' to reveal their underlying prejudices. The conference supported collecting diversity data, an innovation also strongly recommended in the recent Culture White Paper. [Guardian](#)

New British Museum Director

The Guardian has also published a profile of the new British Museum Director Hartwig Fischer. Fischer was previously director at Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, where he made a point of displaying the museum's ethnography and anthropological collections, revealing the cosmopolitan taste of the Electors of Saxony over 450 years of collecting. In this respect his work has echoed the British Museum's outward-looking status as a World Museum. He has also been vocal against far right movements centred around Dresden. [Guardian](#)

All MSPs invited to Scottish museums

And invitation has been extended to all Scottish MSPs to come and experience the work of Scottish museums at first hand. Joanne Orr, CEO of Museums Galleries Scotland which came up with the idea said "*As difficult decisions are being made about budgets across the country it is vital that the true value of the sector is understood. The response from MSPs and Cabinet Secretaries has been terrific and will result in important opportunities to communicate the sector's impact.*" [MGS](#)

New Year Honours applications

DCMS is inviting people from across the cultural sector to make nominations for 2017 New Year Honours. Nominees should have 'made a difference in their field of work or community'. Applications close on April 29th. [Gov.uk](#)

Sector surveys

Survey: admissions charging

The Association of Independent Museums is commissioning a major survey into charging for museum entry. The survey is being run by DC research and supported by ACE and the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division in Wales. AIM is seeking responses from both charging and non-charging museums and galleries and hopes to build a picture of the effects of a decision to charge. It will particularly explore the effect of charging on visitor spend and on the diversity of audiences, the effects of a venue switching from one model to another, and the impact of annual passes and free entry for children. Findings, case studies and guidance will be published in the summer. The closing date for the survey is 11th April. AIM is particularly keen to get more responses from beyond the independent museum sector. [AIM](#)

ACE relaunches flagship study into private philanthropy in arts and culture

ACE is relaunching the Private Investment in Culture Survey, and invites all arts and culture organisations in England to take part. The survey had been conducted by Arts & Business for 30 years until it was discontinued in 2012 and was the main source of information on how the private sector engaged with the arts and culture sector, collecting information on business investment, individual giving and income from trusts and foundations. With the relaunch of the survey, ACE aims to not only shed new light into the current state of play, but also bridge the gap in terms of data on how the sector has developed since the 2011/12 survey. The survey takes 15 minutes to complete and participants are entered in a prize draw for Amazon vouchers. [ACE](#)

Survey: Museums University Partnerships

Share Academy and the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement are running a survey to explore partnerships between museums and universities in England. This is part of the Museum University Partnership Initiative (MUPI) project funded by ACE. The survey seeks to discover how museum university partnerships are structured, their impact and challenges. It is anonymous and takes a few minutes to complete. [Survey](#), [NCCPE](#)

Survey: Welsh apprenticeships programme

MALD is considering making a bid for funds for a strategic apprenticeship programme to bring a younger and more diverse workforce into the heritage sector. First however it needs to assess views from sector bodies. It therefore invites staff from Welsh museums and galleries to complete a short survey. The deadline is 13th April. [MALD](#)

Survey: De-accessioning in UK museums

Research is being conducted into the attitudes of UK museum professionals to the circumstances and practices of de-accessioning objects from museum collections. The research seeks to understand when, why and under what conditions museum professionals do or do not support this practice. An online survey, compiled by Erasmus University researcher Anne-Catherine Denies as part of her Masters in Cultural Economics, is now open. [Survey](#)

Events and training



Inside the newly restored Military hangar at National Museum of Flight, East Fortune Airfield © Ruth Armstrong.

MuseumNext Dublin 2016

MuseumNext, the international conference about the future of museums is taking place in Dublin on 18th-20th April. It includes 40+ speakers, 30+ presentation sessions, 15 tours, 3 social evenings, and plenty of opportunity to network with colleagues from around the globe. Speakers include: Marian Goodell, CEO, Burning Man, USA, Michael John Gorman, CEO, Science Gallery International, Deborah Cullinan, CEO, Yerba Buena Centre for the Arts, USA, Alexandre Fernandes, Audience Development Director, Museum of Tomorrow, Brazil and Monica O Montgomery, Co-founder Museum Hue, Action Director LatimerNow, USA. Tickets are £250 for one day or £500 for the whole conference. Use the code **NMDCsaver** to receive a £50 discount on a full conference ticket. [MuseumNext](#)

Think, Feel, Do: coproduction symposium

Derby Museums is holding a symposium to explore why co-production matters in museums, what difference it makes and how to make it work. 'THINK FEEL DO. Making Museums Together, for the Head Heart Hands' takes place 26th-27th April at Derby Silk Mill. Tickets start from £50 for a single day for participants from smaller museums. Places are limited and booking is essential. [Derby Museums](#)

Working Internationally 2016

If you missed the Working Internationally Conference - the annual event run jointly by NMDC and ICOM-UK - at The Whitworth in March, you can watch the best bits of the Conference via ICOM-UK's YouTube channel. The Conference looks at museums' international work, and this year considered how working internationally can help museums deliver both their core business and public policy priorities. There was an inspiring keynote address from Maria Balshaw, Director of The Whitworth and Manchester City Galleries, which outlined the international work of the two organisations and why this is relevant to local communities, the city of Manchester and the museums' collections. Other speakers included: Paul Smith, Director of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Oxford, and Michelle Kindleysides from Beamish: The Living Museum of the North, who both demonstrated the mutual benefits of international partnerships; Kirstie Hamilton (Museums Sheffield) and Sally MacDonald (MOSI) who outlined city-wide approaches to international working; and Alexandra Smirnova, Curator of the Science Museum's *Cosmonauts* exhibition. [YouTube](#)

Raise your game: new approaches to fundraising

The Museums Association is holding a one day event at Thinktank Birmingham on 20th April, exploring how museums can fundraise more successfully. The programme includes The Art Fund on effective crowdfunding, Birmingham Museums Trust on fundraising from trusts and foundations, and Maidstone Borough Council on obtaining major grant funding. Tickets are £55–£195. [Museums Journal](#)

MA launches its Code of Ethics

The MA is holding an event at the Wellcome Collection to launch its new Code of Ethics. There will be a panel discussion including Diane Lees, NMDC Chair and Director of Imperial War Museums, and *Guardian* journalist Maev Kennedy. The event takes place on the afternoon of 22nd April and admission is free. [Museums Association](#)

Welsh Museum Festival

The next Welsh Museums Festival will take place on 22nd – 30th October. The dates overlap with autumn Museums At Night, so events can be listed in both programmes. The Welsh museums website has also been adapted to carry events all year round, not just during the festival. An evaluation of the 2015 event is also available. [Museums.wales](#), [Welsh Museum Federation](#) (evaluation 2015)

Museums and being human in the digital age

The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH) launched its Humanities and the Digital Age series last month with an event considering how museums should present their offer for generations who are digitally native. It contrasted how on the one hand younger people may become divorced from objects – 'never held a real book in their hands' – and on other how digitisation projects, such as the work at IWM to make available material from the First World War, rehumanises lost generations. [M+H](#) (scroll to the bottom to watch a film of the whole event)

OUMP extends programme

Oxford University Museums Partnership is expanding its very successful and innovative training programme, with more than 20 events planned the 2016-18. It will continue its focus on commercial enterprise, fundraising and philanthropy, but will also be exploring digital engagement, communication and audience development. There will be one day events based on the Oxford Cultural Leaders programme. John Orna-Ornstein, Director, Museums at ACE said "*The partnership with the Saïd Business School is particularly innovative and I look forward to seeing many more people benefit from its development of new ways of thinking and working.*" [OUMP](#) (overview), [OUMP](#) (events)

Also: As part of its Cultural Leaders Programme Oxford University Museums Partnership is holding a one-day conference exploring how museums are changing organisational culture: 'Risk and Reward: Enabling a Culture of Innovation'. The event will particularly address digital, demographics and changing funding models. The event takes place on 10th June, and sales open on 18th April. [OUMP](#)

Past and future of Islamic heritage

Everyday Muslim Heritage and Archive along with British Library curators are hosting an event to celebrate and explore the past and future of Islamic Heritage. In particular, they will reflect on the 40th Anniversary of the 'World of Islam Festival.' The event takes place on 25th April 6-9pm at the Brunei Gallery Theatre, SOAS. [Everyday Muslim](#)

Picture the poet training

Engage and the National Portrait Gallery are holding an event to explore how museums and galleries can support literacy and creative writing for young people. The day will include performance by poets and project participants, and complements the Gallery's 'Picture the Poet' exhibition. Tickets are from £25 and must be booked by noon on 11 April. The event takes place on 25 April. [Engage](#)

Heritage Insider workshops

Heritage Insider are offering a series of workshops across the country from May to September teaching museum and heritage skills. Topics include evaluation boot camp, interpretation for beginners, HLF activity planning, improving panels and how to lead guided walks. Courses begin at £60 for non-profits. [Greedy Squirrel](#)

Awards

M+H shortlist announced

Museums+Heritage has announced the shortlist for its annual awards, which includes around 40 museums. Nominees include numerous NMDC members including Oxford University Museum of Natural History's Dodo Roadshow (for project on a limited budget), The Museum of London's Crime Museum Uncovered, the V&A's Alexander McQueen and the Bowes Museum's Yves Saint Laurent (for temporary exhibition). Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums and The Whitworth are both shortlisted for trading and enterprise. Winners will be announced at a ceremony on 18th May. [M+H](#)

Museums encouraged to enter health awards

The 2016 Royal Society for Public Health has opened its Health & Wellbeing Awards for entries. Six categories represent the breadth of public health projects and programmes, including an arts and health award, programmes which promote healthier lifestyles and community health development. Museums are increasingly involved in work with well-being component, and are encouraged to enter the awards. The deadline is 31st May and winners will be announced in October. [RSPH](#)

Funding



Fiona Hayes, Curator, Social History, Glasgow Museums holding a horn from 1700, used by Glasgow's last Town Herd, John Anderson (d.1782).

£4m in new funds for museums

DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation have relaunched their capital grants scheme, which will be distributing £4m for renovation and improvement projects to allow institutions to increase access, improve displays and enhance public spaces. The fund will open for applications this month. Culture Minister Ed Vaizey said: "*the partnership with Wolfson is a much-valued source of support for the sector and a fantastic example of what can be achieved when public funds are matched with private philanthropy.*" [Gov.uk](#)

Great Exhibition of the North competition opens

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey has launched a competition to choose a town or city to host the Great Exhibition of the North in 2018. The exhibition will highlight the art, culture and design of the North East, North West and Yorkshire, and help drive economic growth. The government will contribute £2m to the two month long exhibition, plus a further £15m in legacy funding. Sir Gary Verity will Chair the Great Exhibition Board. He said "*There are many towns and cities across the North of England that have what it takes to host the Great Exhibition of the North and I hope that many of them put in a bid.*" [Gov.uk](#)

Decline and fall? Cultural quarter or closure for Lancaster's history offer

Writing for the *Guardian* Sam Jordison gives a personal view of his home town of Lancaster amid flood damage and cuts. He also gives an update on the status of some of the town's museums. A year ago the city rebranded with the strapline 'Small City, Big Story' and a plan to increase its profile as a tourist destination – an ambition now regarded sceptically locally in the light of the city's setbacks. Jordison argues that all the ingredients to create a Lancaster cultural quarter are present, including the castle and the probability of exciting archaeological finds including a fourth century fort nearby. Jason Wood, a heritage consultant, says of the dig "*we're looking at something that can rival anything in Chester or York, if anyone can be bothered to dig it up. And if only there were museums to store the stuff in*".

The local council announced plans to close five of the area's ten museums earlier this year. The Judge's Lodgings will not close at the end of March as originally planned, but will remain open until September in the hope that an interested party will come forward. The Maritime Museum remains closed due to flood damage with no fixed reopening date, although the Council says it will 'reopen as soon as it is practical and safe to do so'. [Judge's Lodgings](#), [Lancaster Maritime Museum](#), [Lancaster Chamber of Commerce](#)

Welsh local museums at risk as strategy is delayed

The *Museums Journal* writes that museums in Wales are at risk because of the 'political limbo' ahead of elections in May. The Welsh government has not yet responded to a report from 2015, which said that 10% of local museums were operating unsustainably. Meanwhile museums which are fit for purpose are at risk from cuts. Rachel Silverson, president of the Welsh Museums Federation, says local museums need strategic direction from the government in order to move forward. [Museums Journal](#)

Also: There were further strikes over weekend pay at National Museum Wales over Easter. The museum says it cannot pay its front of house more in a climate of cuts; the PCS union argues that cuts should not fall on comparatively lowly paid front of house staff. [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only)

BP ends Tate funding

BP will end its funding of the Tate in 2017 after 26 years. It blamed an 'extremely challenging business environment'. Protesters however believe that the termination is due to their protests in the gallery. Yasmin Da Silva from the activism group Liberate Tate said "*about 30 years ago, the tide turned on tobacco sponsorship, and now the same thing is happening to the oil industry.*" Campaigners say they now plan to target the British Museum, Royal Opera House and RSC. Cultural commentator and former Tate staff member Will Gompertz predicted that Tate would miss funding which was for collections – which are more difficult to get sponsored than high-profile exhibitions. Meanwhile 100 people, including the Shadow Chancellor, Mark Rylance and Margaret Atwood, have written an open letter to the British Museum asking it to drop BP sponsorship. [Arts Professional](#), [Guardian](#), [The Stage](#), [Guardian](#), [Guardian](#) (letter), [BBC](#)

Collections

From urchins to umbrella trees: advocating for natural history collections

32 natural history museums in the north-west of England are highlighting their 2015 advocacy document *'7 million wonders: how Natural History Museums help people and nature flourish in the north-west'* to a wider audience. Collectively, they attract 2 million visitors a year and the 10 most popular visitor attractions in the region are Natural History Museums. The document argues that there are proven health benefits to contact with nature, but social deprivation is correlated with losing access to green space. The museums are well placed to put people back in contact with the natural world, whether they are urban populations who struggle to get beyond the city, or tourists and locals in more rural areas where the museums form a bridge back to the outdoors. The north-west has a unique offer which the museums reflect in their collections and tap into: rare breeds flourish, including red squirrels in Cumbria and peregrine falcons in some towns and cities. There are also economic reasons for using natural history museums to encourage people to reconnect with nature: in 2013-14 2.93bn visits were made to the countryside, half of which were for health. These generated £17bn of expenditure. [Naturally Curious](#)

Palmyra arch to be recreated in London

A single arch which is all that survived when Isis destroyed the 1st century AD Temple of Bel in Palmyra is to be reproduced and displayed in Trafalgar Square. The 15m high structure will be recreated in Shanghai and finished in Italy before being shipped to London. There are plans for an identical arch in New York. The project is being led by the Institute of Digital Archaeology, which produced the photographs from which the arch will be 3D printed. Spokeswoman Alexy Karenowska said she hoped it would help people realise the importance of preserving ancient monuments in war torn regions like Syria. Others are characterising the project as a gesture of defiance against the terrorists. Meanwhile, a museum in Cologne is holding an exhibition of 18th-century drawings of Palmyra. [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [The Art Newspaper](#)

Bradford museum director defends collections move

National Media Museum Director Jo Quinton-Tulloch has defended the decision to move its photographic collection to the V&A at a Bradford Council meeting. She said the museum had to make practical decisions in the face of 30% government cuts, and the choice was not about London or Bradford but how to make the collections most accessible: *"art photography... is not an area that we are going to curate anymore, and we don't have the resource to make it actively available. We could leave it within the stores in Bradford, but that would not be the right professional thing to do as a national institution."* [Guardian](#)

Exit Sekhemka

The statue of Sekhemka, controversially sold by Northampton Council in 2014, has now left the country after funds could not be raised before an export bar deadline. There had been a proposal from the Egyptian ambassador in London to raise funds to share the statue between the British Museum and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. However, no philanthropist came forward. [The Art Newspaper](#)

Export bar for Robert the Bruce seal

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey has placed an export bar on an early 14th century seal, one of the very few objects with a direct link to the Scottish King Robert the Bruce. It was commissioned by him to seal customs documents by Dunfermline Abbey. £151,250 is needed to retain the seal. The export bar is in force until 21st June, with a possible extension to September.

A drawing by Veronese has also received an export bar, but at £15.4m it is one of the most expensive works on paper ever sold and *The Art Newspaper* speculates that it is well beyond the means of any museum likely to be interested in acquisition. The initial deferral lasts until 28th June. [Gov.uk](#), [The Art Newspaper](#)

Footfall

ALVA publishes annual visitor figures

The Association of Leading Visitor Attractions has published the visitor figures of its members for 2015. Highlights include:

- Overall figures are up by 3.2%
- The top 10 visitor attractions were all in London with the British Museum receiving the most visitors (6,820,686) for the ninth year running. The National Gallery was second (5,908,254) and the Natural History Museum third (5,284,023). Both London Tates saw a decline in visitor figures – by 19% at Tate Modern, where visitor figures tend to fluctuate more than other London venues.
- The most visited attraction outside London was the Library of Birmingham.
- Many of the attractions seeing the largest visitor increases based their success on touring exhibitions – the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art Two had a 35% increase, helped by its Escher exhibition.
- The National Maritime Museum saw a 10.6% increase having opened a new children's gallery and the immersive event 'Against Captain's Orders'.
- The World Museum in Liverpool saw an 8% increase with the exhibition 'Mayas: revelation of an endless time'.
- The National Museum of Scotland (1,567,310) was the most visited museum outside London, although Edinburgh Castle was the most visited attraction in Scotland.

Director of ALVA Bernard Donoghue said late-night openings and membership events were driving interest from 'a younger and culturally curious' new audience. The weakness of the pound against the euro and dollar also drove foreign visits. [ALVA](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Guardian](#)

Global art museum figures published for 2015

The Art Newspaper has published figures for global visits to art museums and exhibitions. Headline findings include:

- The Louvre is again the most popular art museum in the world, with 8.6m visitors – although this is a decline from 9.2m in 2014, in the wake of the Paris attacks. Three London museums are among the top ten: the British Museum stays in second place (6.82m visitors); the National Gallery is down two places to fifth most popular (5.9m) after some gallery closures caused by strikes; and Tate Modern is seventh (4.71m). The Met and Vatican museums are in third and fourth places respectively.
- The National Palace Museum in Taipei dominates the list of most popular exhibitions taking the top seven places - 1.7m attended the top exhibition: 'Hidden Talent: Cheng Chen Po'. Museums in Japan, Brazil and New York feature heavily in the top 20. Free exhibitions at the Saatchi Gallery dominate the London list.
- The Saatchi Gallery also leads and dominates the Decorative Arts top ten, with the V&A's 'Savage Beauty: Alexander McQueen' exhibition in seventh place (493k). The Met's 'China Through the Looking Glass' was second (815k).
- The top ten paid exhibitions for London were led by the Royal Academy's Ai Weiwei exhibition, with the V&A's Savage Beauty in second place. Rembrandt at the National Gallery was fourth, Turner at Tate Britain sixth and Tate Modern's Sonia Delaunay tenth.
- The most popular antiquities exhibition was Tokyo National Museum's 'Cleopatra and the Queens of Egypt', followed by a National Museum of Korea show about Pompeii.

The Art Newspaper also interviewed five museum directors from across the world who expressed both commitment to and ambivalence about generating large visitor figures. Max Hollein of the Stadel Museum says "we have all developed an obsession with attendance as a way of justifying what we do, but it's only half or a quarter of what we do." Timothy Rub of the Philadelphia Museum of Art said high figures translate into the members who 'keep the boat afloat', while Iwona Blazwick of the Whitechapel Gallery emphasises the importance of taking risks on lesser known artists. [The Art Newspaper](#) (commentary, full figures subscription only)

Expanding museums get more visitors shows survey

After a survey of more than 500 museums across the world from 2007 to 2014, *The Art Newspaper* reports that museums which expand their gallery space grow their visitor figures significantly faster than those that do not. The Perez Art Museum Miami's visitors grew by 462% after it tripled in size. Los Angeles County Museum of Art went from a venue where you could 'roll a bowling ball through the galleries on a weekend' to an 81% increase in visitors. On average, expansion gave museums and galleries a third more growth than those which didn't expand. *The Art Newspaper* comments "As *Tate Modern in London and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art prepare to unveil building projects costing hundreds of millions of dollars, these results confirm what many have long suspected: if you build it, they will come.*" [The Art Newspaper](#)

Appointments

Ros Kerslake has been appointed Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund. She will begin work in the summer. She was previously Chief Executive of The Prince's Regeneration Trust. [HLF](#)

Dr Laura Van Broekhoven has been appointed as new Director of the Pitt Rivers Museum. She was previously a head curator at Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen. [University of Oxford](#), [Art Daily](#)

Education

Creative Journeys film shows the uses of an arts education

A new film *Creative Journeys* highlights the practical uses of studying arts subjects and is aimed at children choosing their GCSEs. Some of the UK's leading designers, architects and engineers describe how they began their careers. The film is supported by the Sorrell Foundation and ACE. [Creative Journeys](#)

Education White Paper and the arts

The new Education White Paper was also published during March. The Cultural Learning Alliance has published a useful summary of how its provisions will affect arts education. Key points include:

- Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum, which frees schools to make personal choices about the arts – they may ignore them in favour of the Ebacc, or invest more heavily.
- The White Paper 'goes some way towards acknowledging' that there is a crisis in teacher recruitment. This especially affects subjects such as art, drama and dance where there are no financial incentives for training.
- The government will invest in careers advice for young people. CLA says that for this to be effective for the arts it must take into account the 'fractured, diffuse and multifarious nature of the sector' and signpost young people to a number of specialist bodies.
- The government is planning to fund 25% of secondary schools to offer extended days for activities such as arts.

[Cultural Learning Alliance](#), [A New Direction](#)

And finally...spot the time traveller

When SNP councillor Greg Hepburn visited the City Chambers gallery in Glasgow, he spotted an uncanny resemblance between a 1930 portrait of Patrick Dollan, Lord Provost of Glasgow, and the 12th Dr Who - and tweeted it. Since then, celebrity spotting in old oil paintings has become bit of a thing: is that Sylvester Stallone in Raphael's *The Cardinal and Theological Virtues* (1511)? Is Jeremy Corbyn Tchaikovsky? However, as the *Spectator* reports, the resemblance between David Cameron and Johann Baptist Lampi's 1794 painting of Catherine the Great may have a more practical cause: they are second cousins, nine generations removed. [Apollo](#), [Spectator](#)

Jobs

A selection of jobs from across the NMDC membership this month:

- [Employee Services Delivery Manager - British Library, Boston Spa](#)

- [Events Manager - Museum of London](#)
- [Curator of Television and Broadcast - National Media Museum](#)
- [FM Technical Manager - IWM](#)
- [Exhibitions Officer - National Portrait Gallery](#)

A complete list is available on our website [here](#).

This newsletter can also be read online at <http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/news/newsletters/>