

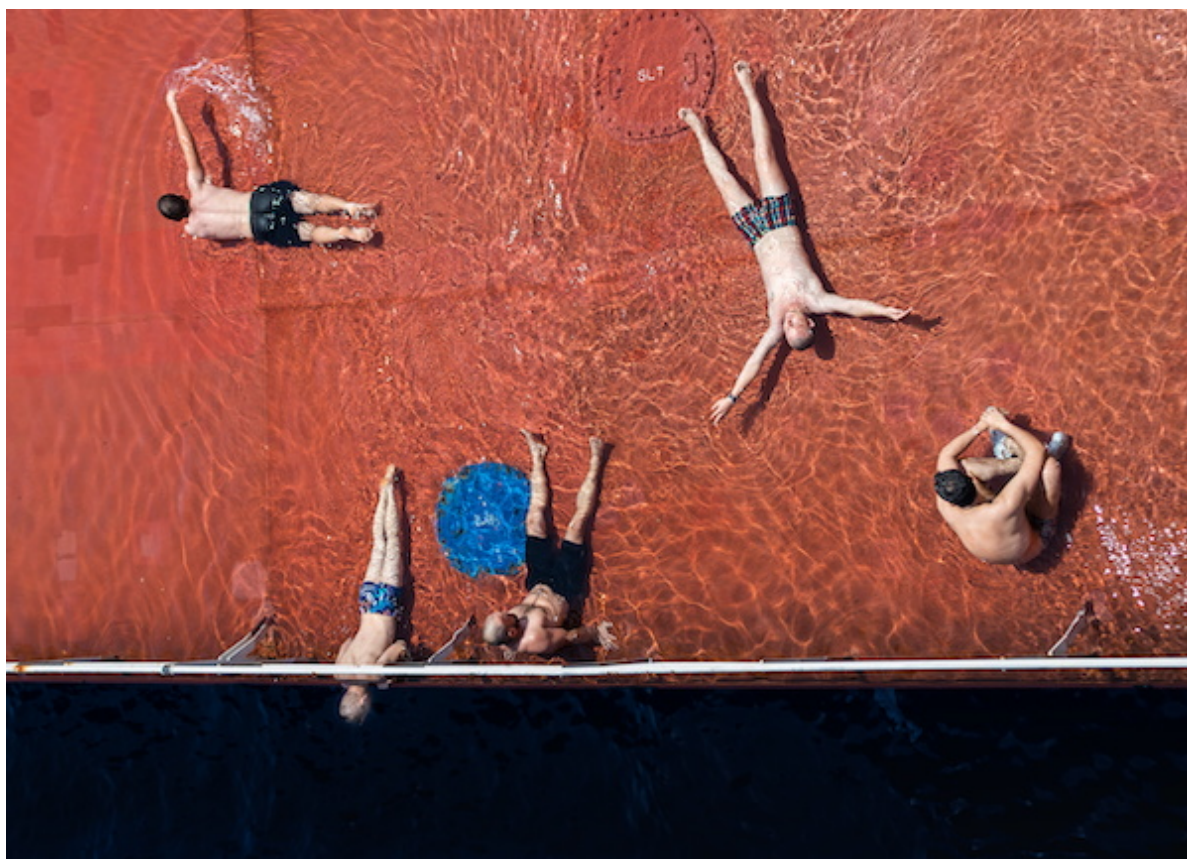
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NMDC news



'Blowing off Steam' - by kind permission of artist. © Popescu Cezar Gabriel. Part of the National Maritime Museum's forthcoming exhibition 'Exposed: Lives at Sea'

Maria Balshaw appointed as new NMDC Chair

Dr Maria Balshaw CBE, Director of Tate, has been appointed as the new Chair of the NMDC. Maria takes over from Sir Ian Blatchford, Director of the Science Museum Group, who has been Chair since April 2016. Maria has been a member of the NMDC Executive Committee for two years and is the first Director of Tate to hold the NMDC Chair. Maria said *"I am delighted to be taking over as NMDC Chair at this crucial moment as we prepare to reopen our museums and galleries and help communities across the UK recover from the pandemic. On behalf of all members I give huge thanks to Ian for doing a fantastic job leading the NMDC, particularly during the tumultuous events of the last year. I look forward to continuing his excellent work to promote and support NMDC members and the incredible work they do"*. Following the end of Ian's tenure as Chair as well as the retirement of NMDC Vice-Chair Iain Watson, Director of Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, two new members have also been appointed to NMDC's Executive Committee: Reyahn King, Chief Executive of York Museums Trust and Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A.

Members' news

Scottish Government triples funding for V&A Dundee, as a crucial strand of socio-economic recovery

The Scottish Government has committed an additional £2m per year to V&A Dundee for the next three years, as it officially becomes Scotland's centre for design. This triples its existing £1m annual budget, with the intention of using design as an aspect of the nation's long term social and economic recovery. The museum will continue to broaden its partnership projects which already include Design for Business, which works across Scotland to apply design skills to social or business challenges; the secondary education based Schools Design Challenge; and Sewing Box for the Future, a programme with the University of Dundee to address the crisis of waste in the fashion industry. The young museum contributed £75m to the wider Scottish economy in its first year alone and so is well-placed as a centrepiece of ambitious planning. Director Leonie Bell said *"design is one of the most accessible forms of creativity, it is a way to understand the world and to change it for the better... We believe that design offers Scotland huge potential as it looks to its recovery after the pandemic. I am hugely grateful to the Scottish Government for its continued role as the principal supporter of V&A Dundee."* The museum will be reopening on 1st May with a new exhibition on the history of nightclub design. [M + H](#), [V&A Dundee](#), [Daily Record](#) (reopening exhibition), [Museums Journal](#)

NMM signs Neptune Declaration and plans oral history project of those stranded at sea by Covid-19

The National Maritime Museum has become one of 700 signatories to the Neptune Declaration, calling for international action to solve the crew change crisis, which has left many seafarers stranded at sea during the pandemic. Although the UK has recognised this group as key workers, many still find they cannot access ports and vaccines. NMM will also work with two maritime welfare organisations, the ITF Seafarers' Trust and The Mission to Seafarers to collect oral histories of those at sea in this period, which will become part of its permanent collection. [Hellenic Shipping News](#)

Images this month - Exposure: Lives at Sea

Images this month come from the National Maritime Museum's 'Exposure: Lives at Sea' new photography exhibition, which looks at the realities of working at sea today. The exhibition will be live as soon as NMM is able to reopen. [RMG](#)

NPG to improve visibility of women in its collection with support from the Chanel Culture Fund

The National Portrait Gallery has launched a new three year project 'Reframing Narratives: Women in Portraiture' to bring greater visibility to women in its collections, in partnership with the Chanel Culture Fund. Currently, only a quarter of sitters and 12% of artists in the NPG collection are women, which is compounded by the fact that many are under-researched. Dr Flavia Frigeri, the newly appointed Chanel curator of the collection said *"they might have made an important contribution to the war effort. They might have written treatises on mushrooms ... the range is quite vast."* The project will also seek to commission new portraits of contemporary women as well as acquiring portraits of historically significant figures, such as Lilian Lindsay, the first British woman to qualify as a dentist. The overall outcome should be a greater proportion of women artists and sitters on display when NPG reopens in 2023, 'tell[ing] urgent and untold stories that broaden definitions of greatness'. The Chanel Culture Fund is also operating a broad programme internationally to support artists in the post-pandemic world. Its Chanel Next Prize will celebrate ten artists in fields from performance to visual arts who 'radically redefine their fields', with each winner receiving €100,000. Chanel will also work with The Underground Museum in LA, GES-2 in Moscow and arts institutions in Asia. Harper's Bazaar comments *"the idea of luxury brands and conglomerates offering prizes to rising talents is nothing new in fashion, but Chanel's take on its support of the arts is broader than the norm."* [M + H](#), [Vogue](#), [Country & Town House](#), [Tatler](#), [Guardian](#), [Harper's Bazaar](#), [Chanel Culture Fund](#), [maxwell museums](#)

IWM to use £2m from 'They Shall Not Grow Old' film to create 14 – 18 NOW Legacy Fund

Peter Jackson's film 'They Shall Not Grow Old' created with restored and colourised footage from the First World War was a partnership project with IWM, watched by 300 million people. The museum has realised £2m as its share of royalties from the project and will use the money for a 14 – 18 NOW Legacy Fund, making money available to artists and cultural organisations for new commissions in 2021. The first partner and artist will be announced in the Spring, with further commissions announced through the year. IWM Director Diane Lees said *"we are particularly grateful that the money was set aside in a manner which enables us to reinvest in cultural practitioners and organisations, to support recovery from the wide-reaching impacts of COVID-19. Through the programme, IWM will work in partnership ...ensuring over 20 ambitious commissions are fully funded and bringing art and the histories of conflict to audiences in new, relevant and transformative ways."* [IWM](#), [Evening Standard](#)

Open storage, and a Rolls Royce engine suspended in mid-air: Museum of Making opens soon

Derby Museums has revealed more details of its new Museum of Making, which is poised to open later in the Spring. The site will have all of its 30,000 strong collection on display – much of it in open storage on the second floor. A Rolls-Royce Trent 1,000 engine which powered the first transatlantic flight in 1919 is among the star objects, and will be suspended above visitor's heads in the Civic Hall. Hannah Fox, who has led the Museum of Making project since 2012 says *"Derby is a city full of engineers, technicians and craftspeople, we hope that the Museum of Making will be a fitting recognition to their contribution to the city's story."* [Experience UK](#), [Derby Silk Mill](#) (project blog), [Twitter](#) (Museum of Making on DCMS Instagram), [Derby Museums](#)

Also: The Science and Industry Museum in Manchester has completed the transformation of its late Victorian Grade II listed New Warehouse into a £5m Special Exhibitions Gallery. The space will reopen with 'Top Secret: From Ciphers to Cyber Security'. [M + H](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Covid 19



'Underwater Gardeners' by kind permission of artist and made possible by the National Geographic Society © Jennifer Adler.

Opening patterns for museums in the four UK countries during April and May

Restrictions across the UK are gradually lifting, although few museum interiors will be open for some weeks.

- In Wales, some restrictions have already lifted, and there has been a limited opening of outdoor areas of some historic places and gardens. The outdoor areas of St Fagan's have reopened with timed ticketing to control numbers. Although there is now an all-Wales travel area, movements in and out of the country are only allowed in specific circumstances including emergencies. There will be a further review of measures on April 12th, but there is no specific date penciled in yet for reopening museums. [Visit Wales](#), [Wales Online](#)
 - In Northern Ireland no reopening dates have been announced with the Executive saying it will be led by 'data not dates'. [Museums Journal](#)
 - Local, non-essential journeys are now permitted across Scotland as restrictions begin to lift, and many Scottish islands are already in tier 3 with open museums. If data allows, mainland Scotland will move into tier 3 on 26th April and museums will be free to reopen; National Museums Scotland is among those welcoming the public on that day. Museums Galleries Scotland will also launch a reopening campaign #MuseumsAreGo when it judges that the time is right. [NMS](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Scottish Government](#), [MGS](#) (reopening guidance)
 - In England, indoor spaces at museums remain closed until 17th May. However, some museum gardens and outside spaces are opening to the public. Grounds at the Beamish and Tullie House are among those opening on 12th April, with take away food available, and IWM Duxford is opening its airfield with cut price tickets. 50 English Heritage sites with larger outdoor spaces also opened at the end of March. [M + H](#), [Beamish](#), [Tullie House](#), [IWM Duxford](#)
- Meanwhile the MA is promoting reopening exhibitions under the hashtag #BackToMuseums. [Museums Journal](#), [Museums Journal](#) (gardens expect high demand)

Updated NMDC Good Practice Guidelines for Reopening Museums

NMDC has updated its Good Practice Guidelines for Reopening Museums in the light of recent Government announcements. The tier system has now moved to a step system, with Step 2 beginning on April 12th with the opening of outdoor areas, and Step 3 from May 17th when museums can reopen their buildings. Major additions include guidance that on reopening museums should:

- Ask every customer or visitor to provide their name and contact details.
- Keep a record of all staff working on your premises and shift times on a given day, and their contact details.
- Keep these records of customers, visitors and staff for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested.
- Display an official NHS QR code poster, so that customers and visitors can 'check in' using this option, as an alternative to providing their contact details. However, you must still have a system to collect (and securely store) names and contact details for those who do not have access to a smartphone.
- Ensure you manage this information in line with data protection regulations.
- There is also updating to information about opening cafes and takeaways – until May 17th food outlets can only be open if they are separate from the museum building, but outdoor seating can be provided.

There is a note of all recent changes to the guidance, and relevant page numbers, towards the bottom of the Good Practice Guidance homepage. [NMDC](#)

New round of Cultural Recovery Fund opens in Wales

The Welsh Government has opened a new £30m round of its Cultural Recovery Fund, open until 20th April. The timing of a separate fund for freelancers will be announced later. [Business Wales](#), [Welsh Government](#)

Museums in England and Scotland eligible for Restart Grants up to £18k

Restart Grants are a one-off payment available to the non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure, personal care and accommodation sectors in England. This group explicitly includes museums and galleries. The grants are available now through local authorities and consist of either:

- up to £6,000 in the non-essential retail sector (likely to reopen on 12th April) or

- up to £18,000 in the hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym sectors (likely to reopen from 17th May)

There is also an equivalent in Scotland: the Strategic Framework Business Fund.

[Gov.uk](#) (eligibility checker), [Gov.uk](#) (guidance to local authorities), [Museums Journal](#) (Scotland), [Scottish Government](#) (Strategic Framework Business Fund), [Gov.uk](#)

Free rapid lateral flow coronavirus tests for employees: order by 12th April

Businesses and organisations with ten or more employees can order free rapid lateral flow tests, which can be taken twice weekly by employees. To be eligible, businesses must register by 23:59pm on 12th April, even if currently shut, so as to receive tests when staff return to work. [Gov.uk](#)

Museum bodies express concern as Government considers vaccine passports

A Government consultation has recently closed on whether to require 'vaccine passports' for entry to many places in England – from pubs to events and museums. Culture Minister Oliver Dowden told the BBC that no decision had so far been made but that it was important to examine the option, alongside running a number of tests during April of factors such as ventilation at cultural and sporting venues. Meanwhile the EU is proposing a 'digital green certificate' for those vaccinated against or recovered from Covid-19 as part of plans to open summer tourism. The most recent overview of Government thinking is in its Roadmap Review from 5th March, covering the Event Research Programme, global travel and social distancing as well as Covid status certificates. MA Director Sharon Heal expressed concern about vaccine passports, on the grounds that museums are already safe spaces, and because they may discriminate against those who *"can't have a vaccine for health reasons and those that have not yet been able to get a vaccine because they are not in a priority group."* She added that this would also potentially put staff into conflict with visitors if they had to vet documents. Data from the Audience Agency suggests that at least in the shorter term, vaccine passports would shut out more visitors than it encouraged, and especially affect younger age groups. Meanwhile, a recent study by Berlin Institute of Technology suggested that museum, theatre and opera visits at 30% occupancy with a mask had an R-value of 0.5, making them safer than a visit to the hairdresser, travel on public transport or going shopping – and the safest of a range of scenarios explored in the research. However, this level of footfall would not allow most museums to recover financially. [Museums Journal](#), [Gov.uk](#) (closed consultation), [Audience Agency](#), [European Commission](#), [Twitter](#) (Dowden), [Hyperallergic](#) (Berlin study), [Gov.uk](#) (Roadmap review)

Policy



Irene Lopez Rodriguez, Data Engineer/Mud Logger (Prospector 1 Drilling Rig, Franklin Field, central North Sea) - by kind permission of artist © Peter Iain Campbell

ACE publishes first part of revised Delivery Plan for 2022 – 25

ACE's Delivery Plan 2021 – 24, delayed due to the pandemic, is now being published in two halves, with the first section covering context, themes and funding streams now released. It sets out the first phase of delivering the vision to 2030 described in 'Let's Create', and remains a live document where some elements may change. Details include:

- the plan is underpinned by four new equality objectives, including a more equitable distribution of funding; supporting inclusive organisations whose leadership, governance and workforce reflect the diversity of contemporary England and support for underserved regions. ACE will also become more 'inclusive and relevant' itself to model good practice.
- ACE's development role will include giving more help to non-NPO museums as well as expanding the number in that group in 2023. It will also support the refurbishment of non-national museums through the Museum Estate and Development Fund, and advocate for fair business rates and a continuation of the Museums and Galleries Exhibitions Tax Relief.
- There will be particular support for individual and freelance workers who have been particularly hit by the pandemic, with a focus on helping younger and under-represented groups to forge a career.
- There will be greater focus on 'place based' culture, looking at how it can support health and wellbeing and contribute to 'levelling up' across the country. By July 2021 there will be a list of places where investment and engagement are too low. Where investment is already high, support will continue but with a greater focus on improved public benefit.

- There will be a focus on working internationally, both to adapt to Brexit and recover from the pandemic, and to encourage greater international research and dialogue about collections held in museums.

The second half of the Delivery Plan will be published in the summer, including actions to help the sector reset, communities recover and the economy rebuild post-pandemic. There will also be five delivery plans with local and regional detail. [ACE](#) (Delivery Plan 2021 -24), [ACE](#) (Let's Create), [ACE](#) (blog), [ACE](#) (equality objectives), [ACE](#) (list of major funding streams for the new plan)

Employment

In brief: new support for creative freelancers

Cultural sector freelancers, especially those in the performing arts or not eligible for Government SEISS payments have been among the worst affected by pandemic loss of employment and support. Now networks and programmes are emerging to offer better support.

- The Creative Industries Federation has convened a group of creative freelancers with work backgrounds including museums. The group will meet for the first time in April – contact evy@creativeindustriesfederation.com to raise issues for discussion. [CIF](#)
- The Centre for Cultural Value has published an extrapolation from ONS figures unpicking how the pandemic affected freelance workers. Culture sector workers are almost twice as likely to be freelance (27% vs 15%), and this group are the least likely to have received Government support. However, the impact has fallen unevenly by subsector, with music, performing arts and visual arts workers 'at the epicentre of the crisis'. Women and younger workers also seem to have been more affected, and the paper recommends 'specific, targeted support' reflecting this picture. [Culture Hive](#)

V&A reconsiders restructuring plan – but still needs to save £10m each year due to long-term pandemic impact

V&A has said that it will reconsider two strands of its previously announced restructuring plan. 20 posts (out of a total of 30) which were at risk at the National Art Library will be retained through the Government's extended furlough scheme, which now runs to September. A senior library consultant will be appointed to review library services, and NAL will reopen at the end of December. The museum is also reconsidering a scheme to restructure its teams around geography and time, rather than materials. The consultation period is being extended, but the museum still proposes cutting 10% of conservation and 20% of curatorial posts, as it seeks to save £10m a year because of the long term financial impacts of the pandemic. [Art Newspaper](#), [Museums Journal](#) (NAL), [Museums Journal](#) (materials teams), [Apollo magazine](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (NAL)

Museum trends and visitor statistics for 2020



'Immersed' by kind permission of artist and made possible by the National Geographic Society © Jennifer Adler

Art Newspaper shows global art museum visits falling by 77% in pandemic year

The Art Newspaper has published its annual visitor statistics for art museums globally – and in doing so captures the extraordinary circumstances of 2020, with footfall more to do with local Covid-19 measures than with the popularity of exhibitions. For this reason it has not published a league table of the most popular exhibitions this year. The report also captures snapshots of how museum staff worked in extraordinary conditions: for example, at the Hubei Provincial Museum, Wuhan, the Director Fang Qin and seventy staff camped at work for several months to continue to care for its collections at the height of the epidemic. Figures from the report show:

- Among the top 100 art museums, The Art Gallery of South Australia had the lowest losses of visitors at 22%. 75% of the top 100 museums lost more than 60% of visitors, and only three lost less than one third.
- On average, museums were closed for an extra 145 days each, or 41,000 days collectively – 'more than a century's worth of missed visiting opportunities'.
- Four London nationals (V&A, British Museum, Tate Modern and the National Gallery) had an average loss of attendance of 78%, but with the British Museum particularly affected with a 91% loss in footfall. As well as closure and limited footfall when open due to social distancing and public caution, overseas visitors to the UK also plummeted, by as much as 96% in the second quarter of 2020.
- UK nationals also recorded huge financial losses, with Tate's four sites down from £94m to £38m, a 60% drop; V&A losing 63%, and The British Museum losing more than 90% of visitor generated income.
- European cities saw a particularly steep decline in international tourists, down 95% in Paris last summer. Nevertheless, the Louvre had the highest footfall with 2.7m visits, a drop of 72%.
- Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki was closed for 101 days and had to cancel major Picasso and Monet exhibitions because of travel restrictions. But it brought forward a show of contemporary Maori Art, which has proved to be the largest show in the museum's 133 year history.

[Art Newspaper](#) (global overview), [Art Newspaper](#) (focus on four London nationals), [Economist](#) (graphic)

ALVA 2020 figures show a 66% drop in visitors, with gardens coping best with pandemic restrictions

The Association of Leading Visitor Attractions has published visitor figures for its members during 2020. Visitor numbers rose in the first quarter, due to increased visits from overseas, but then fell dramatically after the first lockdown, creating an overall decline of 66%. Overall the top 294 ALVA sites received 45.4m visitors, down from 151.3m in 2019.

- Botanic and museum gardens were more able to stay open and attract visitors, and two sites appear in the top ten most visited for the first time – Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (1.2m visitors), and RHS Garden Wisley (993,000). Horniman Museum and Gardens, which was able to provide safe outdoor space, was the 12th most visited attraction (606,329). Similarly, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh was the most visited in Scotland (452,479).
- Tate Modern was the most visited attraction (1.43m), followed by the Natural History Museum (1.29m) and British Museum (1.27m) which was closed for one month more than Tate. These all reflect visitor declines of over 75% – with Royal Museums Greenwich losing 96% of its footfall, down to 111,263.

ALVA Director Bernard Donoghue said *“our annual figures for 2020 reflect what a devastatingly hard year the Attractions sector and the wider visitor economy faced. Tourism is the UK’s 5th biggest industry and, as these figures show, was hit first, hit hardest and will take the longest to recover.”*

Donoghue also urged overseas tourists to visit this summer for a unique experience of ‘culture without the crowds’. [ALVA](#) (press release), [ALVA](#) (reopening exhibitions), [Guardian](#), [ALVA](#) (statistics), [Museums Journal](#)

Instagram overtakes Twitter for museum content – plus experiments in making digital pay

The Art Newspaper’s snapshot of museums’ work to monetise digital programme shows price points that range from Birmingham Museums Trust’s monthly access package at £20 to Vienna’s Kunsthistorisches Museum, with an offer from €3 for a lunchtime talk to customised private tours at €150 - €200. Few have revealed how economically successful these experiments have been, though Design Museum Director Tim Marlow says that its ‘Electronic’ show sold 50,000 tickets to its in-person event, compared to 4,100 for the digital version, by late February. What may have permanently shifted is the idea that digital is largely a marketing avenue for live experiences, and towards being an offer in its own right – whether for adult education or talks from specialists. Vastari’s Bernadine Bröcker comments that exhibitions by themselves may not perform especially well online (being a less optimal version of a live experience) but that tapping into expert interpretation will attract a paying audience.

On social media, two New York museums have the highest social media follows in the world: the Museum of Modern Art (12.4m) and Metropolitan Museum of Art (9.7m). London nationals have four spots in the top ten with Tate Modern/Tate Britain with a combined 9.3m, the third most followed. The British Museum has 5.5m, National Gallery 3.36m and V&A 3m in the eighth to tenth spots. Globally, Instagram museum followers have grown by 30% in the past year (compared to only 13% on Twitter and 5% on Facebook). It is now the most popular platform for following art museums, with 54.4m following the top 100 art museums. Meanwhile, ‘it seems likely’ that the Black Country Living Museum is the most followed museum on TikTok. [Art Newspaper](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (making digital pay), [Art Newspaper](#) (top 10 social media),

A world snapshot of museums in 2021: open in Australia and China, with a mixed picture in Europe

The Art Newspaper has given a snapshot of the status of museums and galleries across the world – whether they are currently open or closed, and how controlled the pandemic is in wider society. Most museums in Australia are open, although many have timed tickets to prevent overcrowding; museums are also largely open with distancing measures in the US, although in California public institutions are only slowly reopening now. Brazilian museums have been open since October and continue to be so, despite high mortality in its current second wave. In China, Wuhan is 'nearly back to normal' but museum goes across China have to pre-register with verified identification. Meanwhile as a third wave reaches Europe, there is a more uneven picture of opening and closing by country and region. For example, museums in Poland closed again until at least 9th April, having previously reopened on 1st February. In Germany, where museum openings are tied to regional infection levels, more are expected to close with warnings of stricter lockdowns ahead. [Art Newspaper](#) (world view, late March), [Art Newspaper](#) (Europe)

Collections

German Government and other institutions move towards restitution of Benin Bronzes

There has been a step change in discussions of ownership and restitution of the Benin Bronzes, taken in a punitive expedition by the British army in 1897, after the German Government and other cultural bodies said they would permanently return collections to Nigeria. Around 10,000 items were taken in 1897, with about 8% at the British Museum, and the rest held in 160 museums worldwide including 45 in the UK, as well as numerous private collections.

- The University of Aberdeen has announced that it will return a Benin Bronze to Nigeria, 'within weeks' which has been in its possession since 1957. Vice Chancellor Prof George Boyne said the piece, taken in the British punitive expedition of 1897, could not be retained by the university as it was 'acquired in such reprehensible circumstances'.
- A Foreign Ministry official for the German Government says that the country is on course to return Benin bronzes in its public collections, in an agreement that will also include training Nigerian museum workers, and participation in the construction of a new Edo Museum of West African Art, designed by David Adjaye and incorporating the ruins of the palace site in Benin City. Around 25 German museums hold relevant collections, including the Humboldt Forum. Its Director Hartmut Dorgerloh said the museum was now in talks with Nigeria about the return of 400 objects, either displaying replicas or leaving symbolic empty spaces.
- Meanwhile Manchester Museum is recruiting a new curator of living cultures, with an understanding that 'repatriation and restitution [are] a core part of the job', acting proactively rather than waiting for requests. The museum currently holds a Benin tusk, recently the subject of a commissioned poetry cycle and discussion event.
- In January, the Netherlands approved a mechanism for repatriating collections looted during the colonial period. Now a research consortium of nine museums and a university are launching a €4.5m project by June which will offer practical guidance for museums on colonial collections, exploring 'dilemmas and solutions'.

The British Museum said that it is currently working with the Legacy Restoration Trust in Nigeria and that it 'fully acknowledged' the devastation of the 1897 exhibition, while emphasising that the strength of its collections is dependent on showing how the cultures of the world 'interconnect over time'. In an interview with *The Art Newspaper*, Senegalese historian El Hadji Malick Ndiaye advocated for greater involvement of African stakeholders, adding "if we consider that around 80% of African artefacts are currently outside of our continent, we need to achieve the restitution of around half of them". [Art Newspaper](#), [Guardian](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (podcast), [Art Newspaper](#) (El Hadji Malick Ndiaye), [Museums Journal](#), [artnet](#), [Museums Journal](#) (Manchester Museum), [Manchester Museum](#) (Benin tusk), [Art Newspaper](#) (Netherlands)

Bayeux Tapestry needs €2m conservation project before it can be displayed in the UK

In 2018, Theresa May's Government reached an agreement with the French that the Bayeux Tapestry would be displayed in the UK. However, a condition report reveals that the tapestry is in need of extensive conservation with '24,000 stains, 16,000 wrinkles, 9,000 holes and 30 non-stabilised tears', which will cost €2m to repair. The Mayor of Bayeux Patrick Gomont, has suggested that the UK should foot the bill to secure the loan. V&A Director Tristram Hunt said it would be 'fabulous' to conserve the tapestry in the UK, although only a few institutions would be able to manage the work on the 70m textile. Speaking to the BBC, he added *"I think we should all pay, whether it was French government money, British government money or private sector money. As Theresa May said, it is a shared patrimony, it tells of an incredible story at a time of turbulence across the Channel."* [Times](#)

Treasure report 2018 reveals objects acquired by 108 museums - from a medieval seal to Iron Age grave goods

The British Museum has published its Treasure Report for 2018, which lists finds, mostly discovered by metal detectorists, which have been defined as treasure. 1,094 cases were reported overall, consisting of 20,906 individual artefacts. 347 of these cases were acquired by 108 different museums, with 93% of these local to the find spot. Cases include a 'snail man' silver gilt mount from 1200 – 1350, found in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, which Wakefield Museum is working to acquire. Iron Age objects including a bronze mirror and tweezers, dated between 80 BC– AD 100, were found at Kensworth, Bedfordshire, and the Culture Trust, Luton is hoping to accession them. British Museum (press release), [Finds database](#) (snail man), [Arts Industry](#)

Art UK extends its reach in new partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies

Art UK has announced a major multi-year partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies, which should significantly extend the visibility and reach of its public art collections online. As part of the partnership, in June 2021 Art UK will launch a guide to its holdings on the Bloomberg Connects app, which showcases virtual guides to exhibitions and stories from museums around the world. Bloomberg support will also accelerate Art UK's core aims on its own site: uploading digitised artworks, telling new stories of lesser-known artists and diverse subject matter and growing learning resources for schools. It will also bring greater footfall to the Art UK shop, which helps participating museums generate income without risk. ACE Chair Sir Nicolas Serota said *"this partnership is an exciting development not only for Art UK, but also for the whole network of institutions they work with...I know this announcement is a major milestone in their mission to make art accessible to everyone."* [Art UK](#), [Bloomberg Connects](#)

Appointments

Lisa Ollerhead will take up the post of Director of the Association of Independent Museums from May. She was previously Head of Museums Policy at DCMS. [AIM](#).

David Hopes has been appointed as the new Head of Service at Leeds Museums and Galleries, following the death of his predecessor, John Roles. Hopes previously worked for the National Trust for Scotland. [Museums Journal](#)

Podcasts



A Neighbourly Visit to the Penguins - by kind permission of artist. © Michał Krzysztofowicz

Podcasts on culture, health and wellbeing

The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance is gathering a list of podcasts in its field of interest. The list to date contains more than a dozen options, including the Wellcome Collection's For All I Care, a five part podcast on reimagining care and healing, presented by artist Nwando Ebizie. Other podcasts cover the intersect of arts and culture with mental health, stroke or regional wellbeing groups. CHWA welcomes more suggestions for its list. [CHWA](#) (podcast list), [Wellcome Collection](#) (For All I Care)

Bringing worlds together: Centre for Cultural Value launches new podcast series

The Centre for Cultural Value has launched a new podcast series, hosted by Dr Robyn Dowlen, looking at how to communicate cultural value, bringing together voices from the sector and academia. Early episodes include 'Whose Safe Spaces?' asking what barriers are created when culture, health and research come together and 'Bringing two worlds together' describing how culture conveys its value to the health and social care sector. [CCV](#), [CCV](#) (trailer), [CCV](#) (press release)

Also: the most recent digest from the Centre for Cultural Value looks at how cultural organisations are working with healthcare students to help them develop new skills. [Culture Hive](#)

Whitechapel Gallery's schools programme: art and creative play at a time of physical distancing

Cultural education charity A New Direction has produced a one-off podcast in conversation with Whitechapel Gallery's Alex Kais and local primary school teacher Keri Sellens, looking at how the gallery reorganised its schools programme during the coronavirus, and how it intends to continue working with schools post-pandemic. You can also sign up for A New Direction's monthly newsletter. [AND](#) (podcast), [AND](#) (newsletter)

Surveys and consultations

Northern Culture All Party Parliamentary Group launches – and opens consultation

A new All Party Parliamentary Group on Northern Culture (NC-APPG) has launched to promote and champion the economic contribution of the North's cultural sector, and build support to level up investment and empower future generations. It is running an Inquiry on how to help the region recover from the pandemic and to feed into recommendations the group will make to Government. The deadline for responses is 10th May. [Northern Culture](#), [Northern Culture](#) (Inquiry)

Consultation on implementing the Ivory Act – processes and fees for exempted items

Defra has opened a consultation on the implementation of the Ivory Act, 2018. Once implemented, there will be a near-total ban on import, export and dealing in elephant ivory, with a few very specific exemptions for museums, musical instruments and some exceptional works of art. This consultation will focus on registration, certification process and fees for exempted items. The deadline for submissions is 4th May. [Gov.uk](#) (overview), [Defra](#) (consultation)

MGS seeks views from Scottish museums and galleries on reopening

Museums Galleries Scotland is keen to hear from Scottish museums and galleries on their current situation and reopening plans. The results will be anonymised to share with the Scottish Government and visitor support body, as part of advocacy to support your work. The deadline for submissions is 26th April. [MGS](#)

Older people: culture, community and connection

The Centre for Cultural Value is planning its next research review on the topic of older people: culture, community and connection. It is keen to hear from the sector and policy makers about which areas of knowledge would be most useful. The survey should take only five minutes to complete. Alternatively, there is a more in-depth interactive workshop on this topic on 13th May at 2pm. [CCV](#) (survey), [CCV](#) (workshop)

Events

Sharing collections: the future of borrowing and lending

The Art Fund has published further dates for its five-part webinar series on borrowing and lending. Closely allied to the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund, which supports loan programmes, topics include planning and research, making the case for support and marketing. A final session will look at how enormous changes in the past year will shape the future of borrowing and lending. The final three live dates are 22nd and 29th April and 6th May, but recordings will be available for some sessions. [Art Fund](#) (sign up), [Art Fund](#) (Weston Loan programme)

Reaching carbon neutral at the Australian Museum and the role of conservators

The Australian Museum, Sydney is ahead of many other larger institutions in its work to address climate change, and has become a climate neutral organisation. The museum's Dr Jenny Newell will be giving a talk on how the museum lowered its carbon footprint despite its historic building, and future plans which include switching to renewable electricity and becoming carbon positive. The talk is hosted by the International Institute for Conservation (following, but separate from its AGM), and is free for all to attend live. It takes place on 19th April at 8pm. [IIC](#)

VocalEyes training to create better access for visually impaired visitors

VocalEyes has created two new training events for museums and galleries to help them create a better experience for visually impaired visitors in person and online. 'Visual Awareness training' will identify barriers, describe how to welcome and communicate with visually impaired people using appropriate language, and learn the basics of audio description. Tickets are £50 + VAT and the training repeats on 6th May and 4th June. A second event focused on web and social media accessibility is £45 and repeats on 21st April, 27th May and 15th June. [VocalEyes](#)

A Culture of Care: Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance National Conference

The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance has now published the full programme for its conference, with speakers including Farah Ahmed of Julie's Bicycle, Hilary Jennings from Happy Museum, Esther Fox from Accentuate and UCL's Professor Helen Chatterjee. The event takes place over three days from 21st – 23rd April and tickets are £50 - £100. [CHWA](#)

Kids in Museums Conference 2021

Kids in Museums is holding its annual conference with a focus on the return to museums and the host of issues from better representation to digital and climate change that reflect the world that younger visitors live in and will inherit. Speakers include ALVA's Bernard Donoghue asking what the future holds for families returning to museums, Leah Dungay of the National Videogame Museum on engaging older children through videogames, and panels on supporting mental health and wellbeing and reaching underrepresented families. The event takes place online on 11th May. Tickets are £20 live, £10 for the recording, with 30 free places for under 25s, and discounts for freelancers and those made redundant. [Kids in Museums](#),

Better careers, caring museums: BM's Knowledge Share programme continues for April

The British Museum's series of Knowledge Share events continues for April, with further events to be announced for May. Upcoming dates include:

- Museum careers unlocked: getting your foot in the door, led by the British Museum Youth Collective, 13th April, 4pm
- Better recruitment, better sector -an interactive workshop with Fair Museum Jobs, 20th April, 3.30pm
- Reimagining museums as caring places, led by Paisley Museum, Who Cares? Scotland and Kairos Women+, 27th April, 2pm

Events are free and aimed at museum professionals and those hoping to work in the sector. [NPC](#) (Caring museums), [NPC](#) (better recruitment), [NPC](#) (museum careers unlocked)

Training fellowship for senior fundraisers

Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy is launching its first Fellowship programme for senior fundraisers – who have either led a fundraising team in a cultural organisation, or are the most senior staff member. It will focus on skills growth and leadership development, incorporating elements of business and finance. The nine month programme is a mixture of online training, networking, private learning and a three day residential, running from May 2021 to February 2022, with a commitment to 24 days of work. Participants will gain a Post-Graduate Certificate at the University of Leeds, with an optional pathway through to an MA. The course is free to organisations with a turnover of under £3m, rising to £800 or £1.5k for larger institutions. The deadline for applications is 12th April. [Arts Fundraising](#)

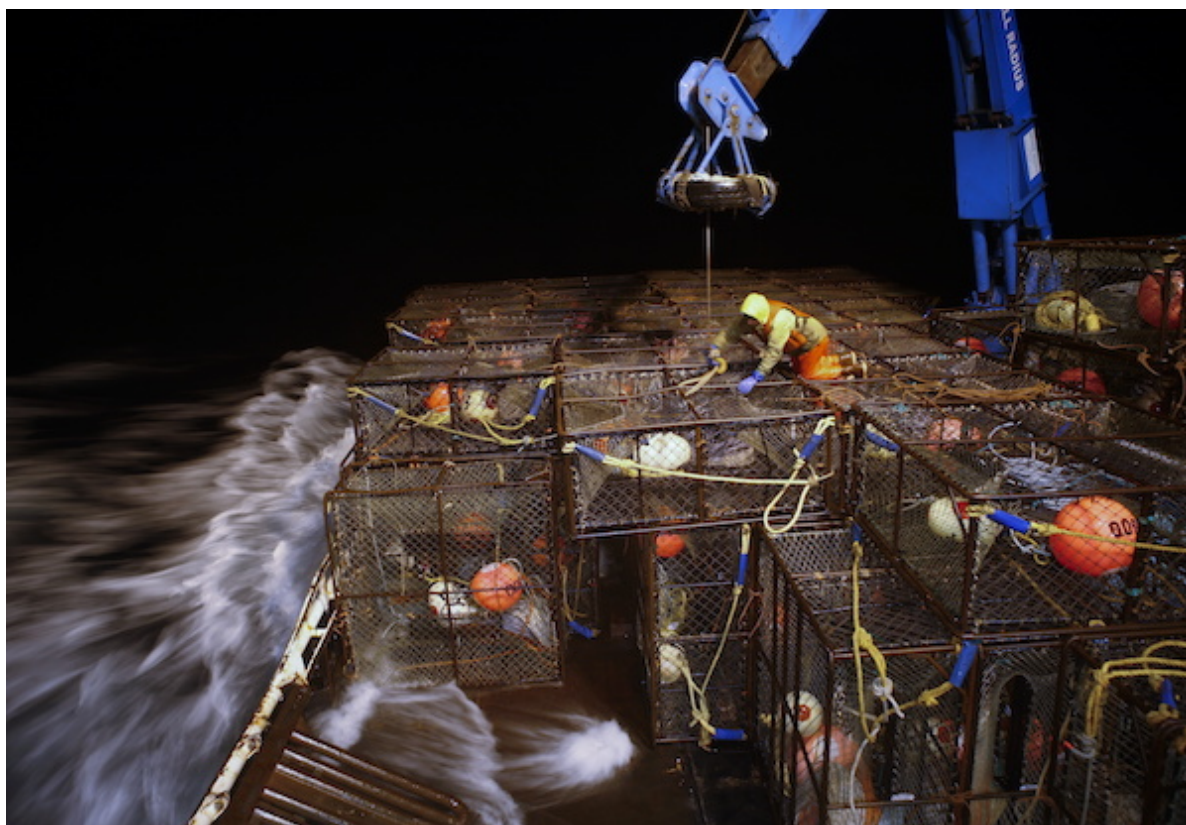
Migration Network regional event series

The Migration Network has launched a series of events aimed at bringing together organisations for knowledge-sharing in the UK and beyond. The group is led by the Migration Museum in partnership with a number of museums and museum bodies including the MA, National Museums Liverpool, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums and the National Trust. The next event in the series covers the South-West and Wales and takes place on 22nd April. The group is now seeking partners for future events in the Midlands, Scotland and London and the South East. The group has also recently produced a 'Migration and Museums' report which looks at why museums are also well-placed to address this subject. [Migration Museum](#) (event programme), [Migration Network](#) (Wales/SW event), [Migration Museum](#) (Migration and Museums report)

BBC local radio will feature cultural venues and their reopening plans in April event

All 39 BBC Local Radio stations will be featuring nearby cultural venues in their broadcasts on 12th April – from museums and galleries to theatres and other performance venues. Places featured include the Museum of Liverpool, Opera North in Leeds, the Turner Gallery in Margate, and The National Space Centre in Leicester. Programmes will focus on reopening plans, and how the public are responding to opportunities to return. This event is just one strand of a wider BBC reorganisation of its cultural offer, as it moves its creative and journalistic centre away from London over the next six years. Spending on arts and music on BBC Two will double, and there will be up to eight box sets on BBC iPlayer around culture each year. There will also be work to build on the well-received Culture in Quarantine programming. However, BBC Four will cease to commission new work and will become an archive-focused channel. [BBC](#) (programme in detail), [BBC](#) (structural changes), [Guardian](#) (BBC Four)

Funds open for applications



'Self portrait stacking pots' by kind permission of artist © Corey Arnold

MHCLG opens £30m fund for Changing Places toilets at arts, tourism and other venues

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced a further £30m to install Changing Places toilets in existing buildings in England, including arts and tourism venues. Local authorities will be invited to opt in to receive a share of funding based on need. Individual venues interested in accessing funding should get in touch with their local authority and express an interest in working in partnership to deliver a Changing Places toilet. [Gov.uk](#)

New round opens of £40m Green Recovery Challenge Fund

NLHF is opening a second round of its £40m Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Applications must be made in partnership with an environmental charity and meet at least one of three criteria: nature conservation and restoration, nature-based solutions, particularly focused on climate change mitigation and adaptation and/or connecting people with nature. The deadline for applications between £50k - £250k is noon on 14th April (the deadline for larger sums has already passed).

[NLHF](#)

Contemporary Art Society launches annual fundraiser to buy art for local museums

The Contemporary Art Society is again raising funds to help local museums buy art, in a crowdfunding campaign which offers Katharine Hamnett 'Choose Art' t-shirts at £60 or more. The campaign is currently nearly half way to its £200k target. Last year CAS raised £230k to buy 106 works of art by British artists for 16 museums. [Arts Industry](#), [CAS](#), [Crowdfunder](#)

£26m Creative People and Places launches for 2022 – 25

ACE has opened a new round of Creative People and Places, its programme dedicated to reaching the 109 areas of the country with the lowest arts engagement. Funding of £750k - £1m is available for projects running from April 2022 – March 2025, from an overall fund of £26m. It is open to both new and existing consortia. Projects must include community and grassroots organisations as well as museums, libraries or arts organisations. Organisations are encouraged to register an interest as soon as possible, with a deadline for applications of 11th June. [ACE](#) (list of eligible areas), [ACE](#) (overview), [Creative People and Places](#) (includes newsletter and map of existing projects)

Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund reopens with changed criteria

The MA has announced new rounds of the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, which will support collections engagement with up to £90k per applicant over two years. £1.3m will be awarded in total. One stream will support projects which kickstart new kinds of engagement where there is a strong link between collections and audiences. A second will look at new ways of engaging audiences living with the consequences of the pandemic. The first deadline for expressions of interest this year is 26th April. [Museums Journal](#)

Funding distributed

Museums receive £25m in latest round of Cultural Recovery Fund

2,700 cultural and heritage organisations will share £400m in the latest round of the Cultural Recovery Fund. 140 museums share £25m, with recipients including York Museums Trust which received £423k, enabling it to open the Yorkshire Museum for the first time since March 2020 and stay financially viable despite losing £3m in income since the start of the pandemic. Support for individual museums ranged from £9k to £1.9m with Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust receiving £1.1m, Birmingham Museums Trust £820k (which will help towards reopening Thinktank) and Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust (£370k). [Gov.uk](#), [York Museums Trust](#), [ACE](#) (data on all CRF support so far)

Also: The National Audit Office has published an investigation into the Cultural Recovery Fund, in particular raising the issue of awarded funds arriving slowly with successful organisations. In a response on 12th March, DCMS said 80% of first round funds had reached organisations, with the rest due to be paid by early April. [NAO](#), [Gov.uk](#)

NLHF gives a further £1m to develop digital projects for culture

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has distributed a further £1m through the Digital Skills for Heritage Initiative, to continue to support sector digital upskilling through the pandemic. Among the eight recipients are groups creating topic-specific digital archives ranging from textiles to Pan-African heritage, as well as work by Wikimedia UK to expand coverage of marginalised people and subjects on open source platforms, and a consortium including The National Archives, which will work to open up community access to archives. [NLHF](#)

National Archives awards £500k to 25 archives through its Covid-19 fund

The National Archives has distributed up to £50k each to 25 archives to support their projects through Covid-19. The money comes from a direct grant from the Treasury. Recipients include City of Westminster Archives which will use the support to safeguard the history of smaller businesses at risk through the pandemic; Worcestershire Archives will secure the archives of Worcestershire County Cricket Club from flooding and loss, and a photographic record of now-vanished streets in Northampton Borough will be preserved by Northamptonshire County Council. [National Archives](#)

Ten creative teams announced for Festival UK* 2022 include NMNI in astrophysics consortium

Ten creative teams have been selected to develop a series of events, public engagement programmes and virtual projects for Festival UK* 2022 (which has a temporary name until later this year). Each group combines STEM organisations with arts and cultural groups, and will create events that celebrate the UK and promote it globally, as well as supporting the levelling up agenda. The £120m event will take place in towns and cities across the UK. National Museums Northern Ireland is involved in the 'Nerve Centre' group, which promises *"an experiment in astrophysics, augmented reality, landscape, visual art and play, asking what happens to your perspective on everything when you look back at earth from space"*. [Gov.uk](#) (detail of team partners), [Arts Industry](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Festival 2022](#), [Apollo magazine](#)

MGS distributes £800k in pandemic support to civic and university museums

Museums Galleries Scotland has distributed an additional £800k in pandemic support funding to museums run by local authorities, arms-length trusts and universities. Individual awards ranging from around £2k - £60k, will support museums to enhance their digital offers and continue to reach audiences through online education, podcasts, livestreamed events and digitised museum tours. [MGS](#) (full list of Covid-19 emergency funding), [Museums Journal](#)

Coventry City of Culture receives additional £3.5m for Covid-safe event

DCMS has awarded an additional £3.5m to Coventry City of Culture to help it deliver its programme this year in a Covid-secure environment. This brings total Government support for the event to £18.5m. [Gov.uk](#)

Wellbeing projects



'Christian' by kind permission of artist © Corey Arnold

Wessex Archaeology offers guide to using collections and expertise for wellbeing projects

During the pandemic, Wessex Archaeology realised that it had two central assets – ‘an archive of amazing things and experts to interpret them’, and has been using these to create a community wellbeing project over Zoom, called ‘A Thousand Lost and Found Stories’, in partnership with third sector organisations. Asking people to take part in simple activities such as choosing a favourite object and explaining why it resonates with them, it helped people to stay connected under lockdown. It has now produced a simple guide to the considerations in setting up this kind of work, and a ‘Museum of Lost and Found’ featuring chosen objects and feedback from sessions. Sheffield Mind was among the partner organisations – one participant, Simon said the event was ‘the highlight of my week’ adding *“this was particularly so during the pandemic when times have felt more lonely and cut off. One of our tasks was to choose and talk about objects that are significant to us. Hearing something about other people’s passions and lives, and also sharing my own objects, has brought me out of myself and made me think about the place of objects in my own life.”* [Wessex Research, Museum of Lost and Found](#)

Tullie House is among 37 recipients sharing £1.8m for social prescribing projects

The National Academy for Social Prescribing, which was set up by Health Minister Matt Hancock last October, has distributed £1.8m to 37 nature, culture and civic society organisations through the Thriving Communities Programme. The funds come from a consortium which includes ACE, Natural England, NHS England and others, reflecting the broad reach of the work. For one project, Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery will be lead partner in the newly formed North Cumbria Arts, Health & Wellbeing Partnership, working to help people of Carlisle to recover from Covid-19 through the power of social prescribing. The group will deliver a programme of community co-produced arts, health and well-being activities across North Cumbria. Other core partners are Carlisle City Council, North Cumbria Integrated Care Foundation Trust, Carlisle Healthcare, Prism Arts, Susie Tate Projects and Cumbria Wildlife Trust. Other Thriving Communities projects centre around craft making, green volunteering, singing, exercise and community meals. ACE Chief Executive Darren Henley said *"there's growing evidence that taking part in cultural and creative activities, getting enough exercise and connecting with nature can really improve people's physical and mental health"*. [Social Prescribing Academy](#) (all projects), [Social Prescribing Academy](#) (press release), [Arts Industry](#)

National Centre for Creative Health is launched

A National Centre for Creative Health launched in early March to make arts interventions mainstream in health and social care. It is the result of findings by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, which sees the arts as integral to health. Its work will initially focus on four areas: Gloucestershire, Suffolk, West Yorkshire and Harrogate, and Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. [National Centre for Creative Health](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Forests for the future – museums and the natural environment

National Trust interactive map shows risk to heritage sites by 2060

The National Trust has produced an interactive climate change map of England, Wales and Northern Ireland to chart the danger to historic sites now and in 2060. The first of its kind, it is based on factors including overheating and humidity, storm damage and soil heave (soil beneath a property pushing upwards to create structural damage). The projection shows current risks for 2020, but a worst case scenario for 2060, and the National Trust intends to use it as a 'flagging tool' for preparedness. Searchable by postcode, it allows for granular, local action as well as big picture strategies. Sites already at risk include Ham House, which is likely to face regular 40C days, which its Head Gardener says *"applies a climate change perspective to every single action in the garden"*. Although South East England will be the most severely affected, flooding is currently an issue at Lyme Park, Cheshire, and landslides and coastal erosion threaten the Giants Causeway in Northern Ireland. Recent research by the University of Reading also shows that wildfires could become as much of a threat in England as in France or Australia in coming decades. Without action, the number of NT sites at high or medium risk of damage could rise from 30% to 71% in the next 40 years. Its own action plan includes planting 20 million trees, with 50,000 already planted in the past 12 months at the most strategically useful sites, from Devon to London. [National Trust](#) (press release), [National Trust](#) (map), [M + H](#), [ITV](#), [National Trust](#) (Ham House – planting for heat), [M + H](#), (risks in focus), [Museums Journal](#), [Guardian](#) (wildfire research)

Horniman creates membership club to address climate change

The Horniman Museum has launched an Environment Champions Club for children and families, operating largely online. The club will invite participants to take part in activities including supporting pollinators, reducing plastic pollution and cooking meat free meals. [Horniman](#)

Forest of 400 trees to be planted at Somerset House as part of Design Biennale

Artist Es Devlin will fill the courtyard of Somerset House with 400 trees this summer, as part of the London Design Biennale from 1st – 27th June. The 'Forest for Change' will include 23 varieties of trees native to the UK and Northern Europe – all in planters so as not to damage the underlying courtyard. The installation is in line with the theme of the biennale, which looks at how design can find solutions to the major challenges of our era. Devlin says *"when I was first shown around Somerset House many years ago, I discovered that the enlightenment principles on which the building was conceived specifically forbade the introduction of trees into the courtyard. Of course, the first thing we wanted to do when considering this year's biennale was to counter this attitude of human dominance over nature by allowing a forest to overtake the entire courtyard."* [dezeen](#)

Justice Museum develops creativity kit on wheels, to bring its work to 'unexpected places'

The National Justice Museum in Nottingham has customised a bicycle to carry its creative resources to events around the city. It allows the museum to be a presence 'wherever people are at' and offer creative activity in an un-prescriptive, unexpected, and exploratory way. The front of the bicycle contains a 'mini gallery' of original collection items, with other compartments holding craft-making kits, bunting, gallery guides, a donation box and more. Through this approach Artistic Programme Manager Andrea Hadley-Johnson aims for people outside the museum to shape what happens within. Once insured, the bicycle will be out on the streets of Nottingham from April. [National Justice Museum](#), [Twitter](#) (@NJMIdeas, for developing coproduced activities), [Twitter](#) (main account), [Instagram](#)

Fundraising through local arts, crafts and nature

BMT revamps shop with an emphasis on local craft and makers

Birmingham Museums Trust is taking a new approach to its shop with an emphasis on locally made products from independent makers. Its offer now features several jewellers from the city's Jewellery Quarter and cult brand Punks and Chancers. Commercial Director Alex Nicholson-Evans says *"we're really excited to be launching our new online shop with local makers at the fore and look forward to adding many more products showcasing Birmingham's creative talent and businesses."* A report by the Crafts Council in mid-2020 showed a unique craft offer can attract relatively high value purchases, and that museum and gallery shops attract some of the most high-spending and adventurous buyers. [BMT](#) (shop), [Museums Journal](#) (craft buying report June 2020)

Also: Meanwhile RAMM is launching a group seed planting activity 'Growing Together' through its social media channels, encouraging people to grow six of their own bee-friendly aromatic and flowering plants (starting with calendula this week) and then share the results online. It is also selling packs of all six seeds with a specially designed guide through its online shop for £5. The work complements its seed-themed summer exhibitions, including 'Seedcapes: Future proofing nature'. [RAMM](#) (Growing Together), [RAMM](#) (shop),

Garden Museum sells 236 drawings of a growing plane tree seedling

After spending years unsuccessfully trying to grow an iconic London Plane tree, artist Alice Sielle finally discovered the secret: sprinkle the seeds on the surface of the soil and cover them with cling film. A fledgling tree began to emerge in Spring 2020 as lockdown began, and for 236 days she created a new pencil drawing of its growth. Now all of these images are for sale through the Garden Museum website, as part of its latest creative approach to pandemic fundraising. Prices range from £27 - £55, giving the opportunity to own affordable art, local and unique to the museum. Alice says *"what took 10 minutes a day ended up taking one and a half hours. It grew from 15cm to 46cm and I kept having to buy bigger and bigger and more and more pads of paper. I set myself the task of drawing the tree every day until its last leaf dropped, which happened on 24th November."* [Garden Museum](#)

Telling global stories, addressing colonialism and slavery

Kew's ten year plan calls for action on the extinction crisis – and announces reinterpretation of plants and collections

Kew Gardens has published its plan to 2030, with an ultimate goal of 'helping to end the extinction crisis', by deploying its scientists to protect plants and fungi globally, as well as inspiring people to protect the natural world and training a new generation of experts. Director Richard Deverell said "we stand at a crossroads - the next decade will be critical if we are to reverse this environmental devastation." However, press coverage and some public discussion has centred around whether Kew is 'woke' due to plans for reinterpretation which describe how some plants, such as sugar, have been part of stories of colonialism and the slave trade. The museum also plans to highlight indigenous uses of plants, diversify its senior staff and attract a more representative audience. Writing for *The Spectator* about the coverage of Kew's plans, journalist Isabel Hardman comments "that word 'de-colonise' is the magic password into the culture war. Instead of this being merely about Kew updating its already extensive signage throughout what functions, in part, as a museum of plants, this has been picked up by some as a new front in the war... But why shouldn't Kew add some further context to some of the plants in its collections? How they got to Kew, or indeed how many of them became so important that they changed the course of history is fascinating, often bloody and, at times, disturbing." In a blog responding to public debate, Deverell writes "this is predominantly an exercise in revealing and restoring stories that have so far been untold, adding to information and bringing more diverse perspectives. We want to broaden and enhance our narrative, not detract from it or to censor. There is always something new to learn." [The Times](#), [Evening Standard](#), [Kew Gardens](#), [Guardian](#), [Spectator](#), [Kew Gardens](#) (blog), [Kew Gardens](#) (plan to 2030)

Charity Commission finds no grounds for regulatory action against the National Trust

An enquiry by the Charity Commission has concluded that the National Trust did not act outside its charitable purpose when it published a report in September 2020 linking 93 of its properties to slavery and colonialism. The regulator said that the Trust commissioned the report after a consultation with 2,000 members which found 'considerable support...for research into challenging histories'. However, it said that more could have been done to 'clearly explain the link between the report and the trust's purpose'. In a blog welcoming the ruling, the Trust's Director-General, Hilary McGrady said "there is so much to be proud of in our history. The wonderful collection of places the Trust cares for, that have been cherished for generations before us, is a testament to that. However history can also be challenging and contentious. It is surely a sign of confidence, integrity and pride that while we can celebrate and enjoy history we can also explore and acknowledge all aspects of it. The National Trust is at its best when we capture this complexity." [National Trust](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [Guardian](#), [Civil Society News](#), [Telegraph](#), [Times](#)

Tourism

'Uffizi diffusi' – Florence lays plans for a 'scattered museum' to prevent post-pandemic overtourism

Prior to the pandemic, Florence, Italy had a serious overtourism problem, particularly severe at The Uffizi Gallery, where its 12,000 visitors a day often spent time stuck in long queues. Poor tourist behaviour was also an issue in the city, leading to €500 fines and an 'Enjoy Respect Florence' campaign. Now The Uffizi is planning a 'scattered museum' model, to drive tourists out over a wider area, creating a more sustainable future. 60 – 100 venues are planned to be involved in the 'Uffizi Diffusi' project, with sites in towns and villages across Tuscany now nominating themselves for inclusion. In many cases art will be returned to places where it was first created, connecting people directly to their heritage, as well as creating stable jobs and opportunities away from the overheated tourist centre. This has been made possible by newly affordable 'top notch' security measures which will keep works safe at regional sites. Uffizi Director Eike Schmidt hopes that the end result will be a 'different type of tourism' to 'ground culture in people's lives'. The museum has also recently launched 'Uffizi da Mangiare' (Uffizi on the Plate) on its YouTube channel, featuring chefs from the region creating food inspired by works of art – and again linking the museum with its wider cultural context. [CNN](#), [maxwell museums](#), [Artnet](#)

Also: The Italian Government has banned large cruise ships from entering the historic centre of Venice, after years of concern about pollution, blocked views and damage to local ecology and

fragile cultural heritage. [CNN](#), [Art Newspaper](#)

Welsh Government launches plan for reopening tourism

Visit Wales has published its joint plan with the Welsh Government for reopening tourism in the country. It anticipates enthusiasm for domestic tourism, and aims to create manageable spread, both to prevent overcrowding at particular events and venues, and over time – with plans to encourage people to visit during off-peak seasons. [Welsh Government](#)

Awards

Winners of first £150k Civic Awards for arts organisations announced

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has announced the four winners of its first Civic Awards for arts organisations, chosen from a shortlist of ten. The overall winner, Heart n Soul is a creative arts charity for people with learning difficulties. It received the £75k main prize for its work co-creating a programme of activities, and employing freelance artists to deliver club nights, quizzes and baking sessions to its members. Three further awardees receive £25k each:

- The Museum of Homelessness, London is a creative social justice museum, drawing its narrative from people with a lived experience of homelessness. In March 2020, it redirected funds into a collaborative Covid-19 Homelessness taskforce and within five days had a plan to block-book empty hotel rooms and allow homeless people to self-isolate.
- The Whitworth, Manchester responded to the pandemic by concentrating on the health, education and justice issues of most concern to its community. It reached 300,000 people during the pandemic online, delivered sessions for under fives and craft workshops for over 50s, and was even able to migrate its horticultural wellbeing programme, GROW, to an online format. It also ran projects in its community garden when restrictions allowed, and contributed to a creative packs programme for those not online.
- Eden Court Highlands, Scotland's largest combined arts organisation, which pivoted to practical help during the pandemic including staffing a helpline for vulnerable people and delivering creative activities for children.

The new award was delivered and judged in partnership with King's College London and its students have produced a celebration publication, highlighting the range of work. It comments *"arts organisations across the country have channelled the anxieties of this period and boldly reimagined their missions to put their communities first. However, much of this pioneering work is unknown, even within the arts sector itself."* The awards seek to further spread and advocate for the best projects. There are plans for a second iteration of the award, but details are not yet confirmed. [Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation](#), [CGF](#) (celebration document with project examples), [Heart n Soul](#), [Whitworth](#), [Museum of Homelessness](#) (includes street museum installation), [Eden Court](#), [King's College](#)

Collections Trust Award shortlist and winner announced

Kilpin Hall and Gardens, near Richmond in North Yorkshire has won this year's £1k Collections Trust Award for 'work achieved in difficult circumstances'. It acquired and cleaned the Annie Marchant Kitchen and Dairy Collection during lockdown. Other shortlisted museums were Experience Barnsley for its 2020 redisplay, Garstang Museum of Archaeology, Liverpool which created virtual 3D models of museum objects for teaching and outreach, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke on Trent for index card digitisation, St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff for Collecting Covid and Verdant Works, Dundee for recording knowledge of jute processing machines. [Collections Trust](#)

Jobs

Posts being advertised this month include:

- [Reporting Administrator - Natural History Museum](#)
- [Masterplan Project Director - National Railway Museum](#)
- [Senior Project Conservator - Museum of Science and Industry](#)
- [Art Handling Technicians - National Galleries Scotland](#)
- [Archivist \(Military Records Project\) - National Archives](#)

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

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