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NMDC news



Images this month are from the My Primary School is at the museum project, which included work at Tate Liverpool. Courtesy of King's College London

Ian Blatchford to become new NMDC Chair

The Director of the Science Museum Group, Ian Blatchford, will become the next Chair of the NMDC. Ian will take over from IWM's Diane Lees in April 2017, and will be the first Director of the Science Museum to be NMDC's Chair.

Working with national museums: partnership and collaboration

It can sometimes be difficult to find the right person to contact in a national museum if you want to talk about working in partnership or collaborating in some way. NMDC has therefore produced a leaflet including all the contact details of the national museums' Heads of Partnerships (or equivalent) and details of some case studies to act as inspiration. The leaflet will live on the Promoting Partnerships page of the NMDC website and will be updated when personnel change. Paper copies were distributed in each of the Conference bags at the MA Conference. [Working with national museums](#) [Promoting partnerships](#)

To coincide with the publication of the leaflet, NMDC hosted a networking event at the MA Conference to provide the opportunity for delegates to meet national museums' Heads of Partnerships and discuss ideas for projects or collaboration. The event was well attended and NMDC will continue to support museum partnership and collaboration through our involvement in the Touring Exhibitions Group's *Preparing to Borrow* in 2017.

Working Internationally Conference

NMDC and ICOM UK - supported by the British Council and Natural History Museum - will hold the fifth Working Internationally Conference on 2nd March 2017 at the Natural History Museum. It considers the issues and practicalities that may open up to UK's museums and their international partnerships on leaving the EU. Led by keynote speaker Michael Dixon, Director of the Natural History Museum, the day will be a mix of sharing experiences and discussion. Tickets are £45 including lunch. [ICOM](#)

Autumn Statement

Tax relief for permanent and temporary exhibitions included in Chancellor's Autumn Statement

The Chancellor Philip Hammond has made a number of announcements relating to museums and heritage in his Autumn Statement. These include:

- Following representations by AIM, NMDC and various museums, the Chancellor has confirmed that a tax relief will apply to permanent exhibitions as well as touring and temporary exhibitions.
- The Royal Society of Arts will receive £850m to explore the effect of cultural education interventions on Pupil Premium eligible children. The programme will begin in early 2018.
- There will be £7.6m to help the restoration of the South Yorkshire stately home Wentworth Woodhouse. This will pay for essential repairs which will then make it possible for the National Trust to bid for the building.
- A more flexible Gift Aid Scheme.
- £1.8bn for Local Enterprise Partnerships with local authorities in England, which was welcomed by the Creative Industries Federation as offering potential benefit to the sector.
- The RAF Museum receives a further £3m from LIBOR fines towards its redevelopment.

AIM expressed delight at the Chancellor's decision on the exhibition tax relief. Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar also welcomed the Chancellor's decision which he said was likely to save museums up to £5m in 2017/18 and up to £30m from 2018 – 22. However, he added, *"it is the relatively modest financial challenge of keeping our museums' operational costs properly covered where we now need the government's leadership and support, especially those funded by local authorities, such as the threatened New Art Gallery Walsall."* The Local Government Association referenced museums in a statement which said the Chancellor's proposals would not fill the local government funding shortfall to 2020 of £5.8bn. It said: *"even if councils stopped filling in potholes, maintaining parks and open spaces, closed all children's centres, libraries, museums, leisure centres, turned off every street light and shut all discretionary bus routes they will not have saved enough money to plug this gap by the end of the decade."* Scotland's unprotected budgets will also be cut by £1.3bn a year to 2020. [Gov.uk](#) (whole autumn statement), [Gov.uk](#) (summarised in bullet

points), [M+H](#), [Arts Professional](#), [LGA](#), [AIM](#), [IPPR](#), [The Scotsman](#)

Full detail of the exhibitions tax relief

The conditions of the new exhibitions tax relief are as follows:

- The relief is set at 25% for touring exhibitions and 20% for non-touring exhibitions.
- It is capped at £500k of qualifying expenditure per exhibition.
- The relief comes into force from 1st April 2017 and will expire in April 2022 unless renewed.
- The government will re-examine tax reliefs in this area in 2020 and form a plan then for post-2022.

[Gov.uk](#) (whole Autumn Statement)

Museums Review update

DCMS' Neil Mendoza has written a blog summarising work carried out to date on the Museums Review. DCMS has received more than 1,600 responses to an online survey, as well as 30 written submissions from industry experts and sector bodies. The Review team has also crossed the country talking to over 150 people who have oversight of museums, and has explored the breadth of museum types – from village to local authority, and from national to independent. Mendoza writes: *"I've been challenged (and failed) to climb the rigging on SS Great Britain in Bristol. We've had our own private display of the mechanical silver swan at the Bowes Museum in County Durham. I've been mocked by a dead knight at The Armouries and looked deep into the stores at Leeds City Museum."* The reviewers will now spend the next two months developing lines of inquiry which will inform recommendations to government. [DCMS blog](#)

Leaving the EU



Arbeia Roman Fort and Museum, which became a school for a term to a class from a local primary school. Courtesy of King's College London.

Arts Council England reports on the effects of leaving the EU

In the aftermath of the EU referendum Arts Council England carried out a survey of more than 1,000 artists and cultural organisations to assess the likely impact of Brexit. Those responses, weighed up against available evidence now, form a new report - *The arts and culture sector and exit from the European Union*. The main themes emerging were around funding, ease of movement, regulatory frameworks and trade. Issues raised include:

- 9.3% of respondents had received funds from Creative Europe. In the previous three years cultural organisations had accessed funds ranging from €5k - €2.4m. Smaller organisations will find it particularly difficult to manage without this funding stream.
- European Structural Funds have benefited many less developed areas of the UK. The Creative Kernow project was planning to use £1.7m of EU money to turn the former Redruth Grammar School into a space for 200 creative businesses and artists. The project is now on hold.
- The weakened £ makes touring to the EU difficult for many, although others see the benefit of increased profit from European touring, and inbound tourism.
- 75.3% of organisation said that barriers to freedom of movement would have a negative effect on their ability to bring in performers from outside the UK; 70.8% were concerned about being able to work in the EU. ACE would like to contribute as new movement arrangements for artists are brokered.
- 56% of UK export of music, performing and visual arts, or £362mm is to the EU. The UK also exported €8121m in cultural goods during 2014, and imported only €5365m. Trade is therefore a significant issue for the sector.
- Of the top ten countries where National Portfolio Organisations tour, seven are in Europe – the exceptions being the US, Canada and Australia. 37% of NPOs toured to France, 36% to Germany and 26% to Spain. On average in 2014/15 11.6% of NPO earned income came from international work.
- There are concerns around intellectual copyright, tax exemption and VAT: ACE is asking for a review to make sure laws work for UK creatives once outside the EU.

[ACE](#) (full report)

MA responds to Select Committee on Leaving the EU

The Museums Association has published their response to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry into the impact of Brexit on tourism, creative industries and the digital economy.

- It highlighted that many museum workers are earning below the £35k threshold for Tier 2 UK work visas, and that their status post-Brexit is therefore uncertain.
- It also argued that there could be substantial recruitment and training costs for museums replacing cleaning, catering and front of house staff previously from the EU.
- EU tourists have not increased this year despite a weakening pound, the MA called for minimal barriers to future visits.

The response also listed some of the major EU funds which have benefited the sector, and pointed to issues of copyright and orphan works which are resolved with reference to a pan-European database. [Museums Journal](#)

As we reported in November's Newsletter, NMDC also submitted evidence to the inquiry. [NMDC](#)

Scotland seeks UK commitment to Capital of Culture plans

Scottish Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop has written to DCMS asking it to clarify that the UK government still intends to support participation in the European City of Culture 2023. A UK and Hungarian city were due to host, and Dundee is among the cities which had scoped a bid. However, the bidding process appears to be delayed following the Brexit vote. Ms Hyslop said, "I am concerned that the delay in launching the competition is a signal of the Government's intention to renege on its agreement to be a host city. Dundee must not now have the rug pulled from under them. I hope to receive reassurance that the UK Government intends to go ahead with its commitment to be the host country in 2023 and clarification on when the bid process will open."

[Scotland.gov](#)

Members' news

Not formulaic: Science Museum brings new Maths Gallery into the equation

The Science Museum has unveiled their new Mathematics: The Winton Gallery, which was designed by the late architect (and Maths graduate) Zaha Hadid. The Gallery's curator, David Rooney, has used the Museum's collection to show how maths has played, and continues to play, such an important role in everyday life. There is no algebra, but there is a shoe shop x-ray machine, JMW Turner sketches and the Monaic machine, which was created by the London School of Economics and used water to explain Keynesian economics. The Handley Page Gugnunc aircraft is at the centre of the new gallery, and a YouTube video shows how it was reassembled. [Science Museum YouTube](#)

Also: The Science Museum has acquired a spaceship. Soyuz TMA-19M is the vehicle which took British astronaut Tim Peake to the International Space Station in 2015, and landed again on the Kazakhstan steppe in June 2016. It will become the first flown, human rated spacecraft to be acquired by the UK when it arrives from Russia in early 2017. Tim Peake said, "*I'm absolutely delighted that my Soyuz spacecraft, the TMA-19M, is going to be returning here to the UK and may serve, hopefully, as inspiration for our next generation of scientists and engineers.*" [Science Museum blog](#)

Terracotta Army figures to visit Liverpool

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has announced that an agreement has been signed for the World Museum in Liverpool to borrow 120 objects from the treasures discovered at the tomb of Qin Shihuangdi, including some of the Terracotta Army warriors. The announcement was made during the Secretary of State's visit to China - part of the annual People-to-People dialogue - and the exhibition will open in February 2018. National Museums Liverpool Director David Fleming said, "*we are proud to be strengthening the city's connections with other cultural organisations in China and creating an exhibition programme that continues to excite and inspire visitors from across the globe.*" Liverpool is home to the oldest Chinese community in Europe. [Guardian](#) [BBC](#)

York Art Gallery on European Museum of the Year Award longlist

York Art Gallery has been nominated for European Museum of the Year, following a visit by one of the competition's judges. It is the only UK museum on a list of 46 nominees from 23 countries. Chief Executive of York Museums Trust, Reyahn King said, "*this is international recognition for the transformation which has taken place at York Art Gallery and it will help us to promote the gallery and the city of York as an exciting cultural destination to new audiences across the continent.*" The winner will be announced in Zagreb, Croatia, on 6th May 2017. [YMT](#)

David Bowie Is no more, record audiences visit exhibition

The V&A's *David Bowie Is* has drawn more visitors than any other touring exhibition in its history, with 1.5 million attending at eight venues so far. Following the singer's death in January, the Groninger Museum in the Netherlands saw a jump of 30,000 ticket sales in a week. The exhibition has now been extended to include Bologne and Tokyo during 2017. [ALVA](#)

National Galleries Scotland strike deal for Monarch of the Glen

National Galleries Scotland is fundraising £4m to purchase the painting *Monarch of the Glen* from drinks manufacturer Diageo after it agreed to sell the painting for less than half of its £10m valuation. The painting had previously been on long term loan to the National Museum of Scotland. Diageo at first planned to auction the painting to release funds, but was persuaded to rethink by former National Museum of Scotland Chair, Sir Angus Grossart. Edwin Landseer's 1851 painting is both an iconic representation of Scotland ('one of the world's great animal portraits'), a familiar image in advertising campaigns, and a source for more complex questions about 'conflicting interpretations of Scottish culture and history'. National Galleries Scotland's Director-General Sir John Leighton said, "*we are delighted with this grand gesture by Diageo which offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for this major work to be acquired for the nation.*" [Scotsman](#), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [Museums Journal](#), [NGS](#), [Guardian](#)

Three-month closure for repairs at Museum of Liverpool

The Museum of Liverpool will be closed for three months from 31st December to late February for vital repairs to the structure. This follows a court hearing in 2013 in which the Museum was awarded £2.4m against AEW architects for defects to the building. National Museum Liverpool's Director David Fleming said, "*we have considered the timing of this closure carefully to minimise disruption as much as possible, and will be carrying out the works during our least busy time for visitors.*"

[Museums Journal](#)

Events



Arbeia Roman Fort and Museum, which became a school for a term to a class from a local primary school. Courtesy of King's College London.

What can the cultural sector learn from the referendum?

The Happy Museum is holding an event exploring the neuroscience and psychology of the referendum debate, and the role museums could play in building social capital in their communities in the aftermath. Speakers include neuropsychologist Kris de Meyer and Tom Crompton from Common Cause. The event takes place on 3rd February and tickets are £50, with concessions available. [Happy Museum](#)

Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27th January. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is offering resources for museums and galleries interested in running an event, including films, access to an image library and links to organisations which provide speakers with experience of genocide. Bilingual Welsh-English resources are available for the first time. The theme this year is 'how can life go on?', and will look at life in the aftermath of genocide. There were 5,590 events in 2016. Case studies from previous years include work at museums in Liverpool. [HMDT](#) (resources), [HMDT](#) (Liverpool case study).

Entrepreneurship in Cultural Heritage Workshop

Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage is holding a workshop to explore the increasing need for museums and heritage organisations to become more entrepreneurial as a way of both increasing their resilience and identifying ways to build profile and audiences. Themes including working with partners outside the cultural sector, going global and building income. It takes place at the Old Ikon Gallery, Birmingham on 2nd February 2017. Tickets are £45 before 13th January, then £55. [Birmingham University](#)

Iraq scholarships and academic grants

The British Institute for the Study of Iraq is offering a number of scholarships and grants, all with a closing date of 1st February. Pilot project grants up to £8k, and conference attendance and research grants up to £4k relating to Iraq are now available. Topics including arts, humanities and social science from the medieval period to the present day are welcomed. There are also two to three scholarships for Iraqi academics to carry out collaborative research trips to the UK. [BISI](#) (research and conferences), [BISI](#) (pilot projects), [BISI](#) (visits)

Live stream: Power Through Diversity

Arts Council England will be live streaming its 12th December event Power Through Diversity, which will look at change and good practice throughout the cultural sector. All are welcome to watch for free. [ACE](#)

Festival of Museums registration open

Scottish museums are invited to register to take part in the Festival of Museums which runs from 19th – 21st May 2017. The weekend coincides with Museums at Night and gives museums a platform to raise their profile, and develop skills in running sustainable and enterprising events. Participants will receive listing, support through blogs and seminars and marketing materials. Museums should sign up by 28th February. [MGS](#)

Welsh Museums Conference 2017

The Welsh Museums Conference 2017 will take place at the Cardiff Story Museum on 2nd March 2017 and will look at the Museums and Future Generations Act. Tickets are £30 for Welsh Museums Federation members and £60 for non-members: contact john@arenig.demon.co.uk

Welsh museums survey 2016

The Welsh Government is topping up its comprehensive statistical data for Welsh museums collected in 2011 and 2015, with a shorter data capture this year. Topics include visitors, finances, staff, volunteers and education for the 2015/16 financial year. The deadline for completion is 6th January 2017. The data will inform the next Welsh Government Museum Strategy for Wales. [Spotlightonmuseums](#)

Futures: the museum as community infrastructure

'My primary school is at the museum'

The Education department at King's College London has published a report *My Primary School is at the Museum*. It describes a pilot at three local museums to invite primary school classes to spend up to a term using museums as their school for a majority of lessons. The project is the brainchild of architect and mother-of-three Wendy James, who noticed that primary school places are increasingly in short supply, while local museums are underused. She hopes the project will eventually lead to the creation of a dual-use museum primary school. Arbeia Roman Fort welcomed year five children from Hadrian Primary school for a term. Teacher Stephanie Christie says "every single morning they come into school and ask 'are we going over to Arbeia?'" Activities included science and geography classes using the collections, as well as pretending to be slaves, digging up artefacts or going for 'angle hunts' in the museum for their maths class. One year five pupil said "I don't actually like museums, but this one has been different. I think I will remember this forever." Meanwhile, Tate Liverpool hosted a preschool class for two weeks, and reception class pupils in Swansea spent five weeks at the National Waterfront Museum. King's recommends building on the strong enthusiasm from children, parents, teachers and museum staff with a toolkit, more school residencies in museums and specialist training for teaching in museums. [Kings College](#) (whole report)

Diversifying the means of production: creating Fab Cities

By the middle of the century it's likely that 70% of people will live in cities. These populations are already responsible for 75% of global CO2 emissions and are reliant on supply chains from elsewhere to provide food and energy. Nesta blogger Toby Baker says that this trend is unsustainable, and introduces the Fab City initiative, which aims to help cities become self-sufficient, with everything from rooftop grown food, to self-produced prosthetic limbs. The Fab City initiative aims at 50% self-sufficiency by 2054, and is inviting civic leaders, fab lab managers and technologists and enablers to get involved. The project doesn't directly mention museums, but with many interested in fab labs and the intersection of technology and local craft, as well as having a link back to industrial history, museums may be well placed to be hubs for the evolving movement. [Nesta, Fab Cities Initiative](#)

Few museums provide well for blind and partially sighted visitors

VocalEyes, the charity which champions access to arts and heritage for blind and partially sighted people, has published the results of its annual survey on access. It found that a small number of museums are following excellent practice, but a majority need to make improvements:

- Only 30% of museums publish information on their websites that would be useful to blind people planning a visit.
- Only 10% publicise live audio-described tours and handling sessions for blind people
- 27% of museums do not provide access information for disabled people planning a visit on their websites.
- Only 5% are using websites which provide detailed access audits, such as DisabledGo.com or Euan's Guide.

Around two million people, or 3% of the population have significant sight loss. Arts Council England's Director of Museums, John Orna-Ornstein, said, "*we hope that VocalEyes' report will serve as a catalyst for change, driving more museums across the country to facilitate access for all of their audiences.*" [VocalEyes](#)

Culture sector avoids £5m in bills as it embraces green energy

Julie's Bicycle has published its regular report for Arts Council England tracking the environmental footprint of cultural organisations. In 2015/16:

- 98% of NPOs were involved in the scheme.
- Cultural organisations have saved an estimated £5.1m through greener approaches, and £8.7m since 2012.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from energy use decreased by 17% compared to 2014/15
- Generation of onsite renewable energy increased by 23%.
- Organisations are also engaging audiences on the subject – 37% have produced, programmed or curated work on environmental themes. These included Manchester Museum's Climate Control series of exhibitions and events.
- 24 organisations have agreed to take up environmental leadership roles in their NPO funding agreements – including Ironbridge Gorge, which aims to become the most environmentally friendly UNESCO World Heritage Site on the planet.

In its work to 2018, Julie's Bicycle plans to deepen its understanding of the role of capital investment in environmental sustainability, to help inform Arts Council England's investment planning. [ACE, Julie's Bicycle](#)

Web



My primary school is at the museum. Courtesy of King's College London.

Art UK to open museum print shop

Art UK has recently soft launched an online shop that will give participating museums an opportunity to generate commercial income. Art UK hopes that the shop will become a UK-wide marketplace selling print on demand, image licenses and merchandise from across UK museums that can be purchased in a single transaction. The pilot shop offers print on demand and licensing from seven launch collections including National Museum of Wales and Manchester Art Gallery. The shop will be formally launched in March. [Art UK shop](#)

Tate among first to become state of the .art

A new batch of domain names ending in .art have been released and Tate will become one of the first to use the new tag for the sector. The Art Newspaper, Centre Pompidou and Guggenheim Museum are other early adopters. [Arts Professional](#)

Qualifications and arts education

History of Art A Level saved

History of Art A Level has been saved. The exam body Pearson will develop a new History of Art A Level syllabus in time for September 2017 when AQA will cease to offer a course in the subject. The news was welcomed across the art world where many individuals and institutions – including the National Gallery, Tate, Anish Kapoor and Cornelia Parker - had campaigned for the qualification to survive. Welcoming the news, Culture Minister Matt Hancock said, *“it is now crucial that our leading museums and galleries work closely with schools that already offer or are thinking of introducing the A Level in their teaching, particularly in state schools where uptake has been traditionally very low.”* [M+H](#), [The Art Newspaper](#), [DCMS blog](#)

House of Lords debate on creative education

A debate took place in the House of Lords on 3rd November to discuss arts education, including the Ebacc, the unavailability of some arts A Levels and the decline in the uptake of arts subjects at GCSE. Baroness Brinton (Liberal Democrats) commented, "*one in 11 jobs in our society is creative but this year alone we have seen an 8% drop in the uptake of arts subjects from the previous year.*" Viscount Younger of Leckie (Conservative) said that the Government wished the [then] cancelled subjects – including archaeology and classical civilisation – to continue at A Level and was in discussion with exam boards. [Hansard](#), [Creative Learning Alliance](#)

Also: Statistics published by the Department for Education show that arts teaching hours have declined by 15% between 2010 and 2015. Design and Technology showed the greatest fall (by 23%). History hours are up by 15% and Geography by 18%. A recent report from the NUT has also raised concerns about the squeezing of many arts subjects. [Creative Learning Alliance](#), [Arts Professional](#) (NUT report)

Filling the creative skills gap

The Creative Industries Federation has produced a short report, *Social Mobility and the Skills Gap*, demonstrating that the current emphasis on the 'utilitarian' Ebacc may be shutting UK children out of creative industries careers where there is currently a shortage of skilled workers. It gives practical examples, such as the creative GCSEs needed to start a BTEC at Cleveland College in 'interior, architecture and product design' (a qualification leading to jobs from theme park or furniture designer to computer animator). The Creative Industries Federation also points out that dyslexic students and those with ADHD often struggle with academic subjects but excel elsewhere, and therefore restricted access to a creative syllabus may particularly harm their life chances. Writing for the *TES*, Maggie Atkinson argues that poorer children are disproportionately affected when the arts are marginalised in a school syllabus. Meanwhile, the Department for Education has announced £300m for cultural education over the next four years, up from £271m in the previous four years. The majority will continue to go music education hubs. [CIF](#) (full report), [TES](#), [Cultural Education Alliance](#), [Telegraph](#)

Also: The London pilot of the Cultural Citizens Programme has kicked off at the Barbican Centre with a treasure hunt and a chance for children from Barking and Dagenham to meet cultural sector leaders. [AND](#)

International

British Army seeks Monuments Women and Men

The British Army will be recruiting 15 – 20 archaeologists next year to help protect cultural property in areas of conflict. They will form a special unit and will be the first such appointments to the army since the Second World War. The plan follows the UK's planned ratification of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which seems likely to be finalised in the spring. Lt Col Tim Purbrick is an art dealer, army reservist and former tank commander, and has been leading a military working group on the subject for two years. He says both civilian women and men are encouraged to apply. The final shape of the unit will be decided by ministers in consultation with the Army. The British Museum's Assistant Keeper for the Middle East, St John Simpson, who has previously briefed troops to the Middle East, points out that both Ninevah and Mosul are currently at risk. He welcomed the creation of the unit, adding, "*they can also be the point of contact between the armed forces and institutions such as ourselves.*" [The Art Newspaper](#), [Parliament.uk](#)

Also: Swiss authorities have seized looted items from Palmyra, Libya and Yemen which had been stored at Geneva's free ports since 2009 or 2010. A French minister had complained in November that Swiss and other free ports are a 'weak link' in countering terrorist financing. It is not clear when the looted items were seized – questions were first raised about them in 2013 – but the objects will now go on display at Geneva Museum of Art and History while return to their countries of origin is arranged. [Guardian](#)

Long pasties, Nigerian markets and Jamaican botanical collections

ICOM-UK has published a number of case studies, describing how UK regional museums have used Working Internationally Regional Project travel grants to develop and strengthen international connections. NMDC and the British Council are also partners in this programme.

Two staff members from Royal Cornwall Museum visited Hidalgo State in Mexico and researched similarities and the shared history of the two regions. Both Mexico and Cornwall have a history of mining and a preoccupation with pasties (dating back to the emigration of Cornish miners to Mexico). Part of the visit included the three-day Festival Internationale de Paste where the world's longest pasty was created. The result of the exchange has been strong cultural connections, and an exhibition *Mexico: the Cornish Connection*. A modest £2k travel grant made the visit possible. Other recipients of the travel grants included: Haslemere Education Museum, who developed links with a Swedish museums); Bristol Museums and Galleries, who undertook a research and development visit to Jamaica; and the Horniman Museum, who's Curator of Anthropology did field research and contemporary collecting ahead of the major re-display of the Museum's Anthropology galleries. [ICOM](#), [Further case studies](#)

Also: A final Working Internationally Regional Project workshop will take place 1st March 2017 in London. The workshop will feature those who received the travel grants. Bookmark [this link](#) for further details.

Awards

M+H Awards 2017 open for applications

Museums + Heritage has opened applications for its annual awards. Director Anna Preedy said that 'cost-effectiveness and creativity' are at the heart of awards. There are 11 categories for 2017 including restoration or conservation, temporary and permanent exhibitions, marketing, innovation, trading and enterprise, limited budget, international, and both fundraiser and volunteer of the year. The deadline for entries is 1st February. After sifting down to a shortlist, the winners will be announced on 17th May at a ceremony in London. [M+H](#)

Transformers open for next round

Transformers, the MA's UK-wide training scheme for mid-career museum professionals has opened its latest call for applications. Around 170 trainees will be supported, encouraging participants to 'develop new ways of thinking, influence more effectively, and create change for themselves, their colleagues and their organisations'. Applications to the 'Innovate' strand close on 27th January 2017, 'Influence' and 'Diversify' close on 28th February 2017. [Museums Journal](#) (news article), [Museums Journal](#) (full details and application form)

Apollo chooses its 2016 favourites

The art world magazine Apollo has announced the winners of its 2016 awards. These include Nick Serota as Personality of the Year, Cornelia Parker as Artist of the Year, and ArtUK as the best digital project. The judges remarked, "[ArtUK's] ability to bridge scholarship and public engagement has been clear this autumn in Britain's Lost Masterpieces, a BBC series that has seen the attribution of a number of important works in regional collections after they initially aroused interest on Art UK." The Fitzwilliam Museum's online manuscript project, Illuminated, was also shortlisted. [Apollo Magazine](#), [Illuminated](#), [ArtUK](#)

Gold diggers: treasure trove doubles this decade

The most recent Treasure Annual Report, published by the Portable Antiquities Scheme and covering 2014, shows that gold and silver treasure finds have doubled in a decade. There were 506 finds in 2004, and 1011 in 2014. 373 items were acquired by museums, often with help from organisations such as the Art Fund, HLF and V&A Purchase Grant Fund, but also through 77 cases of individual generosity, where finders waived their reward. The PAS 2015 Annual report, also just published, reports that 90% of finds were by metal detectorists. Recent discoveries include a votive Bronze Age shield from before 975BC, and the Watlington Viking hoard of 200 pennies and precious metal jewellery. [Finds.org.uk](#) (Treasure report 2014), [Finds.org.uk](#) (PAS report 2015), [Museums Journal](#), [Gov.uk](#)

Investment

Private investment in culture survey report

Arts Council England has published a report based on its survey Private Investment in Culture, alongside analysis on its blog. Michelle Wright, Director of the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy programme wrote that the breadth of the data, including that from regularly funded organisations, allows the sector to benchmark success. Findings include:

- There was £480m in private investment in culture in 2014/15 of which £96m was from business, £245m from individuals and £139m from trusts and foundations.
- Visual arts organisations have done particularly well, receiving 32% of funds – museums receive 9% of all funds, which make up 17% of their income.
- Museums and the visual arts are also growing their private investment faster than the rest of the sector – at 38% and 29% respectively between 13/14 and 14/15.
- Private gifts to larger organisations in the South and London predominate. The 50 largest organisations received 60% of total funding – and the 21% increase in 2014/15 was largely due to individuals giving to large organisations.
- The lowest level of private funding as a proportion of organisational income is in Yorkshire and The Humber and the West Midlands, both on 6%, followed by East Midlands (9%), North East (10%), North West (10%) and South West (11%). However, the East of England (21%) rivals London (22%) and outperforms the South East (19%).
- Smaller organisations are more reliant on private investment with 29% of income of those under £100k coming from that source.
- 57% said that they expected private investment to grow as a percentage of income over the next three years (although the survey was taken pre-Brexit).
- 63% said they lacked in-house staff capacity for fundraising.

Michelle Wright wrote, “*those organisations that seem to be thriving tend to pick two or three key areas of income to focus on.*” She also warns against ‘post-referendum paralysis’ with Trustees tempted to ‘wait and see’ rather than build new and creative approaches to fundraising, in collaboration with donors. Arts Council England said that schemes such as Catalyst Evolve are helping smaller organisations to attract more private investment, but said continued work is needed to grow those areas. [ACE blog](#), [ACE](#) (full survey results) [M+H](#)

Declining National Lottery sales

National Lottery sales have fallen by £226m between April and September 2016 compared to the same period in 2015. This means £92m less for National Lottery Good Causes. Camelot CEO Andy Duncan pointed to economic uncertainty and competition from other lotteries. National Lottery receipts had increased over a three-year period to an all-time high at the end of 2015/16. [Arts Professional](#)

MGS simplifies funding structures

Museums Galleries Scotland has announced that it will be reducing the number of grant programmes it offers to make it easier for museums to know which one to apply to. Deadlines have also shifted, but the sums available remain the same. [MGS](#)

Future of local authority museums

Culture Minister gives evidence to Select Committee inquiry

The Minister for Culture and Digital Industries, Matt Hancock MP, has appeared in front of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee to give evidence in the sixth and final session of their inquiry, *Countries of Culture*. The Select Committee is considering the future of regional arts and culture. The Minister's evidence included much mention of museums, and he was supportive of the proposal NMDC made in both the consultations for the Culture White Paper and Museums Review, to encourage local authorities to follow the example of national government and allow museums to work with greater freedom. The Minister also spoke about the opportunities for museums which digital innovation provides and praised the culture sector for focusing on finding solutions to the challenges it faces. The transcript of the session can be read in Hansard. [Hansard](#)

Dewsbury Museum closes – community group explores takeover

Dewsbury Museum shut in early November as part of Kirklees Council's plan to save £531k. The Council said it was open to bids to continue to run the museum, but said the building might be sold on the open market if a viable plan does not emerge. Councillor Graham Turner said, "*the council did not want to be in this position...I am sorry people will no longer be able to access these museums, but I can assure you we will do everything possible to look after the collections.*" A group called the Friends of Dewsbury Park Museum are now exploring whether they can transform the site into a community 'leisure, entertainment, social and wellbeing venue'. Spokesperson Jax Lovelock said that generating income and finding grant money to repair the building was essential if the group's plans are to work. She said, "*I don't underestimate the difficulties ahead. But I feel as though we are now on our way*". Red House Museum in Gomersal is also due to close in late December.

[BBC](#), [Dewsbury Reporter](#)

CAS Director says gallery cuts risk making investment impossible

The Director of the Contemporary Art Society, Caroline Douglas, has written for the *Guardian*, highlighting the risk that declining public investment will prevent private investment in regional galleries. She says, "*if core funding to a gallery is cut beyond a certain point, the institution becomes almost unable to accept philanthropic support, because the key contact for donors is often the dynamic and empowered curator. In one extreme case, curators are even afraid to acquire new work in case it draws the attention of cash-strapped councillors to their valuable collection.*" However, there are positive examples, including the Baltic Gateshead's new commissioning prize and the Hepworth Wakefield's new prize for sculpture. CAS' own Great Works scheme has allowed some museums to spend six figure sums on modern acquisitions that would not otherwise have been possible. Douglas argues that with so much evidence that the arts '*boost economies, enhance lives and build the reputations of cities*', the sector must hold its nerve and hope for continued investment.

[Guardian](#)

Locals protest for Walsall Leather Museum and New Art Gallery

Local people have launched a campaign and held a protest in favour of keeping Walsall Leather Museum open. The museum is threatened with having its collections transferred to a local library where only a fraction would be on display. Senior museum curator Michael Glasson said, "*the museum is very much rooted in working class life, but it's not a community who tend to shout loud - they don't feel they have the right to protest.*" He argues that there are a whole range of options to help keep the museum open, but says that the Council has so far presented people with only a very limited choice. One protestor told the local newspaper "*[The museum] is something for us to be proud of. This is the story of Walsall men and women. Leather was the lifeblood of the town. I'm astounded they want to get rid of it. If you move it, it becomes a totally different experience and it will lose its uniqueness.*"

Debate also continues about Walsall's New Art Gallery, which is also at risk of closure. Commentator Simon Tait says that it would cost more to shut the gallery than keep it open, and argues that the Council should look to the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, which has found creative ways to sustain itself. Peter Knott, an ACE Area Director said that Arts Council England is in discussion with the local authority: "*Walsall Council's budget proposals are currently open to public consultation, and people are making their voices heard about the incredibly important role the New Art Gallery Walsall plays in the cultural life of the town. No final decisions have been made and the gallery remains open for people to enjoy its collections and exhibitions. We are continuing to work closely with our partners at the council to find a sustainable way forward.*" [Museums Journal](#), [Express and Star](#), [Taitmail](#)

Northampton Museum publishes phased expansion plans following Sekhemka sanctions

Northamptonshire Borough Council is to go ahead with its plans for an expansion of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, but has divided them into two phases. The approach follows the sanctions from most major arts funding bodies because of their sale of the statue of Sekhemka. The £6.7m first stage will be funded entirely from the sale of Sekhemka. The Council then hopes to fund part two in 2020 with 'sponsorship, fundraising and...grant giving bodies'. *The Art Newspaper* describes the plan as 'optimistic' since the withdrawal of Accreditation lasts until at least 2019, and reinstatement is not assured. The [Art Newspaper](#) (subscription only)

Local council arts funding declines next year, but only 3% of services threatened with closure

Arts Development UK has published its 13th annual survey, assessing plans and projected spend of local authorities on arts and culture over the coming year. It received 44 responses, representing 12% of all authorities in England and Wales, and 19% with an arts service. The report finds that:

- There is a projected 13% reduction in spend compared to 2015/16, but the proportion is much higher in England (14%) than Wales (5%)
- The modal spend is between £150k - £500 per authority
- Smaller local authorities are more likely to close their service in the face of cuts
- 48% of all spend is on NPOs, demonstrating strong partnership arrangements with ACE and ACW
- Local authorities have historically been significant funders of independent arts organisations, especially in areas with low NPO provision. Next financial year, this segment of funding averages at 11%, down 6% since 2015/16.

The report, published before the Autumn Statement, concludes, "*this is still a period of instability for the arts in local government, with at least 28% of those under threat of major cuts, but only 3% under threat of closure. For most, although the threat of immediate closure seems to have declined, local authorities still face severe cutbacks in funding and we will not know the full picture until the national government spending review takes place in autumn 2016.*" [Arts Professional](#), [Arts Development UK](#)

Statistics

Heritage Counts shows membership increases and closing demographic gaps

Historic England has published its most recent set of Heritage Counts statistics. Findings include:

- 73% of over 16s visited a heritage site in 2015, around 40 million people
- There are signs that the demographic gap is closing, with a greater number of visits to properties in more deprived areas. In 2009/10 there was a 44.4% gap between number of visits to the most and least deprived areas of the country. In 2015/16 that gap was only 24.5%: 83% participated in the least deprived areas compared to 59% in the most deprived.
- Visits to historic properties have climbed to 39% above the 1989 average, or 61.3m in total
- Heritage organisations have seen marked membership growth in the last year: English Heritage is up 10%, the National Trust 8% and Historic Houses Association 11%.

Historic England also produced a detailed report on how heritage is and isn't used by Business Improvement Districts in branding an area. The report tracks complex interrelationships between types of heritage and the aura of a place – from relatively high-end independent businesses in uphill Lincoln, to the cosmopolitan reputation of Clerkenwell, or the more corporate feel of the Victoria Quarter in Leeds. Heritage often gives a backstory to an area where branding narratives aimed at attracting business and tourists would otherwise appear invented or thin. [Guardian](#), [Historic England](#), [Heritage Counts](#) (area branding report)

Mapping heritage density: second year of RSA's ambitious data plan

The RSA and HLF have collaborated for a second year to track the level of heritage in areas across the UK. The research cover 120 data points for all 390 local authority areas and includes 'assets' like blue plaques and local foods with protected name status as well as areas of natural beauty and castles and museums. Scarborough, Gosport and Norwich are in the top ten, and since the project began a year ago over 50,000 people have already browsed the data to see how their area measures up. [RSA](#)

Taking Part launches more data analysis tools

Taking Part has added to its data analysis tools with two new pilot prototypes. These cover changes in individuals' behaviour – which looks at data from 2011 – 16, and participation across sectors e.g. how many museum goers also use libraries. Taking Part welcomes feedback on these new innovations. [Taking Part](#)

Jobs

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

- [Sales and Operations Manager - Cutty Sark](#)
- [Creative Producer - Museum of London](#)
- [Masterplan Interpretation Manager - National Railway Museum](#)
- [National Outreach Co-ordinator, Armada Portrait Project - Royal Museums Greenwich](#)
- [Producer Public Engagement and Learning \(x 4 posts\) - Imperial War Museums](#)

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

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