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NMDC news



Builders by the Fitzwilliam Lions courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum

***Striking the Balance* between public access and commercial reuse of digital content**

A new report commissioned by the NMDC from the Collections Trust examines how museums are balancing the twin aims of maximising public access to their digital content and promoting their own financial sustainability. *Striking the Balance* sets out the findings and recommendations from an 18 month study of the different methods and approaches employed by NMDC member institutions. Key findings include:

- No two museums are the same, and their approach to the balance between open access and commercial reuse is highly sensitive to their specific circumstances, capabilities, leadership, collections, audience, location and prior business model.
- There is an overall lack of clarity in the definition of the different approaches to open content licensing and commercial reuse, and a lack of concerted policy in this area.
- There are significant opportunities to develop hybrid models which combine open access and commercial reuse.
- There is a growing body of evidence that open access to digital content for both commercial and non-commercial reuse drives value back to the existing business model or revenue streams of the institution.
- There is a need for greater clarity in relation to expectations of commercial revenue generation.
- There is a significant investment gap reported between the aspiration either to promote open access or commercial reuse and the extent to which participating institutions are able to invest in capacity, infrastructure and promotion to realise these ambitions.

The report contains case studies from across NMDC's membership and explores a range of issues including current trends, developing policies on access and reuse, understanding return on investment and different models for open access and commercial reuse.

Download the full report from the [NMDC website](#).

Working Internationally Conference

There are still tickets left for the fourth Working Internationally Conference taking place on Friday 4th March 2016 at The Whitworth in Manchester. The theme of the conference, organised by NMDC and ICOM UK in partnership with Manchester Museums and Galleries, is 'Working internationally in hard times'. Speakers will discuss how they have maximised partnership opportunities for international work in four key areas: health and well-being, knowledge and innovation, regional development, and developing good cultural and community relationships. The conference programme also includes a session on resources to support international work, a panel discussion exploring how to maintain good cultural relationships while working with international partners and a keynote speech from Maria Balshaw, Director of The Whitworth.

For more information and to book tickets please see the [Eventbrite page](#).

Members' news



The Fitzwilliam Museum Founders building, 2015

Fitzwilliam Museum celebrates 200 years

The Fitzwilliam is celebrating its bicentenary, which fell on 4th February 2016, with a year-long programme. The Museum was founded when Viscount Fitzwilliam left £100k (equivalent to £74m today) and his art and library to Cambridge University. Special exhibitions will explore some of its most treasured collections including ancient Egyptian coffins and illuminated manuscripts. Fitzwilliam Director Tim Knox said: *"The gift Viscount Fitzwilliam left to the nation was one of the most important of his age. This was the period when public museums were just beginning to emerge. Being a connoisseur of art, books and music, our Founder saw the importance of public collections for the benefit of all. From the records we have discovered he appears to have been as generous as he was learned: he arranged music concerts to raise funds for charity, and helped many people escaping the bloodiest moments of the French Revolution. We are delighted to commemorate our Founder in our bicentenary year."* [Fitzwilliam](#), [BBC](#)

Cosmic classroom: Liverpool World Museum chats to space

On 2nd February British astronaut Tim Peake spoke to 300 schoolchildren at Liverpool World Museum live from space. It was his only mass public broadcast from the space station, and a much larger audience was listening at primary schools across the world after 10,000 teachers signed up. Footage of the event from the BBC shows the young audience giggling and mesmerised as the astronaut casually sends first his microphone and then himself somersaulting around the capsule, before explaining the science of gravity. His best trick however, was inserting a vitamin tablet into a glob of water (both floating independently around the capsule) and then watching the bubble grow as the gas was released inside it. Although the world's most exciting science class is now over, the Destination Space programme continues at the World Museum, and families can sign up for live updates from Tim Peake and the space station. [BBC](#) (broadcast excerpts), [Liverpool Museums](#)

Gressenhall's 'Moaning Martha' on VisitEngland shortlist

Rachel Duffield, Learning & Engagement Officer at Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse in Norfolk, is one of only 11 people on VisitEngland's shortlist for Tourism Superstar 2016. Rachel has been channelling Moaning Martha, a workout inmate, for tourists for the past seven years. She also lived on workhouse diet for three weeks, recording her experiences on a blog.

Several NMDC members are on the shortlist for VisitEngland's Large Visitor Attraction of the Year, including Beamish and The Whitworth, and Wheal Martyn Museum is on the Small Visitor Attraction shortlist. [Norfolk Chamber of Commerce](#), [VisitEngland](#), [VisitEngland](#) (Visitor attraction shortlist)

Council cuts

Partial closures at one in 10 regional museums: MA Cuts Survey 2015

The Museums Association's cuts survey, published in December 2015, shows a growing trend for shorter hours, branch closures and moves towards charging at regional museums. 115 museums took part, with a make up reflecting the UK sector as a whole. Key findings include:

- 18% of survey respondents said that part of their museum had closed in the past year or would in the coming year.
- 8% had introduced charging the past year and 12% said they would do so in the coming year.
- 11% said they were considering financially motivated disposal.
- There has been an increase in self generated income of 6%.
- Independent museums are showing the strongest income, with an increase of 3%, in contrast to local authority museums, which showed reductions of 2%.

Some museums anticipate the loss of major assets, with one local authority museum in Yorkshire quoted as saying [we are] *"planning for a 52% further cut in budget by 2017, meaning that total cuts since 2010 are 69%. We are highly likely to lose museum buildings by 2017 and rationalise collections significantly so that storage costs are reduced."* The report concludes that while some museums are finding resilience through commercial schemes and community partnerships, in other places closures are inevitable. [Museums Association](#) (full report), [Museums Journal](#), [Guardian](#)

Artes Mundi prize among those receiving cuts from Cardiff Council

The Artes Mundi contemporary art prize is among the cultural schemes which will be cut from the budget of Cardiff Council. Organiser Karen MacKinnon said that the £20k cut would not in itself be 'fatal', but that the council contribution was used to draw in match funding, with £10 being raised for every pound contributed by the council. International art was displayed at the National Museum Wales venues, drawing positive national and worldwide press. Several arts leaders have now written to Cardiff Council about the shortsightedness of cuts to the arts. They said *"far from being a drain on limited resources, the arts drive tourism and inward investment. Clear evidence of this can be seen in cities such as Copenhagen or Manchester that have placed the arts at the forefront of their successful regeneration and economic development plans."* The Council is contemplating £700k in cuts to the arts at a budget meeting next month. [Wales Online](#)

FOI charts the dismantling of Snibston Museum

Snibston Discovery Museum is to be dismantled by Leicestershire County Council following its closure last year. A freedom of information request reveals that this will cost £180k. The council will also be returning £146k to the HLF, which it had previously invested in the collections. Overall costs of closure appear to be roughly equivalent to those for running the museum for nine months. 37% of exhibits will go to Leicester City Council's museum service, with the rest remaining in store.

[Museums Journal](#)

Civic museums at risk

The *Guardian's* art critic Jonathan Jones writes arguing that regional museums are disproportionately likely to close in the North. He compares the threatened closures in Derby and Lancashire with the well established museums in Bath, Oxford and Cambridge and says *"museums across this affluent part of England tend to have fine restaurants, refurbished galleries and highly publicised acquisitions"* - which help them to survive in a climate of cuts. He mentions the unique collections held in Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, Birmingham Museums and Derby's Joseph Wright collection, which charts the birth of the Enlightenment. He argues that it is crucial that first class collections are recognised and preserved wherever they are in the country.

Meanwhile Derby Museums director Tony Butler had blogged on his own website that civic museums must not react to cuts by retreating into safe territory. He writes *"civic museums have consistently been more radical than most. Museums from Newcastle to Bristol and from Liverpool to Birmingham have used their incredible collections of art, social history, archaeology and natural sciences to increase access to learning, promote social justice and tackle the challenges of how we live together in a crowded planet. It would a huge mistake for our civic museums to retrench to survive – moving to a comfort zone of charging or catering only for existing audiences. They must continue to do the kind of work more commercially driven organisations cannot or will not do."* [The Guardian](#), [Tony Butler](#)

IWM loses appeal on rates for archive

Imperial War Museums is among those which have recently been contesting the level of business rates on their buildings. Rates on IWM's archive building in Saffron Walden were increased by a factor of 12 from £27k to £325k in 2013 when a new system of calculating the tax came into force. However the cost is decreased by 80% because IWM is a charity. In the latest round of court hearings it was judged that IWM must pay an additional £30k in business rates each year backdated to 2013. IWM said it was represented on a no-win, no-fee basis and would not appeal. [Museums Journal](#)

MGS offers advocacy guidance for Scottish museums

Museums Galleries Scotland has published guidance to help the sector defend its usefulness and funding at a time of cuts. Guidance explores what to say to MPs and MSPs as well tapping into public support. Many of the messages echo the ongoing #ILoveMuseums campaign which speaks for museums across the UK. [MGS](#)

Education



Book of Hours illuminated by Vante di Gabriello di Vante Attavanti (act. c.1480 - 1485), Florence, c.1480 - c.1490, tempera on parchment. Courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum.

David Cameron gives speech in support of the arts

Prime Minister David Cameron has given a speech on life chances, exploring how people from the poorest backgrounds can be encouraged to thrive. He heavily referenced recent research and neuroscience about how life expectations are shaped in the early years, adding that "social connections and experiences are vitally important in helping people get on".

Cameron recognised arts and culture as among the experiences which would help young people overcome difficult early experiences and find a way out of poverty. He said "our museums, theatres and galleries, our exhibitions, artists and musicians, they are truly the jewel in our country's crown. And culture should never be a privilege; it is a birth right that belongs to us all. But the truth is there are too many young people in Britain who are culturally disenfranchised. And if you believe in publicly-funded arts and culture – as I passionately do, then you must also believe in equality of

access, attracting all, and welcoming all. Rich and poor, culture vultures and first-timers, in London and outside London."

Among commentators on the speech, the Cultural Learning Alliance continue to argue that less young people are studying arts subjects because these are excluded from the Ebacc, a set of core subjects explicitly praised by Cameron. Blogging for Arts Council England, Laura Gander Howe, their Director of Children, Young People and Learning, said it was pleasing that the Prime Minister's views echoed so much of ACE's own recently launched Cultural Education Challenge. The *Telegraph* described it as 'the best speech he's given as PM, at least in terms of policy and philosophy' and said it was the work of a man who went into politics determined to change his party. A more sceptical *Guardian* asked whether people's life chances could be improved at the 'same time as cuts to benefits and council services.' [Cultural Learning Alliance](#), [Gov.uk](#) (full speech), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [Arts Council](#)

Actors and musicians write to Times about 'narrow' Ebacc

A group of 70 creatives have written to *The Times* to argue that the narrow curriculum of the Ebacc will harm future UK creativity. They write, "*in order to stay at the top we need to invest in the future, especially in creativity in schools, where the number of pupils taking design and technology has halved in the past decade*". In a report published by BOP Consulting, it is suggested that the UK is retreating from the arts, just as other countries internationally are investing in an 'arts race'. These include China, South Korea and Brazil.

Schools Minister Nick Gibb responded to the letter with an article in *The Telegraph*, strongly defending the policy. He said, "*when I discuss our GCSE policy with young people who attended top comprehensive schools (and independent and grammar schools), they take it for granted that pupils study maths, English and science at GCSE, alongside a foreign language and either history or geography*." He argued that the policy helps disadvantaged students and said that the government hopes to raise the proportion taking the Ebacc from 39% to 90%. He also argued that the number of students taking art and design, performing arts and music at GCSE has risen between 2011 and 2015. By contrast the letter to *The Times* states that creative and technical qualifications dropped 14% in the same period. [Times](#) (paywall), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Sadiq Khan discusses arts plans for London

In an interview with the *Evening Standard* London Mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan said that he wants to improve access to arts for children in London. He praised Newham Council for giving every child the opportunity to attend the theatre or play an instrument. He would like to introduce a Love London discount card for theatre, making it more affordable for families, and to encourage arts to tour to the outer boroughs, saying that central London arts organisations are enthusiastic about this, seeing it as an investment in the future. He also wants to stem the loss of small music venues – and put the onus on developers, not performance venues, to make sure there isn't noise pollution when new flats go up around existing performance spaces. [Evening Standard](#)

The recipe for Nobel winning scientists: be an actor, dancer or magician

Research into child geniuses over a 50-year period in the US reveals that creative pursuits are strongly linked to the highest scientific achievement. Westinghouse Science Talent Search has run since 1942 and is the most prestigious award for scientifically gifted high school students. Longitudinal research from 1942–1993 shows that a very small number of the Westinghouse teenagers went on to become exceptional scientists, with only 1% making the National Academy of Sciences. Nobel prizewinners are much more likely to avoid the sort of systemised thinking which is good for passing school exams in some subjects, and there is a much stronger link between scientific discovery and an interest in the arts. The *New York Times* writes: "*Relative to typical scientists, Nobel Prize winners are 22 times more likely to perform as actors, dancers or magicians; 12 times more likely to write poetry, plays or novels; seven times more likely to dabble in arts and crafts; and twice as likely to play an instrument or compose music*." Being raised in a less rules-based environment is also linked to later making scientific breakthroughs. [New York Times](#)

Social museums

Health, social care and the museum

The National Alliance for Museums, Health & Well-being will be holding its first national conference on Wednesday 2nd March at the Whitworth in Manchester. Tickets are £20 including lunch. The conference will feature speakers from health and social care sectors and will explore what contributions museums can make. A marketplace will highlight work from various museums, hands-on activities in the afternoon include behind-the-scenes tours and mindfulness sessions.

[Museums & Wellbeing](#)

Arts and older people survey

Arts Council England has commissioned a survey exploring how older people respond to the arts. Findings include:

- 38% of older people say that it is more difficult to take part in arts and cultural events or activities now compared to when they were younger.
- 43% select venues that are easier to get to; 39% say having someone to go with would make them attend more cultural activities.
- 69% say that arts and culture is important in improving their overall quality of life, 60% say that it is important in making them feel healthy or in encouraging them to get out; 57% say that arts and culture is important in helping them to meet other people.

ACE CEO Darren Henley said, *"with research showing that engagement in the arts tails off as people get older, we need to get cleverer about how we engage older people and tackle the barriers to taking part."* He added that further funds for work with older people will become available later this year. [ACE](#)

Two-year enquiry on arts and health

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health & Well-being has announced a two-year enquiry into arts and health. Co-chair Lord Howarth of Newport said, *"our aim is to inform a vision for political leadership in the field of arts, health and wellbeing... we hope that, through the combined efforts of us all, the arts, museums and heritage will become very widely valued and fully established contributors to health and social care services, promoting good health and wellbeing."* The group will meet with academics and cultural sector representatives and report in 2017. [Arts Professional](#)

Wordsworth Museum to be transformed for 250th birthday

The HLF is giving a £4.75m grant to the Wordsworth Trust for transformative works at the Wordsworth Museum in Cumbria. The historic building will become a hub for exploring themes such as the human mind, democracy and our relationship with nature, all of which were central to Wordsworth's poetry. Larger windows, sympathetic landscaping and greater public access to gardens and woodlands will connect visitors with the landscape; more original manuscripts will also be displayed. [HLF](#)

Creatures of the night

Free Museums at Night workshop

Culture24 is offering a free workshop for museums interested in participating in the Museums at Night festival later this year. The workshop is aimed both at those who have never run an out of hours events before and to those from more experienced venues who would like additional help with PR and marketing. It takes place at Lighthouse Arts in Brighton on Wednesday 10th February from 1pm to 4.30pm. Booking is essential. [Museums at Night](#)

Museums: the hot, late-night ticket for millennials?

Slightly desperate sounding American 20 and 30 somethings have been advertising on Craigslist, offering to pay inflated prices, to get into a late night venue. The hot tickets are for the Franklin Institute's monthly Science After Hours event, which offers drinks and dancing for an adult crowd. 2,700 tickets were sold for a recent event which explored, amongst other things, the science of bootlegging. The Franklin Institute is among a number of US museums which have worked out how to attract a 20 to 40-year-old audience, often poorly represented in museum demographics. Speaking for the Institute, Frederic Bertley said, "*we wanted to figure out: how can we cleverly get them in the door? But we don't want to sell out the soul of the Franklin Institute and what it's all about, which is science learning and hands-on, really cool experiences.*" Elsewhere, The Academy of Natural Sciences has hosted *Mystery Science Theater 3000*-inspired movie nights, and The Philadelphia Museum of Art holds evening sessions with yoga, art-making, and games, as well as gallery access. Many of these events are revenue generators – Science After Hours raised \$200k during its first year. Philly.com

Events and surveys



Creative sector grows at twice the rate of the rest of the economy

New figures published by DCMS show that the growth of the creative sector continued to outstrip the rest of the economy during 2014, generating £84.1bn, a growth rate of nearly 50%. A spokesperson for NESTA said that creative jobs "*have the added attraction of being more resistant to future automation. We argue that the UK economy should create one million new creative jobs by 2030.*" [The Stage](http://TheStage), Gov.uk

National Archives survey on its services

The National Archives is conducting research into its services for academics and researchers and exploring what new services it could offer in the future. The survey takes around 10 minutes to complete, and also covers the changes academics expect to see in methods of research over the next five years. [National Archives](#) (click to open survey)

Exploring opportunities in British Muslim heritage

The cultural group Everyday Muslim is hosting a roundtable on 26th March about the challenges and opportunities in preserving British Muslim heritage at Rich Mix in London. It will bring together speakers from multiple sectors. [Rich Mix](#)

Happy Museum spring event series

The Happy Museum is running a series of workshops across the country during the spring. These are:

- [Ethics \(and Values\): The Only Way?](#)
The Royal Academy of Art, London Feb 18th, 10am – 5pm
- [Measure What Matters](#)
Fazeley Studios, Birmingham 1st March 2016, 10-5pm
- [Museums at Play: Learning how to become a More Playful Place](#)
[Manchester Museum](#)
Manchester Museum, 14th March 2016, 12-5pm

The events are aimed at museum practitioners who are interested in sustainability and well-being and want to learn more about the ethos of the Happy Museum. [Happy Museum](#)

Touring exhibitions workshops

The Touring Exhibitions Group is offering a series of workshops across the country, funded by ACE, to train museum staff in putting together good touring exhibitions. Workshops run from February to December, from Newcastle to Exeter. Tickets are £25 for TEG members and £35 for non-members. Ten travel bursaries are also available for each seminar, up to a value of £30. [TEG](#)

Resilient Leadership programme

Arts Council England is funding the Black Country Living Museum's Resilient Leadership programme for a third year. The programme offers entrepreneurial and leadership skills and includes an overseas visit, professional mentoring, eight workshops and two residential retreats. ACE invests £7k per participant and offers travel costs, those taking part contribute £500 each. The deadline for applications this year is 29th February. [ACE](#)

Leadership programme for learning and education staff

Engage has opened its leadership programme for the sixth year. Learning and education staff are often underrepresented in leadership roles, and this programme seeks to correct the imbalance. Two residential and nine hours of mentoring are included, as well as networking between the 19 participants. The deadline for applications is 10th March. The course is heavily subsidised, participants contribute £800 towards the cost. [Engage](#)

Heritage Show + Tell

The next Heritage Show + Tell event, at which speakers have three minutes to talk about their museum project, will take place at Leeds Local and Family History Library on 1st March. Anyone involved in museums or heritage in Yorkshire is encouraged to attend. To sign up as a speaker, please contact Helen Graham: h.graham@leeds.ac.uk. [CCSMGH](#)

Free Collections Trust workshops

The Collections Trust is running six workshops during February and March across the country exploring how user focused approaches to collections management can help museums become more sustainable. The next workshop is in Leicester on 9th February. [Collections Trust](#) (scroll)

Reaching audiences online, analytics and content strategies

This free seminar is for those working for arts or heritage organisations in England who wish to improve an online presence. Supported by Google and Arts Council England, it is curated by Culture24 and will focus on "reaching audiences online, analytics and content strategies". It takes place at The Digital Garage in Manchester Central Library on Tuesday March 22nd. Sign language interpretation is available on request. Deadline for applications is 1st March. [Culture24](#)

Improving access to your digital collection

This free, one day workshop is for organisations with collections (galleries, archive, museums) who want to improve access to their digital collections and takes place at the Wellcome Library, London on Tuesday 19th April. Thanks to support from the Europeana Foundation the project can cover travel costs to London if necessary. Deadline to apply is 7th March. [Culture24](#)

Tourism

2016 'year of anniversaries'

The UK will be celebrating a significant number of historical anniversaries during 2016, from the birth of punk to the death of Shakespeare, 1000 years since Cnut's conquest of Britain, 500 years since Royal Mail was established, as well as the births of Charlotte Brontë and Capability Brown. HLF will be funding events associated with many of these anniversaries. [HLF](#), [HHA](#), [UCL](#) (Cnut conference)

Tourism campaign sees Chinese visitors increase by 40%

Visits to the UK from China increased by 37% in the first nine months of 2015, following a campaign by UK tourism bodies including a simpler visitor visa and Chinese language facilities at many cultural venues. Chinese visitors are high spenders averaging £2688 per head. Visit Britain Director Patricia Yates said, '*China is the world's largest outbound market and a huge opportunity for Britain.*' [VisitBritain](#), [ALVA](#)

After the flood: £3m tourism package for Lancashire and Cumbria

The Government has announced a £3m package of support for flood stricken tourist areas Lancashire and Cumbria. £2m will be spent on mending footpaths and other infrastructure; £1m will be spent on a marketing campaign to encourage people to spend their Easter break in the north-east. [Gov.uk](#)

'More than half' of national museum visitors to come from overseas in 2016

Projections suggest that more than half of all visitors to national museums in 2016 will be from overseas. In the previous financial year the average stood at 47%, a 3% rise. Culture Minister Ed Vaizey said '*it shows our museums are great for tourism*'. The proportion varies by institution: roughly 68%, or 4.3 million overseas visitors, head for the British Museum, whereas overseas visitors comprise roughly a third of audiences for the National Portrait Gallery and Science Museum Group. [The Art Newspaper](#) (subscription only)

Export licensing

Art Fund to cease public fundraising campaigns unless there is export licence reform

Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar says that it is no longer possible to run public fundraising campaigns to save art in danger of export from the UK. In a blog, Deuchar describes the recent failed campaign to buy a Rembrandt and he argues that only swift changes in the law without 'obfuscation or delay' will help the system to function again. The Art Fund is often vital in helping museums and galleries to acquire major pictures, but believe it will not get interest from donors if sellers find loopholes in the rules.

His comments come after a £35 million public campaign to save *Portrait of Catrina Hooghsaet* was frustrated when the owners, the trustees of Penrhyn Castle, and Sotheby's auction house, cancelled the application for an export licence having got wind of The Art Fund's campaign. This put them in a position to auction overseas, although the painting cannot immediately leave the UK. The Art Fund

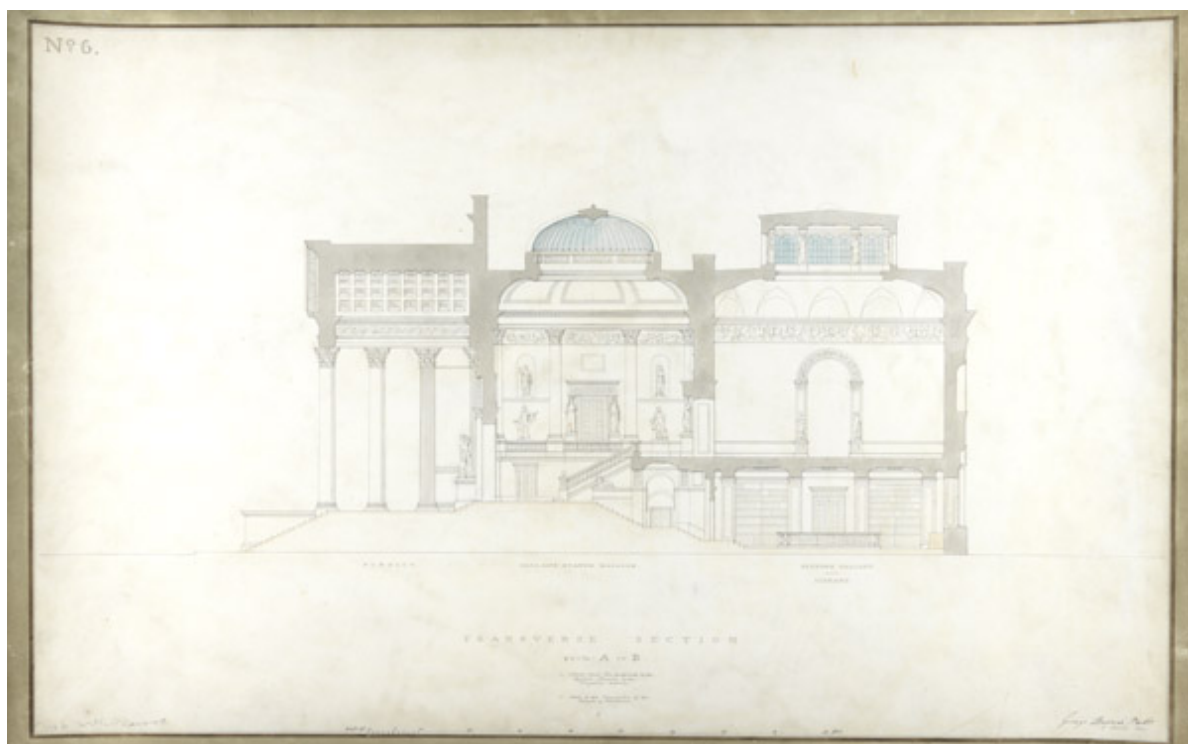
had a credible chance of raising the money because of the £12.5m tax break it would have received on the final price. Now the picture will probably remain in the UK for a few years in private hands, then a new export licence can be applied for. If The Art Fund tried to match the price again, it would have to find the whole £35m, plus inflation, meaning that its fundraising attempts would probably fail. There has been a history going back a decade of several other cases with a similar outcome, with institutions including the V&A and British Library frustrated in their attempts to make acquisitions for the nation. [The Art Newspaper](#), [The Art Fund](#)

Lawrence of Arabia's robes and dagger at risk of wandering abroad

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey has placed a temporary export bar on a variety of objects this month:

- A dagger and robes belonging to Lawrence of Arabia, which he left behind after posing for the sculptor Lady Kathleen Scott, widow of the equally famous Scott of the Antarctic. The objects have remained in the Scott family ever since, but are now at risk of going abroad unless £122k and £12.5k respectively can be found to retain them in the UK. [Gov.uk](#)
- 17th-century Italian cabinets brought to the UK by leading collector the fourth Earl of Carlisle are among the most important cabinets remaining in Britain. They are decorated with inlaid stones and mounted in bronze. [Gov.uk](#)
- Charles II silver andirons – objects used in wealthy households to hold large logs in open fireplaces. Any UK buyer will need to find £541k. [Gov.uk](#)

Collections



Basevi architect drawing. Courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Transfer of photographic collections to the V&A

The Science Museum Group has come to an agreement with the V&A to transfer the Royal Photographic Society Collection from the National Media Museum in Bradford to join 500,000 photographs already at the V&A to form a new International Photographic Resource Centre focusing on artistic photography. The move is line with a refining of the focus of the National Media Museum on science and technology, which will enable them to ensure better public access to the nationally significant photography collection remaining in Bradford. Nevertheless, the move has not received the support of Bradford's politicians.

Firepower closes in Woolwich

The museum Firepower, which houses the the Royal Artillery Collection, is closing in Woolwich in London in July this year, following a period of low visitor numbers. There are plans to reopen a new purpose-built heritage centre for the collection at a site close to Stonehenge. It is hoped that the new museum will open in 2020. Firepower Chairman Brigadier Iain Harrison thanked staff and supporters for their work through 'turbulent 24 months'. Greenwich Council plans to use the site to develop a cultural quarter in the borough. [Firepower](#), [News Shopper](#)

Three more years on the road for Artists Rooms

The Artists Rooms collection of contemporary art will be touring for another three years to 30 venues following funding from ACE and The Art Fund. The 1600 items are jointly owned by Tate and National Galleries Scotland. Tate Director Nick Serota said that Artists Rooms allowed people to see top-quality art at very small venues. He emphasised the importance of preserving local cultural venues over the next five years, adding "*all of us will need to work with local authorities to sustain these very, very valuable local resources for communities.*" [Museums Journal](#)

Feeling museums: inside the Tate Sensorium

During 2015, Tate experimented with an immersive gallery environment created by the agency Flying Object. Tate Sensorium invited visitors to look at a handful of paintings while their sense of touch, taste and smell and sight were subverted by various interventions, from the latest technology which allows people to feel things in thin air, to eating chocolates with startling flavours. Biometric wristbands measured the visceral response of gallery visitors, and reactions gathered by more conventional means have been enthusiastic. The project demonstrates that digital in galleries doesn't just have to mean screens, and works brilliantly in combination with real-world props. [The Guardian](#)

The life of a 21st-century curator: a snapshot

Curators from institutions across England have been talking to the *Guardian* about what life is like as a curator in the 21st-century. All emphasise how the job is increasingly outward looking with, Daniel Martin of Derby Museums saying '*we don't spend all day lurking in musty stores any more*'. He adds that experience is more important than a prestigious degree and that jobs are frequently unstable and short-term. Commitment remains important: the Historic Royal Palaces' Chief Curator Lucy Worsley says, "*as the world gets quicker, and shallower, and bite-sized, retaining our ability to take a deep dive into history is more and more important.*" [Guardian](#)

Three new museums to display Arts Council Collection

2016 is the 70th anniversary of the Arts Council Collection, which includes important work by all of the most influential British artists from the mid-20th century to the present. There will be several new commissions this year to mark the anniversary. Three new venues will be added to its partner list: Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne, Birmingham Museums Trust and The Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool. Working with existing partner Yorkshire Sculpture Park, they will curate twenty-four exhibitions drawn from the Collection over the next three years. [ACE collection](#), [ACE](#)

International

Monuments men and women: the House of Lords debates cultural property

The House of Lords has held a debate to discuss the ratification of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property. Many expressed some frustration that the legislation had not progressed since government announced that it would ratify last June. However they welcomed the announcement of a £30 million Cultural Protection Fund. A consultation document on the fund has been produced and comments are welcome until 19th February. Baroness Berridge (Con) said, "*the irony is that the UK is fulfilling much of the substance of the convention through the special police unit, military units and the £3 million dedicated to the Iraqi emergency heritage management project run by the British Museum. The legislation is not complex and the matter is now urgent.*" The Earl of Clancarty added that there are now plans for UK representatives to be part of the new 77th Brigade: "*excitingly, they will be the UK's monuments men and women for the 21st century.*" The House also welcomed the creation of Blue Shield under Dutch law – a sort of 'Red Cross for heritage'.

[Parliament.uk](#)

Funding

Museums Resilience Fund opens for 2016

The Art Council England's Museums Resilience Fund has opened for 2016, with available funds of around £10m. The fund is open to museums of all sizes and focuses on enabling them to become more sustainable and resilient businesses. The deadline for the first expressions of interest is 18th February, and the deadline for full applications is 25th May. [ACE](#)

Scrutinise fundraising practice, government tells trustees

A parliamentary committee has warned trustees that they must have knowledge of and take responsibility for their charity's fundraising practices. A recent review found that many trustees claims to be ignorant of dubious methods. New legislation, the [Charities \(Protection and Social Investment\) Bill 2015–16](#), will bring in tougher self-regulation for the sector, and forbid sharing a donor's details without their explicit consent. There will be a simplification of the rules allowing charities to access social investment funds. [Parliament.uk](#)

Wellcome and the Government offer £30m for science centres

A new Inspiring Science Capital Fund will fund the overhaul of infrastructure and exhibitions at science centres and attractions. The fund consists of £20 million from the Government and a further £10 million from the Wellcome Trust. Applicants must demonstrate how funding will help them reach underserved and underrepresented audiences. [ALVA](#)

D-Day museum receives £4m for major redevelopment

The Heritage Lottery Fund has granted £4m to the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth towards its major redevelopment. This means that the Museum is only £170k short of its full funding target. It will close in October this year and reopen in late 2017 with new galleries, events and learning spaces. Stuart McLeod for HLF said, "*involving 156,000 men from the British and Allied forces, the D-Day landings were the largest seaborne invasion the world has ever seen and a momentous event in European history. As we head towards the 75th anniversary, this National Lottery investment will help to refresh and revamp Britain's only museum dedicated to the landings, helping to bring this story to life for a new generation.*" [HLF](#), [Museums Journal](#)

South London Gallery awarded £600k for fire station regeneration

Last year, South London Gallery received the unexpected gift of an entire fire station from an anonymous donor. It is now converting the 1867 building into a new gallery and cultural centre. It has just received an additional £600k towards the work from the London Regeneration Fund. SLG director Margot Heller said, "*The London Regeneration Fund grant is a huge boost to our fundraising campaign and an important endorsement of our efforts to bring a fascinating building into public use as part of an internationally acclaimed cultural venue embedded in its local community.*" The fire station will allow SLG to extend its education work with hundreds of local schoolchildren and residents of three adjacent housing estates. [SLG](#)

14 – 18 NOW continues

The 14 – 18 NOW programme has announced a series of events throughout 2016 to commemorate the Battle of the Somme and the Battle of Jutland. Events include the choral piece *Memorial Ground*, an exhibition of sculpture and prosthetics at the Henry Moore Gallery in Leeds, and Manchester Art Gallery's *Fashion and Freedom* which explores how women adopted less constrictive dress during the period. HLF continues to offer grants of £3k - £10k through its dedicated First World War commemoration funding scheme. [YouTube](#), [1418 now](#), [HLF](#), [HLF](#) (funding programmes)

Appointments and resignations

Sir Peter Bazalgette has announced that he will step down as Chair of Arts Council England at the end of January 2017. Recruitment for his successor will begin in the spring. Sir Peter said that he has been proud to make the case for investment in the arts and that he intended to explore 'a number of opportunities in the Creative Industries I'd like to take up before I pop my clogs.' [Gov.uk](#)

Ed Vaizey became longest serving Arts Minister on January 12th when his 2060 days in office meant that he had been in post for longer than Labour's Jennie Lee. He said he felt 'incredibly honoured' to have reached the milestone adding, '*I am massively optimistic that our arts and culture - the envy of the world - will continue to thrive and do fantastic things*'. [The Stage](#)

Kathryn Thomson has been appointed Chief Executive of National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI). [Museums Journal](#)

Frances Morris will replace Chris Dercon as Director of Tate Modern when he leaves later this year. She is currently Director of Collections, International Art at Tate. [Museums Journal](#), [Apollo Magazine](#)

Awards

Welsh museums win accolades

Museums are among the tourist attractions winning accolades in Wales for providing exceptional visitor experience. The Cardiff Story Museum has won a 2016 gold accolade for excellent facilities; Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum wins a hidden gem award, and Big Pit wins in the best told story category. [Welsh Government](#)

Prehistoric Society offers new £3k study award

The Prehistoric Society has announced a new £3k award for an early career researcher to explore archaeological collections, with an emphasis on human prehistory. However, it will be a year before the first award is granted on 31st January 2017. [Prehistoric Society](#)

Back from the fire: restoring Clandon Park

In May last year the National Trust's Clandon Park was gutted by fire. Curators describe hearing beams within the house 'snapping like gunshots', and firemen rescuing pictures by cutting them out of their frames with Stanley knives. Now in two short films they describe some of the decisions they have made as they bring the gutted building back from devastation. The lower rooms will be restored to an earlier period than previously represented, and the emptier upper floors will be turned over to new uses. [YouTube](#)

Event and exhibition highlights 2016

We are bringing together a list of highlights from our members' 2016 programmes [here](#), and will be adding more in the next month. We are highlighting a mixture of major exhibitions and one off events and projects which show the breadth of programming. Here are some picks from the longer list.

Stormy seas

The **Ashmolean's** *Storms, War and Shipwrecks* exhibition tells the story of Sicily: an island at the crossroads of the Mediterranean through the discoveries made by underwater archaeologists. For 2500 years, Sicily was the place where great ancient civilizations met and fought, leaving a long and complex record. The exhibition explores the roots of this multi-cultural heritage through objects rescued from the bottom of the sea.

National Maritime Museum Cornwall's Vikings exhibition includes a chance to experience Viking life over 1000 years ago and climb aboard a full scale replica Viking ship. The Museum is also hosting the Cnut 1000: Empire of the Sea conference, with a stellar cast of international scholars discussing the millennium anniversary of King Cnut's conquest of England.

Tullie House and Art Gallery and **Norwich Castle** are both hosting the popular but imaginary Vikings invented by Cressida Cowell - and their dragons. The new exhibition, developed by Seven Stories and the author, will include Cressida's original drawings, manuscripts and working processes from her hugely popular *How to Train Your Dragon* book series.

Citizen science

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums is running Future Makers, a series of events that will enable children - and adults - to use new technologies for designing and making. The programme has clearly caused excitement: Minecraft sessions at Arbeia Roman Fort have sold out four months in advance. Other events include a coders' 'hackathon' at Stephenson Railway Museum. Future Makers seeks to inspire a new breed of makers whilst challenging preconceptions of what museums and their collections mean in the digital age.

At the end of the year, **The Science Museum** will be opening Mathematics: The David and Claudia Harding Gallery. This was made possible by the largest individual donation ever made to the Science Museum, an £5m gift from the Hardings. It will explore how mathematicians, their tools and ideas have helped to shape the modern world, and challenge the idea that it is a dry subject. The stories told in the gallery will span 400 years of human ingenuity, from the Renaissance to the present day, with objects ranging from intriguing hand-held mathematical instruments to a 1929 experimental aircraft – the largest object in the gallery.

The **Natural History Museum's** *Orchid Observers: citizen science* harnesses the enthusiasm of the general public to make discoveries about the natural world which would not otherwise be possible. People are invited to photograph orchids in the UK in the spring and summer, and sending them the images with the date and location. They will also be helping NHM to extract data from their own 15,000 orchid specimens.

Engineering past and future

Ove Arup (1895-1988) was the most influential engineer of the 20th century and the pioneer of a multidisciplinary approach to design that has defined the way engineering is understood and practiced today. Sydney Opera House and the Penguin Pool at London Zoo were among his early projects. The **V&A** will explore his influence in a major exhibition this year.

The **National Railway Museum** has nearly completed its decade-long, £4.2m restoration of the Flying Scotsman, and Scotsman Season will dominate its programme this year. The Museum is planning an inaugural run between London Kings Cross and York in late February. The innovative, experiential ticketed exhibition *Service with Style* is running in late spring. The exhibition will enable visitors to immerse themselves the glamour and luxury of the Flying Scotsman train service throughout the eras. Three carriages of the kind that travelled the Flying Scotsman route will house audio and film clips, archive news footage and signature tastes inspired by historic on-board menus.

Fashionistas

From humble origins, Emma Hamilton rose to national and international fame as a model, performer and interpreter of neo-classical fashion. Within the public mind however, she is often remembered simply as the mistress of Britain's greatest naval hero, Admiral Lord Nelson. The **National Maritime Museum's** *Seduction and Celebrity: The Spectacular Life of Emma Hamilton* recovers her from myth and misrepresentation, and reveals her to be an active and influential historical actor in her own right: one of the greatest female lives of her era.

Brighton Museum & Art Gallery's *Fashion Cities Africa* is the first major UK exhibition dedicated to contemporary African fashion. It will explore fashion and style in four cities at the compass points of the African continent: Casablanca in Morocco, Lagos in Nigeria, Nairobi in Kenya and Johannesburg in South Africa. *Fashion Cities Africa* will focus on the style choices of individual 'fashion agents' from each city: from designers and stylists to photographers and bloggers.

And finally...

The Horniman got prime time BBC exposure during January on *QI* when host Stephen Fry and most of the panel competed to praise the 'fabulous' South London museum as 'a genuine museum of curiosities of the most fascinating kind'. Its ['Feejee Mermaid'](#) - a hideous creature made from fish and papier mâché was a star of the show, although the one featured was a 3D print of the original artefact. This is possibly just as well given the *QI*'s sometimes energetically hands on approach, regular panellist Alan Davies having once attempted to saw the set with a gentleman's bladed stick from the Garden Museum. [BBC](#) (from 6:20)

Jobs

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

- [Exhibitions Manager: Competitions \(Maternity Cover\) - National Portrait Gallery](#)
- [Collections Photographer - National Museums Scotland](#)
- [Curator of Drawings and Books - Sir John Soane Museum](#)
- [Museum and Housekeeping Assistant, Tring - Natural History Museum](#)
- [Project Development Officer Clay Works! Project - Wheal Martyn Museum](#)

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

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