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La Donna Della Finestra [The Lady of Pity], 1881. Unfinished oil painting. Artist: Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery.

## Members' news

### Birmingham's Gas Hall to reopen for Victorian Radicals exhibition

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery which has been partially or fully closed since March 2020 will reopen the Gas Hall in February 2024 to show more than 160 works from artists such as Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne-Jones and Elizabeth Siddall. The collection has been touring America reaching around 168,000 visitors and will now be displayed in its home for the first time in five years. Maintenance will continue in some areas of the museum with several gallery spaces set to re-open ahead of summer 2024. NMDC is delighted to feature images from the collection in this month's newsletter ahead of the exhibition opening on 10 February. [Birmingham Museums](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#)

### Museum of Making due to reopen in January

Derby's Museum of Making will open to the public on 26 January after the substantial damage caused by flooding from Storm Babet in October 2023. Their new exhibition Lego Lake District due to start the day after the museum was forced to closed will be showcased from January. [Museum of Making](#), [BBC](#)

### Norwich Castle to reopen in 2024 after a £15m redevelopment

Part of Norfolk Museums Service, Norwich Castle's 900 year old medieval keep is due to reopen in the summer with the roof top battlements accessible for the first time and a new permanent gallery of Medieval Life created in partnership with the British Museum which will showcase more than 1,000 treasures from Norman England. [Norwich Castle](#), [BBC](#), [Bloolooop](#)

### British Museum announces new partnership with BP to fund masterplan

The British Museum is committing to a new 10 year partnership worth £50m with energy company BP, to deliver a masterplan that includes reimagining a third of the Museum's galleries, a new Energy Centre, and the official opening of the new British Museum Archaeological Research Collection (BM\_ARC) on 7 June 2024. [British Museum](#) (press release, pdf) There has been a significant amount of press coverage on the announcement including [Museums Association](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (masterplan, £), [Art Newspaper](#) (trustee decision, £), [BBC](#), [Times](#), [Times](#) (op ed), [Guardian](#), [Guardian](#) (op ed), [Financial Times](#), [Telegraph](#), [Telegraph](#) (op ed)

**Also:** British Museum completes Independent Review into thefts from its collections – the review recommends completing the documentation of its collection, closing gaps in the registration of objects alongside recommendations around audit and risk, governance and security. The Board of Trustees have unanimously accepted the steps with over a third of the published recommendations either underway or completed. The review concludes a total of 2,000 items were taken or damaged and 850 antiquities remain untraced. [British Museum](#), [Museums Association](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Telegraph](#), [Sunday Times](#)

**Also:** Deputy Director Jonathan Williams leaves the British Museum following the publication of the Independent Review on 12 December. [Telegraph](#), [BBC](#)

### National Museum Cardiff highlights £25m needed to save 'at risk' collections

Jane Richardson, Chief Executive of Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museums Wales, specified that £25m critical maintenance work was needed at National Museum Cardiff, including fixing a 'leaky roof' that is putting works of art at risk of rain damage. A Nation.Cymru article reported Richardson's comments on the backlog of maintenance across Museum Wales estate that is estimated to cost around £90m. The impact of Covid, rise in the cost of living and reduction of income streams from corporate hire and filming were cited as contributing factors to a challenging financial future. [Nation.Cymru](#)

### Museum of London research draws fire from MP

A research paper published in the journal Bioarchaeology International which was co-written by Rebecca Redfern at the Museum of London has been accused of being 'woke' by Equalities Minister, Kemi Badenoch. The paper looked at the bioarchaeological evidence for population diversity in London during the Black Death comparing bone and dental changes in 145 individuals from 3 London cemeteries. The research found a higher proportion of people of colour and those of Black and African descent in plague burials compared to non-plague burials and sought to draw conclusions on the socio-economic environment and its impact on health. [Museum of London](#) (press release), [Guardian](#) ([original report](#)) ([criticism](#)), [Museums Association](#)

### Fitzwilliam Museum acquires 500 year old bronze Apollo

The Apollo Belvedere made by Pier Jacopo Alari Bonacolsi, known as Antico, was acquired under the Arts Council's Acceptance in Lieu scheme. The allocation reunites the Renaissance parcel-gilt bronze figure with the Boscawen Collection. Luke Syson Director and Marlay Curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum said: *"The acquisition of this bronze owes everything to the generosity of the children of Cecil and Hilda Lewis and the marvellous Acceptance in Lieu scheme. Without it, we would not have been able to acquire this new lynchpin of our sculpture collection, perhaps the most quintessentially Renaissance work we own. We are grateful for the opportunity to tell new stories about such an important historic work of art."* [Fitzwilliam Museum](#), [Guardian](#)

### Figureheads at the National Museum of the Royal Navy to be conserved after grant

The National Museum of the Royal Navy has received a grant of £249,893 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and £15,000 from the Pilgrim Trust to conserve their rarely seen figureheads collection. The project will involve 3D scanning and reinterpretation to reveal hidden stories from the nationally significant collection. [NMRN](#)

### BFI awarded £249,389 from National Lottery Heritage Fund to open up access

The BFI have received a £249,389 grant as part of their 'Audit to Access' project which will contribute to opening up access to the national collection. The project will lay the groundwork of new collections management knowledge and large scale audit systems. They will also undertake a review of un-accessioned paper collections. The grant enables the recruitment of new roles including Paper Audit Assistants and Data Records Specialists. [BFI](#)

### British Library continues to face the impact of cyber attack

The Financial Times published an update into the current situation at the British Library on 5 January, reporting that about 40 per cent of their reserves will be used to recover from the attack. The British Library's online catalogue remains unavailable. [FT](#)

**Also:** Tate Liverpool appoints Gilbert-Ash as main contractor for gallery transformation, [Tate](#), South Asian Gallery wins at Manchester Culture Awards, [Manchester Museum](#), Horniman Museum: overstuffed walrus exhibit closes for renovation, [BBC](#), Inside the Science Museum's new home for 300,000 artefacts, [Times](#)

### Images this month

Images this month come from 'Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts Movement' which is on from February at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Although the main museum and art gallery is closed for maintenance the Gas Hall has been reopened for this homecoming show which includes more than 160 works that have been touring in America. The exhibition opens on 10 February. [Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery](#)

## Government news

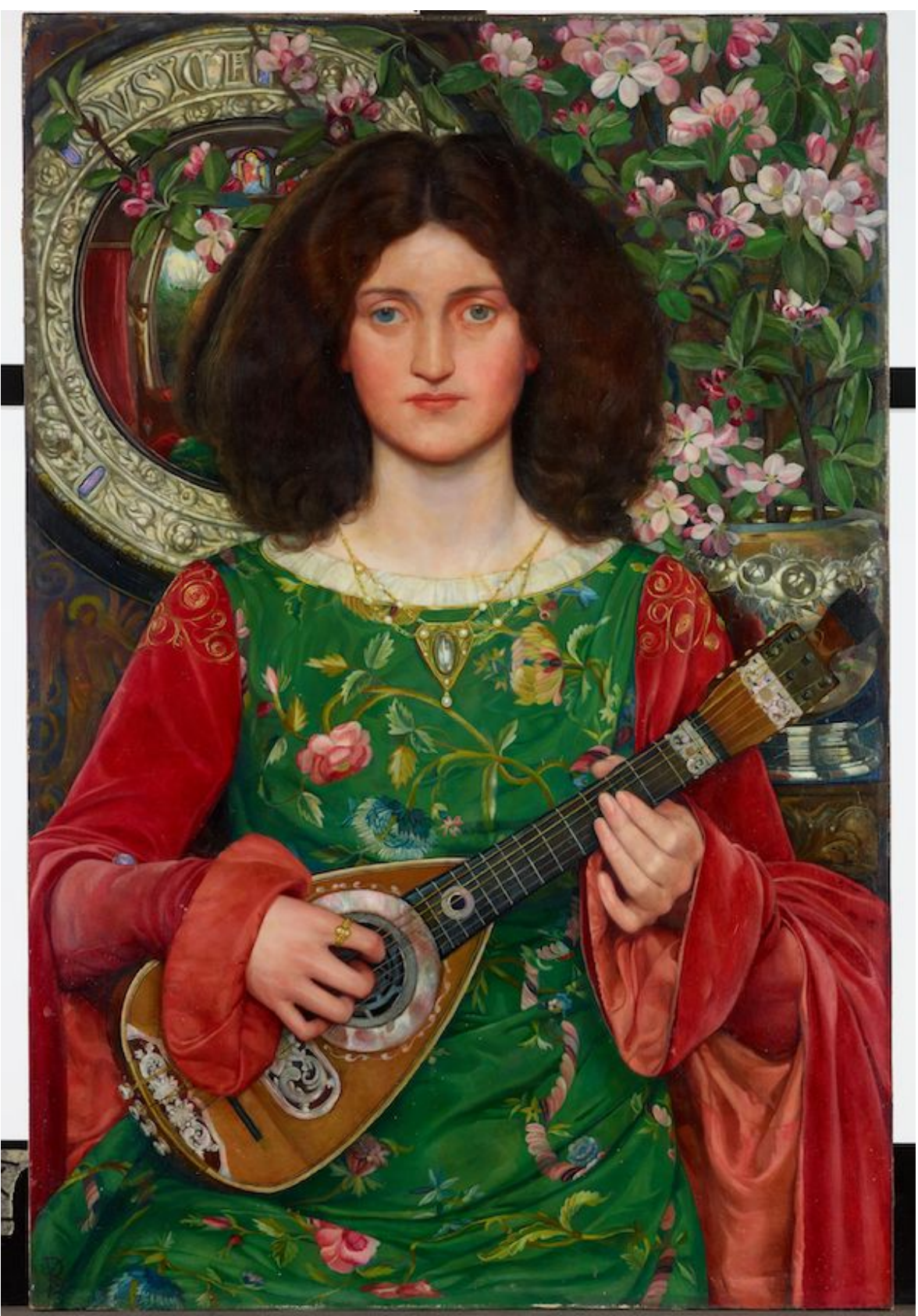
### UK Government launches consultation on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage

The online consultation seeks views on the UK Government's plans to ratify the 2023 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and create an inventory of living intangible heritage in the UK. The UK Government's plan for its own inventory of intangible cultural heritage aims to reflect practices from anywhere in the world and from any period of time that are currently practiced in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Communities will be able to make submissions for inclusion on the topics with plans to echo the following UNESCO categories:

- Oral traditions and expressions, including language.
- Performing arts.
- Social practices, rituals and festive events.
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.
- Traditional craftsmanship.

Two further categories may be added – 'Traditional games and sports' and 'Culinary traditions and knowledge'. The consultation closes next month. [Museums Association](#), [Gov.uk](#) (consultation)





Musica (Melody), 1895-97. Oil on canvas. Artist: Kate Elizabeth Bunce (d.1927). Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

## Culture funding cuts

The New Year has seen a wealth of stories on local council funding cuts and the impact being felt on arts and culture. At the end of November [Arts Professional](#) reported funding cuts proposed in **Bristol** from 2024, with councillors defending the cuts citing a £20m overspend from the demands of social care and the costs of temporary accommodation. A [BBC](#) report on the 7 December mentions the impact on Watershed Cinema, Bristol Old Vic and the Exchange music venue.

On the 12 December [Arts Professional](#) covered cuts to five Arts Council England NPOs (National Portfolio Organisations) in **Nottingham** where Nottingham City Council proposed cutting its entire cultural budget to plug a £50m deficit. The council issued a [Section 114](#) notice at the end of November 2023 which means no new expenditure is permitted with the exception of statutory services. The [Museums Association](#) confirmed the Nottingham museum service is 'currently undergoing a Delivery Model Assessment process to identify an alternative delivery model for these primarily discretionary services that minimises contributions from the council'.

On 4 January **Suffolk** County Council announced 100% cut to arts funding, as reported in the [Guardian](#). In an effort to save £67.4m over two years £500,000 core funding to the art and museums sector will be stopped from April 2025. In a [BBC](#) article on 6 January the council's Conservative Deputy Leader said "We have found enough money to give them 12 months' notice... so that they can attract other funding sources, something they're very good at." The council said the cuts were to give more support to children's services and adult care.

**Hampshire** Cultural Trust also confirmed on the 8 January that four of their museums and one arts centre are at risk of closure due to local authority funding cuts. The five venues including Westbury Manor Museum and the Ashcroft Arts Centre could potentially close under a phased plan over the next three years. Hampshire County Council is the trust's largest funder currently contributing £2.5m per annum. Under current budget consultations which opened on the 8 January this would be cut by £600,000 per annum by 2027. [M+H Advisor](#)

**Creative Scotland** have already been in the news with the removal and reinstatement of their budget, with a £6.6m cut reported in the [Scotsman](#) on 19 December and a pledge to invest an additional £100m by 2028/9 as covered in [Arts Professional](#) on 20 December.

The **Welsh Government** was reported on 21 December to be cutting arts funding by 10% with Arts Council Wales, National Museum of Wales and Cadw all facing reduced funding – [Arts Professional](#). The [Museums Association](#) urged the Welsh Government to reconsider the sweeping cuts to museums and heritage on 5 January.

Recent commentary on the nature of the cuts and the future of cultural services include the Museums Association '[Civic museums grapple with existential crisis](#)' from 21 November. [The New Statesman](#) reported on 15 December that more than a third of councillors say recreational, leisure and cultural services have been cut since 2010. Additional tracking for Section 114 notices mentions the local councils of **Slough, Croydon, Thurrock, Woking** and **Birmingham** have all issued warnings on financial difficulties, [New Statesman](#). On the 7 January the [Observer](#) reported on the cuts calling the situation 'A national emergency: UK theatres fear closure after more local funding cuts' with mentions of cuts to the cultural budgets of **Windsor** and **Maidenhead**.

## Heritage at risk in Gaza and Ukraine

On the 18 December ICOM, the International Council of Museums, reported that Gaza's central archives containing thousands of historical documents dating back 150 years had been destroyed. [ICOM](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Protestors calling for a Gaza ceasefire stage a die-in at Canadian Museum for Human Rights, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Winnipeg Sun](#)

Arts & Heritage Minister Lord Parkinson addresses the International Cultural Diplomacy Forum held on the 4 December by the Ukrainian Institute at the British Library on the damage to Ukrainian heritage and culture. [Gov.uk](#) (speech)

## Sector reports

### Over £52m allocated to galleries nationwide via Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Scheme

Arts Council England announced the year up to 31 March 2023 that more than 40 items were saved for the UK via two schemes – Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Scheme. Works by Damien Hirst, Claude Monet and Barbara Hepworth were among the items allocated to UK museums and galleries. These included a Frank Auerbach painting with a tax value of £1.46m that went to the National Portrait Gallery and a key work by 17th century Dutch painter Jacob van Ruisael that went to Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery. New allocatees this year included the Donald McGill Museum in Ryde and the Ruskin Museum in Coniston. [ACE](#) (website), [ACE](#) (report, pdf, 68pgs), [Art Newspaper](#)

### Creative PEC launch 'Geographies of Creativity' report

The first report in a new 'State of Nations' series, the 'Geographies of Creativity' looks at where creative clusters arise and what policymakers can do to optimise intervention. Exploring three levels of the UK's creative industries geography: microclusters, clusters and corridors it provides an up to date economic assessment of the UK's clusters and microclusters, including the impact of Covid-19, building on recent work commissioned by DCMS, previous reports published by Creative PEC and earlier study by Nesta. It presents preliminary findings from an exploratory analysis identifying the potential for developing 'creative corridors' including a deep dive into the North of England.

It includes a breakdown of employees in the creative industries by region and employment growth rate. It highlights that the creative industries have grown in many areas of the UK but significant regional inequalities persist. [PEC](#) (website) [PEC](#) (report, pdf, 52pgs)

### Creative Health Review report published

A collaboration between the National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, the Creative Health Review evidences how Creative Health can form an integral part of a health and social care system aimed at reducing health inequalities and building social capital. The report highlights include:

- Creative health is fundamental to a healthy and prosperous society, and its benefits should be available and accessible to all.
- Creative health should form an integral part of a 21st-century health and social care system.
- Creating the conditions for creative health to flourish requires a joined-up, whole system approach incorporating health systems, local authorities, schools and the cultural and VCSE sectors.

The report features lots of case studies and gives advice on how to articulate the value of creative health. It sets out recommendations for different government departments, specifying that DCMS establish sustainable funding models, coherent approaches to measuring health outcomes and ensuring opportunities are available and accessible to all. [KCL](#) (website), [NCCH](#) (report, 140pgs)

### British Council publish their Global Perceptions report

The study gauging what 18-34 year olds across the G20 member states think of the UK and other member states gives a picture of what matters to young people today and their intentions of engaging with education, arts and culture, and tourism, with over 19,000 young people surveyed:

- The UK had the highest trust levels in institutions at 58%.
- Exploring 'soft power' and overall influence in the world saw the UK come out on top at 67%.
- The top 3 values for 18-34 year olds were equality, sustainability and freedom. [British Council](#) (website), [British Council](#) (report, pdf, 74 pgs)



## Digital

### Small charity guide on improving your cyber security

The National Cyber Security Centre have a 'Cyber Security: Small Charity Guide' on their website which can help increase awareness of the steps to take to protect your organisation from the most common types of cyber crime. The five topics covered in the guide are free or cost little to implement. [NCSC](#) (website), [NCSC](#) (guide, pdf, 20pgs)

**Also:** A cyberattack hits software used by museums, causing online systems to go down in the US, [Artnet](#)

### Austrian museum celebrates 300th anniversary by putting 626 historical exhibitions online

Belvedere in Austria has put over 100 years of historical exhibitions online covering an archive that runs from 1918 to 2023. A team of eight dedicated approximately one year to the project with information covering the year of the exhibition, duration, location, director in office at the time and staff members involved. There are also accompanying texts including archive materials, newspaper articles, photographic records and digital copies of catalogues. [Belvedere](#) (press release), [Belvedere](#) (website)

**Book:** AI in Museums: Reflections, Perspectives and Applications, edited by Sonja Thiel and Johannes C. Bernhardt and published by Transcript Publishing. Sections include; The hidden costs of AI, AI with museums and cultural heritage, Digital curation and Algorithmic Exhibition Making. A full pdf of the book is available via the link. [Transcript Publishing, full text](#) (pdf, 321pgs)

**Also:** EU agrees 'historic' deal with world's first laws to regulate AI, [Guardian](#). Dream of talking to Vincent Van Gogh? AI tries to resurrect the artist at Musée d'Orsay exhibit through chats with visitors offering insights into his life and death, [Artdaily](#). Why all museums need an in-house TikTokker, a look at the impact of two creators in residence at the Peabody Essex Museum, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

## Collections

### Collections Trust accountability resources

Collections Trust have launched a new section of their website 'Accountability for Collections' which signposts useful guidance for trustees and senior managers who wish to review their organisation's policies and procedures to ensure they meet standards required by Spectrum and Museum Accreditation. It includes a number of 'bitesize' videos that explain the difference between an audit and inventory as well as guidance on damage and loss of collections. [Collections Trust](#)

### ACE publish UK Museum Accreditation deadlines

Arts Council England has published the Museum Accreditation submissions schedule (formerly called 'returns') for museums due to submit between May and August 2024. [ACE](#)

### Reproduction fees for UK museums

The Art Newspaper reported on a Court of Appeal judgement on 20 November that marks the end of UK museums charging fees to reproduce historic artworks. The judgement confirms that museums do not have valid copyright in photographs of (two-dimensional) works which are themselves out of copyright. The article quotes responses from Tate and the National Gallery in terms of their policies and whether they charge for high-resolution images. [Art Newspaper](#) (£)





Eight Peacocks/8 Peacocks, 1882-1888. Earthenware vase. Designer: William De Morgan. Birmingham Museum

## Climate crisis

### Responses to UK Museum COP

Alex Rock, Director of Commercial and Operations at Derby Museums Trust and a member of the UK Museum COP Scope 3 subgroup, has written an opinion piece about the event for Museums Journal. He notes that COP was 'a timely intervention and an ambitious forum for collectivising a response – how should an under-resourced, under-funded, under-insulated (in every way) sector start to balance the competing and contrary demands of collections conservation and carbon reduction?' [Museums Journal](#)

And in an Art Newspaper piece entitled 'At last, institutions join forces to take environmental action', Louisa Buck reports on the collective agreements made at the COP event. COP Chair and Chief Executive of the Horniman Museum Nick Merriman is interviewed: "Because of the strong public trust in museums and their moral authority as institutions over the long term, it was really important that there was an overwhelming consensus from the leaders of the UK's major museums on the need to accelerate action around the climate crisis." [Art Newspaper](#)

### Book – Museums and the Climate Crisis

Edited by Nick Merriman and published by Routledge, the book includes insights and international case studies showing how museums can respond to the interrelated global climate, biodiversity and pollution crises. Taking a broad approach beyond purely climate issues, the contributions touch on the use of renewables, environmental controls and standards, travel (including virtual couriering), waste management and increasing biodiversity in museums. [Routledge](#)

### 'Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action' launched at COP28

In response to the 'Global Call to put Culture at the Heart of Climate Action' the 'Group of Friends' was established at COP28. Over 30 ministers or government representatives and a large delegation of committed cultural advocates from across the globe attended the inaugural meeting, co-chaired by UAE and Brazil, recognising the key role of culture for transformative climate action. [Europa Nostra](#), [Julie's Bicycle](#)

## Tourism

### UK museums continue to recover visitors post-pandemic

UK Government visitor figures for national museums in the UK show an increase in visitor figures although numbers are still below levels pre-Covid-19 pandemic. Between July and September 2023 there were 12.5 million visits to DCMS sponsored museums and galleries. Visits remained 11.2% lower than the equivalent period pre-pandemic in 2019 but visits have increased each year since the pandemic and are 24.4% higher than the equivalent period last year. [Gov.uk](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Museums Association](#)

### VisitBritain publishes inbound tourism forecast for 2024

The figures published on 20 December show an increase in inbound visits and spend overall to the UK compared to 2023 levels. Forecast spending by international visitors in 2024 is up by 7% on 2023 to £34.1 billion. VisitBritain predicts that inbound tourism, both the number of visits and spending by international visitors, will recover to 2019 levels by early 2025. [VisitBritain](#)

### The Nation Brands Index 2023 sees the UK move up two places overall

The Anholt-Ipsos Nationals Brand Index is an annual study of 60,000 consumers in 20 panel countries around the world, respondents score 60 nations on a range of attributes including tourism, culture and people. Findings include –

- The UK was ranked 4th out of 60 nations a rise of two places.
- The UK held steady on Tourism in 6th place but slipped one place to 4th for Culture.
- In measuring rank for Welcome the UK dipped to 19th place the lowest rank ever received for this measure.
- Having a rich cultural heritage saw positive movement gaining two places to 6th. [Visit Britain](#) (website), [Visit Britain](#) (report, pdf, 42pgs)



Sleepe after Toile, 1903-1907. Artist: Mary J. Newill d. 1947. Stained glass. Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

## What to look out for in 2024

### New museums to look out for in 2024

A brief look at new museums to visit in 2024 across the UK:

- Perth Museum – The Perth Museum and Art Gallery has separated with the newly revamped Perth Museum opening in March after a £27m redevelopment project. [Perth Museum](#)
- Showtown – Blackpool's museum of fun and entertainment is also opening in March. Tickets are now available online, full price adult tickets costing £15 are valid for 12 months. [Showtown](#)
- Women's Museum in East London – Barking and Dagenham Council are opening with their inaugural exhibition on International Women's Day – Friday 8 March at Barking Wharf Square. [Women's Museum](#)
- Museum of Homelessness – Due to open in April in Finsbury Park, the museum delayed opening in 2023 to focus on community programmes. They have a 10 year lease on their current location. [Museum of Homelessness](#)
- Peace Museum – Bradford's Peace Museum on the Salts Mill site is planning to open in the summer. [Peace Museum](#)
- Paisley Museum – Opening after a £45m redevelopment. [Paisley Museum](#)

Also look out for the National Gallery Bicentenary with twelve simultaneous exhibitions opening in May. [National Gallery](#). If you want to travel farther afield, the Grand Egyptian Museum at Giza is due to open in May. [Grand Egyptian Museum](#). Or perhaps the Nintendo Museum in Japan will be more your style. 'X' And one you might have missed – Manx National Art Gallery reopens after revamp, [BBC](#), [Manx Museum](#). Overviews of 2024 can be found here [M+H Advisor](#), [Apollo Magazine](#)

**Also:** President Macron confirms Notre Dame opening date plus plans for a new museum, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

### Exhibitions to excite in 2024

The usual round of highlights have been getting museum and art fans excited for 2024 with [TimeOut's](#) Top 11 featuring Yoko Ono at Tate Modern, Caravaggio at the National Gallery and Francis Bacon at the National Portrait Gallery. The [Guardian](#) included Sargent and Fashion at Tate Britain and William Blake at the Fitzwilliam Museum. The British Museum's 'Legion: Life in the Roman Army' got a mention in the [Telegraph](#) and the [Times](#) gave the nod to Barbie and Burton exhibitions at the Design Museum as well as Paolozzi 100 at Modern Two in Edinburgh.



## Funding and giving guidance

### Art Fund and ACE publish 'Guide to Giving'

A new 'Guide to Giving (and selling) art and cultural artefacts to UK museums and galleries' has been published by Art Fund and Arts Council England. The 31 page document explores how to gift and bequeath through Art Fund, the Cultural Gifts Scheme, Acceptance in Lieu, Private Treaty Sale and Conditional Exemption. It includes case study examples and clearly sets out conditions for each option. [Art Fund](#) (pdf, 32pgs) Art Fund are also running a 1 hour webinar 'Everybody is a winner' guide to giving on Monday 22 January at 11.40am. [Webinar](#)

### Guidance published on securing Section 106 developer funding

Arts Council England in partnership with the National Archives has published 'Guidance on seeking and securing developer contributions for museum and arts provision in England' exploring how museums and arts organisations can engage with the local planning process and officials in order to secure funding through Section 106 legal agreements (S106) and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy, collectively known as developer contributions. Aimed at Directors, Chief Executives and Senior Leads with responsibility for strategic planning, development and delivery. [ACE](#) (website), [ACE](#) (guidance, pdf, 52pgs)

## Grant opportunities and news

### AIM Pilgrim Trust conservation grants awarded

18 small to medium sized museums received conservation grants in the latest round of grants from AIM and the Pilgrim Trust. 39 applications with a request of £195,031.52 were set against a funding pot of £61,951. Collection care audit grants were given to 7 museums including St Ives Museum and the West Highland Museum. Care grants were given to 6 museums including Stromness Museum for Seaweed Collection Conservation and Rehousing and the Keep Military Museum. Remedial conservation grants were also allocated to 5 museums including grants for the conservation and display of The Coleford Banner at Radstock Museum and timber conservation at the Scottish Crannog Centre which was suffered a devastating fire in June 2021. [AIM](#)

### Commission Grants from Art Fund

Supporting the commission and acquisition of new work this funding from Art Fund ranges from £7,500 to £75,000+ and applications are expected to be of international, national or regional significance. Public museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives based in the UK or Channel Islands are invited to apply as long as they are open at least half of the week for 6 months of the year and at least provisionally accepted through the Arts Council Accreditation Scheme or other national equivalents. There are two levels of funding available, small grants of £7,500 or less and main grants exceeding £7,500, with application rounds in February, May, July, October and December. [Art Fund](#) **Also:** 'Hibiscus Rising: The power of public art' in Arts Professional explores the fund in more detail. [Arts Professional](#)

### 12 new Heritage Development Trusts announced

The Architectural Heritage Fund with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund have named the 12 UK cities and towns that will benefit from a £5m fund empowering communities to breathe life into their disused and at-risk historic buildings. Organisations in Chatham, Glasgow and Derry/Londonderry will each receive between £55,000 and £70,000 a year to acquire and redevelop a pipeline of local historic buildings. The Heritage Development Trust model is being expanded after the success of pilot projects. [AHF](#)

### Wolfson Foundation publish top tips for applying for funding

The Wolfson Foundation have published 'Tips for a Stage 1 application' the tips apply to capital projects explaining the two stage application process, the impact they are looking for and costings with trustee decision meetings in June and December. [Wolfson Foundation](#)



## Support offered for those applying to the EU Horizon Europe funding

The British Academy with support of the Royal Society, the Academy of Medical Sciences, and the Royal Academy of Engineering are inviting proposals to support the effective uptake of opportunities provided by the UK's association to Horizon Europe. Proposals are welcome in all disciplines including the humanities, it is in particular aimed at those less experienced with applying to EU Framework Programmes. The purpose of the call is not to implement the proposed project but to give UK based partners the resources needed to collaborate with EU organisations and stakeholders to further develop ideas. Awards are offered up to £10,000, deadline for applications is 17 January.

[British Academy](#)

## Arts education

### Initial Teacher Training data shows reduction in recruitment for arts subjects

The 2023/4 teacher recruitment data for England showed that the Government failed to meet any of its recruitment targets for arts subjects, with recruitment down on 2022/23 and significantly down on 2021/22. The Cultural Learning Alliance reported that not only had the Government failed to meet its targets it actually failed to increase recruitment at all across all three subjects. The number of new arts subject teachers being down on previous years. For Art and design, the Government met 44% of its recruitment target, compared with 88% in 2022/23 and 134% in 2021/22, recruiting 364 teachers, 111 fewer than 2022/23 and 416 fewer than in 2021/22. [CLA](#), [Gov.uk](#)

### House of Lords report calls for urgent change in 11-16 education

Published on 12 December, the House of Lords Education for 11-16 Year Olds Committee calls for urgent action to revise the curriculum and place more emphasis on creative, digital and technical areas of study. The report notes that creativity is valued by employers, and that the value of the creative sectors to the UK is well documented but it highlights the ongoing decline in uptake of arts subjects in the 11-16 phase with witnesses expressing concern that some academies are using the flexibility they have over curricula to drop national curriculum arts subjects. Some witnesses also described a more general decline in opportunities to develop creativity across secondary education. [CLA](#), [Parliament.uk](#) (report, pdf, 113pgs)

## Dates for the diary

### Reminder Holocaust Memorial Day 27 January

This year Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on Sunday 27 January. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust has a section on their website with guidance for activity organisers in light of the conflict in Israel and Gaza. [HMDT](#)

**Also:** Four artists commissioned to create new work in response to Holocaust testimony, [Museums Association](#). Montreal Holocaust Museum starts constructing new building, [Blooloop](#)

### Sign up for National Lottery Open Week 2024

The National Lottery is inviting supported organisations to register if they would like to take part in National Lottery Open Week from Saturday 9 to Sunday 17 March 2024. During the week, members of the public will use their lottery tickets to access special offers at museums and heritage sites, these can include free entry and behind-the-scenes tours to a complimentary gift or cup of tea. Around 70% of visitors who took part said they had never visited the venue before or had not in the past 2 years. [Heritage Fund](#)



Dress worn in Bromsgrove, 1860-70. Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

## Conferences and events

### Promoting the Cultural & Creative Industries: Meeting Challenges & Building on Success

This Public Policy Exchange webinar on Tuesday 16 January will provide stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors an opportunity to evaluate government support for cultural and creative industries, the challenges posed by Brexit, UK skills shortages and the energy and cost of living crises. Speakers include Chris Bryant, Shadow Minister for Creative Industries and Digital and Liberal Democrat spokesperson for Culture, Media & Sport, Jamie Stone MP. The session runs from 9.30am-1pm, tickets cost from £149. [PPE](#)

### Museum iD Study Days: from co-curation to AI and social justice

Museum iD have a number of Study Days beginning with Sacha Coward on 'playable immersive experiences in museums' on 30 January followed by further sessions on co-creation and making change, community lead interpretation, AI and digital innovation and social justice. Events are in London and tickets are on a sliding scale from £177 for one study day to £137 for 5 tickets. [Museum iD](#)

### Essentials in application writing for applications to trusts and foundations

Across two 3 hour sessions Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy are offering this course on the skills needed to write a strong application and effectively communicate about your work. Aimed at those new to fundraising, those looking to achieve multi-year support or launch a big project. Running on 6 and 13 February it costs £75 with a concession rate of £50 which includes NMDC members. [Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy](#)

### Showtime: Designing Great Exhibitions 2024

The Museums Association have scheduled a one day conference on 7 February at the Wellcome Collection in London to look at how the changing role of museums in society is affecting approaches to exhibition design – from sustainability and decolonisation to co-production and community engagement. With case studies from the Design Museum, Showtown Blackpool and the Derry Girls exhibition at Tower Museum in Northern Ireland. Tickets range from £75 to £150. You can also follow this event on 'X' using #ExhibitionDesign2024 [Museums Association](#)

### Working in Partnership and Writing an Agreement from TEG

The Touring Exhibitions Group are offering this short course over two days on Thursday 22 February and Thursday 29 February online. The course will guide you through the characteristics of a successful partnership, different ways to reach an agreement, developing and writing an agreement and using an agreement to support collaborative practices. It is also an opportunity to network with other professionals interested in temporary, touring and partnership exhibitions. Tickets cost between £59 for TEG members to £89 for non-members, book by 19 February. [TEG](#)

### ALVA Retail Conference 2024

The 2024 Retail Conference from the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions will be held on 26 February at the Wellcome Collection in London. With case studies from the National Trust, London Transport Museum, Southbank Centre and V&A there will also be sessions on sustainability and how attractions are responding to the cost of living pressures on customers. Tickets cost £175 + VAT. [ALVA](#)

### Choosing a paid advertising platform with DCN

The Digital Culture Network are helping you get 2024 off to a good start with a session on how to choose a paid advertising platform with a Google, Meta and TikTok ads overview. Taking place online at 2-3pm on Thursday 22 February this free webinar is aimed at beginners so no prior knowledge is needed, but it can also act as a refresher for those already using these platforms. [DCN](#)

### NatSCA 2024 Conference and call for papers

The Natural Sciences Collections Association conference for 2024 will be held in Oxford on Thursday 18 and Friday 19 April. Proposals are invited on the theme of 'Trials and Triumphs: sharing practice across the museum sector' with a deadline for submissions of 19 January. Presentations are sought from every aspect of museum operations, including audience engagement, collections management practices, changing laws, social justice, restitution and decolonisation, environmental issues, global challenges, research and academic engagement. [NatSCA](#)

### 2024 Sporting Heritage Conference

Taking place on 8-9 May at Headingley Stadium in Leeds, with an evening of pre-conference networking and social event followed by the main conference on Thursday 9 May. Keynote speakers include Paralympian Pippa Britton and sessions will include case studies to help develop your projects and programmes and advice on applying for funding. Early Bird tickets are available till 31 January and range from £80-£155, full price tickets range from £100-£180. [Sporting Heritage](#)

**Also:** Nominations open for the Sporting Heritage Awards with 9 award categories including Recognising Sporting Heritage Volunteers, Digital Innovation in Sporting Heritage and Sporting Heritage Research Award, deadline for nominations is 29 February 2024. [Sporting Heritage](#)

### MuseumNext returns to London in June 2024

The international conference MuseumNext will run from 11-13 June at the Royal Geographical Society in London for the first in-person conference for 5 years. Featuring workshops, fringe sessions, tours, networking and an opportunity to visit some of London's museums. A call for speakers on the theme of 'Gamechangers' is open till 31 January. Early Bird tickets cost £480. [MuseumNext](#)

**Also:** MuseumNext – Green Museum Summit, virtual conference, 26-27 February, tickets range from £30 for a student ticket to £130 for an individual ticket. [MuseumNext](#) MuseumNext – Digital Summit, virtual conference, 25-26 March, [MuseumNext](#)

## Professional development opportunities

### Clore Leadership and Arts Council England announce leadership assemblies

'Leadership Now' is a series of assemblies for cultural leaders offered by Clore Leadership in partnership with ACE. Launching in January the assemblies aim to empower leaders to instigate collaborative solutions and foster a more connected, resilient, and thriving cultural leadership. The sessions will begin on Friday 26 January at the Battersea Arts Centre with Tarek Iskander, Artistic Director and CEO. Further assemblies will be held across February and March at Leeds Playhouse and Birmingham's ThinkTank Science Museum, and there will also be two online sessions in February and March. Cultural Leaders are invited to attend one assembly. [Clore Leadership](#)

### Bursaries for 2024 Association of Art History's Annual Conference

Doctoral and early career researchers are invited to apply for bursaries to attend the 2024 Association of Art History's Annual Conference which will be held at the University of Bristol from April 3-5. Applicants must also be current members of the Association for Art History with a deadline for submissions by Friday 19 January. [AAH](#)

## Appointments and honours

### 2023 New Year Honours for NMDC members

The 2023 New Year Honours list has awarded **Richard Deverell**, Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a CBE for services to botanical science and conservation. **Nick Merriman**, Chief Executive of Horniman Museum and Gardens (until Feb 2023 when he joins English Heritage as CEO) an OBE in recognition of his services to arts and heritage. **Nicholas Cullinan**, Director of the National Portrait Gallery who oversaw the revamp and reopening of the gallery in 2023, receives an OBE for services to arts. **Steve Miller**, head of Norfolk Museums Service and Norfolk County Council's head of culture and heritage receives an MBE for services to heritage and tourism.



Other awards included a CBE for **René Olivieri**, Chair of the National Trust, an OBE for **Chris Blandford**, President of World Heritage UK and Chief Executive Officer of the Southbank Centre, **Elaine Bedell**, is appointed an OBE for services to business and the arts. Director of Finance and Corporate Services at the Natural History Museum, **Neil Greenwood**, is appointed an MBE for services to museums and Tullie House Museum in Carlisle can celebrate a British Empire Medal for **Melanie Gardner** who has been a Fine and Decorative Arts Curator since 1988, in recognition of her service to arts and culture in Cumbria. **Nathaniel Hepburn**, Director and Chief Executive at Charleston also receives an MBE for services to the arts. [Museums Association](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Horniman](#)

**Also:** Sir Guy Weston has been named as Chair of Imperial War Museums' Board of Trustees replacing Matthew Westerman who has served 9 years as a Trustee including 4 years as Chair. Weston has been a board member since 2019, currently in the role of Business Trustee, and has chaired IWM Trading Company Ltd Board since March 2020. [Arts Professional](#)

Indhu Rubsingham has been appointed Director and joint Chief Executive at the National Theatre. She will work alongside Executive Director Kate Varah as Director Designate from Spring 2024 until current Director and Chief Executive Rufus Norris leaves in Spring 2025. [National Theatre](#), [Guardian](#)

## Catch up

**Podcast:** 'Culture cuts right across the life of everything in our communities'... BBC Front Row looks at how successful the North East Cultural Partnership has been so far, halfway through its 15 year timeline. With contributions from former Culture Minister Ed Vaizey, Jane Robinson, Co-Chair of the North East Cultural Partnership board and **Keith Merrin**, Director of Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums. From 26 mins. [BBC](#)

New Courtauld director Mark Hallett promises to 'shout about' art history's importance, 28 December 2023, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Parthenon marbles should return to Athens, says Lord Frost, 14 December 2023, [Guardian](#)

Campaign launched to create Museum of the Prime Minister, 13 December 2023, [Museums Association](#)

Campaigners lead legal battle against controversial plan to build tunnel near Stonehenge, 12 December 2023, [ARTnews](#)

Architect appointed for Vestry House Museum revamp, 6 December 2023, [Museums Association](#), [Vestry House](#), [Building Design](#)

English National Opera chooses Manchester as new home after relocation row, 5 December 2023, [BBC](#), [Guardian](#)

## International news

Metropolitan Museum's deaccessioned George Washington portrait could bring \$2.5m at auction, 20 December 2023, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Eric Schmidt will head to Naples as 10 new museum directors are appointed to Italy's top museums, 18 December 2023, [Artnet](#)

The Met to return looted ancient artworks to Thailand and Cambodia, 16 December 2023, [BBC](#)

New Argentinian president says adios to Argentina's Ministry of Culture, 12 December 2023, [ARTnews](#)

Controversy swirls around Centre Pompidou ahead of 2025 closure, 8 December 2023, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts repatriates 44 artefacts following New York inquiry, 6 December 2023, [ARTnews](#)

**Also:** The Louvre has hiked its ticket prices for the first time in seven years, [Artnet](#), Berlin's state museums raise ticket prices as costs climb, [Art Newspaper](#) (£) Meanwhile the Whitney goes free on Friday evenings and second Sundays – with admission to some New York museums reaching \$30, it wants to widen access, [New York Times](#) (£)

## Jobs

Jobs being advertised on the [NMDC jobs board](#) this month include:

- [Curator of Ancient Levant and Syria - British Museum](#)
- [Digital Asset Officer - Royal Armouries](#)
- [Communications Administrator - National Gallery](#)
- [Conservator - Royal Armouries](#)
- [Senior IT Engineer - Tate](#)
- [Internal Security Officer - British Library](#)

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